



Mission to Root out Terror Will be Taken to its Logical End: LG Manoj Sinha

Chairs high level security meet, directs for coordinated measures to wipe out terror ecosystem; calls for acting tough against OGWs

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: The Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today chaired a high-level meeting with senior officials to review the prevailing security scenario in Jammu Kashmir. The meeting was attended by Shri Nalin Prabhat, DGP J&K; Shri Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary Home; Shri Nitish Kumar, ADGP CID J&K; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Shri



Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu and Shri Shiv Kumar Sharma, DIG Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range.

The Lieutenant Governor directed for strong and coordinated measures to completely wipe out terrorism and its entire ecosystem from Jammu Kashmir.

"It is the collective resolve of the people of J&K and the nation to destroy the root of terror emanating from our neighbourhood. We must be resolute to fulfill this mission.

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DGMO India warns Pak counterpart over ceasefire breaches, expresses concern about unprovoked firing

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 30: Director General of Military Operations (DGMOs) India on Wednesday warned Pakistan regarding the continued ceasefire breaches and expressed concern over the unprovoked firing along the Line of Control and International Borders.

According to the news agency—the DGMOs of India and Pakistan held discussions over the hotline to address the ongoing violations. "During the conversation, India expressed concerns about the unprovoked firing by Pakistan and issued a warning regarding the continued ceasefire breaches," said an official. Meanwhile, for the sixth consecutive night Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked firing along the Line of Control (LoC)

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Government decides to hold caste census

■ HT News Network/UNI



NEW DELHI, APR 30 (UNI) In a landmark decision, the government on Wednesday decided to include caste enumeration in the forthcoming census, marking the first such step since independence.

The decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"As per article 246 of the Constitution of India, the subject Census is listed at 69 in the Union list in Seventh Schedule. According to the Constitution of India, Census is a Union subject," Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw said at a media briefing.

He said, "Some states have conducted surveys to enumerate castes. Some states have done this well, while some others have conducted such surveys purely

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

CM Omar Abdullah reviews progress of NH projects, bats for timely execution, rehabilitation, strategic coordinations

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the progress of key national highway, expressway and tunnel projects across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary Forest, Ecology & Environment Department Sheetal Nanda, Commissioner Secretary Mining



Department, Vikramjit Singh, Secretary Revenue Department Kumar Rajeev Ranjan; Secretary Public Works (R&B) Department Bhupinder Kumar. Besides, senior officers from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and Public Works Department (R&B) also participated in the meeting.

The meeting stressed on the need to identify bottlenecks and enhance inter-agency coordination to ensure time-bound

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Government School Create History in Class 12 Exams

Top Officials Laud Outstanding Performance; Girls Dominate Merit List

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR: In a historic achievement, students from government schools have set a new benchmark

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

80 percent qualify 10th exams in JK, Ladakh

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 30 : With an overall pass percentage of 79.94 percent, Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) on Wednesday declared the results of annual regular examinations of 10th standard.

"Girls registered a total pass percentage of 81.24 percent while boys registered

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Sakeena Itoo greets students on 12th ,10th class results

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 30: Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo extended her heartfelt greetings to the students of 12th and 10th class who were declared successful in results declared today. In her greetings, Sakeena applauded the dedication, hard work, and



TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Kashmir heatwave: Kokernag records hottest April day ever, Srinagar logs second highest

■ HT News Network/UNI



SRINAGAR, APR 30 (UNI) Jammu and Kashmir witnessed an extraordinary rise in temperatures on Wednesday, with Kokernag in south Kashmir setting a new all-time record for the highest maximum temperature ever recorded in April.

The summer capital Srinagar sizzled at 30.9°C, marking the second-highest maximum temperature ever recorded in the city during April.

According to the Meteorological Department, Kokernag in Anantnag district recorded a maximum temperature of 29.1°C, surpassing the previous April record of 28.3°C, which was set on April 30, 2007.

MeT said Srinagar recorded a 30.9°C day temperature, making it the second-highest maximum temperature ever recorded

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Srinagar Police urge public to disassociate from IuM, AAC

SRINAGAR, APR 30: Srinagar Police on Wednesday led a public awareness campaign across the City, urging citizens to disassociate themselves from the Itihad-ul-Muslimeen and the Awami Action Committee (AAC).

The loudspeaker announcements and poster campaigns were carried out at multiple locations in the city.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), police vehicles equipped with loudspeakers were seen traversing various localities, including key areas like Lal Chowk and Karan Nagar.

Through these public address systems,



authorities called on the general public to stay away from the two organisations.

Additionally, posters carrying the same message were pasted on walls, poles, and other public spots in several neighbor-

hoods.

The posters reportedly warn citizens against associating with the Itihad-ul-Muslimeen and AAC, reiterating the police's advisory.

Officials also stated the move is part of a broader awareness campaign aimed at educating the public about certain groups and their affiliations.

Meanwhile, the campaign is said to be continuous for the past few days across multiple zones of Srinagar city and may expand in the coming days.

Eyewitnesses said that police personnel not only made announcements via mobile

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Lt Gen Pratik Sharma takes over as Northern Army Commander

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 30: Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma Wednesday took over as the new Commander-in-Chief of the Udhampur-based Northern Army Command. He replaced Lt Gen MV Suchendra Kumar after his 15-month tenure in the office. With an illustrious career spanning across three decades, Lt General Sharma, according to the news agency—is an infantry officer who has served in varied operational environments. He was a part

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Secretary Health visits Baltal, assesses Medical Preparedness for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2025

■ HT News Network

BALTAL (SONAMARG), APR 30: In order to take first hand appraisal of the Health facilities being put in place for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, today visited Base Camp Hospital Baltal and Primary Health Centre Sonamarg.

Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr Jahangeer Bakhshi, accompanied the Secretary during the visit.

At the 100-bedded Base Camp Hospital in Baltal, the Secretary inspected critical medical facilities including Inten-



sive Care Unit, trauma care section and oxygen generation plant besides accommodation infrastructure for the staff. He also visited PHC Sonamarg and inspected various section of the health facility.

The Secretary emphasized the need for complete readiness of all medical services well before commencement of the pilgrimage season.

He issued clear directives to all medical officers and yatra staff, stressing the importance of maintaining 24/7 emergency services, establishing efficient patient referral systems and ensuring adequate stock of essential medicines. Special

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

J&K, Ladakh to achieve 62% non-fossil fuel capacity by 2034-35

■ HT News Network/UNI

SRINAGAR, APR 30 (UNI) Jammu and Ladakh are likely to witness around 62 per cent of share from non-fossil fuel-based capacity in mixed electricity generation by 2034-35.

