



Our progressive Farmers are Shaping Future of J&K's Agriculture: CM Omar Abdullah

Reviews implementation of HADP, launches multiple digital initiatives

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, APRIL 16: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a review meeting on the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) here at the Civil Secretariat.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Agriculture Production Department Javed Ahmed Dar, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo,

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CM Omar Abdullah chairs review meeting ahead of Mission YUVA launch in J&K

■ HT News Network

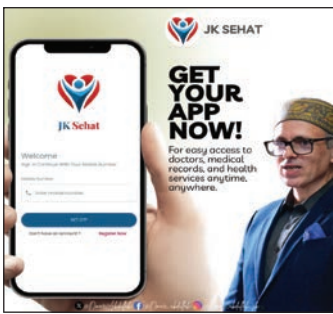
JAMMU, APRIL 16: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a meeting to review the pre-launch preparations of Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan)—a transformative initiative aimed at empowering youth through entrepreneurship, skill development and inclusive economic participation.

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CM Omar Abdullah inaugurates e-SEHAT App, one-stop healthcare solution for J&K citizens

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 16: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today launched the e-SEHAT App — a comprehensive, one-stop digital solution designed to cater to the healthcare needs of the people of Jammu & Kashmir, including citizens, doctors and medical professionals.



The Chief Minister congratulated the team for developing such an elaborate and wide-ranging application that addresses the health needs of J&K's citizens.

He suggested making the app more user-friendly and incorporating additional features, including the integration of the appoint

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Deputy speaker's post remains vacant in J&K Assembly

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 16: The Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly has completed over five months of its five-year term, yet the crucial post of deputy speaker remains vacant.

According to the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, the election for the deputy speaker must be conducted "as soon as may be". "The Legislative Assembly shall, as soon as may be, choose two members of the

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Book Bombshell Former RAW Chief's book bundle of lies, figment of imagination: Dr Farooq

Dulat defends claims, says his writings based on facts

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR, APR 16: Terming the 'book bomb shell' "The Chief Minister and the Spy" written by former RAW Chief A S Dulat as bundle of lies,

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Dulat stirs 'Hornet's Nest', says Dr Farooq secretly supported Art 370 abrogation

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 16: Former RAW Chief, A S Dulat has stirred the 'Hornet's Nest' by claiming that former J&K Chief Minister and National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah had 'secretly' supported the abrogation of Article 370.

In his new book "The Chief Minister and The Spy", Dulat as per the news agency—has made startling revelations. Several opposition leaders took to the micro-blogging site, X and reacted to the revelation.

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Justice Arun Palli Takes Oath As 38th Chief Justice Of J&K And Ladakh High Court

■ HT News Network



JAMMU, APRIL 16, ANB, Justice Arun Palli sworn in as Chief Justice of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court

According to News Service, Associated News Bureau, ANB, He was administered the oath by Jammu & Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The ceremony was attended by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Judges of the high court, subordinate judiciary and other dignitaries.

The Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court, Justice GS Sandhawalia, was also present. Judges, sitting and retired, from Justice Palli's parent high court of Punjab and Haryana, along with advocates, family and friends, also attended the event at the Convention Centre, Jammu.

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Rains lash Kashmir; MeT predicts 3-day wet spell from Friday

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 16: A day after the Valley recorded the hottest day of the season, fresh rainfall in Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir on Wednesday led to mercury plummeting across the region. According to the details available with the news agency—the weather conditions remained mostly cloudy today across the Valley while the rainfall in the evening led to the decline in temperature. Amidst the gusty winds, the rains lashed multiple areas of the Valley including Srinagar, especially north and central Kashmir. However, the weatherman has predicted generally dry

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Govt schools record over 70,000 new admissions: DSEK

60% staff rationalisation completed, no staff shortage in far-flung areas; No ban on picnics

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 16: Director School Education Kashmir (DSEK), G N Itoo Wednesday said that government-run schools have admitted over 70,000 new students in the recent enrolment drive.

DSEK as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that among the new entrants, around 35,000 were enrolled at lower primary level, 1,500 out-of-school children were brought back to the educational institutes and over 1,200 specially-abled students were also enrolled in the drive.

Itoo dedicated the success of new entrants



to teachers, parents and civil societies and acknowledged their role in achieving this

milestone. "Teachers and other concerned stakeholders have left no stone unturned in making this enrollment drive a grand success. Our focus now is on sustaining this success".

About the district wise performance, Itoo said that frontier district Kupwara has emerged among the top performers in the enrollment drive.

On the issue of schools operating from rented accommodations, the director said that the land availability had remained a key challenge, especially in urban areas. However, he assured that steps are being taken in a phased manner to address the

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J&K Bank registers 4200 Yatris on day one of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra - 2025 registration drive

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, April 16, , Marking a strong start to this year's Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra registration process, J&K Bank registered over 4200 pilgrims on Tuesday through its 91 designated branches spread across the country.

According to News Service, Associated News Bureau, ANB, The registration for the annual pilgrimage, which commenced



on April 14, 2025, is being carried out on a first-come, first-served basis and includes the issuance of Yatra Permits to eligible pilgrims. This year, the

holy Yatra to Himalayan cave of Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine is scheduled to begin on 3rd July and conclude on 9th August, 2025. Expressing satisfaction at the response, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "It is encouraging to see a good response from devotees on Day One. Registering over 4,200 pilgrims in a single day reflects the trust people have in the Bank's service delivery

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Kashmir's Walnut Industry faces Chinese threat

From 1.70 lakh MTs in 2020 to mere 30,000 MTs in 2024

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR: The once-thriving walnut industry in Kashmir is facing a severe crisis as demand for its organic walnuts has sharply declined from 85% to just 30% over the past four years.

Growers and traders are deeply concerned as sales have dropped drastically from 1.70 lakh metric tonnes in 2020 to a mere 30,000 metric tonnes in 2024. The primary reasons behind this decline include the influx of cheaper Chinese walnuts, inadequate processing facilities, and weak marketing strategies.



According to the news agency—Correspondent, in local markets, Kashmiri organic walnuts are currently priced between Rs 700-800 per kilogram, while

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CS pushes for achieving green goals under CAMPA

AWC-2025 records 13,43,506 birds visiting valley wetlands annually

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 16: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today while addressing the 25th Steering Committee Meeting of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), emphasized on the department to work dedicatedly towards achieving the set targets in a given timeframe.

The meeting besides Commissioner Secretary, Forests, Ecology & Environment was attended by Principal Secretary, Finance; PCCF; Chief Wildlife Warden; Secretary, Planning; Director, Remote Sensing; CEO, CAMPA and other



concerned HoDs of the department. During the meeting, the Chief Secre-

tary took stock of the afforestation efforts made during the past year and the targets

achieved during this time. He asked the officers to complete installation of Boundary Pillars (BPs) around the forests across J&K to ensure their protection.

He also enjoined upon the concerned to digitise these BPs in order to create digitized maps of all the forest areas. He urged them to give details of the areas treated in lieu of the forest areas that came under Hydro Electric Projects of Kwar, Kiru and Ratlehere.

Dulloo further remarked that forests are lungs of the earth guaranteeing its sustainability. He advised for adopting modern technology to map the highly

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3 SPs among 36 J&K cops selected for Haj-2025 duty in Saudi Arabia

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 16: The Jammu and Kashmir Home Department has ordered the temporary deputation of 36 police personnel to the Consulate General of India (CGI) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to serve as Haj Officers and Haj Superintendents for Haj-2025. According to news service, Associated News Bureau, ANB, the deputation follows recommendations from the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, and approvals from the J&K Police Headquarters and CID, J&K. The officers and police personnel include Superintendents of Police (SPs) Peerzada Aijaz Ahmed, Ruhail Mircha, and Mohd Muzaffer Jan; Inspectors

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CS

degraded areas for its treatment on priority basis.

On the occasion, Commissioner Secretary, FE&E, Sheetal Nanda, informed the meeting about the role and responsibilities of the Steering Committee in deciding the future course of action to take up the CAMPAs works during the year ahead.

She also made out that the Committee had an overarching role of monitoring the department's activities besides giving necessary directions for utilization of resources to achieve the desired goals.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Suresh Kumar Gupta, gave out that the scheme is being implemented smoothly in the UT, obtaining tangible results over the years. He said that installation and digitization of BPs around the forests had been achieved to a larger extent with the left out forests to be demarcated in the year or two ahead.

He asserted that the department has established strong internal and social audit mechanisms, including inter-range and inter-divisional checks, alongside monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting formats to monitor the outcomes of this CAMPAs scheme.

Moreover, it was given out that the public transparency is being maintained through the e-Green Watch portal, where data from 3,410 projects (including geotagged coordinates) is accessible.

Elaborating further, CEO CAMPAs, T. Rabi Kumar, revealed that the third-party evaluations show improved survival rates. The third-party evaluation (2012–2019) reported a 50% survival rate and in the next phase (2019–2022), conducted by AFC India Limited, survival rates improved significantly to 62.70%, with Kashmir at 65.40% and Jammu at 60%.

Giving the financial overview of this scheme as on March 2024, it was divulged that a total of Rs 851.65 crore were available with an approved outlay of Rs 276.27 crore for FY 2024-25. It was further added that an expenditure of Rs 153.67 was booked during this year leaving a balance of Rs 727.66 crore available with the department.

As far as the outcomes over the past 15 years are concerned, the meeting was apprised that during 2010-11 to 2024-25, a substantial amount of forest land has been treated under CAMPAs initiatives, with the total area afforded reaching thousands of hectares. A significant financial commitment of Rs 1369.76 crore has been made during this period.

HAAJ

Gowhar Ahmad Bhat, Mubashar Hussain Shah, Shahid Amin, Peerzada Bashir Ahmad, Afaq Ahmad Nayak, Farooq Ahmad, Haroon Rashid Bhat, Parviaz Ahmad, Arshid Hussain, Farooq Ahmad Wani, and Ibrar Ahmad. Assistant Sub-Inspectors (ASI) Zahoor Ahmad Wani, Bilal Ahmad Ganaie, Tahir Maqbool Malla, Mohd Abbas, and Maksood Ahmad Selection Grade Constables (Sgct) Mohammad Rafie Bhat, Mohd Aslam Bhat, Shabir Ahmad Mir, Raja Faheem Nabi, Imtiaz Ahmad, John Mohammad, Mehraj Ul Shafi, Peerzada Mahboubul Haq, Wasim Sikander, Mohd Amin Bhat, Ruyaz Ahmad, and Javid Ahmad, Constables Aaqib Inayat Ullah, Adil Ahmad Sofi, Rafeeq Ahmad Malik, Suhail Ahmad Wani, and Reyaz Ahmad Hurra. These personnel have been directed to report to the Ministry of Minority Affairs, CGO Complex, New Delhi, on April 21, 2025, for completion of requisite formalities. An advance Travelling Allowance (TE) has also been sanctioned for their journey to and from New Delhi, as per government rules.

YATRA

and commitment to this sacred pilgrimage. "We have ensured seamless arrangements at all designated branches with dedicated helpdesks, registration counters and trained staff to facilitate hassle-free registration. As always, J&K Bank remains deeply committed to be a meaningful part of this significant spiritual journey", he added. Meanwhile, Pilgrims can register themselves in real-time at any of the designated Bank branches after undergoing Aadhaar-based biometric eKYC authentication which will enable yatris to obtain their RFid Cards without the need to wait in the long queues. The system-generated Yatra Permit is issued through the official NIC Portal <https://jksasb.nic.in>. Those intending to undertake the Yatra and falling in the age group of 13 to 70 years as on the date of the pilgrimage, are required to submit the prescribed Compulsory Health Certificate (CHC) at the Bank's branches, the format of which along with the list of Doctors/ Medical Institutions authorized to issue it are available at Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board's website. Notably, the Bank has urged all prospective yatris to complete their registration early to avoid last-minute inconvenience in obtaining their desired dates as Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board has allocated a limited quota of permits to the Bank.

WALLNUT

Chinese walnuts sell for nearly half the price at Rs 350–400 per kilogram.

This stark price difference is largely due to China's mass production methods, which rely heavily on chemical fertilizers, allowing for large-scale exports at lower costs.

A critical challenge for Kashmir's walnut industry is the lack of processing units to enhance the quality of the produce after harvest. Experts explain that while Kashmiri walnuts are rich in oil, their natural color does not turn white due to insufficient processing, making them less attractive in both domestic and international markets.

Official data from the Horticulture Marketing Department reveals that only 15% of walnuts are currently being sold through formal channels.

Official sources reveal that the absence of a proper grading system and the failure to promote organic certification have further worsened the situation.

To revive the industry, the horticulture department has launched new initiatives aimed at supporting the annual production of 2 lakh metric tonnes across 70,000 hectares. Key measures include establishing processing units, securing organic certification and Geographical Indication (GI) tags, improving marketing efforts, and implementing a stronger grading system.

District-wise production figures highlight significant disparities, with Anantnag leading at 11,915 metric tonnes, followed by Kupwara at 8,824 metric tonnes and Ganderbal at 5,454 metric tonnes. Other districts like Pulwama, Budgam, Kulgam, Shopiya, and Srinagar contribute smaller but notable quantities.

Wholesale traders like Abdul Rahim Bhanday from South Kashmir's Pulwama pointed out additional challenges, noting that nearly 10% of Kashmiri walnuts turn out empty upon cracking, and their smaller size makes them less appealing compared to the larger kernels of Chinese walnuts. The harder shell of Kashmiri walnuts has also contributed to declining demand.

Efforts, as per the officials, are underway to boost production through research on high-yielding mountain varieties. Under the Krishi Samagra Vikas Yojana, the government is promoting walnut cultivation and plans to provide farmers with essential facilities, including processing units. The department is also working on obtaining GI tags to enhance the marketability of Kashmiri walnuts once processing improves—

DESK

issue. "Under the Samagra Shiksha scheme, provisions for additional classrooms have been made, with special attention given to girls' institutions," he added. Addressing concerns regarding staff shortages, particularly in remote areas, the Director said, "Nearly 60 percent of the rationalisation has been completed and the remaining will be finalized in the coming days."

Itoo on the occasion further clarified that there is no ban on school picnics or excursions. He said that a meeting was convened by the Education Minister with key departments, including school education, traffic, transport and others wherein detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were issued to ensure the safety of the student.

DSEK said that as per the SOPs, the Head of Institution (HOI) must seek prior approval for excursions wherein concerned ZEOs have been designated as the officers for middle schools, CEOs for high and higher secondary schools, and for inter-district trips. He said that the concerned officials are mandatorily supposed to seek permission from the DSEK for any outing, picnic or excursions.

The director sought public cooperation, especially from HOIs and students, to ensure safe and smooth excursions in the days ahead—

RAINS

weather tomorrow.

Director Meteorological department, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the weather is expected to remain wet from April 18 as light to moderate rain and snow (higher reaches) at most places and moderate to heavy rain at isolated to scattered places during 18th & 19th April accompanied with thunder and gusty winds from April 18th evening onwards is expected in the region.

The major activity is expected on April 19 as the local MeT department here has issued yellow and orange alerts for the day.

On April 21, he predicted cloudy weather with possibility of light rain and thunder at scattered places. "From April 22 to 25, the weather conditions would remain generally dry," he added.

In between April 26 & 27, the weather would again turn cloudy in the region, he said.

Moreover, the MeT in its advisory has stated that all concerned are advised to plan accordingly and follow administration and traffic advisory, according to the advisory, there is a possibility of landslides, mudslides and shooting stones at vulnerable places.

Meanwhile, the farmers have been advised to suspend the farm operations

during April 18 and April 19—

DEP SPEAKER

Assembly to be respectively Speaker and Deputy Speaker thereof and, so often as the office of Speaker or Deputy Speaker becomes vacant, the Assembly shall choose another member to be Speaker or Deputy Speaker, as the case may be," reads sub-section (1) of section 19 of the law.

As per parliamentary convention, the deputy speaker's post is offered to the largest opposition party in the Assembly.

In the previous PDP-BJP coalition government, the position was given to the National Conference, which held only 15 seats at the time. Nazir Gurezi of NC was elected as Deputy Speaker. Similarly, during the Congress-NC government, the post was held by PDP's Sartaj Madni.

Source told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the NC has neither shown an inclination nor disinclination to offer the Deputy Speaker's post to the BJP, which holds 28 seats in the Assembly.

"As of now, NC has not shown any sign of handing over the post to the opposition," they said, adding that the party is treading a cautious path over the issue—

CM PORTAL

ment system of empanelled private health institutions.

The Chief Minister also directed the concerned authorities to conduct hands-on training through scheduled workshops for the staff to familiarize them with the application. "Once the staff is trained, awareness campaigns can be launched to educate the public about the app and its benefits," he said.

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring, he called for regular reviews—weekly by the Secretary, Health & Medical Education; monthly by the Chief Secretary; and quarterly by the Minister In-charge—to assess the app's performance and progress.

The launch event was attended by Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakeena Itoo, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Secretary Health & Medical Education Syed Abid Rashid, DG BISAG-N, Principals of various Government Medical Colleges, Medical Superintendents, HoDs and other concerned officials.

Earlier, Secretary H&ME Syed Abid Rashid gave a detailed presentation outlining the objectives, purpose, and target users of the SEHAT App.

He informed that the department has developed a cutting-edge digital application designed to guide and support patients and their attendants in accessing healthcare facilities and services across both public and private sectors in Jammu & Kashmir.

He stated that the SEHAT App is a smart e-health solution offering tele-diagnosis and first opinion for healthcare needs. Useable from home, offices, or hospitals, the app is especially beneficial in remote areas and serves a broad range of users including the general public, patients, healthcare professionals, medical students, and aspirants of medical and paramedical courses.

The SEHAT App offers a wide array of features aimed at improving healthcare access and delivery across Jammu & Kashmir. It provides detailed information related to healthcare institutions, including doctors' availability, options for appointment bookings, diagnostic and surgical services, as well as tele-consultation, telemedicine, and emergency care. For the general public, the app includes tools for health promotion and disease prevention, an AI-powered symptoms checker, health tracking capabilities, medication reminders, integration with wearable devices, and multilingual support.

Healthcare professionals can benefit from secure messaging, access to Electronic Health Records (EHR), prescription and billing management, lab result integration, academic resources, and opportunities for research. The app also supports medical students by offering information on academic courses, hostel accommodations, library facilities, and student exchange programs.

Additionally, SEHAT includes helpline services for hospital assistance, ambulance information, and feedback mechanisms.

It facilitates a coordinated referral mechanism through hospital networking for efficient patient transfers and emergency support. The app also provides comprehensive details on health insurance schemes such as PMJAY, CGHS, and ECHS.

Furthermore, it promotes skill development through CPR and Basic Life Support (BLS) training, workshops, and various continuing education programs.

The Secretary emphasized that the SEHAT App is aimed at strengthening collaboration between healthcare providers, patients and insurers by improving communication and facilitating access to healthcare resources.

MISSION YUVA

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Ministers Sakeena Itoo, Javed Ahmed Rana, Javed Ahmad Dar, and Satish Sharma. Also present

were Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary Education Department Shantmanu, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance, AGM NABARD, Vice Chancellors of various universities of J&K, Secretary Labour & Employment Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, and all Deputy Commissioners and other concerned attended the meeting both in person and via virtual mode.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah lauded the "pathbreaking" work undertaken by the Labour & Employment Department during the baseline household survey conducted across Jammu and Kashmir.

He noted with satisfaction that much of the data aligns with existing government records.

He suggested that this data be shared across departments to ensure easy access and usability for formulating new schemes or refining those already in place.

Secretary Labour & Employment, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, presented a detailed overview of the survey findings, highlighting its focus on four foundational pillars—Culture, Capital, Capacity, and Connectivity.

He explained that the survey is designed to foster an entrepreneurial culture and build a supportive ecosystem aimed at enabling individuals aged 18–49 to establish at least 1.37 lakh new enterprises, thereby generating around 4.25 lakh job opportunities over the next five years.

The presentation also provided insights into the programme's design, key innovations, implementation strategy, and budget as outlined in the Detailed Project Report (DPR).

Secretary Ranjan emphasized that the core objective of Mission YUVA is to identify youth inclined toward self-employment and entrepreneurship, and to provide them with robust support through structured mentorship, training, and access to capital.

Mission YUVA envisions transforming Jammu & Kashmir into a vibrant entrepreneurial hub by unlocking the potential of its youth.

With a focus on strategic interventions and comprehensive support systems, the mission seeks to spur economic growth, reduce unemployment and cultivate a spirit of self-reliance across J&K.

CM

Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Agriculture Production Department (APD) Shailendra Kumar, Mission Director HADP Rahul Yadav, and other senior officials.

All Deputy Commissioners of Jammu & Kashmir, along with progressive farmers, participated in the meeting via video conferencing from their respective district headquarters.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, while sharing the vision of HADP, remarked that the programme is not just a policy intervention but a movement to empower farmers, modernize the agri-sector, and build a sustainable Rs 100,000 crore agri-economy for Jammu & Kashmir by 2030.

On the role of digital innovation in agriculture, he stated that by integrating cutting-edge technologies such as AI-based advisory tools and real-time monitoring applications, governance is being redefined at the grassroots. "We are redefining how governance reaches the grassroots. HADP is making agriculture smart, data-driven, and future-ready," the Chief Minister said.

Termining progressive farmers as the backbone of agricultural transformation, the Chief Minister said, "Their stories of success inspire confidence in our mission and reaffirm our belief that change is happening, village by village, farm by farm."

Reiterating his government's unwavering support, he affirmed that every scheme, every platform, and every rupee invested under HADP is aimed at directly benefiting the farmer. "Our government will continue to walk alongside our cultivators in this journey of growth and innovation," he added.

Earlier, Mission Director Rahul Yadav presented a comprehensive overview of HADP's evolution, highlighting the preparation of 29 Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) within a record four-month period. He noted that the programme aims to transition agriculture in J&K from a low-growth, subsistence-based model to a vibrant, commercially-driven agri-economy.

The meeting also deliberated on strategies to address structural challenges in the sector, particularly the long-standing cycle of low productivity and income. The programme is anchored around key strategic levers of change, with 29 distinct, future-ready projects forming its foundation.

DR FAROOQ

Peoples Conference (PC) President and MLA Handwara, Sajad Gani Lone in a post said that he was not surprised at the revelation and that the August 4, 2019 meeting of incumbent Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah with the PM was never a mystery for him.

"Dullat sahib has revealed in his upcoming book that Farooq Sahib privately supported the abrogation of Article 370. Com-

ing from Dullat sahib makes this revelation very credible. Dullat sahib is the closest ally of and friend of Farooq sahib. Virtually his alter ego. Incidentally Dullat sahib is the famed Uncle of the infamous Uncles and Aunties Brigade of Delhi," Lone wrote on X.

Of course NC will deny it. Call it yet another conspiracy against NC. They have perfected playing the victim card, he said, adding that "Uncle and Aunties will take cognisance of my tweet and other such tweets and implore upon BJP to teach such tweeters a lesson."

"Out here, their MLAs will privately visit LOP Sunil Sharma and tell him that they are brothers separated at the Kumbh Mela. That the theatre they enact in Assembly and outside assembly is in national interest. I personally am not surprised at this revelation. The August 4 2019 meeting of CM sahib and Farooq sahib with the PM was never a mystery for me. I can visualise Farooq sahib saying—Humey roney deejyie—Aap apna kaam karein—hum aap kay Saath hain—It now seems 2024 was a prize for services rendered in 2019. Of course in national interest," he wrote.

MLA Pulwama and PDP leader, Waheed Parra in a post said that Dullat's revelations today tear away the NC's last remaining veil.

"Dullat's revelations today tear away the NC's last remaining veil. It tells us that all those fiery speeches, the staged outrage, the carefully crafted image of 'fighting the BJP' - was all theatre. A performance designed to mislead the people of Jammu and Kashmir into believing that the National Conference was standing guard over their rights. In truth, they were complicit - quiet facilitators and sponsors of our disempowerment," Parra wrote.

"But really, should this come as a surprise? This is the same NC that watched silently for decades as Article 370 was gradually hollowed out - posing as protectors while doing nothing to actually protect. Their legacy is not one of resistance but of convenient silence dressed up as statesmanship. This well-rehearsed charade has only one purpose: to normalise the abrogation of 370 and 35A, and the climate of fear and intimidation unleashed post-August 5, 2019 - under the convenient label of a 'popular government'."

BOOK

National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday said that his claims are figment of his imagination.

Dr Farooq, according to the news agency—said that his book is a "piece of fiction" which he is trying to project as the work based on facts.

Dullat, in his book, has alleged that Dr Farooq privately backed the abrogation of Article 370 while publicly opposed it. "Me and my son Omar Abdullah were put under arrest for several months at the time of the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019. We were detained because our stand against the abrogation of special status was well-known," he said. "Dullat's book is nothing other than rubbish."

Meanwhile, NC Chief Spokesperson and MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq also rejected the claims made by Dullat.

Sadiq while speaking to KNO said the book contradicts itself and questioned the credibility of the author. "If you look at the book and what he writes in it, he contradicts his own words. He writes that the Government of India waited for seven months to see Farooq Abdullah Sahib's reaction when he was in custody. If that was the case, then why did he promote the PAGD after coming out?" he asked.

He added that the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) was rejuvenated after Abdullah's release and that it was not broken by the NC.

Sadiq also questioned Dullat's comments about the PDP and its leadership. "The words he used about the PDP patriot are probably inappropriate. I don't trust those things," he said.

He added that Dullat had earlier made remarks against PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, which he termed as a bid to stay relevant.

"If the PDP and opposition talks about it, then I believe the same author has time and again said something about Mufti Muhammad Sayeed, he has said that PDP was the creation of PDP and many other personal talks. If that is true then it is true."

"I think it is just a figment of imagination and he (Dullat) is trying to sell his book and what better than to create a controversy with regard to J&K. I think there is nothing much to it than this and I believe if the opposition is taking it head-on then I think they should also look at their own house because Dullat Sahab has said many things about the opposition as well. I feel there is nothing to it and we have cleared it very clearly."

He said that the opposition had no issue to raise now and was trying to divert attention. "They can't say anything on the budget or other matters. So they are making up stories," he said. "We have bigger issues to deal with like the amendment bill and the reservation issue."





DC Srinagar reviews progress on Major Drainage Projects

Emphasizes urgent need for solution-oriented strategies to protect City from water logging, potential flood-like situation

HT News Network

SRINAGAR APRIL 16: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Wednesday chaired a meeting of Officers at DC Office Complex here to review the progress of ongoing major drainage projects under execution in the district.

The major drainage projects are aimed to strengthen the existing drainage network system and upgrade the system to protect the City from water logging and potential flood-like situations.

At the outset, DC took a comprehensive review of ongoing major drainage projects across the district,

emphasizing the urgent need for solution-oriented strategies to protect City from water logging and potential flood-like situation during any inclement weather conditions. During the review meeting, DC directed the concerned to expedite works on the drainage projects and ensure timely completion of critical drainage infrastructure. He highlighted the importance of sustainable and long-term planning to enhance the City's flood resilience, especially in light of past weather-related challenges.

Dr Bilal urged the Officers to prioritize innovation and efficiency in project execution, while also coordinating closely to address bottle-



necks and streamline processes.

DC reiterated the Administration's commitment to improving urban infrastructure and protecting Srinagar residents from environmental vulnerabilities. He said that all works taken up must be in accordance with need-assessment.

On the occasion, DC was given a detailed appraisal of major vital projects including new projects and ongoing works for upgradation and augmentation of drainage networks system in the district. The major drainage projects are aimed to strengthen the existing drainage network system and upgrade the system to protect the City from water logging and potential flood-like

situations.

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Over 5 lakh tourists visit Kashmir in first three months of 2025

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 16 : Kashmir is seeing a big boost in tourism this year, with 5,25,272 tourists visiting the valley in just the first three months and one week of 2025. This includes 5,14,845 domestic and 10,427 foreign tourists, giving a major push to the local economy and bringing smiles to people who depend on tourism for their livelihood.

According to official data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), in January, there were 1,51,023 tourists (1,48,439 domestic and 3,585 foreign). In February, 1,47,560 tourists visited (1,43,444 domestic and 4,116 foreign) - March recorded the highest numbers with 1,76,355 tourists (1,74,349 domestic and 2,006 foreign). From April 1 to 7, 49,544 tourists arrived (48,614 domestic and 930 foreign).

Tourism officials said that 2025 is turning out to be one of the best years



in recent times. A major reason for the rise in tourists was the successful hosting of the Khelo India Winter Games in Gulmarg in March. "The Winter Games attracted national attention and brought adventure lovers in large numbers," said a tourism department official.

At the same time, the Tulip Garden in Srinagar is drawing thousands of visitors every day. "This place looks like heaven on earth. The flowers, the cool breeze, and the view of the Zabarwan Hills are simply mesmerising," said Rajesh Sharma, a tourist from Delhi.

Another tourist, Neetu Raina, also

from Delhi, said, "I had only heard about Kashmir's beauty. But being here is a dream come true. People are warm and welcoming."

Locals are also happy with the tourist rush. Ishfaq Ahmad, a houseboat owner, said, "After a long time, we are seeing such occupancy in our houseboats. It feels like the old days." Mushtaq Ahmad, a shikara owner at Dal Lake, said, "There is life on the lake again. Tourists are enjoying shikara rides and clicking pictures. It's a good sign for all of us who depend on tourism."

Basharat Ahmad, a cab driver from Kangan Ganderbal, said, "We have been busy since January. My bookings have doubled compared to last year. I am hopeful this trend will continue."

The Director of Tourism said more cultural programmes and festivals will be organised this year to attract more tourists. "Our goal is to make Kashmir a top international tourist destination," he said.

Hajj-2025: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir reviews arrangements

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 16: Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today directed all the concerned Departments and agencies to work in synergy for making the Hajj-2025 a hassle free and seamless experience for the intending pilgrims.

Chairing a high level meeting to review the arrangements made for this year's Hajj pilgrimage, the Divisional Commissioner issued a slew of directions to the officers and instructed them to intensify preparations for the foolproof arrangements for the intending pilgrims and ensure their smooth departure.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners of almost all the districts of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh UTs, Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Director Airports Authority of India besides officers and representatives from various line departments including Police, Emigration & Customs, R&B, PHE, KPDC, MED, Traffic, Transport, Information, Hospitality & Protocol, Health, Hajj Committee, Police, CISF, Airforce, J&K Bank and other concerned Agencies.

While highlighting the significance of Hajj, the Div Com urged the DCs to immediately activate the Hajj Cells in their respective offices to monitor all the preparations with respect to facilitation of pilgrims in their respective districts. He directed the Health department to establish medical camps for timely vaccination of pilgrims in their respective districts so that all the selected pilgrims are protected and certificates of vaccination are issued in their favour well



in time. The meeting was informed that this year Haj flights are scheduled to begin from May 4, 2025, from Srinagar to Saudi Arabia, with the final flight carrying pilgrims set to leave on May 15, 2025.

Underlining the need of sufficient Foreign Exchange at Banks, Haj House Bema and Srinagar Airport, the Divisional Commissioner directed the J&K Bank authorities to ensure availability of adequate forex so that pilgrims don't face any inconvenience in obtaining Saudi currency. The Div Com also directed PHE, KPDC and SMC to ensure uninterrupted civil amenities at Haj House including electricity, sanitation & water supply. He also directed immediate repairs of interior roads for smooth riding surfaces. He also directed officials to make sufficient arrangements for boarding & lodging facilities at Haj House for the pilgrims from Jammu and Ladakh while factoring in road and weather condi-

tions. The Div Com asked the Customs & Immigration Departments to make special arrangements at the Airport for hassle-free clearance of the intending pilgrims by timely installation of adequate X-Ray machines and technical staff at Haj House.

To facilitate seamless movement of Haj Convoy vehicles, the Div Com directed the Traffic Department to chalk out a meticulous plan for smooth movement of pilgrim buses & luggage vehicles from Haj House Bema to Srinagar Airport. He also instructed SSP Traffic Rural to ensure smooth movement of vehicles ferrying Haj pilgrims from Ladakh to Srinagar Haj House.

To ensure close coordination & synergy among departments, Div Com directed creating a dedicated WhatsApp group of the concerned officers for timely dissemination of information and updates regarding flights & other advisories.

28 companies offer over 1000 vacancies to local youth at Baramulla job fair

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APRIL 16: In a significant initiative to enhance employment avenues for the youth of Baramulla, District Administration Baramulla, in collaboration with the Dagger Division of the Indian Army and District Employment and Counselling Centre Baramulla today organized a Mega Job Fair at the Chinar Yuva Centre, Baramulla. The event witnessed overwhelming participation from hundreds of job aspirants hailing from various parts of the district. The event was attended by Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Baramulla, Javed Hassan Baig; Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa; senior Army officers, district-level officers, representatives of participating com-



panies, and a large number of enthusiastic job aspirants. A total of 28 reputed companies from sectors such as hospitality, automobile, education, banking and other service industries participated in the job fair. The companies collectively offered 1,024 vacancies, with many conducting on-the-spot interviews and some issuing provisional appointment letters during the event itself. This direct engagement between employers

and job seekers made the fair a highly productive and impactful platform. Alongside private companies, several line departments of the district administration also set up awareness stalls to disseminate information about key livelihood and self-employment schemes, including MUMKIN, Tejaswini, PMEGP, Mission YUVA and NRLM. These stalls aimed to encourage entrepreneurship and guide youth towards gov-

ernment-backed opportunities for self-sustenance and growth.

Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Baramulla appreciated the efforts of the District Administration and the Indian Army for jointly organising the fair. Speaking on the occasion, he said, "This initiative reflects the growing commitment of our institutions to the future of our youth. Such collaboration between civil administration and defense forces is commendable and essential for building trust and development at the grassroots level. I congratulate the District Administration for creating meaningful opportunities for our young generation."

On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla handed over appointment letters to two selected candidates and interacted with job aspirants.

Awareness programme under Drug Free J&K held at Khonmoh Panchayat

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 16: As part of the ongoing Drug Free Jammu and Kashmir campaign, an awareness drive was today organised in Panchayat Khonmoh B on the directions of Dep-

uty Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat. The programme was aimed at sensitizing the local population, especially the youth, about the ill effects of drug abuse and the importance of a healthy and addiction-free society.

Block Development Officer Khonmoh along with officials from various line departments participated in the event.

Speakers on the occasion emphasized community responsibility in tackling substance abuse and encouraged youth to

engage in constructive and positive activities. Pamphlets were also distributed, and interactive sessions were held to engage the participants and spread the message regarding ill effects of drug menace among the masses effectively.

Around 3,000 J&K pilgrims opt for private Hajj travel each year since 2015: JKAHUC

Seeks PM's intervention as India's private Hajj quota slashed from 52,000 to 10,000 for 2025

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 16 (KNO): Even as around 3,000 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir chose private Hajj Group Operators (HGOs) over the last decade for their annual pilgrimage, private operators are staring at an uncertain future following a drastic reduction in India's private Hajj quota for 2025.