The official documents available with the reveal that the share of non-fossil fuel-based capacity in the generation mix is projected to be around 62% by 2034-35 with higher contribution from non-fossil fuel-based capacities in alignment with Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) trajectory.

"As per the studies, the total projected contracted Capacity for the year 2034- 35 excluding Short Term Open Access (STOA) is 10,088 MW which consists

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



BJP Tarun Chugh Calls PM Modi Govt's Caste Census Move a Social Justice Milestone, Blasts Congress for Hypocrisy

■ HT News Network

BALTAL (SONAMARG), APR 30: Jammu, April 30, ANB, Speaking at a state seminar under the Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Samman Abhiyan at the BJP State Office in Chandigarh, BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh hailed the Narendra Modi government's decision to include caste-based enumeration in the upcoming Census as "historic, visionary, and a defining moment for India's social justice landscape."

According to News Service, Associated News Bureau, ANB, "This isn't just about counting castes," Chugh said. "It's about informed policymaking for the most deprived, backed by precise data. The Modi government delivers with intent and integrity —

not just slogans."

Chugh launched a sharp attack on the Congress and the I.N.D.I alliance, accusing them of politicizing caste census after having failed to act on it during their rule. He noted that no full-scale caste enumeration was carried out under Congress, and the 2011 SECC survey lacked transparency and seriousness. "Back then, they only offered lip service," he said.

He also criticized politically driven caste surveys by some state governments, calling them "opaque and divisive." In contrast, Chugh said the Modi government is incorporating caste enumeration into the national census for "transparency, accuracy, and national coherence."

Chugh highlighted the Modi government's track record on social equity: the 10% EWS reservation for



economically weaker sections without unrest, and granting constitutional status to the OBC Commission — a demand long ignored by Congress.

Turning to Punjab politics, Chugh accused Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's government of failing Dalits, OBCs, and marginalized communities.

"Scholarships have stalled, education is crumbling, and jobs are vanishing. The AAP government has reduced Ambedkar's legacy to photo ops," he said.

He further accused Congress of sidelining Dr. B.R. Ambedkar during his lifetime and delaying his Bharat Ratna recognition until a BJP-supported government came to power. "Even Ambedkar's entry into the Constituent Assembly was opposed," Chugh added.

Praising BJP efforts to honor Ambedkar — including Atal Bihari Vajpayee's move to place his portrait in Parliament and PM Modi's development of the Panch Teerth — Chugh accused Congress of exploiting Ambedkar's name for electoral gain while undermining his ideals historically.

Chugh also targeted Rahul Gandhi, Arvind Kejriwal, and other I.N.D.I alliance leaders.

"These are the same people who lose elections and then preach constitutional values. Their predecessors consistently opposed reservation and OBC rights," he said, citing Nehru's directive against reservation, Rajiv Gandhi's opposition to OBC quotas, and Rahul Gandhi's past remarks on reservations abroad.

Concluding, Chugh said, "Dr. Ambedkar dreamed of an India that is educated, empowered, and equal. Prime Minister Modi is realizing that vision. Those who misuse Babasaheb's legacy for political theatrics will be judged — by history and by the people." ANB

Awareness Programme on New Criminal Laws Held at Girls Hr. Sec. School Reasi

REASI, APRIL 30: An awareness campaign on the newly introduced criminal laws was today conducted at Girls Higher Secondary School Reasi. The program was organized under the guidance of the Principal, DIET Surjeet Kumar Sharma in collaboration with local police.

The chief guest and resource person for the event, Sub-Inspector Jarnail Singh, provided detailed insights into the three new criminal laws. He engaged actively with the

students, helping them understand the changes and their impact on society.

Vineet Sharma, Teacher at DIET Reasi, served as the District Nodal Officer, while Dr. Zakir Hussain, Senior Lecturer at Girls Hr. Sec. School Reasi, coordinated the event. The entire school staff participated enthusiastically, contributing to the success of the programme.

The initiative aimed to educate students about important legal reforms, promote legal awareness, and encourage responsible citizenship among the youth. An awareness



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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

LG

Take strong action against OGWs who are providing logistics to terrorists, identifying targets for them and helping them to escape. Infrastructure and support system of terrorism in every nook and corner of Union Territory has to be dismantled permanently.

It should be our priority to ensure a sense of security to the common man," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also directed to further strengthen the security grid and stressed upon the need for better coordination and synergy among the security agencies.

CM

and efficient execution of vital infrastructure works.

The Chief Minister was briefed on the status of major infrastructure projects being executed by NHAI, NHIDCL, BRO and the PWD. Secretary, Public Works (R&B), Bhu-pinder Kumar gave a comprehensive presentation, informing that approximately a dozen major highway corridors and one expressway, spanning over 1,800 kilometers, are currently in various stages of execution. These include strategically important routes such as National Highway 44 (Jammu-Srinagar), NH-144A (Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch) and the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway (NE-5), among others.

The meeting also reviewed 12 major tunnel projects, including the Zoji La Tunnel, Z-Morh Tunnel, Panthal-Magarkote Tunnel, and other projects, many of which are in the advanced stages of construction.

Commissioner Secretary Industries and Commerce Vikramjit Singh briefed the meeting on the availability of construction material and mining permissions, highlighting recent improvements and unresolved issues requiring attention at the appropriate forums.

Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani flagged key traffic congestion points and suggested practical mitigation measures. He emphasized incorporating long-term traffic management features into the ongoing highway designs.

Omar Abdullah took detailed stock of project-specific challenges and enquired about persistent bottlenecks, particularly those falling within Jammu and Kashmir's territorial jurisdiction. He emphasized the need to resolve procedural hurdles and recurring loopholes, calling for time-bound clearances and proactive administrative facilitation.

"These projects hold not just developmental but strategic importance. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that there are no unwarranted delays or procedural gaps. The Centre is also closely monitoring these corridors, and our progress must reflect seriousness and coordination," the Chief Minister observed.

Expressing concern over delays caused by land acquisition, forest clearances and shifting of Utilities, the Chief Minister directed the concerned departments to streamline these processes. He called for enhanced inter-departmental synergy, particularly between the executing agencies and the district admin-

istrations.

On the issue of public displacement and property acquisition, the Chief Minister stressed the importance of fair and well-planned rehabilitation and resettlement.

"Those affected must be given substantial reassurance through timely and fair rehabilitation measures," he said.

He also reviewed security-related constraints in certain stretches and instructed the concerned departments to ensure that project activities remain on schedule with adequate coordination with security agencies.

"These projects are the main road arteries for Jammu and Kashmir's future economic development. The timely and quality execution of these projects must remain a top priority," the Chief Minister added.