"Since 2018, around 3,000 pilgrims from J&K have opted each year to undertake the holy journey through private tour operators, except during the pandemic years," reveals the data provided by the Jammu & Kashmir Association of Hajj & Umrah Companies (JKAHUC) to the news agency—Kashmir

News Observer (KNO). However, with the Union government slashing the private Hajj quota from 52,000 to just 10,000 this year, JKAHUC has raised alarm and sought immediate intervention from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"In J&K, the trend of performing Hajj through private HGOs has remained steady at around 3,000 pilgrims every year since 2015. The only dip we witnessed was in 2022, right after Covid restrictions were lifted, when only 500 pilgrims booked with us," Sheikh Feroze, President of JKAHUC, told KNO. The association fears that the drastic quota cut may result in the cancellation of thousands of already-booked pilgrims, many of

whom have paid in full. "This decision has left pilgrims and operators alike in deep uncertainty. We urge the Prime Minister to restore the previous quota and prevent a major crisis," Feroze said at a press conference in Srinagar on Tuesday. While the government quota remains intact this year, accommodating around 3,600 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir, private operators say they are bearing the brunt of policy changes.

Orientation and vaccination drives for government-quota pilgrims are already underway. National data shows that in 2019, out of 1.39 lakh Indian pilgrims, over 27,000 chose to

travel through private HGOs. The trend dipped in 2022 to just over 11,000 private Hajj pilgrims due to pandemic aftermath but rebounded to pre-Covid levels in 2023 and 2024.

Adding to the uncertainty is a temporary suspension of Umrah, tourist and visit visas by Saudi authorities ahead of the Hajj season.

With the Hajj season drawing closer, JKAHUC has appealed to the central government to take swift action to restore the private Hajj quota and avoid a situation where thousands of pilgrims from J&K and elsewhere may be forced to cancel their long-cherished spiritual journey—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Reduction in Hajj quota leads to tension among intending pilgrims

As the Hajj pilgrimage for this year is just around the corner, thousands of people intending to carry out the pilgrimage through the private tour operators are worried following the deduction of quota by the Saudi government. The Saudi government had allotted 52,000 seats for the private Hajj and Umrah operators of India. The registered Hajj and Umrah tour operators had devised packages for the intending pilgrims and most of the prospective pilgrims had deposited the advance amount in this regard.

The intending pilgrims received a shock on April 15 (Tuesday) when they came to know that the quota for private operators has been reduced to a great extent. In the first instance it came out that no seat would be allotted to the private Hajj operators of the country. However, there was some relief for the intending pilgrims after it came to the fore that 10,000 seats have been allotted to the private Hajj operators of the country.

The allocation of seats for the private Hajj operators is minimal and as such it remains to be seen whether there is an increase in the same. There are reports that as a mark of protest the private Hajj operators have decided not to take any person for the Hajj pilgrimage this year. Although there is no official confirmation about the same, there are chances that the tour operators will not take any person for Hajj 2025.

The private tour operators of Jammu & Kashmir have already addressed a press conference in this regard and have demanded that the quota should be restored to its original number. These tour operators are quite right in their contention since it takes a lot of time in getting the seats for the Hajj pilgrimage. When the quota is cut drastically it is bound to create ripples among the people more so among those who have to undertake the pilgrimage and also among those who have to take the pilgrims for the Hajj pilgrimage.

It is high time that the Hajj Committee of India takes up the issue with the Saudi government at the earliest so that the confusion comes to an end. All the mainstream politicians of Jammu & Kashmir have already voiced their concern on the issue and have demanded that necessary and corrective action is taken. They said that this would absolve the thousands of intending pilgrims of the tension and they would be able to undertake the holy pilgrimage.



ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL

B R Ambedkar's wisdom has shaped and nurtured India's governance in a multidimensional manner. His contribution as an architect of the Constitution and a prominent voice of justice is widely acknowledged, but his legacy as India's earliest and sharpest economic thinker still remains elusive to many.

Long before India had its own Reserve Bank or a stable currency system, Babasaheb was writing about money, what gives it value, how it should be managed and why a country like India needs to control its own financial future. When he was 22 years old, Ambedkar arrived at Columbia University, New York, as the first Dalit student abroad. In 1915, he received an MA for his thesis, 'Ancient Indian Commerce'. The following year, he submitted a thesis for his PhD degree, 'The National Dividend of India: A Historic and Analytical Study'. Later on, this was enlarged and published as The Evolution of Imperial Provincial Finance in India.

On his return, in November 1918, Ambedkar was appointed professor of Political Economy at Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay. In July 1920, he moved to London to further pursue his studies in Economics. He completed his MSc thesis, titled 'Provincial Decentralisation of Imperial Finance in British India' in June 1921. In 1923, he wrote a groundbreaking thesis titled 'The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution'. These were not mere academic works. They emerged as a bedrock for India's financial and monetary system in the years to come.

These works were a deep dive into how a weak monetary system could weaken a nation. During his time at the LSE, he studied the Indian currency system not just as an academic subject but as a lived reality affecting millions back home. His



thesis was the first serious attempt by an Indian scholar to explain how colonial monetary policies were weakening the Indian economy from within. He clearly explained the manner in which the relationship of the Indian rupee to the British pound was artificially manipulated by the colonial rulers, putting a crushing financial burden on the Indian economy.

Ambedkar questioned the very foundation of India's currency system. He offered solutions that were bold, practical and visionary, proposing that India adopt the gold exchange standard, a more stable and modern approach being followed by many developed countries at the time. This would tie the value of the rupee to a gold-backed currency like the British pound, bringing in

more predictability and fairness in exchange rates. More importantly, he called for the creation of an Indian authority, something like a central bank, that would have full control over currency issuance, monetary policy and inflation management.

His thesis didn't stay confined to library shelves. In 1925, just two years after its publication, he was invited to present his views before the Hilton Young Commission. This commission was tasked with reviewing India's entire monetary framework, and Ambedkar offered it a well-researched economic roadmap. Nine years later, the RBI was established in 1934 through an act passed by the British government. This act had his intellectual fingerprints all over it. His doctoral thesis inspired the setting up

of the Finance Commission of India and his works acted as a beacon in framing guidelines for the RBI Act, 1934.

Ambedkar believed that without sound economic planning, social justice would remain incomplete. For him, money was not just a technical issue, it was tied to human dignity, labour and opportunity. A weak economy, he believed, would always push the poor further into suffering. In all of this, his aim remained clear – to build an economy that protects the vulnerable and promotes fairness. He also supported state-led development and planned industrial growth.

During his time as labour member on the Viceroy's Executive Council, he introduced several pro-worker policies, such as regulated working hours, maternity ben-

efits, and dispute resolution boards. He was instrumental in shaping the water, power and labour welfare policies. He was one of the founders of employment exchanges in our country. He also pushed for the better management of water resources through institutions in the form of the Central Water Commission, the Central Technical Power Board, the Damodar Valley Project, the Hirakud Dam Project and the Sone River Project, among others.

In an era of global financial uncertainties, Babasaheb's arguments about financial discipline and real-value currency are more important than ever. As we move toward a world of digital currencies, AI-driven financial decisions, and decentralised finance, Ambedkar's emphasis on transparency, control, and fairness remains our best guide. His concerns regarding what gives money value, who controls it, and how to protect the common citizen from financial shocks, still hold. His emphasis on how inflation disproportionately harms the poor, and his insistence that currency must be managed responsibly, still echo in today's policy debates. India's inflation-targeting framework, its resistance to reckless monetary expansion, and the emphasis on welfare-centric policies, financial inclusion and direct benefit transfers are all in line with Ambedkar's thinking.

Ambedkar was the mind behind some of India's earliest and most important economic ideas. His economic ideas were not just about numbers but also justice, dignity and self-reliance. The RBI and the Finance Commission and the creation of waterways infrastructure, in many ways, are living embodiments of that vision. Today, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the nation is on cusp of becoming the third-largest economy in the world. As India prepares for its next phase of economic growth to realise the goal of Viksit Bharat, adherence to the economic wisdom of Babasaheb is a fitting tribute to the noble soul.

The writer is Union Minister of State (I/C) for Law and Justice, Minister of State for Culture and Parliamentary Affairs, and Lok Sabha MP from Bikaner.

From Classroom to Corporate: Bridging the Gap Between Higher Education and Industry



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

India today has the largest youth population in the world. This demographic dividend can be a boon—if we prepare it according to the skills, abilities, and modern needs. But unfortunately, our higher education system is facing a deep crisis today. The gap between what is being taught in universities and what the industries need is constantly widening. This gap is not only hampering the employability of students but is also seriously hampering India's economic progress and global competitiveness.

The reality of employment and

the mismatch between education

According to the India Skills Report 2024, only 45.9% of graduates in India were found employable. This means that one in every two students who have received higher education is not equipped with employable skills. The situation of technical institutes is also dismal. According to a NASSCOM report, only 25% of engineering graduates were found fit for work in the IT sector. This situation is not only a failure of the education system but also a tragedy of the shattering of dreams of crores of youth of the country. The root of this problem is an education system with a theoretical and academic approach, which is disconnected from the needs of the practical world. The curriculum of universities is decades old, which does not match the needs of today's data-driven, artificial intelligence-driven, innovation-led industry.

Changing industry, unchanged

curriculum

Jobs today are not the same as before. Fields like artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, blockchain, cybersecurity, and green technology are growing rapidly. But the curriculum is not changing to suit these emerging fields. For example, IIT Hyderabad has started a B.Tech program in artificial intelligence—a visionary step. But most universities still rely on outdated textbooks and lectures. This situation is not just of technical courses. Students in commerce, humanities, sociology, media, law, and other subjects are also not being equipped with future needs. As a result, they are neither job-ready nor able to think in the direction of innovation or entrepreneurship.

The road to a solution: aligning curriculum and profession

The solution to this crisis cannot be just one-way. For this policy, institutions and industry—all three—will have to

come together. The curriculum should be revised every 2-3 years with the help of industry experts. It should be ensured that the content remains relevant over time. Teachers should be given internships or exposure in industries so that they can teach students in accordance with the current scenario. All universities should include industry internships, live projects, and case study-based assessments in their curriculum. Integration of technical and human subjects: Not only technical skills but also elements like soft skills, communication skills, teamwork, empathy, and leadership should be developed. Companies should work with universities to set up research labs, innovation hubs, and startup incubation centers—as exemplified by the Research Park of IIT Madras.

International examples and inspiration

India needs to understand that complete development is

not possible through technical education alone. We should learn from global models. Germany's "Dual Education System" is a great example, where a combination of theory and practice prepares students for the industry. Similarly, in the US, community colleges and startup accelerators connect education with industry. In countries like Singapore, skill review is done every three years, and education is run in collaboration with the industry. India also needs to adopt a similar "Dynamic Curriculum Framework."

Challenges and precautions

However, taking steps in this direction has its own dangers. If we limit education only to the needs of the industry, we will prepare only employees, not citizens of the future. This can be a dangerous trend. Excessive professionalism can blunt the creativity and ethical thinking of students. If subjects like literature, philosophy, and sociology are

ignored as 'non-useful,' then education will deviate from its original purpose.

Frequent changes in curriculum, technological upgrades, and industry collaboration could prove costly for universities, restricting access for rural and underprivileged sections.

The need for a national approach

The Government of India has launched schemes like 'Skill India,' 'Digital India,' 'Make in India,' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat.' The success of these campaigns is possible only when the higher education system produces skilled, inclusive, and entrepreneurial human resources. This will happen only when the strategy of linking university education to the needs of the industry becomes a national priority. The National Education Policy 2020 has given some positive signals in this direction, such as flexibility, a multidisciplinary approach, and skill-based education. But to fully implement these reforms

at the ground level, political will, financial investment, and institutional coordination are needed.

Education is not just a profession, but it is incomplete without profession.

If India dreams of becoming a developed nation by 2047, we must prepare our universities for global competition. This means aligning the education system with the needs of the industry in a way that it prepares students not just for jobs but also for innovation, entrepreneurship, and social leadership. This alignment should not be limited to just technical training. It must also include values such as ethics, empathy, dialogue, and responsibility. Only then will we be able to build an India that is not just economically prosperous but also intellectually capable, socially inclusive, and culturally empowered.

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The climate system of the earth consists of many interacting subsystems: the atmosphere, the oceans, the cryosphere (ice and snow), the biosphere (biota and their environment plus humans and their activities), the bottoms of oceans, and some of the solid material below land and oceans. The interacting components of these subsystems are called the internal climate system, whereas those forces that drive the climate system but are not an internal part of that system, are known as external forcing or boundary conditions.

Environmental conservation:

The conservation of nature is fundamental to human existence and is the concern of all people everywhere. It is not to be accomplished by the setting aside of specially protected natural areas but must be always practiced in all places. All areas must be protected areas to some degree, since even the most heavily urbanized areas provide suitable living spacesfor many wild species.

With the increasing use of fossil fuels and the spread of industrial technology, the use of energy in the industrial world increased steadily, from the original 15,000 kilocalories per person per day to about 2,50,000 kilocalories in the USA in the mid-1970s. By that time most of the energy was derived from petroleum, but during the 1960s and 1970s, a growing percentage was derived from a non-solar source, nuclear power.

It is worth pondering to consider the question of basic energy needs as distinct from mere wants or “greed.” Every person must have food and means of keeping warm or cool through clothing or shelter, as well as the ability to transform unpalatable to palatable

food through cooking. These are basic needs, everywhere and were recommended easily within the 15,000 kilocalories per day limit. They are still the basic needs for those living close to the earth and deriving their livelihood from the land. In industrial societies, however, organized the way they are today, basic needs cannot be so simply defined. The separation of home, workplace, food supplies, and the sources of other essentials is so great in most urban communities that the possibility of traveling from one to the other by foot is ruled out. Even bicycles are not really useful if one lives at a great distance. Adequate transportation, with all of the energy associated with it, becomes as basic as food itself since it is the means for obtaining food.

Global warming:

The earth has not been 1 to 2 degrees C warmer than now during the 10,000-year era of human civilization. The previous ice age. In which mile high ice sheets stretched from New York to Chicago to the Arctic was “only” 5 degrees C colder than the current 10,000-year-old interglacial epoch we now enjoy.

Humans have altered the natural green-house effect by adding 25% more CO2. 100% more CH4 and a host of other greenhouse gases such as N2O and CFC since the Industrial Revolution.

Most forest species “migrate” at rates of at most 1km/y and would not be able “to keep up” with temperature changes at a rate of several degrees centigrade per century without human intervention to transplant them (i.e., ecological engineering)

Climate change:

Climate change is a pressing global issue with far-reaching consequences. Here’s a breakdown of what’s happening:

Causes of climate change:

Greenhouse gas emissions: Human activities like burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and agriculture release carbon dioxide, methane, and other gases, trapping heat in the atmosphere.

Industrial Revolution impact: Since the Industrial Revolution, human activities have significantly increased atmospheric carbon dioxide levels by 50% ¹.

Effects of climate change

Rising global temperatures: The global mean near-surface temperature in 2024 was 1.55°C above the 1850-1900 average.

Extreme weather events: Intense storms, droughts, heatwaves, and wildfires are becoming more frequent.

Sea-level rise: Melting glaciers and ice sheets contribute to sea-level rise, threatening coastal communities.

Water scarcity and food insecurity: Changes in precipitation patterns and increased evaporation due to warmer temperatures affect water availability and crop yields.

Impacts on Ecosystems and Human Health

Biodiversity loss: Climate change forces species to adapt, migrate, or face extinction.

Human health risks: Warmer temperatures increase the spread of diseases, heat stress, and other health issues.

Food and water insecurity: Climate-related disasters and changing weather patterns impact food production and access to clean water ^{1 2}.

What can be done:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions: Transition to renewable energy sources, increase energy efficiency, and adopt sustainable land use practices.

Adaptation and resilience:

Implement measures to protect communities from climate-related disasters and promote sustainable development.

Global cooperation: Encourage international cooperation to address the global nature of climate change.

Overview:

Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings such as modulations of the solar cycles, volcanic eruptions and persistent human-induced changes in the composition of the atmosphere, ocean or in land use.

“Anthropogenic” or “human-induced climate change” results from human activities which are already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. These can include

Burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, land use and land use changes, livestock management, fertilisation, waste management, and industrial processes.

According to IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report, human activities, principally through emissions of greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global warming. The 10-year average global surface temperature for 2011-2020 is estimated to be 1.1 °C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial baseline (IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report).

Human-induced climate change has led to widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere, affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe and causing widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people.

Global greenhouse gas emissions have continued to increase, with unequal historical and ongoing contributions arising from unsustainable energy use, land use and land-use change, lifestyles and patterns of consumption and pro-

duction across regions, between and within countries, and among individuals. Only with deep, rapid and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions can we limit the temperature increases and avoid the worst impacts of climate change. (Source: IPCCSynthesis Report).

Impact: Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred.

Human-caused climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. This has led to widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people (IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report SPM). For example, the changing state of our glaciers has caused a significant rise in sea level.

Risks and projected adverse impacts and related losses and damages from climate change escalate with every increment of global warming. Climatic and non-climatic risks will increasingly interact, creating compound and cascading risks that are more complex and difficult to manage. For example, increased air pollution from burning fossil fuels can worsen the impact of natural disasters like heat waves and droughts on human health.

Constraining global warming to 1.5°C, rather than to 2°C and higher, is projected to have many benefits for terrestrial and wetland ecosystems and for the preservation of their services to humans.

WMO’s response:

WMO and the United Nations Environment Programme jointly set up the Inter-governmental (IPCC) in 1988 to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies. IPCC reports are also a key input into international climate change nego-

tiations. The IPCC is a body made up of governments that are members of the United Nations or WMO.

WMO also works in partnership and collaboration with Members and organizations worldwide to coordinate studies of the climate, its variations and extremes and impact on human activities, as well as coordinating development and use of climate services as an essential component of climate action.

Together, we work to understand the influence of climate change on human health, safety, and welfare, so that countries and communities around the world can make evidence-based decisions to mitigate and adapt to its impacts.