DGMO

and International Border in four districts of Jammu region and in North Kashmir, official sources told KNO.

They said that Indian forces 'responded effectively' and gave a befitting reply. "The firing with small arms was reported from the Pargwal sector along the IB in Jammu district and the Sunderbani and Naushera sectors in Rajouri district," officials added.

Pertinently, after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 people, mostly tourists dead, "India and Pakistan armies have been on high alert amid heightened tensions along the borders and the LoC."

"On the night of April 29-30, Pakistan Army posts initiated unprovoked small-arms fire across the Line of Control opposite the Naushera, Sunderbani, and Akhnoor sectors in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir," a defence spokesperson in Jammu said.

The Indian Army troops responded swiftly and proportionately, he added.

Similar incidents of unprovoked small-arms fire were also reported from Pakistani posts across the LoC in Baramulla and Kupwara districts in Kashmir, officials said.

"Initially, the firing began in Kupwara and Baramulla districts and then spread to the Poonch and Akhnoor sectors. It further escalated to the Sunderbani and Naushera sectors in Rajouri district, followed by firing along the IB in Jammu's Pargwal sector," they added—

CAST

from a political angle in a non-transparent way. Such surveys have created doubts in society."

Vaishnav said, "Considering all these facts, and to ensure that our social fabric is not disturbed by politics, caste enumeration should be transparently included in the Census instead of surveys. This will strengthen the social and economic structure of our society while the nation continues to progress."

It may be mentioned that the main Opposition party, the Congress and especially Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had been demanding caste census. He had raised the issue at various platforms including the Lower House.

The Minister added, "This demonstrates that our government is committed to the

values and interests of our society and country, like in the past when our government had introduced 10 percent reservation for the economically weaker sections of the society without causing stress in any section of the society."

12TH RESULT

in the Class 12 examinations, prompting praise from top education authorities for their stellar performance and the timely declaration of results.

Minister for Education, Health and Medical Education, and Social Welfare, Ms. Sakina Itoo, expressed deep satisfaction over the high pass percentage and applauded the efforts of the board officials, teachers, and support staff for ensuring the efficient conduct and swift publication of results. She particularly highlighted the commendable performance of girl students, describing it as a promising sign of rising educational standards in the region.

Joining in the commendation, Additional Chief Secretary for School and Higher Education, Mr. Shantmanu (IAS), extended congratulations to the successful students, as well as to the teaching community and board officials. He noted that the seamless coordination between educators and administrative staff played a vital role in the timely and transparent release of exam results, strengthening public trust in the education system.

Director of School Education Kashmir, Mr. G.N. Itoo, also expressed pride in the students' accomplishments, offering special congratulations to those who secured top ranks and distinctions. He spotlighted the success of students from several government schools particularly GHSS Kothi Bagh Srinagar for excellence in Home Science, GHSS Nowhatta Srinagar for outstanding performance in Arts, GHSS Bugam Budgam for excellence in Science and GHSS Amirakadal Srinagar for securing top marks in Commerce.

Mr. Itoo also acknowledged the dedication of teachers and school heads whose tireless efforts paved the way for such impressive outcomes. He further praised the parents for their continued faith in government institutions and for supporting their children through the exam process.

This year's Class 12 examination saw 103,308 students appear, out of which more than 77,000 successfully cleared the exams, pushing the overall pass percentage to 74.83%. Notably, girls outshone boys, claiming all but one of the top ten positions.

The announcement of results has sparked widespread celebration across the valley. With this landmark performance, government schools in Jammu and Kashmir have not only made headlines but also reaffirmed their growing role in shaping the region's academic excellence.

10TH

"Girls registered a total pass percentage of 81.24 percent while boys registered only 78.74 percent," BOSE said

In the exams, a total of 1,456,71 students were enrolled for class 10th session Annual Regular 2025 in the UTs of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh out of which 1,164,53 students

qualified the exams.

It also said that at least 16,343 students qualified the exam with A1 grade, 18,678 students with A2 grade, 22,219 secured B1 grade, 27,171 got B2 grade, 25,583 secured C1 grade, 6432 C2 grade and 49 students have been placed in Grade-D.

The figures also reveal that in the exams, one student was having a disputed eligibility, three students were caught with unfair means, exam was cancelled of 40 students, five students were disqualified for two years and one student for three years.

The official had said that nearly 3,55,963 students were registered for the annual regular examination of class 10th, 11th and 12th including 1,32,992 candidates of 10th standard, 1,20,673 in 11th standard and 1,02,298 students of 12th standard respectively.

Pertinently, Education Minister Sakina Itoo had directed the BOSE and the concerned authorities to announce the results by April-30.

Earlier the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) had said that the board will declare the results of 10th and 12th standard on the same date—

SAKEENA

perseverance of students for achieving academic excellence. She added that our students have shown remarkable determination and achieved such brilliant results.

The Minister also extended her heartfelt greetings to girl students for outshining the boys both in overall pass percentage and top meritorious positions, adding that girls are excelling in every field.

The Minister also encouraged those who may not have achieved their desired results to stay motivated and focus on future opportunities. "Exams are just one step in the journey as there are many paths to success and each student has their own unique potential", Sakeena stated.

The Minister also appreciated the JKBOSE administration for compiling the results in a short span of 36 days.

HEATWAVE

in the summer capital during April. The all-time highest temperature in Srinagar for the month remains 31.1°C, recorded on April 20, 1946, MeT said. Qazigund and Pahalgam in south Kashmir recorded day temperatures of 30.9°C and 27°C respectively.

The ski resort of Gulmarg in Baramulla district recorded 22.2°C.

The MeT on Wednesday predicted generally hot and dry weather with heat wave at isolated places till May 1.

The MeT said from May 1 to May 5, the Union Territory is likely to witness brief showers at isolated scattered places, accompanied by thunder and gusty winds.

The weather is expected to settle from May 6 to 8, with a generally dry spell forecast. However, May 9 and 10 may bring a change again, as there is a possibility of light rain and thunder in some parts of the Union Territory.

ARMY

of key operations such as operations Pawan, Meghdoot, Rakshak and Parakram.

Lt Gen Sharma has held key appointments, including Director General Military Operations, Military Secretary branch. He was also the Director General of Information Warfare at the newly institutionalised Information Directorate at the Army Headquarters in New Delhi.

The Udhampur-based Northern Army Command looks after the entire gamut of operations against Pakistan and China in the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh sectors.

Even prior to his appointment, which was approved by the government on April 28, Lt Gen Kumar had travelled with Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi to Srinagar after the Pahalgam terror attack, which killed 26 people on April 22.