J&K Scenario:

We witnessed the worst flood in September 2014, a hotter summer in J&K last year with a dry spell having lesser precipitation affecting our crops and the generation of hydropower, Even River Jhelum our lifeline had almost dried up in this winter and some earlier winters. Besides, our glaciers are depleting at a faster rate than before which has been a matter of concern as debated in many seminars on the last World Water Day.

Climate Change Station launched:

Here is good news India’s first climate change station has been inaugurated at J&K in Udhampur district last week, April 08, 2025. The Central University of Jammu’s Himalayan High Altitude Atmosphere and Climate Research Station aims to study atmospheric and climate phenomena in the Himalayan region. It is reported that this initiative is bound to enhance our understanding of climate change and its impacts on the environment.

The writer is a former Chief Engineer and Chairman, IEL, J&K SAC

Growing Involvement of Women in farming



VIJAY GARG

The recently crafted rump on the part of the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad is reported that there are 64.4% of women in the country’s agricultural workforce, but just six to ten% of women are in top positions in agriculture and top companies related to it. This rapat has highlighted the deep gap between the role of women in the agriculture sector and their low presence in top positions. According to Rapat, the future of agricultural business is education to women, by increasing education, workplaces inclusion, and the medium of leadership development. In Rapat it has come to empower that 30-40% enrolment of women in agricultural education programmes is the case, but very few of these find employment in the formal agriculture sector. So need to do women in agriculture. The same partnership of addressing the challenges and obstacles they face can be enriched with agriculture sector only by supporting them. Only then will the benefit of this society be able to get all the members. Experts quoted Rapat say raising women’s participa-

tion in agriculture sector will be. But despite the high academic level, their number in strong formal employment is negligible. It should be insisted on increasing. There are many strategies suggested to increase the participation of women in Rapat. These include ensuring women have equal access to resources, implementing specially designed training programs for them, and motivating them for leadership by promoting inclusive workplaces. Experts say the agricultural landscape in the country presents a surprising contradiction. Women are an important part of agricultural workforce and educational groups, yet graduates are not able to enter a larger portion of formal employment structures. We have to find solutions avenues considering this situation seriously. In fact, women’s participation in agriculture is a multi-dimensional process, which is influenced by many social, economic and political factors. Many challenges are yet to be resolved to promote the full and equal participation of women in agriculture. According to the hundreds of national sample survey office data, women in the agricultural labour force in India are in significant proportion. About 43% of the farmers and 52% of the agricultural labourers were women in the year 2010-11 period. But the participation of women in agricultural labour has increased in time. In the year 2002-03, the ratio of female cultivators increased by 37%

to 43% in the year 2010-11. In the same period, the ratio of women agricultural labourers 1143 increased from 48% to 52%.

The main challenges in this field also have discrimination and stereotypes, which limit women’s access to resources, knowledge, and opportunities in this field. It is necessary to implement such policies and programs to solve these and promote equal participation of women in farming, which support promoting them in this field. This includes initiatives that are aimed at improving the reach of women to resources, knowledge and ve| old thinking of people to change. For this, civil society can also play an important role in organizing agricultural sector women collectively, educating them about all their rights, extension services enabling their access to 1 and providing them training making sustainable livelihood”. For this, women will have to provide equal access to land and other resources, including loans, extension services and storage facilities. It’s a great pleasure to have you. Promotion of recognition and value of unpaid and informal labour of women in agriculture | Must give. The policies and programmes that support women’s education and training in agriculture, including vocational training and expansion programmes, will have to be implemented. Women’s participation in the process of making r decisions at all levels includ-

ing farmer organisations, co-operative societies and other local entities will have to be promoted. The provision of technical support and funding will have to support the development of women-led initiatives and enterprises in agriculture. Women’s land ownership will have to be promoted, in order to help them gain benefits under various farm schemes undoubtedly the role of women in agriculture is key. They do many farming related work, like selection of seeds, ploughing fields, harvesting crops, cattle management, milking milk, collecting fodder etc. Their participation rates vary in different regions. But it is necessary to promote equality and improve stability and productivity of the area to increase the role of women. The agriculture sector will be able to prosper by supporting their equal participation. At the same time, women will be able to reach the leadership positions in agriculture and top companies related to it. Agriculture sector as well as it is necessary to do so for the development of the country. For this we all have to work by meeting. Society with the government also when it comes forward for such programs, only then the entire development of the country is possible. This development has to be made us functional.

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

The Bus that never reached spring

PEERZADA MADIHA
peerzadamadiha4@gmail.com

A tribute to Maymoona and Aasiya—two souls who left us on a road lined with dreams and tulips—and to all those shining stars who are fighting for their lives in hospitals.

Gulloo Ki Aas Liye Nikle
The Raah Par

Magar Naseeb Me Na Tha
Firaq Ka Safar

The day that was meant to be filled with laughter, a day away from books and classrooms, a day where memories were to be made under the open sky, turned into a day of mourning. On 12 April 2025, our college picnic, meant for joy and celebration, turned into a scene of sorrow and grief when the bus met with a tragic accident at Vodhpura, Handwara. The news hit us like a storm, leaving behind silence, shock, and immense sorrow.

We grieve not only for their absence but for all the dreams, conversations, and shared moments that will now remain incomplete. Two stars faded from our sky too early. They returned to their Creator before spring could welcome them. While some returned home with bruises, others are still embraced by hospital walls. A few were critically injured and referred to Srinagar.

We lost our two young, bright students forever—they were not just students, but daughters, friends, sisters, and young women with ambitions and dreams. Their laughter and kindness would light up the entire college

campus. The road was meant to lead them to tulips, joy, and memories—but fate had other plans. Maymoona and Aasiya didn’t reach the garden, yet their souls have surely found a place more beautiful than we can ever imagine.

But the grief remains within us. We could never have imagined we would be separated in this way. You are gone from our sight, but never from our hearts. We extend our deepest condolences to the families of the deceased. There are no words that can ease the pain of such a loss, but we hope they find strength in knowing how loved and cherished their children were by an entire community.

We will always feel the absence of those two empty seats, two lost hopes, two names we won’t call during attendance, and two faces we won’t see in the college corridors—smiling, dreaming, and learning. Your absence is not just a silence—it’s a haunting ache that words struggle to capture. We pray for the lost souls. May Allah (SWT) grant them a more beautiful garden in the Hereafter.

To the injured, we extend our heartfelt prayers for a full and swift recovery. We admire your courage and resilience in facing such a traumatic event. The road to healing may be long, but you are not alone—our thoughts, support, and strength are with you every step of the way. Know that your pain is ours. Your strength inspires us, and we stand with you. Please know that our hearts and hopes walk with you side by side.

This tragedy has left us with wounds that time alone cannot heal. Yet, within our collective mourning lies a powerful truth: Maymoona and Aasiya will never be forgotten. In the midst of our daily routines and dreams, we often forget how quickly things can change. Let us not forget the faces we lost. Let us remember their laughter, their kindness and their presence that lit up our classrooms and corridors.

To their families, we offer more than words—we offer you our hearts. We know your loss is beyond measure, but may you find some comfort in knowing how deeply loved, admired, and respected your daughters were. Their stories, their goodness, and their light will never fade. As a college community and family, we grieve together. We share the burden of this loss and vow to never forget the bright spirits that were taken too soon.

And though the bus never reached spring, their souls surely did. Maymoona and Aasiya now live beyond the pain, beyond this world—etched forever in our hearts, in our prayers, and in every tulip that blooms without them. You may no longer walk among us, but your footprints will forever remain—etched in the hearts of those who knew you, and even in the souls of those who didn’t.

In eternal memory of the two stars we lost, May your souls rest in peace. You are gone but never forgotten.

The writer is a student at
Government Degree College
(GDC) Sogam



Distt admin Ganderbal conducts IEC campaign against drug abuse in educational institutions

Impactful sessions aimed to educate young minds about harmful consequences of drug abuse

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 16: 'Nasha Mukht J&K' campaign continues to gather pace in district Ganderbal, with a special focus today laid on educational institutions.

In a determined effort to curb substance abuse and raise awareness among the youth, several educational institutions were actively engaged today, under the campaign's banner, aiming to maximize outreach to the most vulnerable age group to create a drug-free district by fostering awareness, community partici-



pation, and support for rehabilitation.

From interactive awareness sessions to student-led rallies, the day was marked with a variety of impactful activities designed to edu-

cate and empower young minds about the harmful consequences of drug abuse. Teachers, volunteers, and local officials joined hands to ensure that the message of a drug-free

society reached every corner of the district.

In these institutions, students enthusiastically participated in debates, poster-making competitions, and awareness talks, voicing their commitment towards building a healthier and drug-free future.

The resource persons from various departments emphasized the importance of the campaign against drug abuse. Parents and guardians were also urged to engage in open conversations with their children about the dangers of substance abuse and to remain vigilant for early warning signs.

Work on Khudwani approach road complete; DC Kulgam reviews progress at site

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, APRIL 16: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today visited Khudwani area to review progress on the ongoing construction work on the approach road connecting to the National Highway-44 near Khudwani. Executive Engineer concerned informed the Deputy Commissioner that the road is ready for movement of traffic, and macadamization work will be started on the road in the next month. It was informed that the approach road was taken under District Capex with an allotted cost of 47 lac. Speaking on the occasion, DC said that in absence of a proper approach road, commuters were using a wrong and unsafe route to access NH-44, making the location highly vulnerable and accident-prone. He added that



the newly constructed approach road near Khudwani spot is now expected to streamline vehicular movement and significantly reduce the risk of accidents in the area. Local residents

expressed their gratitude for the timely intervention and appreciated the efforts of the district administration for ensuring safer connectivity at the Khudwani NH-44 spot.

Ist Coordination meeting held at District Court Complex Pulwama

HT News Network

PULWAMA, APRIL 16: High Court of J&K & Ladakh Coordination Committee held its first meeting of the year 2025 at District Court Complex Pulwama. The meeting was presided over by Principal District and Sessions Judge Pulwama, Malik Shabeer Ahmad. Among the attendees were Shabab Ahmad, ACR/Pulwama; Shafat Ahmad, Additional Superintendent of Police Pulwama; Shabir Ahmad Superintendent District Jail Pulwama; Rajesh Kumar, Deputy Superintendent/SDPO Tral/Awanti-

pora; Ex. Engineers of R&B Pulwama and PDD Pulwama; District Tuberculosis Officer Pulwama, District Planning Officer Pulwama & Budgam; CEO/MC Pulwama, EO Tral and M.C. Awantipora; AFO Pulwama, President Bar Association Pulwama and Secretary Bar Association Pulwama.

Addressing the participants, Principal District and Sessions Judge highlighted various bottle necks/deficiencies in the existing infrastructure so that they are addressed as soon as possible, to ensure that justice delivery system is made more robust and efficient in District Pulwama.

Earlier, Chief Judicial Magistrate Pulwama, Muzamil Ahmad Wani introduced the points of agenda to the meeting and the purpose and object of meeting in light of the order of High Court of J&K & Ladakh. Earlier, Chief Judicial Magistrate Pulwama, Muzamil Ahmad Wani introduced the points of agenda to the meeting and the purpose and object of meeting in light of the order of High Court of J&K & Ladakh. Earlier, Chief Judicial Magistrate Pulwama, Muzamil Ahmad Wani introduced the points of agenda to the meeting and the purpose.

Joint Raids Expose 6-Year-Old Timber Hoarding in Dorishpora

DR. AB QAYOOM

Langate, April, 15: In a significant crackdown on illegal timber operations, the Forest Department, in collaboration with Handwara Police and the Revenue Department, conducted joint raids in Dorishpora village of Rajwar Forest Range, under Langate Forest Division. The operation led to the seizure of a large quantity of illicitly felled timber and firewood, reportedly stockpiled for over six years. Acting on specific field intelligence, the joint team raided six houses suspected of hoarding smuggled timber. During the search, authorities recovered 18 Deodar (dry) timber logs—measuring



approximately 40 cubic feet in total. The seized logs were safely transported to the Central Seizure Depot Langate under Form 25 No. 87237 dated April 15, 2025, despite facing strong resistance, particularly from women in the locality attempting to obstruct the seizure. A case under the Forest Protection Act has been registered at Police Station Handwara, and six individuals have been nominated for further

investigation under FIR No. 75/2025. While talking to HEADLINES TODAY Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Langate praised the efforts of the field teams. "This operation highlights our resolve to tackle illegal timber smuggling. Our officers and frontline staff worked tirelessly with police and revenue officials

to make this operation a success," he stated. He further emphasized the importance of community participation in safeguarding forest resources. "We have strengthened our field intelligence network and are collaborating with other enforcement agencies to curb such activities. I appeal to the public to come forward with credible information on forest offences to help us protect our natural heritage," the DFO added. The Forest Department reiterated its commitment to upholding forest laws and ensuring strict action against violators.

HDFC Bank Parivartan covers 298 border villages under rural development initiatives

HT News Network

Jammu, April 16, 2025: HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, under its CSR arm Parivartan, has covered 298 border villages across the country under its rural development initiatives. These clusters of villages are located in border areas of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Ladakh, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. The Bank plans to extend its reach to 150 additional border villages in the years to come. These initiatives are aligned with national development goals outlined in the Centre's Border Area Development Programme and Vibrant Villages Programme. Border area villages along the northern and northeastern Himalayan regions and the western desert stretches often grapple with unique challenges including difficult terrain, restricted access to essential services and economic vulnerabilities due to their remote locations. Parivartan has impacted the lives of approximately five lakh individuals in these areas through targeted need-based inter-

ventions. The Bank implements two key types of projects in these areas:



1) Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP): This approach focuses on clusters of 15-20 contiguous villages over a span of 36-48 months. It integrates multiple aspects, including rural development, education, skill development, financial inclusion, health & hygiene, and natural resource management. And, 2) Focused Development Programme (FDP): This initiative targets specific areas of intervention, achieving concentrated impact in one sector. HDFC Bank's Parivartan initiative is committed to strengthening rural communities across border areas such as Lower Dibang Valley and Shi Yomi in Arunachal Pradesh; Baksa and Udalguri in Assam; Kishanganj, West Champaran and Madhubani in

Bihar; Banaskantha, Kutch, and Patan in Gujarat; Ladakh; Chandel in Manipur; East Jaintia Hills in Meghalaya; Fazilka and Pathankot in Punjab; Barmer in Rajasthan; Gyalshing West and Pakyong in Sikkim; Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh; and Chamoli in Uttarakhand. Speaking about the initiative, Mr. Kaizad Bharucha, DMD, HDFC Bank said, "We are committed to creating meaningful impact in India's border villages by providing access to technology-enabled education, improved agricultural productivity, renewable energy, and livelihood opportunities. By aligning with national development goals, we collaborate with local communities, NGOs, and government bodies to build stronger, self-reliant, and vibrant communities that contribute to India's economic and social fabric." "A holistic approach to rural development is not merely desirable, but an absolute necessity, especially in border areas," said Nusrat Pathan, Head - Corporate Social Responsibility at HDFC Bank. "We ensure that progress in one sector reinforces and amplifies positive outcomes in others, thereby maximising the impact of our interventions."

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir E-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com

Subject: - Change of title of Homestay / Paying Guest House "Homestay" situated at Rainawari, Srinagar.

Public Notice

Whereas, Mr. Ishtiyaq Qayoom Lone S/o Mr. Abdul Qayoom Lone R/o Hazarai Bazar, Rainawari has approached this office for change of title of Paying Guest House from "Fareeda Paying Guest House to Golden Mud Paying Guest House" situated at Rainawari under the provisions of J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act/Rules 1978/82/2011;

Whereas, said Paying Guest House/Homestay is registered with this Department vide registration No. JKPG00001335 valid up to 31/12/2025 with room 04 in the name of Mr. Ishtiyaq Qayoom Lone S/o Mr. Abdul Qayoom Lone R/o Hazarai Bazar, Rainawari, Srinagar.

Whereas, the applicant has submitted following documents for change of title of the above mentioned Paying Guest House;

1. Application.
2. Photocopy of Registration Certificate.
3. Newspaper.
4. Affidavit.

Whereas, change of title in the registration certificate for the Paying Guest House/Home stay is purely for the purpose of running operation management of the said Paying Guest House and does not confer any right of ownership of the Paying Guest House.

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under J&K Registration Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011 before the request of applicant for change of title of the Paying Guest House is considered, the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/Financial Institutions/Banks/Organizations, etc. that in case of any objection, the same should reach to this office within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice. Objections received beyond period of 7 days will not be entertained and necessary change will be effected in the registration records of this office in respect of the above mentioned Paying Guest House under rules after submission of all the requisite documents.

DIPK-437/25
Date: Apr 16 2025

SD / -
Deputy Director Tourism
Registration Kashmir

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 FATIMA HAFEEZ S/O HAFEEZ ULLAH WANI R/O THINDIMA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 07/10/2014 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order. In this connection, if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer WAGOORA) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHSIN HILAL S/O HILAL AHMAD NAJAR R/O THINDIMA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 04/02/2017 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order. In this connection, if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

PUBLIC NOTICE

If is being informed that 1 Mr Mubashir Nabi Dugga son of Gh Nabi Dugga residing at Kothir ANANTNAG JAMMU AND KASHMIR 192201 have lost my passport bearing number W9097093 issued on 14/02/2023 at Srinagar It is hereby informed that I am applying for a new passport. If found, kindly contact me at 7006653313 or passport office mentioned above.