It may be recalled that in February last year, the outgoing General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Northern Command, Lt Gen MV Suchendra Kumar, took over from then Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi, who is now the Army Chief—

POLICE

units but also took steps to physically post warning notices in marketplaces and residential areas.

The campaign has also drawn attention from passersby and locals, with many seen gathering around the posters to read their content—

YATRA

emphasis was placed on coordination between the Base Camp Hospital, PHC Sonamarg and all medical teams along the yatra route.

Dr. Abid reiterated the administration's focus on delivering prompt, efficient, and compassionate healthcare services throughout the pilgrimage period—

J&K

of 3700 MW from Coal, 129 MW from Gas, 3364 MW from Hydro, 68 MW from Nuclear, 1840 MW from Solar and 987 MW from DRE. This IC along with additional 700 MW of STOA shall be able to meet the projected demand with prescribed reliability criteria," the documents reveal.

In the electricity generation mix, non-fossil fuel-based capacity refers to the share of power generation sources that do not rely on fossil fuels like coal, oil, or natural gas. This includes sources like renewable energy, including hydro, solar, wind, biomass, nuclear power, and potentially other technologies like geothermal or advanced energy storage.

The official documents further reveal that the reliability studies have been carried out to adhere to the reliability criteria of Loss of Load Probability (LoLP) and Normalized Energy Not Served (NENS) as provided in NEP (0.2% and 0.05% respectively).

According to the documents, the Performance Rating Method (PRM) for the state of J&K and Ladakh has been assessed as 5.10%. They mention that the projected and contracted capacity fulfils the stipulated Renewable Purchase Obligation," it reads—(KNO)



EDITORIAL

Make Jal Jeevan Mission scheme a hit in real sense

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), a flagship programme launched by the Government of India some years back was aimed to provide clean drinking water to the people of India. The scheme might have achieved its target of reaching out to the people since tap water connections have been provided to the people living in the far-flung areas of the country, but on the other hand people continue to suffer.

Reports of water shortage come from different parts of the Kashmir valley every now and then. Over the years the Jal Shakti department has failed to upgrade the system and as a result of this there has been no improvement in the overall water supply. It is due to this reason that a slight increase in the day temperature leads to shortage of the drinking water across the length and breadth of the valley. Failure to upgrade the existing system and above all the failure to introduce new water supply schemes has compounded the problems of the people.

The basic problem is that the planners here have a limited vision and they don't look towards the future. They are concerned about the present day and seem to be least bothered about the future. Ideally the people at helm should have a vision and they should formulate a scheme that can run for decades together. Once this happens the coming generations will not suffer on account of clean drinking water. As on date the people are suffering and one does not know when the things will change.

It is important that the Jal Shakti department upgrades the existing infrastructure so that the people are not up against multiple problems during the coming summer season. The rusted pipes need to be replaced by fresh ones and that too with a higher diameter. At the same time proper cleaning of the water supply schemes needs to be done so that clean and drinking water is supplied to the people.

The department needs to pull up the socks and make a proper stock of chlorine and other chemicals that are needed to make water free from all the impurities. It has been observed that during rains dirty and filthy water is supplied to the people and as such people fall prey to different water borne diseases. The same need to be looked into by the people at helm so that the masses are entitled to clean and drinking water.

ISLAM AND THE SHIFTING SOCIAL NORMS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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In an age where immersive virtual worlds have become an integral part of daily life, Muslims must ask: Do our online pastimes honour the principles of Shariah? As Islam is a religion that is apt for all time, it engages with all the activities that arise in every era. Now, we are in an online era—an era of the Internet, social media, online games, etc. The social era makes relationships more social; however, unfortunately, our relationships have become narrowed through social media. Games and sporting activities, which were once social and inclusive, have increasingly shifted indoors, becoming more isolating. This shift has contributed to the rise of a more introverted society, potentially hindering social development and communal engagement.

Several Indian states, including Assam, Sikkim, Nagaland, Odisha, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh, have banned Dream11 and similar fantasy sports platforms. These bans are primarily due to concerns that such platforms involve elements of gambling, which are prohibited under their respective state laws.

The Rise of Online Gaming and Its Addictive Impact

The World Health Organization officially classified online gaming disorder as a behavioural addiction in the 11th revision of the ICD-11 (2019). Just as substance addiction can undermine a person's physical and psychological health, compulsive gaming can erode one's financial stability, social bonds, and ultimately, spiritual well-being.

In Islam, play and recreation are permissible within the boundaries of Islamic law. However, certain types of games are considered haram (forbidden) due to their potential negative effects on an individual's spiritual, moral, and social well-being. Addiction symptoms manifest both physically and psychologically. Physical addiction is related to the development of dependence on certain substances or activities after sudden discontinuation. Despite giving pleasure initially, consuming the substances or engaging in the activities will eventually create an urge to eliminate anxiety triggered by the discontinuation, resulting in compulsive behaviour.

Gambling: An Ethical and Social Menace

Islam prohibits gambling not solely due to its addictive nature but because it fundamentally opposes the values of honest labour and ethical wealth acquisition. The religion

upholds the principle that wealth should be earned through genuine effort and not through games of chance or speculative fortune. This discourages dependency on uncertainty and promotes a just and balanced society where resources are fairly earned and distributed. Beyond individual behaviour, Islam's disapproval of gambling also stems from its damaging impact on families and communities. Financial collapse, emotional strain, broken relationships, and the erosion of mutual trust are all seen as consequences that ripple through society—consequences that Islamic teachings seek to prevent in preserving social harmony and moral integrity.

The Prohibition of Maysir in Islamic Law

The games based on gambling are haram in Islam. Gambling is the wagering of money or something of value on an event with an uncertain outcome, with the primary intent of winning money or material goods. It is also known as betting. Allah says: "O believers! Intoxicants, gambling, idols, and drawing lots for decisions are all evil of Satan's handiwork. So, avoid them so you may be successful" (Sura Al Maeda: 90). Prophet Muhammad (SAW) instructed his companions to stay away from such games. The games that had the element of gambling at the time of the Prophet were considered forbidden. The Quran explicitly condemns gambling alongside intoxicants as a "major sin" because both foster addiction and social harm: "O you who believe! Intoxicants, gambling, (sacrificing on) stone altars, and divining arrows are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So avoid them that you may be successful" (Quran 5:90).

Lawful Recreation as a Form of Worship

Islam is the complete and universal version of the primordial faith that was revealed to many prophets, from Adam (A) to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Islam enlightens one's life with the right instructions and rules. It touches on every aspect of life and society, from birth to death. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya defines ibadah broadly as "all acts of obedience to Allah, whether verbal or physical, seen or unseen." Recreational activities can attain the status of ibadah when performed with the right intention and within Shariah boundaries. Therefore, all entertainment activities or sports that do not fulfil the requirements of Sharia and are against the principles of Sharia are considered forbidden (Ibn Taymiyya, Majmu al Fatawa (Beirut: Dar awq, 1997), 23:418).