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 YAWAR NAZIR S/O NAZIR AHMAD MIR R/O KOKOTHAL Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 15/10/2007 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order. In this connection, if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer WAGOORA) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHSIN HILAL S/O HILAL AHMAD NAJAR R/O HAIL Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 04/02/2017 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order. In this connection, if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that I have applied for my DOB certificate, namely Mohd. Rafi Kaboo S/o Ab Rashid Kaboo 2, Kulsuma Begum W/o Mohd Rafi Kaboo. 3, Zainab Binti Rafi D/o Mohammad Rafi Kaboo. 4, Fatima Binti Rafi D/o Mohammad Rafi Kaboo R/O BUNGAM LANGATE. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection at BDO Office LANGATE within a period of 07 days after that no objection will be accepted.

NAMELY/ MOHD RAFI KABOO S/O AB RASHID KABOO DOB 01/03/1989, KULSUMA BUNGAM W/O MOHD RAFI KABOO DOB 24/05/1994, ZAINAB BINTI RAFI D/O MOHAMMAD RAFI KABOO DOB 28/04/2022, FATIMA BINTI RAFI D/O MOHAMMAD RAFI KABOO DOB 15/07/2024, PARENTAGE: MOHD RAFI KABOO. R/O: BUNGAM LANGATE TEHSIL LANGATE DIST KUPWARA.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that I, MOHAMMAD RAMZAN MAGRAY, intend to apply for a Pesticides Licence for "Magray Agro Center" situated at Kohlina, Kreeri, Baramulla. The application will be submitted to the Office of the Plant Protection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar. Any person having any objection in this regard he/she may file their objections in writing to the Office of the Plant Protection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar, within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. Objections received after this period will not be entertained.

MOHAMMAD RAMAZN MAGRAY
Son of MOHAMMAD SULTAN MAGRAY
Residen Of Kohlina, Kreeri, Baramulla.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public through the medium of notice that I mohammad abass ganie s/o mohd akbar ganie R/o kripal pora payeen matipora that my daughter namely yasmeena. abass is born on 20-11-2022 now I want to obtain dob certificate if any body have any objection regarding issuance of dob certificate he/she the context of bdo singpora with in period of seven days



DC Kupwara chairs Mega Block Diwas at Thayan Kalaroose

■ **HT News Network**

KUPWARA, APRIL 16: The Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan today chaired the weekly Block Diwas programme at Thayan Kalaroose of district Kupwara to listen the grievances and developmental issues of the people. The programme was attended by DDC Member Kalaroose, Mustafa Rahie, District Officers, Block level officers, besides, Government employees and large number of people were also present during the block diwas. On arrival, the Deputy Commissioner inspected various stalls installed by different departments including Agri-allied sector, showcasing progress and achievements of their schemes.

Addressing the block diwas proceedings, the Deputy Commissioner appealed the people to come forward to register themselves under various public welfare schemes which will address their different issues. She urged upon the prominent and senior citizens who were present there to take lead in availing the Government schemes so that others get encouraged for the same.

Referring to Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna, the Deputy Commissioner said that the scheme aims to resolve the power woes of the consumers to make them self-reliant and appealed the people to enroll themselves under the scheme to reap the benefits of free electricity. She said the scheme is heavily subsidized by the Government for the benefit of the consumers which



reduces the power bill of the consumer to zero. Replying to the issues

of water supply, the Deputy Commissioner said that different habita-

tions of Kalaroose block have been covered under Water Supply Scheme Kalaroose which have benefitted large number of households living in these areas. She said that all left out areas will also be covered under the JJM as the Government has extended the Jal Jeevan Mission upto the year 2028. Earlier, DDC Member Kalaroose, senior citizens and youth spoke and put forth their demands and issues of the area pertaining to power, water supply, link roads etc. After giving patient hearing to the issues raised by the people, the Deputy Commissioner redressed several issues on the spot and assured them that all their genuine concerns would be addressed in a phased manner with active coordination from relevant departments. Referring to Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft

Bijli Yojna, the Deputy Commissioner said that the scheme aims to resolve the power woes of the consumers to make them self-reliant and appealed the people to enroll themselves under the scheme to reap the benefits of free electricity. She said the scheme is heavily subsidized by the Government for the benefit of the consumers which reduces the power bill of the consumer to zero. Replying to the issues of water supply, the Deputy Commissioner said that different habitations of Kalaroose block have been covered under Water Supply Scheme Kalaroose which have benefitted large number of households living in these areas. She said that all left out areas will also be covered under the JJM as the Government has extended the Jal Jeevan Mission upto the year 2028.

Director Extension SKUAST-Kashmir visits KVK Kulgam

Inaugurates Hi-Tech Dairy Unit & newly established High-Density Orchard trellis system

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, APRIL 16: Director Extension SKUAST-Kashmir, Prof. Riahana Habib Kanth today visited KVK Kulgam, where she inaugurated Hi-Tech Dairy Unit & newly established High-Density Orchard trellis system, established under the university's outreach and development programmes. On the occasion, Prof. Kanth also distributed certificates among the successful trainees of vocational courses in cutting & tailoring and nutrition. Addressing the trainees, Prof. Kanth emphasized the importance of skill development and its role



in self-employment and said that these certificates are not just documents to collect, but a key to creating sustainable employment opportunities. She also urged more youth and women to

come forward and benefit from the various schemes and training programmes offered by SKUAST-K. Prof. Kanth also delivered a detailed presentation on "Poshan Pakhwada" and emphasised

the importance of balanced nutrition in improving the health of mothers and childrens. The Director Extension was accompanied by Dr Liyaqat Ali Chowdhary, Incharge, KVKs-Kashmir. Besides, Dr Manzoor Ahmad Ganai, Prof & Head KVK Kulgam, along with scientists and other staff members and trainees, were present at the event. The visit was marked by interactive sessions, showcasing of progressive farming practices, and a strong emphasis on promoting entrepreneurship in the agricultural and allied sectors. About 15 Chemist shops in areas of Nehama, DH Pora and Watoo, Asnoor were inspected.

Operation of 03 Chemist shops disallowed at Kulgam for violating conditions of license

■ **HT News Network**

KULGAM, APRIL 16: In a bid to regulate the sale of Schedule H1 Drugs and to streamline the records by way of digitization, a special drive was conducted by the team of Drug Control Officers along with Police Officials in various areas of Kulgam.

About 15 Chemist shops in areas of Nehama, DH Pora and Watoo, Asnoor were inspected. During the drive several Drug samples of different brands were lifted for ascertaining the quality standards.

Operation of three chemist shops was disallowed for violating the conditions of licenses.

Earlier in the day, a representative from the Drug Control Department delivered an elaborate lecture in an awareness programme on the topic Drug/substance abuse, its genesis, role of the Drug deptt. and collaborative approach by the student and teacher community to circumvent this growing menace. The mega awareness camp was held at Degree College Kilam Kulgam and was organised by Dist. Administration Kulgam in collaboration with other line departments. Operation of three chemist shops was disallowed for violating the conditions of licenses.

Earlier in the day, a representative from the Drug Control Department delivered an elaborate lecture in an awareness programme on the topic Drug/substance abuse, its genesis, role of the Drug deptt. and collaborative approach by the student and teacher community to circumvent this growing menace.

Subscribers complain of poor BSNL network and internet services in Devsar Tehsil of Kulgam Distt.

■ **HT News Network**

Kulgam April 16: Thousands of BSNL subscribers from Devsar Tehsil on Wednesday complained of poor 3G, 4G poor signal and Internet services.

They complained that fluctuations in signal and poor 3G/4G internet services are not working properly for the last 15 days and the concerned service provider has failed to sort out the issue. In Devsar its adjoining areas, where BSNL have installed new sites recently including Spoot Tangpora, Adigam, Maskud Dardgund, Akhal Khulshan, Chowgam, and Lammer subscribers told that they are facing immense problems due to poor signal and slow internet speed. A subscriber Azhar Iqbal said they are unable to access the internet for the last 15 days causing them inconvenience. It is worth to mention that govt has invested a lot money to get the unconnected villages connected with proper BSNL network but the lack of proper maintainance and monitoring of these sites puts the poor customers into big trouble. They have appeal the govt to redress the issue on priority.

Vaccination to begin from April-21 for Hajj Pilgrims of Baramulla

■ **HT News Network**

BARAMULLA, APRIL 16: In view of the Hajj Vaccination programme in District Baramulla, all the selected Hajj Pilgrims of District Baramulla are asked to get vaccinated at Vaccination Section, Associated Hospital GMC Baramulla as per the date and time schedule for given serial numbers.

For Serial No 1-96, the vaccination shall be held on 21 April, 2025 from 10AM to 1PM. Also, pilgrims falling within Serial No 97-183 shall get vaccinated on 21 April, 2025 from 1PM to 4PM. Similarly, pilgrims from Serial No 184-281 shall get vaccinated on 22 April, 2025 from 10AM to 1PM. Further, the pilgrims falling in between Serial No 282-369 shall are scheduled to come for vaccination on 22 April, 2025 from 1PM to 4PM.

DC Kupwara visits Deedikoot, lauds innovative farmer

■ **HT News Network**

KUPWARA, APRIL 16: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan Wednesday visited Deedikoot village to inspect a Hi-Tech Poly Green House established under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) by progressive farmer Ayaz Ahmad Khan.

Ayaz Ahmad Khan has implemented an integrated farming system on his farm, generating employment for five local youth and providing a seedling nursery to the community. His innovative efforts yield an income of Rs. 5-6 lakh per season.

DDC member Manzoor Ganai chairs Gram Sabha at Lam Village in Aripal Tral

■ **HT News Network**

Tral, April 16: A gram sabha was convened today at Lam village in the Aripal block of Tral, chaired by DDC member Manzoor Ganai and attended by BDO Aripal Basit Nabi. The meeting witnessed active participation from the locals, focusing on developmental planning for the year 2025.

During the session, residents highlighted a range of issues and suggested priority areas for upcoming development projects. DDC Manzoor Ganai attentively heard the grievances and said that efforts are being made to ensure timely execution of developmental works. Speaking on the sidelines of the event, Ganai reaffirmed his commitment to public service and stated that he will continue to remain active in politics. "I will keep participating in the democratic process and will contest in future elections," he said.

Doctor Threatened, Insulted at Pulwama District Hospital While Ensuring Patient Care

■ **HT News Network**

Pulwama, April 16: A troubling incident occurred at the Pediatric Ward of District Hospital Pulwama, where a doctor was allegedly insulted and threatened while on duty. According to hospital sources, the doctor was trying to manage an increasing crowd inside the ward to maintain hygiene and ensure optimal care for patients when the confrontation took place.

Rather than cooperating, one individual reportedly turned aggressive, verbally assaulted the doctor, and threatened to record and circulate the video online in an apparent attempt to defame the medical professional. The hospital administration has strongly condemned the incident, terming it an unacceptable act aimed at obstructing essential medical services. "Such actions not only demoralize our dedicated staff but also endanger patient safety," said a senior hospital official. The administration has indicated that legal action may be taken against the individual involved. Officials reiterated that any attempt to disrupt hospital operations or intimidate healthcare workers will be met with strict legal consequences.

In response, healthcare workers across the district have voiced their support for the doctor, calling for respect and protection for medical personnel. They urged the public to recognize the critical role of healthcare workers and uphold the sanctity of hospital environments.

MLA Irfan Hafiz Lone Raises Alarm Over Environmental Degradation in Gulmarg

■ **HT News Network**

Gulmarg, April 16: MLA Wagoora Kreeri, Irfan Hafiz Lone, has voiced serious concerns over the deteriorating environmental conditions in Gulmarg, a world-renowned tourist destination in Jammu and Kashmir. During a recent visit, Lone was shocked to find a once-pristine water channel turned into a garbage dumping site.

"Visits to such places are meant to be healing experiences," Lone remarked, "but we have unfortunately turned them into health hazards." He criticized the concerned authorities for their negligence, highlighting the growing mounds of plastic waste, litter-strewn trails, and polluted water sources that now mar the natural beauty of Gulmarg. Lone emphasized that the environmental degradation not only ruins the experience for visitors but also poses severe risks to the fragile ecosystem. He urged the Chief Minister to intervene and take



immediate and effective measures to restore the ecological balance of Gulmarg and safeguard its future as a premier tourist destination. The MLA's call for action comes amid increasing concern from environmentalists and locals alike, who have long warned about the consequences of unchecked pollution and poor waste management in the region.

IUST convenes 10th Academic Council, approve significant initiatives.

“University is on the trajectory to emerge as the first Skill and Entrepreneurship University of J&K”, said the Council

■ **HT News Network**

Awantipora, April 16: Prof Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Vice Chancellor chaired the 10th meeting of the Academic Council which was attended by distinguished academicians from across the country including Prof Talat Ahmad, former Vice Chancellor Jamia Milia Islamia and Kashmir University, Prof Mehraj ud Din Mir, former Vice Chancellor Central University of Kashmir, Prof Ashok Aima, former VC Central University of Jammu, Prof Mohammad Mubin, Vice Chancellor Cluster University, Prof Madav Govind Jawaharlal Nehru University, Prof. Shobha Bagai Delhi University, Prof Binod Kumar Kanaujia, Director National Institute of Technology, Prof Manzoor Ahmad Malik, Dean School of Physical and mathematical sciences, Kashmir University, Registrar, Finance officer, Deans and other officers of the University. In his address, Prof Romshoo expressed his gratitude to the government for their



constant support. He presented the university report highlighting performance across indicators concerning enrolment, H Index, citations, infrastructure expansion among others. The members commended the efforts and appreciated the initiatives taken and said that IUST is

poised to emerge as Skill and Entrepreneurship University. Pertinently, IUST's enrolment in the last Academic year increased by 40%, while the H-Index rose to 64 from 49 and the citations doubled in one year alone. Prof Romshoo referred to the collaborations with reputed insti-

tutions across the country such as IIT Bombay, Ministry of Heavy Industries, GoI, SIDBI, Ultratech among others which have helped in the materialization of many of the initiatives taken. The agenda was presented by Prof AH Moon, Dean Academic Affairs who gave a detailed action taken on the decisions of the last AC.

The Council approved the establishment of the Centre for Good Governance and Policy Analysis which shall provide the platform aiming at transforming the governance experience through a localized but smart approach bridging technology, public policy and participatory planning. The Council also approved establishment of the Centre for Cyber Security, introduction of One Year MBA through Lateral Entry, M Tech in Electrical engineering and M. Tech in Computer Science Engineering, B. Voc in Tourism and Hospitality, Four Year Undergraduate Programme in Political Science among other initiatives.



Govt announces free entry to SPS Museum, Srinagar, Dogra Art Museum, Jammu on World Heritage Day

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 16: The Department of Archives, Archaeology & Museums, in collaboration with the district administration, Tourism and Education departments, is going to celebrate World Heritage Day on 18th of April, 2025 in both the divisions of Jammu and Kashmir.

In Kashmir division, an early morning cleanliness drive will be held at Hari Parbat Fort, Srinagar followed by Pledge and Heritage Walk. Similarly, in Jammu Division, an early morning cleanliness drive will be held at Samba Fort in Samba District, followed by Pledge for Preserving Cultural Heritage and Heritage Walk.

On the eve of World Heritage Day, the Department has announced Free entry for all to SPS Museum, Srinagar and Dogra Art Museum, Jammu with an aim to facilitate all sections of society to have glimpse of the Rich Cultural Heritage and symbols of Historical Importance.

Further, the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums is organizing day long Archival exhibition at Archival Repository in Jammu and at Art Gallery Museum, Old Assembly Complex, Srinagar, in order to have glimpse of historical monuments of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Department has urged all to participate in the World Heritage Day Celebration, visit the Exhibitions being organized and avail the incentive of free entry to Museums.

Free Multispecialty Health Checkup Camp Organized in Narbera Battal, Akhnoor

■ HT News Network



Akhnoor: Under the esteemed guidance of Cabinet Minister Sh. Satish Sharma ji, SIBA Event Management and Innovations Cooperative Ltd. successfully organized a Free Multispecialty Health Checkup Camp at Panchayat Ghar, Narbera Battal, Akhnoor. The initiative saw an overwhelming response from the local community, with a large number of residents benefiting from free medical consultations and checkups provided during the camp. The event aimed at improving access to healthcare services in rural areas and raising awareness about preventive health. The health camp was held in collaboration with Family Health Care Clinic Dr Digvijay Singh and Ujala Cygnus JK Medicity Hospital Jammu. Dr. Karanmol Singh, Dr. Devit sharma Druvi Sharma, Jagdeep Singh and Mehran Masood Dar, whose expert medical teams conducted checkups across various specialties, ensuring comprehensive care for attendees. The event was proudly supported by the Jammu and Kashmir Dairy Cooperative Federation, with special acknowledgment to Sh. Vikrant Dogra for his continuous support and contribution toward public welfare initiatives.

SIBA Event Management and Innovations Cooperative Ltd. Co-founders Sidharth Verma Baljeet Singh along with team member Ankush Manni extends heartfelt thanks to all medical partners, volunteers, and community members who contributed to making the camp a grand success.

UTRC reviews cases of under-trial prisoners at Udhampur

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 16: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Udhampur convened the meeting of Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC) on April 15, 2025 as per the quarterly schedule of UTRC Meetings-2025 and in adherence to the directives issued by the National Legal Services Authority (NLSA) and J&K Legal Services Authority (J&K LSA).

The meeting was held in Conference Hall, DLSA to review cases of under-trial prisoners to expedite the release of eligible candidates who have undergone a lengthy waiting period without trial.

The meeting was chaired by Chairperson DLSA, Principal District & Sessions Judge Virinder Singh Bhou and was attended by Secretary DLSA Dr. Smriti Sharma; Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai; Senior Superintendent of Police Amod Ashok Nagpure; I/C Superintendent District Jail Som Raj; Addl. Public Prosecutor, Addl. Sessions Court Hemanshu Prakash; I/C Public Prosecutor, Principal Distt. & Sessions Judge Court Viney Sharma and Chief LADC Pawan Gupta. During the meeting, the Committee reviewed cases based on guidelines from the Supreme Court and NLSA SOPs, focusing on prisoners with no proper representation or those who have spent substantial time behind bars without trial.