The Principle of Continuity: Offline to Online

A fundamental principle of fiqh al-ta adduth (digital jurisprudence) holds that "what is prohibited offline remains prohibited online," and "what is permissible offline remains permissible online." Contemporary scholars agree that the medium (digital vs. physical) does not alter the ruling's substance (Council of Senior Scholars, Digital Fiqh Statement on Online Transactions (KSA, 2021)).

The Permissibility of Online Games in Islamic Jurisprudence

Online games are growing rapidly nowadays, and it is difficult to identify the good and bad among them. Therefore, a Muslim should be more aware of them and should fulfil all requirements and obey all the rulings of Sharia. The permissibility of online or electronic games is the same as that of hadith concerning sports activities. Therefore, all online games that fulfil the recommendations and rules of Sharia are permissible in Islam. Rules such as not having elements of gambling, nudity, or promoting violence must be considered. Many online games promote violence, such as killing others in missions, conquering other things, seducing, and promoting nudity etc. All these games are prohibited in Islam.

Case Studies: Evaluating Popular Electronic Games

In the vibrant realm of electronic gaming, Muslims must navigate with spiritual vigilance, as many popular titles harbour elements conflicting with Islamic principles. Games like PUBG glorify violence, urging players to eliminate opponents through combat and looting—acts starkly opposed to the Quranic sanctity of life and peace. Similarly, the GTA series immerses users in morally corrosive environments, promoting nudity, hedonism, and even idolatry through its missions, all of which clash with Islamic modesty and monotheism. Gambling-centric platforms such as MPL, Packino, Video Poker, and Rummy entice players into financial risk and deception, violating Islam's strict prohibition of maysir (gambling) that exploits chance and greed. Even seemingly innocent games like Ludo spark scholarly debate: while some equate its dice-based mechanics to the forbidden Nardasheer (a game of chance denounced by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)), others permit it as harmless recreation if stripped of monetary stakes. Together, these examples underscore a sacred duty for believers to scrutinise digital entertainment, aligning leisure with divine ethics, rejecting virtual worlds that normalise harm,

indecency, or greed, and embracing pursuits that honour faith over fleeting thrills.

BCGame Casino openly promotes casino-style betting, complete with digital slot machines and high-stakes wagers, directly contravening the Quran's clear condemnation of games of chance (5:90). Dream 11 and My11Circle, widely used fantasy sports platforms, involve creating virtual teams for monetary rewards based on real match outcomes. Despite claims of skill, their reliance on chance and financial stakes aligns them with maysir (gambling), which is prohibited in Islam.

Halal Alternatives: Faith-Centred Recreation

Islam encourages wholesome pastimes that nurture the body, mind, and soul. Consider:

a) Qur'an & Arabic Learning Apps: Gamified interfaces for memorisation and recitation, with badges and leaderboards to motivate learners.

b) Prophetic Sports: Archery, swimming, and horse riding are sports the Prophet (SAW) personally practised and endorsed (e.g., wrestling, swimming). (Al Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al Jihad, 4:271).

c) Family-Friendly Board Games (Non-Gambling): Chess, Scrabble, Carrom, as long as they involve no betting, encourage social bonding, and avoid immoral themes.

d) Creative & Educational Workshops: Calligraphy, Islamic history quizzes, or science-based coding camps that combine education with recreation.

Conclusion

Sport activities help a person maintain their health. As Islam is a religion that deals with all aspects of life, it considers all sporting activities that fulfil the rulings of Sharia. While dealing with online games, all the rulings that should be considered offline are also to be obeyed online. In contrast, all the games that do not clash with the principles of Sharia and those that fulfil the rulings of Sharia are lawful in Islam and are sometimes considered as ibadah depending on their intentions. Games involving gambling, promoting violence or immorality, causing obsession, or featuring harmful content are considered haram. Ultimately, leisure in Islam is not merely about entertainment, but a conscious choice to engage in what uplifts the self and society while remaining within the bounds of faith.

The writer is an Assistant Professor in the University Institute of Legal Studies, Chandigarh University

Fear of independent women: indigestion of Hindi literature



PRİYANKA SAURABHI

The Hindi literature world still cannot digest the real independent and enlightened women. They want a female writer of the kind they want. She should write on soft issues, family, society, some psychology, and man-woman relationships. For them, the synonym of modernity or a modern woman is that she can write boldly. In the name of bold writing, this society praises vulgarity in female writers and bestows them with big words. They do all this in the name of women's freedom.

Those confused women also consider opposing family, opposing culture, and supporting perverted sexuality as bold and modern and keep strutting like puppets in their hands. It is a pity that they do not know that they are puppets; they are made to write whatever they want, and that too by coating them in the syrup of modern, courageous, bold, independent, enlightened words. Writing

of slimy literature, destruction, and negativity is what makes them called bold and enlightened.

Even today, enlightened women with independent consciousness are an uncomfortable truth for the Hindi literary world. Women who are masters of their independent intellect, who think, raise questions, and do not fit into the old mold of submissive female writers—they are still not acceptable to the literary community. Even today, they want such female writers who fit into their prescribed mold: those who write on 'soft' issues—family, society, a little psychology, and some light-hearted male-female relationships.

When 'modernity' is mentioned on the platforms of Hindi literature, it too has a set framework. For them, a "modern" female writer means one who is "bold"—that is, one who serves obscenity in the name of 'bold writin'g. One who is incited in the name of 'sexual freedom'—opposition to the family, mockery of culture, and distortion of relationships—is said to be synonymous with modernity. And this entire trickery is wrapped up with such sweetness that the confused female writers themselves believe this lie to be true. They are filled with pride about how 'bold,' 'independent,' and 'modern' they have

The Hindi literature world still cannot digest the real independent and enlightened women. They want a female writer of the kind they want. She should write on soft issues, family, society, some psychology, and man-woman relationships. For them, the synonym of modernity or a modern woman is that she can write boldly. In the name of bold writing, this society praises vulgarity in female writers and bestows them with big words. They do all this in the name of women's freedom.

become—while they have become mere puppets in the hands of those literary contractors who make them dance according to their convenience. Sadly, they never have the time to raise this question: whether the lesson of freedom that they are being taught, have those male writers taught the same lesson to the women of their

homes as well?

The mindset of the literary society is that women's writing should be limited to a hidden realm of tender emotions, beauty, love, separation, or soft porn. If a woman dares to write seriously on geopolitics, religion, philosophy, spirituality, international relations, sociology, politics, education, economics, or policies, she makes them uncomfortable. This unbearable thought gets embedded in their minds: "These are the fields of men." Women should only embellish words—they should not raise deep questions. Depth of thoughts, sharpness of analysis, and intellectual boldness—all these are still considered 'male bastions' in the Hindi literary scene.

A woman who neither bows down to the desire of any award nor compromises her ideas in the greed of any platform nor is hungry for the favor of any famous critic, a woman who is alert and firm about her thoughts, values, and character—she is still a dangerous presence for the Hindi literary world. Such a woman being the owner of her own conscience and her independence scares them, irritates them, and makes them uncomfortable. They start awarding her with titles like 'arrogant,' 'insensitive,' 'fanatic,' and 'over-intellectual' so

that she can be pushed to the margins. But all their ridicule, all their criticism, is just a trivial noise for that woman, who knows that her war is not against the darkness outside but against the darkness within.

Look at this paradox: those who taught women the lesson of 'modernity' in the name of sexuality still apply the same criteria of 'purity,' 'decency,' and 'tradition' to the women of their own homes. For them, 'boldness' is only for the women of the outside world. The women of the house should still remain veiled, should remain silent, and should remain modest.

Women who sell their freedom for obscenity, their modernity for self-deception, and their courage for the pseudo-support of patriarchy—they do not actually become a part of any revolution but rather become the new cherries of that patriarchal literary system.

The harsh truth is that "Women's Liberation" has also become a brand today. It is traded, displayed on stage, and distributed as awards.

In fact, the rebellion of a woman with an independent consciousness is very subtle and invisible. It is not expressed in vulgar language, not in negativity, not in outrageous boldness—but in the depth

of thought, in the accurate analysis of issues, and in the honesty of her writing.

When she writes on love, she explains the complexity of compassion. When she writes on politics, she draws a picture of the suffering of the people in the churning of power. When she writes on religion, she breaks the web of superstition and intolerance.

She knows that the true purpose of literature is to reveal the truth—not to become a pawn to power, greed, and the sexual market.

Hindi literature will now have to accept that women are not just symbols of "decoration" or "sensitivity." They now ask questions, analyze, break, and create. And most importantly, they no longer want to become pawns of anyone's agenda.

They have become the creators of their own thoughts, their own pens, and their own future. The sooner the literary society understands this change, the better it will be—otherwise only puppets will keep dancing in their world, and women with independent consciousness will keep making new paths for themselves in history.

"When a woman raises her voice, she does not just speak for herself; she challenges the silence of the entire society."

A Medical Student’s Perspective on the Growing Epidemic of Drug Abuse in Kashmir



TYIMA BILAL
Student at GMC Srinagar

In the enchanting valleys of Kashmir, where nature paints a serene portrait, a silent epidemic is eroding the very soul of society: drug addiction. Beyond the statistics and sensational headlines lies a deeper, more painful reality. When one individual falls into the abyss of addiction, entire families suffer. The tragedy of drug abuse in Kashmir is not merely a personal affliction; it is a collective wound that tears through the very fabric of families and communities.

As a medical student, my clinical exposure has not been limited to cardiac diseases or surgical cases, but has increasingly brought me face-to-face with the grim realities of substance abuse. Beyond the walls of hospitals and de-addiction centers, I have witnessed the devastating effects of drugs on young lives and the irreparable scars etched onto the hearts of their families.

The Alarming Rise Of Drug Abuse:

Statistics paint a disturbing picture. Data from de-addiction centers such as SMHS Hospital Srinagar and IMHANS Kashmir, reveal an exponential rise in drug-related cases over the past five years. In 2024 alone, more than 11,000 individuals sought help for substance abuse, with a staggering majority being youths between the ages of 18 and 30. At least 25,400 drug abusers have been registered in Out-Patient Department (OPD) and 1,595 in In-Patient Department (IPD) across Jammu and Kashmir since 2022, according to latest official data. In Kashmir, heroin use—often through intravenous methods—has led to a sharp increase in hepatitis C and HIV infections due to shared needles. Addicts frequently present with collapsed veins, bacterial infections, skin abscesses, and organ damage. As a trainee working in the wards, I witness firsthand how heroin addicts arrive with severe withdrawal symptoms and visibly damaged bodies. Yet beyond these clinical signs lie deeper, often invisible wounds: mental anguish, broken dreams, and shattered families.

The Personal Toll on the User:

Drug addiction is not merely a physical illness; it is a chronic brain disease that hijacks an individual's ability to make rational deci-



sions. During patient interviews, many addicts described their initial encounter with drugs as “An Escape” – a brief respite from the stresses of life, unemployment, conflict, or trauma. However, that escape rapidly devolves into dependency and self-destruction. Drugs overload the brain's reward circuits, with dopamine creating

intense euphoria, initially enhancing but eventually desensitizing the brain's natural ability to feel pleasure. Over time, addicts experience anxiety, depression, paranoia, hallucinations, and in some cases, psychosis. Trapped in this cycle, individuals face withdrawal symptoms such as intense cravings, severe anxiety, and body

aches, which drive many back to drug use even when they genuinely wish to quit. The body suffers, but the mind deteriorates even faster, leading to depression, suicidal thoughts, and sometimes fatal overdoses.

The Unseen Victims: Families

For every person caught in addiction, there is a family that suffers silently. During my visit to the addiction counseling unit, I met numerous parents, siblings, and spouses, each carrying the heavy burdens of hope, despair, guilt, and helplessness. Parents, in particular, wrestle with relentless self-doubt, questioning whether they failed somewhere in raising their child. The constant anxiety of watching a loved one deteriorate mentally and physically slowly erodes the emotional stability of the entire household. Mothers cry themselves to sleep, fearing for their child's life. Fathers age prematurely under the weight of financial strain, societal pressure, treatment costs, legal fees, and job losses. In Kashmir, many families endure this suffering in silence, trapped by the social stigma surrounding addiction. Afraid of being judged by neighbors and relatives, they hesitate to seek help, allowing the disease to fester even deeper.

The Way Forward: A Call To Action

From a medical student's perspective, it is evident that drug addiction must be addressed as a public health emergency. Awareness campaigns should be expanded to reach schools and colleges, and screening for substance abuse must become a routine part of medical checkups, especially for the youth. Mental health services must be strengthened alongside addiction treatment to address underlying issues such as depression, trauma, and anxiety. A collaborative approach involving schools, religious leaders, local NGOs, and healthcare providers is essential to educate, prevent, and treat drug abuse effectively. Furthermore, government policies should prioritize strengthening rehabilitation centers, expanding access to mental health services, and creating employment opportunities for young people to reduce the demand for drugs. Families affected by addiction must be encouraged to seek help without stigma. Support groups for parents and siblings, along with community service initiatives, can play a crucial role in breaking the cycle of addiction. Together, we can guide our youth toward a healthier, drug-free future.