The committee recommended the release of eligible prisoners, ensuring that the benefits of legal provisions reach the intended beneficiaries.

DDC distributes Daksh Kisan Training E-Certificates among trained farmers at Poonch

■ HT News Network

POONCH APRIL 16: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Vikas Kundal, today distributed e-certificates among farmers, who successfully completed the Daksh Kisan training program under the Holistic Agricultural Development Program (HADP). A total of 645 farmers were awarded certificates to individuals associated with agriculture and allied activities. Notably, over 29,000 farmers have enrolled and registered under the HADP in Poonch District, reflecting the strong commitment of the local agricultural community towards improving their farming practices and productivity.

During the distribution ceremony, DC Kundal engaged directly with the farmers, gathering valuable insights on the utilization of HADP projects. He emphasized the transformative potential of these initiatives in enhancing agriculture and other farm based productivity.



The DDC congratulated the farmers on completing the training in their associated fields and expressed confidence that the knowledge gained would translate into improved practices on the ground. He urged all departments to ensure con-

tinuous support and technical assistance to the trained farmers and maximizing the outreach of the HADP schemes in the district. The HADP focuses on various aspects of agricultural development, including farm mechanization, training

programs, and access to quality seeds and fertilizers. By promoting these initiatives, the government aims to create a robust agricultural sector capable of withstanding challenges posed by climate change and market fluctuations. Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik and other district officers were also present at the event. During the distribution ceremony, DC Kundal engaged directly with the farmers, gathering valuable insights on the utilization of HADP projects. He emphasized the transformative potential of these initiatives in enhancing agriculture and other farm based productivity. The DDC congratulated the farmers on completing the training in their associated fields and expressed confidence that the knowledge gained would translate into improved practices on the ground. He urged all departments to ensure continuous support and technical assistance to the trained farmers and maximizing the outreach of the HADP schemes.

Jammu & Kashmir Pythian Games Hosts Online Meeting to Discuss Upcoming Events & activate its strength

■ HT News Network

Jammu, APRIL 16: Jammu & Kashmir, The Jammu & Kashmir Chapter of the Pythian Games held a successful online meeting recently, bringing together 3.4 designations from across the region. The virtual gathering aimed to strengthen collaboration and discuss the roadmap for upcoming cultural and sporting events in Jammu & Kashmir.

During the meeting, key discussions were held regarding the planning and execution of upcoming Pythian events that aim to promote art, culture, and sports among the youth and local communities. The participating members shared valuable insights and suggestions to enhance



engagement and ensure the success of these initiatives. The meeting highlighted the commitment of the Pythian Games organization to foster unity, talent, and cultural pride across Jammu & Kashmir. With enthusiastic participation from all designations, the session marked a significant step forward in preparing for an exciting calendar of events in the region.

This was the beginning of pythian council of India j&k chapter, we are humbled & thankful to Shri Bijendra Goel Founder International pythian council who inspite of his busy schedule joined us & introduced the pythian concept to members on board. We are thankful to jb Basharat Bukhari former minister of law & parliamentary affairs j&k for hav-

ing become the member. We are thankful to Shri SS Gill sb former police officer & sports enthusiast from Jammu & all other friends from Kashmir especially Shaukat Shafi officer of J&k sports council. With your support we look forward in engerising the concept of pythian cultural games in Jammu & Kashmir. We look forward to have our national president Shri Shantanu ji, as next time on board to have his specialised guidance. Also to our National Advisor for the UT Dr Rafeeq Masoodi, jbs, who is face of PCI in j&k along with Mr Arshad, Suhail, Mohsin, Tanzeela, Shah Nawaz & Younis. It was also decided to have off line meeting soon. Further details of the upcoming events will be announced soon.

Dr Jitendra Hails India's First Indigenously Developed Hydrogen Fuel Sea Vessel

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, Apr 16 : As a major breakthrough in shipping transport and inland waterway transport, Union Minister of Science & Technology and Vice President CSIR (Council of Scientific & Industrial Research) Dr Jitendra Singh has hailed India's first indigenously developed Hydrogen fuel sea vessel. Describing it as a success story emanating from the joint effort of public and private sectors, the Minister disclosed that the country's first indigenous green hydrogen fuel cell inland waterway vessel,



which may later pave the way for hydrogen fuel driven larger sea vessels or ships, was developed by Cochin Shipyard Ltd featuring a hydrogen fuel cell based drivetrain built by KPIT, drawing upon the foundational work enabled by the CSIR. Dr. Jitendra Singh was convening a high-level meeting today to

review the ongoing initiatives and achievements of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The meeting was attended by all Heads of CSIR Directorates, the Joint Secretary and Financial Adviser, CSIR. Director General, CSIR, Dr. N. Kalaiselvi presented a detailed overview of CSIR's current research activities, recent technological advancements, and collaborative engagements with industry. During the discussions, the Minister emphasized the importance of aligning CSIR's scientific pursuits with the vision of Prime Minister.

Disturbed By Murshidabad Violence: PDP Chief On Violence In West Bengal

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, Apr 16: PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday said she was "deeply disturbed" by the violence in Murshidabad over the Waqf Amendment Act, and called upon Muslims to remain united and channelise their energies constructively.

"Deeply disturbed by the tragic violence in Murshidabad over the waqf Amendment Bill where innocent lives were lost. It is particularly concerning that despite Mamta di's assurance that this bill would not be imple-



mented in West Bengal protests erupted," she said in a post on X.

West Bengal has witnessed incidents of violence following protests against the Waqf Act, leading to the migration of riots-hit people, especially in Murshidabad district.

The former Jammu and

Kashmir chief minister said as a community "we must channelise our energies constructively- upholding our constitutional rights through peaceful and lawful means".

"We must avoid actions that could weaken our allies who stand with us often at a great personal and political cost.

"We must remain united and vigilant and not allow communal forces to exploit these moments to push their divisive agenda of further disempowering and marginalising our community," she added. (PTI)

Awareness campaign themed 'Addiction and ambition can't coexist' organised at GHSS Paloura

ADC Ansuya Jamwal advises students to focus on their goals

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 16: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, a drug awareness programme was organised today at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Paloura. The event was held to spread awareness among students regarding the harmful effects of substance abuse and to encourage a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu Ansuya Jamwal was the chief guest on the occasion.

In her address, the ADC spoke about the urgent need to prevent substance abuse among youth. Emphasising the theme "Addiction and ambition can't coexist", she encouraged students to stay focused on their goals and remain vigilant against the lure of drugs. She highlighted how substance abuse not only affects health but also hampers educational and professional aspirations. "Shun the lure of drugs and be motivated for ambitious goals in life," she



urged. The ADC also cautioned students against being misled into possessing or transporting narcotics, stressing that both possession and logistical involvement are punishable offences under the law. She further appealed to parents and teachers to maintain open communication with children and support them in making informed, responsible choices. The programme featured interactive sessions by experts from various departments. Sub-

Inspector Uttam Singh from the Home Department briefed the students on the legal consequences of drug offences under the NDPS Act and the importance of awareness at the community level. Dr. Varun Kanathia, Excise Sub-Inspector, discussed the role of the Excise Department in the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan. He provided information about relevant legal provisions and shared helpline numbers that can be used by children, women, and youth seeking help. Dr. Rita Lidwal from the Health Department spoke on the adverse effects of drug abuse on human health, covering both physical and psychological impacts. She emphasised early intervention and the role of healthcare in recovery. Representatives from the Social Welfare Department, including Manjeet Singh, Ranjana Sharma and Meenakshi Bhau, highlighted the importance of community engagement, counselling, and rehabilitation services. They called for coordinated efforts by families, schools, and local bodies in building a drug-free society.



RAMP Scheme implementation takes off in Jammu & Kashmir Udhampur hosts first District-Level awareness workshop to empower MSMEs

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 16: In a significant move towards creating a feasible ecosystem for the growth of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME), the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme was launched today in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory with the successful conduct of the first District-Level RAMP Awareness Workshop in Udhampur. The event, held here at the ITI college, was jointly organized by the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) and Grant Thornton Bharat LLP (SPIU for RAMP), in collaboration with the District Industries Centre (DIC). The event marked the beginning of a series of district-level outreach programs designed to build awareness and capacity among MSMEs, stakeholders, and implementing agencies under the RAMP initiative.

The RAMP scheme, an initiative of the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, supported by the World Bank, is a strategic intervention aimed at revitalizing



the MSME sector across India. With a national outlay of 6,062.45 crore till FY 2026-27, the scheme focuses on improving market access, financing, digital adoption, greening enterprises, streamlining compliance, and enhancing institutional capacity.

Jammu and Kashmir has been allocated 74.03 crore under the scheme, including 66.63 crore as the central share and 7.40 crore as the UT's contribution. The Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, has been entrusted with the responsibility of the scheme across the UT. The Jammu

and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) has been nominated as the Nodal Agency for overall coordination and execution and Implementation of RAMP-related activities.

Managing Director, JKTPO Sudarshan Kumar underlined the strategic significance of the RAMP scheme for the UT. "This scheme directly addresses the on-ground challenges faced by MSMEs, from access to credit and markets to skilling and formalization. Under the guidance of Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, we are committed to ensuring that the RAMP

scheme becomes a game changer for MSMEs across Jammu and Kashmir."

The SPIU Team delivered a detailed presentation, outlining the approved interventions under the RAMP scheme in J&K. These interventions include the formalization of MSMEs through Udyam Registration in the UT of J&K, MSME packaging and publicity of GI/ODOP/DEH/unique products from J&K, and the establishment of producer companies/associations for GI/ODOP/DEH/unique products under cluster development programmes. Additionally, the scheme encompasses buyer-seller meets (BSMs) and reverse buyer-seller meets (RBSM), the Jammu & Kashmir MSMEs Health Clinic, the J&K Ramp M&E Dashboard, Entrepreneurship and skill development programmes (ESDP), Management Development and upskilling of existing entrepreneurs (MDPs), and the penetration of digital financing.

The workshop witnessed active participation from MSME entrepreneurs, officials, and stakeholders. Key functionaries present included Kishor Singh Katoch, General Manager, DIC Udhampur.

Mission Shakti Jammu organises awareness session at Women Cell Gandhinagar

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 16: Mission Shakti District Hub for Empowerment of Women Jammu, Social Welfare Department, organized an empowering awareness session at Women Cell Gandhinagar today. The initiative was designed to inform the Police Officials and survivors about various government schemes focused on uplifting and supporting women, with a broader mission of fostering gender equality and strengthening the role of women in society.

Mission Shakti's team of officials led an informative session covering an array of government programs that cater specifically to women's welfare, economic empowerment, safety, and security. Insp Art Thakur SHO Women Cell, Shagun Manchanda District Mission Coordinator, Mission Shakti, Officials of Women cell and Mission Shakti HEW Jammu were present during the programme. Mission Shakti DHEW Jammu continues to lead from the front in creating meaningful change and the session was led by the interaction with the officials and beneficiaries.

MLA Pawan Gupta inaugurates blacktopping work on 1.75 KM Sundrani road

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 16: Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Pawan Kumar Gupta today inaugurated the blacktopping work on 1.75-kilometre Sundrani to Dhannu via Nambale and Thowal Modha road. The upgrading of the road project is expected to provide a major boost to connectivity and ease of travel for the local residents. Addressing the gathering, MLA Gupta emphasized that providing basic amenities such as roads, electricity, and water to every village remains his topmost priority. He added that this road will not only connect remote villages to major routes but will also contribute to the socio-economic uplift of the area. A large number of villagers, local representatives and government officials were present on the occasion. The local residents expressed gratitude to the MLA for meeting their long-pending demand and appreciated his commitment to rural development. Gupta directed the concerned officials to ensure timely completion of the work with strict adherence to quality standards.

Labour Department issues Advisory for Workers amid Heat Wave alert in J&K

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 16: In view of the seasonal heat wave forecast issued by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), and in line with the advisory of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Labour Department of Jammu and Kashmir has issued an important directive to ensure the health and safety of workers across the Union Territory.

The Labour Commissioner J&K S. Charandeep Singh has directed all Inspectors of Factories and Assistant Labour Commissioners (ALCs) to implement preventive and mitigating measures in Shops, Commercial Establishments, Factories, Brick Kilns, Construction Sites, and other workplaces falling under their jurisdiction.

Considering the occupational risks posed by extreme heat—especially for workers engaged in outdoor and heat-intensive environments—the advisory mandates a series of safety steps.

Employers have been advised to modify working hours to avoid the peak heat period between 12:00 PM and 3:00 PM, wherever feasible. They must also ensure uninterrupted access to safe and cool drinking water at all workplaces. Provision of shaded rest areas at open sites and proper ventilation in enclosed workplaces such as brick kilns and construction sites is to be strictly enforced.

To further strengthen preparedness, the advisory emphasizes the importance of awareness campaigns to educate workers about heat stress, its symptoms, and first-aid measures. Regular health check-ups for outdoor workers, in coordination with local health authorities, are encouraged. Emergency preparedness, including availability of first-aid kits and access to emergency contact numbers and medical transport, is a critical component of the plan.

Mission YUVA Orientation-cum-training programme organized for Yuva Doots at Udhampur

HT News Network



UDHAMPUR, APRIL 16: An Orientation-cum-Training Programme for Yuva Doots was today organized under Mission YUVA here in Conference Hall DC Office Complex. The session, chaired by Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Singh, was aimed at sensitizing the Yuva Doots about their role and responsibilities under Mission YUVA, an ambitious initiative to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment among the youth of Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking on the occasion, the ADDC emphasized the importance of strategic planning and active coordination among all stakeholders to nurture and cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit among the youth. He encouraged the Yuva Doots to act as effective communicators and facilitators between the administration and young aspiring entrepreneurs at the grass-roots level. He highlighted the pivotal role that Yuva Doots can play in identifying potential entrepreneurs, spreading awareness about various self-employment schemes, and assisting them in availing benefits under Mission YUVA. Earlier, Assistant Director Employment Priyanka Gupta delivered an insightful presentation on various components of Mission YUVA, explaining its objectives, expected outcomes and key features such as interest subvention schemes, the Open Network for Digital Commerce one-stop-commerce marketing platform, District Level Small Business Development Units and Sub-Divisional level Business Help Desks.

DC reviews progress under District Capex Plan 2024-25 in Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 16: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Rajesh Kumar Shavan today chaired a meeting to conduct a comprehensive sector-wise review of the physical and financial progress of developmental projects taken up under the District Capex Plan 2024-25. The meeting focused on key sectors including Roads and Buildings (R&B), Jal Shakti, Education, Health, and Youth Services & Sports, among others. At the outset, the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) briefed the meeting on the status of the ongoing works under BDC ADP, DDC Plan. The DDC issued clear directives to all Block Development Officers (BDOs) to submit a comprehensive list of ongoing works along with reconciliation statements by tomorrow evening. In addition, the DDC emphasized



the timely submission of proposals for new works under the 2025-26 plan, with April 25, 2025 as deadline, after due consultation with the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) representing different Assembly Constituencies of the District.

He also underscored the importance of verifying the feasibility of all proposed projects, which must be certified by the concerned Tehsildar prior to execution. The meeting was attended by Deputy Registrar Cooperatives Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal, BDOs,

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Dy. CEO, AD Planning RDD, and officials from other line departments. At the outset, the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) briefed the meeting on the status of the ongoing works under BDC ADP, DDC Plan. The DDC issued clear directives to all Block Development Officers (BDOs) to submit a comprehensive list of ongoing works along with reconciliation statements by tomorrow evening. In addition, the DDC emphasized the timely submission of proposals for new works under the 2025-26 plan, with April 25, 2025 as deadline, after due consultation with the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) representing different Assembly Constituencies of the District.

He also underscored the importance of verifying the feasibility of all proposed projects, which must be certified by the concerned Tehsildar prior to execution.

ECI launches first of its kind training program for BLAs

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 16: In a first, ECI launches training sessions for the Booth Level Agents (BLAs) to strengthen grassroots participation by political parties with around 280 BLAs of 10 recognised political parties from Bihar taking part in the 2-day training programme.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has commenced the training of Booth Level Agents (BLAs) from Bihar in view of the forthcoming elections in the State. The programme is being organised at the India International Institute for Democracy and Election Management, IIIDEM, New Delhi.

Chief Election Commissioner, Gyanesh Kumar, along with Election Commissioners, Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Dr. Vivek Joshi addressed the BLAs in a first of its kind training programme. The training was conceptualised during the Chief Electoral Officers (CEO) conference held on the 4th of March, 2025. The Commission underscored

the importance of BLAs in the election processes and asserted that the training programme would help them fulfil their responsibilities as delineated in the Representation of People Act, 1950 and 1951, Registration of Elector Rules 1960, Conduct of Election Rules 1961 and the manuals, guidelines and instructions issued by ECI from time to time. The BLAs were given an overview of their appointment, roles and responsibilities as per the legal framework. The training programme familiarised them with various aspects of the election processes including the preparation, updation and revision of electoral rolls and the associated forms and formats associated. The BLAs are appointed by the recognised political parties and play an important role at the booth level to ensure transparency and fairness in the final electoral roll. They are empowered to raise objections under the provision in the final section appeals under Section 24(1) and 24(2) of the RP Act 1950.

DDC Ramban interacts with Farmers Gives away Daksh Kissan Certificates to individuals trained under HADP scheme

HT News Network

RAMBAN, APRIL 16: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary today held an interactive session with farmers hailing from different areas of the district and associated with Agriculture and allied sectors. During the interaction, the farmers shared their experiences and success stories, highlighting the positive impact of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) on their livelihoods. They expressed gratitude for the support received under the flagship schemes and the significant improvement in their economic condition.