Arshid Qalmi’s Masterpiece: A Comprehensive Perspective on Adolescent Mental Health: In the Context of India and Kashmir

A Revolutionary, Intellectual, and Scholarly Discourse on Mental Health and Educational Psychology



ARSHAD QALAMI

Kashmir has long been a cradle of knowledge, literature, intellectual thought, and spiritual wisdom. The region's scholars and writers have not only revolutionized the fields of knowledge and research but have also illuminated the paths of awareness and enlightenment for generations. The sagacious teachings of Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA), the mystical poetry of Lal Ded, the scholarly eminence of Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri (RA), and the intellectual contributions of luminaries like Ghulam Rasool Nazki, Abdul Ahad Azad, Mohiuddin Kamran, Mir Ghulam Rasool, Riyaz Punjabi, and Fayaz Tilgami have continuously upheld Kashmir's status as a hub of intellectual pursuit.

Over time, these intellectual beacons have grown even brighter, and in the modern era, many distinguished Kashmiri writers have made remarkable contributions to various academic, intellectual, and social issues. Mental health....one of the most sensitive and intricate subjects has also drawn the attention of Kashmir's thinkers, leading to the creation of impactful works that have gained significant recognition in the academic world. In this domain, eminent psychologists and scholars such as Dr. Mushtaq Momin, Professor Bashir Ahmad Dar, Dr. Waseem Bhat, and Dr. Manzoor Ahmad have highlighted mental health challenges through research and writing, providing valuable resources not only for general readers but also for experts in the field.

Among these notable scholars, Arshid Qalmi has emerged as a distinguished name, contributing an insightful and profound book on mental health. His writing is char-

acterized by intellectual depth and a unique analytical perspective that compels readers to think critically. By delving into the complexities of mental health, its societal impacts, and possible solutions, Arshid Qalmi has crafted a work that may serve as a guiding document for future researchers in this field.

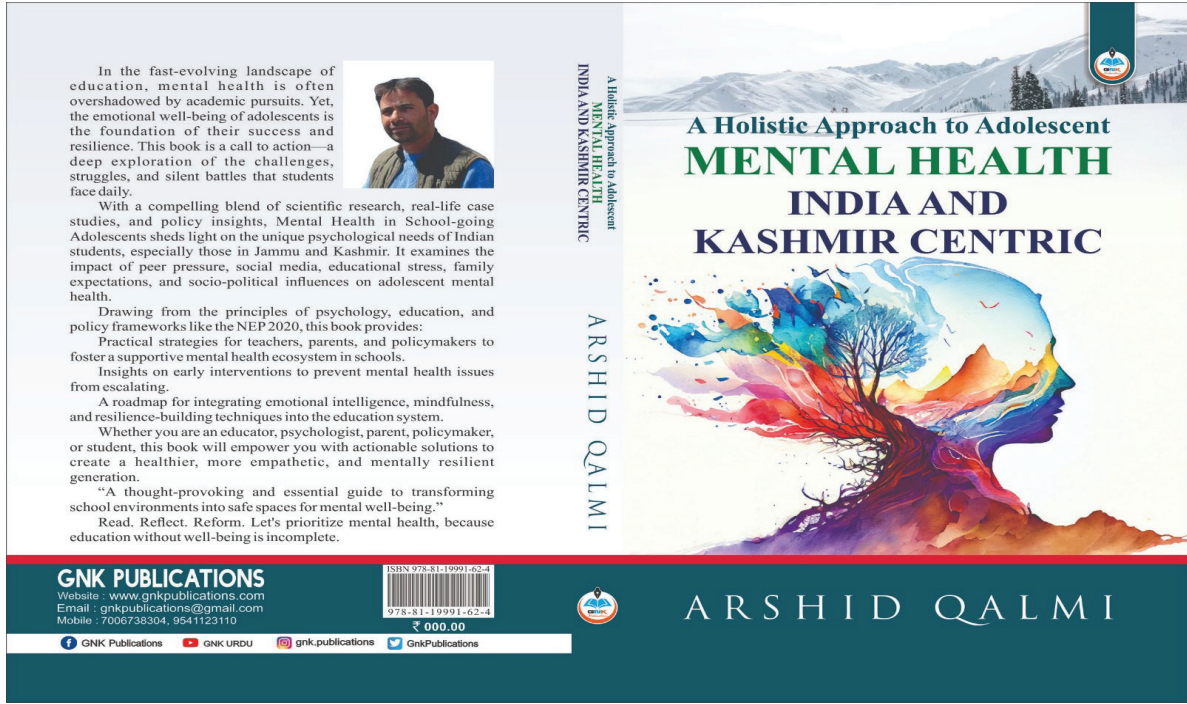
It would not be an exaggeration to say that Kashmiri intellectuals have consistently paved new avenues for thought and awareness through the power of their words. Their writings are not only invaluable intellectual assets but also guiding lights for future generations. Those who contribute to the discourse on mental health are, without a doubt, serving humanity, for a healthy mind is the foundation of a healthy society. Such efforts deserve the highest appreciation, and one can only hope that this scholarly tradition continues with the same brilliance in the future.

Arshid Qalmi: An Educator, Psychologist, and Intellectual Guide

Arshid Hussain Mir, known in academic circles as Arshid Qalmi, holds a distinguished place in Kashmir's intellectual and scholarly landscape. He hails from Aripal, a region known not only for its natural beauty but also for its complex socio-cultural dynamics. This environment has played a crucial role in shaping his intellectual journey...

Academically, he is exceptionally qualified. Holding a Master's degree in Psychology and a Bachelor's degree in Education, he is currently pursuing another Master's in Counseling and Family Therapy. He is not merely a theoretical expert but also a practical educator and a passionate mental health advocate. His research on adolescent mental health has earned him significant recognition in this field.

Currently serving as an educator at Government High School Aripal...His contributions extend far beyond the classroom. He actively collaborates with organizations such as the Pramal Foundation, Chhote Taare Foundation,



Muslim Students Federation, and Kashmir Lifeline to promote mental health awareness in schools.

His vast academic and practical experience is deeply reflected in his book, which stands as a groundbreaking research work on youth mental health and educational psychology.

The Book: A Unique Scholarly and Intellectual Achievement

This book is not just an academic document; it is an intellectual movement that advocates for the integration of mental health within the education system. The author convincingly argues that neglecting students' mental well-being can have irreversible consequences on their academic and personal lives.