DC Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary assured the farmers of continued support from the district administration and encouraged them to adopt scientific and modern agricultural practices to further enhance productivity and income. He also directed the officers of Agriculture and allied departments to extend handholding and guidance to the farmers in availing the full benefits of the HADP schemes.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner distributed 'Daksh Kissan' Certificates among the farmers, who successfully completed skill development training courses in Agriculture and allied sectors.

District Nodal Officer HADP Dr. Suhail Kawoosa along with CAO, AMO and other officers were also present at the programme. On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner distributed 'Daksh Kissan' Certificates among the farmers, who successfully completed skill development training courses in Agriculture and allied sectors.

Rs 65 Crore Worth Development Works Completed by PWD in Dann Panchayat

HT News Network

Jammu, 16 April 2025: The Public Works Department (PWD) has completed development works worth Rs 65 crore in Dann Panchayat, in Nagrota Assembly constituency giving a big boost to rural road infrastructure in the area.

These works were taken up after continuous efforts by Anil Sharma, President of AJKPC, who actively pursued the matter with the

district administration and PWD officials to strengthen road connectivity in the region. The major roads completed under this initiative include the roads from Devak to nearby villages, Chakka to Sullian, Darak to Panwali, and Devak to Bhawani. These routes are now easing travel for the local population and boosting local trade and connectivity. In addition to road construction, several improvements in public amenities have also been completed, aimed at raising the overall



standard of living in the Panchayat. The initiative reflects a broader commitment to inclusive rural development.

PWD officials mentioned that all works were completed on time with full transparency and adherence to quality standards. The local community has responded positively, appreciating the upgraded infrastructure and improved accessibility. Anil Sharma also extended gratitude to the villagers who generously gave land for these roads without

any compensation, contributing to the public cause. Their cooperation was key to the success of the projects. Locals, in turn, thanked Anil Sharma for his persistent efforts and dedication in ensuring the long-awaited projects were not only sanctioned but also completed, bringing real and visible development to their area. This accomplishment stands as a testament to the government's rural development focus and the strong community spirit of Dann Panchayat.





SC begins hearing on Waqf Amendment Act: Petitioners call it Parliamentary overreach into religious rights

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, APR 16 (UNI)

A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and comprising Justices Sanjay Kumar and KV Viswanathan, is currently hearing over 73 petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

Senior Advocates Kapil Sibal, Rajeev Dhavan, AM Singhvi, and CU Singh are arguing on behalf of the petitioners, while Solicitor General Tushar Mehta is representing the Union of India.

Opening the arguments, Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal contended that the Waqf Amendment Act interferes with the essential and integral aspects of the Muslim faith, invoking Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution.

He submitted that the phrase "in accordance with law" in the amended provisions undermines essential religious practices and opens the door for legislative overreach.



Waqf Amendment Act

The court directed that challenges be presented point by point.

Sibal began by contesting Section 3(r) proviso: 'It allows Waqf by user to remain unless in dispute or claimed by the government', which he argued dilutes the essence of Waqf.

Section 3A(2): This provision, which deals with Waqf-alal-aulad and inheritance to women, was questioned by Sibal – "Who is the State to interfere in Islamic inheritance that takes effect only after death?"

CJI responded, noting similar laws exist for Hindu communities, and Article 26 is secular and applies to all religions.

Sibal also challenged

Section 3C: Declares government-identified properties will no longer be deemed Waqf after the Act comes into force.

Section 3C(2): Allows government to unilaterally declare such properties without a defined timeline, which he claimed is unconstitutional.

Provision on protected monuments: He argued that Waqf properties should not be invalidated merely because they are later declared ancient monuments.

To this, the CJI observed that Waqf status would remain intact if declared before the monument status.

Further, Sibal targeted Section 3E, arguing that the Act improperly lists

Muslims as Scheduled Tribes in an administrative context and criticised the Central Waqf Council's composition.

He compared it with Hindu and Sikh endowments, saying all nominees in their respective councils are from their own faiths.

Justice Viswanathan interjected, saying religious rights should not be mixed with property issues, "Properties can be secular; only the administration may have religious dimensions."

Sibal continued by arguing that Section 9 allegedly restricts Muslim membership disproportionately.

Section 14 is seen as allowing complete takeover of Waqf Boards through nomination.

Section 36, allowing Waqf by user without formal registration, was defended.

Singhvi added, "Four out of eight lakh Waqf properties exist purely by user. This amendment wipes them out in one stroke."

"You can't rewrite past": SC slams State over Waqf Amendment amidst Murshidabad unrest

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, APR 16 (UNI)

In a high-stakes constitutional showdown over the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, the Supreme Court on Wednesday expressed deep concern over reports of ongoing violence in West Bengal's Murshidabad district linked to the controversy.

"One thing is very disturbing – the violence that is taking place. If the matter is pending here, it should not happen," remarked Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna, reflecting the bench's disapproval of street-level unrest while judicial scrutiny is underway.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, responded: "Yes, they think they can pressurize the system by this."

But senior advocate Kapil Sibal, arguing for the petitioners, shot back sharply, "Who is pressuring whom, we don't know."

The three-judge bench, comprising CJI Sanjiv Khanna, Justices Sanjay Kumar and K V Viswanathan, is currently hearing a batch of petitions challenging the constitu-



tional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

The bench reiterated that Article 26 of the Constitution does not prohibit the enactment of laws governing waqfs but expressed reservations about certain provisions and their sweeping implications.

Among the major concerns raised was the reclassification of public trusts as waqfs some dating back a century or more.

"You cannot rewrite the past of 100 years," CJI Khanna said firmly, cautioning against attempts to subsume long-established trusts under waqf control retroactively.

SG Mehta defended the government's stance by citing the JPC (Joint Parliamentary Committee) report, emphasising inclusivity: "Two members will be women. It has become inclusive."

However, he also stated that all members of Waqf Boards and the Central Waqf Council, except ex-officio ones, must be Muslims, sparking a sharp exchange with the bench.

In a move to maintain status quo and prevent irreversible changes during the pendency of the case, the Court proposed an interim order with the following key elements that no de-notification of Waqf properties.

Properties declared by courts as waqfs, whether by deed or by long-term use shall not be declassified.

The bench also proposed that the clause stating that a property shall not be treated as waqf during a Collector's inquiry into whether it is government land will not be enforced.

On the composition of Board, the bench pro-

posed that all appointed members of the Waqf Boards and Central Waqf Council must be Muslims, excluding ex-officio members.

Justice Kumar pressed SG Mehta on the logic of restricting Board membership exclusively to Muslims. "Clause (c) doesn't say that only two non-Muslims can be appointed," he pointed out.

Mehta responded that the Centre would clarify the matter through an affidavit and maintained, "This is for new Boards. Existing Boards will complete their tenure."

CJI Khanna also grilled Mehta on religious inclusivity: "Are you saying Muslims can now be appointed to Hindu Endowment Boards too? Say it openly."

The SG quipped, "Then this bench cannot hear the case!" –prompting the CJI to retort: "When we sit here, we lose our religion. Both sides are the same for us."

The heated exchange in the Courtroom veered into historical territory as the bench questioned the retroactive application of waqf status to properties governed by public trust acts.

Ex-President Joe Biden blasts Trump's actions as destructive, divisive

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, APR 16 (UNI)

Former US President Joe Biden has warned that America is a country where "nobody's king", as he lambasted President Donald Trump's early actions as destructive.

In his first remarks after leaving office, Biden also warned that further Social Security cuts could affect millions of Americans.

Biden's remarks in Chicago at the 2025 national conference of Advocates, Counselors, and Representatives for the Disabled marked his first public rebuttal of the Trump administration in the early days of his post-presidential life.

Without uttering Trump's name, Biden called the Republican White House's actions so far "breathhtaking" in terms of their level of destruction during a 27-minute address before disability advocates at a downtown Chicago hotel.

"Fewer than 100 days,



this new administration has made so – has done so much damage and so much destruction. It's kind of breathtaking that it could happen that soon," Biden said, NPR reported.

The former Democratic president warned the country has never been "this divided."

"Nobody's king. Nobody's the boss. Everybody has a shot. All people are asking for is a shot," Biden said. "Honesty, decency, where hard work is rewarded. Have some faith in each other. Fairness, simple fairness. We can't go on like this as a divided nation, as divided as we are."

Biden also responded to Musk's claims that

Social Security is a "Ponzi scheme", but referred to Trump's influential adviser as "one of them."

"What the hell are they talking about? People earn these benefits. They paid into that benefit. They rely on that benefit," Biden said. "And no one, no one, no one should take it away."

While Trump has continued to disparage Biden in the early days of his presidency, including a Truth Social on Monday "Crooked Joe Biden", the former Democratic president had been keeping quiet in his Trump critiques prior to Tuesday's address.

The Social Security

Administration has endured its share of controversy under Trump's second term, including a lawsuit over Trump's decision to allow Musk's Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, to access Social Security numbers.

Trump and Musk also slashed thousands of jobs at the SSA, with more planned – and recipients have reported massive outages on an online benefits portal.

In introducing Biden at the conference, former Social Security Administration Commissioner Martin O'Malley said Trump and Musk have "gutted the Social Security Administration with a chainsaw."

He called the Trump administration claims about dead people and illegal immigrants receiving benefits fraudulently "a big lie."

"The American people aren't buying it," O'Malley said. "They're not buying it because it's not true."

Bengal: Mamata holds Amit Shah, BSF responsible for Murshidabad violence

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, APR 16 (UNI)

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday launched a scathing attack against the Central government urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to "rein in" his Home Minister, Amit Shah, for allegedly "using" central agencies to enable infiltrators from Bangladesh to create unrest in the state.

"I would request the Prime Minister to keep a check on Amit Shah. He is harming the country most to serve his political interests. Why is he (Amit Shah) in such a hurry? He will never become the Prime Minister, and what will he do once Modi-ji leaves?"

"The PM must see how his Home Minister is misusing central agencies. PM Modi-ji must control him," Banerjee said at a meeting with the Muslim clerics at Netaji Indoor Stadium here.

Mamata's allegation comes in the wake of



ongoing claims over the past few days by several Trinamool Congress leaders, accusing the BSF of "aiding" the entry of Bangladeshis into the state to stir unrest under the pretext of protest.

The Bengal Chief Minister's criticism comes in the wake of widespread violence that broke out during protests against the new law on Friday. The unrest saw several vehicles, including police vans, set on fire, stones hurled at security personnel, and road blockades across the districts of Malda, Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas, and Hooghly.

In Murshidabad, the violence claimed three lives and left several others injured, prompting

the Calcutta High Court to order the deployment of central forces.

"There were people wearing BSF dress and chappals who incited the violence. I have information that children were given Rs 5000 to Rs 6000 for pelting stones. We are investigating it and no one will be spared," Mamata said.

"That man (Amit Shah) is responsible for the planning. I didn't want to take the name but I am helpless. Modi ji should have allowed all agencies to function under his control and he is misusing it. Modi ji should stop him," she added.

The Chief Minister referred to a tweet quoting the Union Home Ministry that said that Bangladesh is involved in this riot. "To engage in riots by using certain agencies that facilitate movement of people from there ... If that is the case (allowing people from Bangladesh), the Central government is responsible since BSF guards the

borders, not us. State government doesn't have the responsibility to guard the borders," Banerjee said.

Mamata also alleged that the BSF was involved in the firing incident that resulted in the death of a civilian. The victim, reportedly injured during police firing in Suti, succumbed to his injuries while receiving treatment at a state-run hospital on Saturday.

"I have received information that the BSF was involved in the firing. I will instruct the Chief Secretary to submit a report on the incident, and appropriate action will be taken," she stated.

When asked about it, the leader of the opposition, Suwendu Adhikari said, "This is a fabricated and malafide statement by the Chief Minister of West Bengal. If BSF would not have been deployed, the situation would have worsened. They have brought back people to their houses. They have done a commendable job."

Mob pelts stones at police in Nashik during dargah demolition; Sanjay Raut says deliberate ploy by BJP

AGENCIES

NASHIK, APR 16 (UNI)

A mob pelted stones at Nashik police on Wednesday, injuring some policemen, during the demolition of an unauthorised dargah in the city. The police had to use force to bring the situation under control. Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut strongly criticised the BJP over the demolition.

The Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) personnel removed the unauthorised Satpeer Baba Dargah in Kathe Galli area of the city, following an



order of the Bombay High Court, the police said.

The demolition drive comes as the Shiv Sena (Thackeray group) is holding a day-long Nirdhar camp in Nashik today.

MP Sanjay Raut reacting to the police action, said

that "there is an attempt to create obstacles in the holding of the camp. The intention is to scare us. Why did they choose today for the action on the dargah? All these are tactics to distract attention."

He further said, "An attempt is being made to spoil the atmosphere in the city by driving a bulldozer on the dargah. If you have the courage, come forward and fight. We are ready."

Raut raised the issue that a 15-day notice had already been given to the dargah authorities, but why was the action taken

on the day of the Shiv Sena (UBT) camp? "The BJP always sets the right time, decides in advance when to create riots," he alleged.

Meanwhile, Tuesday's meeting between Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and MNS president Raj Thackeray has become a topic of discussion.

On this, Raut said, "They must have met to eat Amaras Puri. Let's see if an alliance is formed. Currently, Amit Shah is running three parties."

Sanjay Raut said that any likely alliance will not have an impact on the Shiv Sena Thackeray camp.

Punjab and Haryana HC grants reprieve to Bajwa, no action until April 22

AGENCIES

CHANDIGARH, APR 16 (UNI)

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday passed an interim order, which ensures that the Leader of Opposition (LoP) Partap Singh Bajwa will not face arrest until April 22.

The HC has also sought reply from the Punjab government on Bajwa's petition to quash the FIR registered against him. The next hearing in the matter is fixed for April 22.

The FIR, under sections 353 (2), 197 (1) D, was filed against the Congress leader, after he refused to reveal his source for



the statement given to a TV channel in which he had allegedly said that 50 bombs had arrived in Punjab, 18 were used and 32 were still unaccounted for.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann took exception to Bajwa's statement and alleged that the state as well as central intelligence agencies have no such information

and asked whether Bajwa had links with Pakistan. He also said that if Bajwa intended to spread fear by making false claims, it was a crime and action would be taken against him.

Soon after, Punjab police counter intelligence officials reached Bajwa's Chandigarh residence and questioned him. Police claimed that Bajwa did not cooperate with them and an FIR was registered against him on April 13.

Bajwa moved the High Court with a prayer to the quash FIR and restrain the government from taking any coercive action against him.

Bajwa has maintained that he was duty bound to alert the government about any such things and said he would not reveal his source.

He had also appeared before the cyber crime police station on Tuesday and was questioned by the police for almost five hours.

Ruling AAP members have held protests over Bajwa's "irresponsible" statement, while the Congress has also protested the FIR against Bajwa, alleging that the government, instead of maintaining law and order in the state, was attempting to suppress the voice of the opposition.

Travel beauty tips for your summer holidays



SHAHNAZ HUSSAIN

Summertime is here, it's time for beach days, pool parties, travel and vacations. Summer holidays are synonymous with sunshine and outdoor adventures.

Sunlight can make you feel cheerful and is important for the production of vitamin D, but be careful; it can also cause damage.

One of the best things about summer is the chance to enjoy long days at the beach. However, spending too much time in the sun can have a wide range of adverse effects on your skin and hair.

As heat and humidity rise, oil glands get hyperactive. Oily patches, rashes, pimples, sunburn, roughness, patchiness - they all make an appearance

in this season.

While basking in the sun can be invigorating, it's crucial to adapt your skincare routine to protect your skin from increased sun exposure, heat, and humidity.

Whether you're planning a beach getaway, a scenic mountain retreat, or simply enjoying staycations with friends and family, looking and feeling your best can make all the difference.

To help you shine from the inside out, here are some tips that may help your hair and skin "holiday-ready"

1- Prep your skin for the sun---

Sunlight is good for your mood as it enables your skin to synthesize the vitamin D necessary for bone health, and it boosts your immune system.

After months of being covered up, slowly exposing your skin to the sun, little by little, is key. Preparing your skin for the sun before prolonged exposure is an important step for the skin that we too often forget. It is particularly useful for people with fair

skin, sun allergies or intolerances. One of the best ways to prepare your skin for the sun is to engage in numerous short exposures. The lighter your skin, the less it is able to defend itself against the sun.

Skin that hasn't been exposed to the sun for a long time is even more vulnerable to the first UV rays it is exposed to.

The more your skin is exposed to the sun, the more it dries out. And as it dries out, it becomes more vulnerable to UV rays, So

Nourish your skin with a good moisturizing cream to construct its protective layer. Although moisturizing cream does not protect skin from the sun, it can help limit its ravages.

2---Mind your diet

You can't eat your sunscreen. But what you can eat may help against sun damage. The sun's rays don't stand a chance against a diet rich in antioxidant foods.

The foods you eat could help your skin stay protected from the harmful effects of the summer sun's strong UV rays

The first meal of the day can prep and protect your healthy summer glow when you are on vacation.

Include peppers, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, spinach, squash, broccoli, mangos, apricots, kale, peas, tomatoes and melon in your diet that are rich in beta-carotene and other carotenoids.

The carotenoids found in red, orange, and yellow peppers not only provide excellent antioxidant properties, but they also contain 11 times more beta-carotene than green peppers. Foods that are rich in carotenoids add an orange tinge to your skin, which gives you a natural glow.

Eat dinner as early as possible in the evening, preferably before sunset. Eating late at night impairs an enzyme responsible for repairing sun-damaged skin.

A combination of vitamins E and C protects the skin against UV damage. It is suggested that daily consumption of dietary polyphenols may provide efficient protection against the harmful

effects of solar UV radiation in humans. Furthermore, the use of micronutrients in combination may provide an effective strategy for protecting human skin from damage by UV exposure.

3 ---Travel Packing -----

Whether you're planning a beach getaway, a city escape, or a countryside retreat, Comfortable and versatile clothing is essential for a stress-free summer vacation. Less is more when it comes to packing. Focus on versatile pieces that can be worn in multiple ways.

Summers call in for lightweight and light-colored clothing like white, cream, or ecru, which are better at hiding sweat.

Lightweight T-shirts and tanks take up little space in your suitcase, making it easy to roll them up and pack four or five of one color to use throughout the trip. It ensures that you can focus on your vacation rather than your attire, allowing you to relax and enjoy your trip.

Light-toned colors also reflect light and won't feel as

hot on the body when in direct sunlight, like a black shirt.

While packing, make sure you pack clothes that allow air to circulate against the skin.

Don't forget to pack a few key accessories like a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and comfortable sandals to complete your look.

Consider packing clothes that can be easily dressed up or down, making it easy to adapt to different situations.

What is important is that you are comfortable in them in all your hours of travel.

4---Take care of your Hairs -----

Just like skincare, your hair needs special attention when you're travelling

Travelling often can be an exciting and fulfilling experience, but it can leave your hair feeling dry, frizzy, and damaged. Maintaining healthy and fresh hair while travelling can be challenging.

Moving from one climate to another can confuse your hair. Humidity, dry air, or extreme temperatures can cause frizz, dryness, or even breakage.

From different climates

and weather conditions to long hours in the car or on a plane, it's easy for your hair to feel out of sorts.

Changes in climate, water quality, and exposure to sun, humidity, or pollution can take a toll on your hair.

The serum is the best way to keep your hair hydrated and conditioned during travelling..

Hair serums help to protect your strands from sun damage and make them look sleek and shiny. Since you miss a proper beauty care routine while travelling, using hair serum correctly can help to protect your hair from skin problems that occur while on a vacation.

When packing, opt for travel-sized bottles of shampoo, conditioner, and styling products that suit your hair type. A leave-in conditioner or serum can be a lifesaver to combat dryness and frizz. Don't forget essentials like a wide-toothed comb, microfiber towel, and silk scrunchies to minimize breakage.

The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

Study shows new drug delivery system effective against rare eye cancer

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI

A team of US researchers has found a new drug delivery system that showed more efficacy and improved the treatment of a rare eye cancer that spreads to liver.

The multi-institutional study led by Moffitt Cancer Center in Florida, US, found that percutaneous hepatic perfusion using a melphalan hepatic delivery system may help patients with metastatic uveal melanoma (mUM) -- a traditionally hard-to-treat cancer and with usually poor outcomes.

Melphalan/Hepatic Delivery System is a drug or medical device combination used for liver-directed treatment of unresectable mUM patients.

This study assessed the efficacy and safety of the melphalan hepatic delivery system versus the best alternative care.



The results, published in the Annals of Surgical Oncology, showed that the treatment with the melphalan hepatic delivery system can help control the cancer in the liver.

"This new treatment gives hope to patients with this historically tough-to-treat cancer," said lead author Jonathan Zager, surgical oncologist in the Cutaneous Oncology Department at Moffitt.

"The treatment provides an option that does not interfere with their quality of life and gives patients a chance at longer

survival," Zager added.

In the clinical trials, one group of patients received the melphalan hepatic delivery system treatment, while the other group received standard-of-care treatment.

Compared to patients receiving alternative care, those treated with the melphalan hepatic delivery system experienced significantly improved outcomes.

The study reported that the median progression-free survival for these patients was 9.1 months, compared with 3.3 months

for those on standard treatments.

The disease control rate also substantially increased from 46.9 per cent to 80.0 per cent.

Patients treated with the melphalan hepatic delivery system lived a median of 18.5 months, compared with 14.5 months for those receiving other forms of care.

Although there were some side effects, mostly related to blood cell counts, these were treated with standard care as an outpatient and mostly resolved with observation alone.

The melphalan hepatic delivery system treatment was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration in August 2023.

Unlike regular chemotherapy, this treatment delivers a high dose of the drug directly into the liver, which is isolated with a series of catheters and balloons via percutaneous insertions.

Summer Health: Top Essential Daily Habits to Stay Healthy

As summer arrives, it is critical to incorporate healthy habits into your routine to remain cool, hydrated, and safe from heat. The hot weather and sun can lead to various health issues such as dehydration, abdominal cramps, digestive disorders, and skin issues. By including the below seven habits in your daily lifestyle, you can cherish the goodness of the season while preserving your general well-being.

Stay Hydrated

Drinking enough water is important to restore the lost fluids and electrolytes in the body. Try to drink at least 8-10 glasses of water per day. You may also include other water-based drinks, such as coconut water, herbal tea, and fresh fruit juices in your diet.

Eat Cooling Foods

In addition to drink-



ing enough water, it's also essential to consume cooling foods that have a high water content, such as cucumbers, melons, and yogurt. These foods can help lower your body temperature and provide essential nutrients.

Exercise Wisely

While it's important to remain physically active, it's also important to plan your workouts for cooler times, like early morning or in the evening after sundown. That way, you won't have to perform hard work under direct sun hours.

Protect Your Skin

The sun can be very harmful to your skin, particularly when you're exposed directly to the sun's UV rays. Use sunscreen with a minimum of SPF 30, dress in protective clothing, and seek shade when you're outdoors.

Get Good Sleep

Strive to sleep for a minimum of 7-8 hours each night during the summer season to enable your body to rest from heat, humidity, and fatigue. Getting a good night's sleep can also assist in strengthening your immune system and energy levels.

Practice Relaxation Techniques

Participate in stress-relieving activities such as meditation, deep breathing, or yoga to assist in coping with heat-induced stress and other ailments. These exercises can also assist in enhancing overall mental health.

Stay Informed and Updated

Keep yourself updated with weather predictions and heat warnings to schedule your activities accordingly, particularly if you plan to venture out of the house. This will enable you to steer clear of exposure to excessive heat and take precautions accordingly.

More Tips

Steer clear of outdoor activities during the hottest part of the day (generally between 11 am and 3 pm)

Wear loose, light-colored clothing to keep yourself cool

Indian researchers introduce 'toxicity standard' of PM2.5 pollution

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI

Researchers at the Bose Institute, an autonomous research institute under the Department of Science and Technology, showed that the toxicity value of PM2.5 experiences a sudden jump when the pollution reaches around 70 micrograms per cubic metre.

The toxicity standard implies that "policies, strategies and control measures should be taken to keep PM2.5 pollution within this limit of around 70 micrograms per cubic metre, because once the PM2.5 load exceeds this value, the toxicity starts to increase rapidly and goes beyond control," said the researchers.

PM 2.5, or particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometres or smaller, is a significant air pollutant posing serious health risks, including respiratory and cardiovas-



cular problems, and is a key indicator of air quality.

The study, led by Prof. Abhijit Chatterjee, focussed on the toxicity of atmospheric aerosols over the atmosphere of Kolkata.

The researchers explored how the degree of the toxicity changes with the increase in total aerosol pollution load and have studied the oxidative potential of ultrafine aerosols (PM2.5) or the potential of forming the reactive oxygen species (ROS) that are introduced to the human lung cells via inhalation of particles.

The enhanced presence of the reactive oxidative species makes the natural antioxidants of human cells incapable of counter-acting, leading to oxidative stress in cells.

The study, published in the journal Science of The Total Environment, showed that there is a non-linear relationship between the PM2.5 pollution load and its toxicity (OP).

"Up to the PM2.5 pollution load of around 70 micrograms per cubic metre, the toxicity remains unchanged. With the increase in PM2.5, the

OP values show a jump and sudden rise till the PM2.5 pollution reaches around 130 micrograms per cubic metre. With the further increase in PM2.5 load exceeding 130 micrograms per cubic metre, OP values do not change much," the team explained in the paper.

Further, the researchers found that biomass/solid waste burning is the key source of PM2.5 that is enhancing the toxicity of ultrafine aerosols over Kolkata.

"While the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) has been effective in reducing and curbing various air pollution sources like road dust, constructional/demolition dust, vehicular exhaust, industrial emissions, etc. However, biomass/solid waste burning could not be kept under good control. The particles emitted from this particular source are accelerating the toxicity," the researchers said.

Is Your Office Coffee a Health Hazard?

That tiny cup of coffee you sip every morning at work -- and the refills you grab to stay sharp throughout the day -- could be posing a hidden health risk.

A recent study published in the journal Nutrition, Metabolism and Cardiovascular Diseases has found that coffee brewed using common office machines may contribute to rising cholesterol levels.

Researchers in Sweden analyzed coffee samples from 14 machines across four different workplaces to compare the effects of office-made coffee with coffee brewed at home. The results revealed the presence of cafestol and kahweol -- two compounds known to raise levels of LDL (low-density lipoprotein), commonly referred to as "bad" cholesterol.

The study noted: "Intake of insufficiently filtered coffee during working hours could be an overlooked factor for cardiovascular health due



to its effect on plasma cholesterol concentrations."

The machines examined in the study included: Brewing machines using metal filters

Liquid-model machines that mix coffee concentrate with hot water (no filter involved)

Instant coffee machines that use freeze-dried coffee and hot water

In contrast, coffee brewed at home using paper filters, drip brewers, percolators, or even a French press was found to have significantly lower concentrations of these cholesterol-raising compounds.

Researchers concluded that switching to paper-filtered coffee could help lower LDL cholesterol

levels, suggesting a simple change could benefit workplace health.

The study urges companies to raise awareness about the potential risks of office coffee and encourages employees to consider bringing their own brew -- a healthier pick-me-up to help them push through their deadlines.

MI death-bowling masters brace for SRH blaze

AGENCIES

MUMBAI, APR 16 (UND)

The Wankhede Stadium will host a mouth-watering encounter on Thursday as five-time champions Mumbai Indians take on the resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad in the 33rd match of the IPL 2025 season. At the heart of this clash lies a fascinating subplot – the most explosive top order in the league going up against one of the sharpest death bowling units in the tournament.

Hyderabad arrive in Mumbai buoyed by a record run-chase against Punjab, headlined by Abhishek Sharma's sensational 141 off just 55 balls – the third-highest score in IPL history. The left-hander, alongside Travis Head (66 off 37), tore into the Punjab attack as SRH chased down 246 with ease, underlining their potential to dismantle any bowling line-up on their day.

However, the Wankhede challenge is a different beast altogether. The pitch is known to favour batsmen, but in Jasprit Bumrah and Trent Boult, Mumbai possess two of the finest exponents of death bowling in the modern game. Boult's ability to strike early and Bumrah's pinpoint accuracy in the closing stages have



helped MI turn matches even when the odds were against them.

This is the kind of contest that defines a season. Abhishek Sharma is in red-hot form, but going after Bumrah and Boult under lights at the Wankhede is a different ball game. That's where this match will be decided.

Mumbai come into this fixture having edged past Delhi Capitals in a tense affair. After posting 205-5, they held off a late Delhi surge to secure a 12-run victory. The win was significant, not just for the two points but for the all-round performance. Tilak Varma continued his purple patch with another fifty, while Hardik Pandya played a blistering cameo and chipped in with two

wickets. Suryakumar Yadav remains the batting lynchpin, averaging close to 48 this season.

Yet, there are concerns. Rohit Sharma has not looked fluent, while the top order has often failed to fire in tandem. With a power-packed SRH batting lineup waiting, Mumbai will hope for more collective contributions.

MI's bowling has shown flashes of brilliance, though. Vignesh Puthur and Karn Sharma have chipped in with key middle-over breakthroughs, while Mitchell Santner's control has allowed others to attack around him. Boult and Bumrah, despite a few expensive overs in their last outing, remain the key to Mumbai's strategy – particularly in the

last five overs.

SRH's campaign has been as volatile as their batting. After losing four matches on the trot, they turned up in style at home, rewriting the record books with a fearless batting display. Abhishek's assault was backed by Head's aggression and Klaasen's finishing, giving the team a much-needed boost.

Aniket Verma has also emerged as a surprise package, scoring quickly in the lower middle-order. However, their bowling remains a worry. Mohammed Shami has looked off colour, while Pat Cummins has leaked runs at crucial junctures. Harshal Patel, with his variations, has managed to pick wickets, but the overall economy rates have been alarming.

Rahane calls on KKR to learn from defeat

AGENCIES

CHANDIGARH, APR 16 (UND)

Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) captain Ajinkya Rahane has called on his team to learn from their narrow 16-run defeat to Punjab Kings in a thrilling low-scoring encounter at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium here on Tuesday night.

Despite a valiant bowling effort that saw Harshit Rana pick up three wickets, and Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy each take two, KKR faltered in their chase of a modest 112. Rahane reflected on the loss, admitting that the team's batting performance lacked the necessary game awareness to adapt to the challenging conditions.

"We didn't bat well and didn't have the awareness to play according to what



the situation demanded, but we learn from it," Rahane said after the match. "T20 cricket is not only about hitting sixes... it's about reading the situation and having the game awareness as a batsman and then taking the game forward. That's what we lacked today," he added.

KKR's bowlers had done their job, restricting Punjab Kings to a total of just 111 runs, but the batting side failed to capitalise on the manageable target. Rahane admitted that the conditions were not condu-

cive to aggressive batting, saying, "It wasn't a belter or a flat wicket, there was something for the bowlers. So, we had to grind it out. It is not about hitting sixes every time and getting that net run rate up."

Rahane emphasised that in T20 cricket, sometimes it is necessary to play a more measured innings, with lower strike rates, to successfully chase down targets in challenging conditions.

"We need to learn how to grind out results in certain situations. Even though

sometimes you have to play a maiden over in T20 cricket or play at a strike rate of 70-80, it's okay. But you have to grind it out," Rahane said.

Looking ahead to the rest of the league stage, Rahane stressed that there is no room for complacency as KKR have seven more matches to play. "We are halfway through the tournament and there are seven matches to go in the league stage. It's always about coming back with good intent, while still looking to learn and improve as a batsman and take it on in the next game," he concluded.

With KKR sitting on three wins in the tournament so far, Rahane remains confident that his experienced squad will bounce back and learn from this setback to push for a strong finish in the ongoing IPL season.

BCCI seeks head physiotherapist, S&C coach for Women's Team

AGENCIES

BENGALURU, APR 16 (UND)

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Wednesday announced the opening of two prestigious positions at the Centre of Excellence (COE) in Bengaluru: Head Physiotherapist and Strength

and Conditioning (S&C) Coach for Team India (Senior Women).

These roles are crucial to the Sports Science ad Medicine (SSM) team, dedicated to enhancing player performance and implementing cutting-edge injury management and prevention strategies.

Both positions will be based at the state-of-the-art COE, with the successful candidates also required to travel with the Senior Women's team for matches and tournaments. The BCCI is seeking highly skilled professionals with significant experience in sports science and injury

management, particularly those with a background in working with elite athletes.

The Head Physiotherapist will be responsible for providing physiotherapy services on match days, diagnosing injuries, and creating tailored treatment plans.

Bangladesh taking nothing for granted ahead of tough Qualifier contests

AGENCIES

LAHORE, APR 16 (UND)

Having won their first three games at the tournament, Bangladesh are just a solitary victory away from finishing in the top two places in the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier 2025.

This will ensure their participation at the global megaevent later this year.

However, the side will be coming up against two quality opponents in West Indies and Pakistan and will need to be at their very best to overcome the challenge.

Bangladesh skipper Nigar Sultana Joty, speaking after her side's win over Scotland on Tuesday, wanted her teammates to keep themselves grounded and go about the grind before these big match-



ups.

"We plan to go match-by-match. Yes, we're looking forward to the game, but we play this game as a team," Joty stated.

After starting with a massive 178-run win over Thailand, Bangladesh secured a nailbiter against Ireland by two wickets, before overcoming the fight from Scotland's tail to win their third encounter by 34 runs, an ICC report said.

Joty wanted her side to put in a similar effort against the West Indies and Pakistan.

"We need to concentrate on what (good things) we've done as a team. It's going to be a good match, and the way we've played in the last few games, we just want to continue with that," she said.

Bangladesh's winning run has been setup by a strong batting performances, with Joty leading

the charge with 235 runs from three games, to top the run charts at the tournament. Joty has been thrilled with the efforts from her batting group at the Qualifier so far.

"Batting was our visible problem for the last few years. Our bowlers have done well but some of our batting couldn't click (in the past)," she noted.

"But this tournament our batters have played wonderfully well. They've been getting runs in the top-order especially, and they've been pretty consistent," Joty said.

"It was the only unit where we needed to work on, but those improvements are actually showing now," she said.

Bangladesh will go up against Hayley Matthews' West Indies on April 17 next at the tournament.

ICC welcomes announcement of cricket venue for LA28

AGENCIES

DUBAI, APR 16 (UND)

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has welcomed the announcement of Fairgrounds in Pomona, Southern California, as the venue for cricket at the Olympic Games Los Angeles 2028 (LA28).

The cricket competition at LA28 will feature six teams each in the men's and women's competition as the sport makes a return to the Games after 128 years.

ICC Chair, Jay Shah, has welcomed the confirma-



tion of the venue and is looking forward to working in partnership with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to ensure cricket's success at the Games.

Shah said, "We welcome the announcement of the venue for cricket at Los Angeles 2028 as it is a significant step towards the preparation for our sport's return to the Olympics."

"Although cricket is a hugely popular sport, it will be a fantastic opportunity to expand traditional boundaries when it features in the Olympics in the fast-paced, exciting T20 format that should appeal to new audiences," he said.

"On behalf of the ICC, I want to express my gratitude to LA28 and the International Olympic Committee for their support and look forward to collaborating with them and ICC Members in preparing for LA28 and making cricket a huge success there," Shah added.

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