The book comprises five foundational chapters:

1. Fundamentals of Mental Health
- The Importance of Mental Health in Schools
- The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Positive Thinking
- Psychological Resilience and Crisis Management Strategies
2. Challenges and Opportunities
- The Impact of Social Media, Sub-

stance Abuse, and Academic Pressure

Unique Psychological Challenges Faced by Kashmiri Youth

Exploration of Modern and Practical Solutions

3. Restructuring the Educational and Social System

Harmonizing the Roles of Teachers, Parents, and Psychologists

The Contribution of Government and NGOs in Promoting Mental Health in Educational Institutions

4. Empowering Teachers and Students

Training Programs for Teachers on Mental Health Awareness

Fostering Confidence and Leadership Skills Among Students

5. Practical Guidelines and Resources

Research Tools and Questionnaires for Mental Health Assessment

A Blueprint for a Long-Term, Comprehensive Educational Policy

Significance of the Book: The Context of India and Kashmir

This book is not just a theoretical discussion on educational psychology; it provides a detailed analysis of the real and urgent challenges

faced by the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

Compared to other regions of India, Kashmiri youth experience unique academic, social, and psychological challenges. They are affected by educational pressure, socio-political instability, and mental health crises. This book scientifically examines these issues and presents an alternative educational model that places mental health at its core.

Arshid Qalmi introduces a comprehensive strategic framework, guiding teachers, parents, and policymakers on how to transform the educational system into a holistic structure that ensures both academic excellence and mental and emotional well-being.

The Intellectual and Literary Eminence of the Book

This book is not merely a scientific research paper; it is also an intellectual, literary, and philosophical masterpiece. Arshid Qalmi's writing blends academic depth with literary elegance and philosophical wisdom, making it both enlightening and revolutionary. (However, the book is currently available only

in English.)

His style is not confined to dry technical jargon; rather, it reflects a broad intellectual vision, academic expansiveness, and a reformative spirit, compelling parents, educators, and policymakers to perceive education from a holistic human perspective.

This book is not just a publication...it is a manifesto of educational and psychological awareness, redefining the narrative of education, psychology, and social progress.

Conclusion: An Essential Book for Every Home and Educational Institution

A Comprehensive Perspective on Adolescent Mental Health: In the Context of India and Kashmir is not merely an academic research paper...it is an intellectual and scholarly revolution that has the potential to unify education and psychology, opening new doors for future progress.

This book is a must-read for anyone concerned about education, psychology, and the future of youth. It serves as a guiding principle for teachers, parents, policymakers, and educational institutions, encouraging them to view education not merely as information transfer but as a comprehensive personality-development process.

This is not just a scholarly achievement; it marks the beginning of an intellectual movement that can redefine adolescent mental health and educational well-being.

Book Details

Title: A Comprehensive Perspective on Adolescent Mental Health: In the Context of India and Kashmir

Author: Arshad Qalmi

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(Note: Mohammad Arfat Wani, a passionate writer, social activist, and medical student, hails from Kuchmulla Tral. His email address is wania6817@gmail.com)



Dy CM holds public outreach camp at Panchayat Bhawani-A, Nowshera Lays foundation stone for Panchayat Ghar at Bhawani-A

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 30: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today conducted a public outreach camp at Panchayat Bhawani-A in Nowshera, listening to the grievances of local residents with assurance of timely redressal of the same. During the camp, the locals raised several demands including construction of additional border bunkers, installation of hand pumps, establishment of eco-parks and setting up of a JK Bank branch with ATM facilities. They also highlighted the acute staff shortage at the Naib Tehsil office in Bhawani and sought

compensation for land acquisition along the Bhawani to Qila Darhal road under the Border Roads Organization (BRO). Besides, completion of the Bhawani to Shalakh road and inclusion of all eligible beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) were also among the major concerns raised. Other issues brought to the Dy CM's notice included water scarcity, inflated electricity bills and establishment of a receiving station in Bhawani. The community also urged for prompt resolution of staff shortage at Higher Secondary School (HSS) Bhawani. Responding to the demands,



the Dy CM issued on the spot directions to the concerned

departments. He instructed the Executive Engineer to expedite

work on the Bhawani to Shalakh road. He also directed the

Block Development Officer (BDO) to ensure that all eligible families are covered under PMAY-G. The Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) was directed to organize a special camp at Panchayat Bhawani-A for issuing labour cards and creating awareness about welfare schemes of the Labour Department. Taking serious note of the complaints regarding exaggerated electricity bills, the Dy CM asked the Power Development Department (PDD) officials to initiate immediate corrective measures. The Chief Education Officer (CEO) was instructed to ratio-

nalize staff postings to address the shortage at HSS Bhawani. On the occasion, the Deputy CM also laid the foundation stone for construction of Panchayat Ghar at Bhawani-A under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSa) with an estimated cost of Rs. 30 lakh. Extending his condolences, the Dy CM also expressed deep sympathies with the bereaved families affected by the recent terrorist attack in Pahalgam. Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera, PO ICDS, DSHO, ACP, DSWO, CEO Education, CMO, ALC, AD FCS&CA, Executive Engineers REW, PWD (R&B) Rajouri and PDD Rajouri attended the camp.

Police organises awareness programme on New Criminal Laws in Handwara

■ HT News Network

Handwara April 30: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting legal literacy and civic responsibility, Police in Handwara organized an awareness programme on the newly enacted criminal laws at Government High School Magam. The event witnessed active participation from students, teachers, and members of the local community. During the sessions students were interactive and enthusiastically engaged the officers with queries pertaining to new laws. Questions ranged from the advantages of specific legal changes to how these laws would improve everyday life. The officers encouraged such dialogue, fostering an environment where students felt empowered to understand the criminal jurisprudence. Speaking on the occasion, senior police officials emphasized the importance of community-oriented policing and legal education. They noted that informed citizens are vital to the effective implementation of any law, and such awareness programmes serve as a bridge between law enforcement agencies and the public. The event concluded with a collective pledge to uphold the rule of law and contribute towards a peaceful and just society. School authorities expressed gratitude to the police department for taking the initiative to bring legal knowledge to the grassroots level. This programme is part of a broader outreach strategy by the Police to cultivate legal consciousness and strengthen public trust. Similar awareness campaigns are expected to be conducted in other educational institutions and community hubs in Handwara in the coming weeks.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general publi through the medium of notice that Ab Ahad malik s/o Gh qadir malik R/o singpora is born on 01-02-1963 and my wife namely Raja Begum w/o Ab ahad malik born on 01-04-1966 now i want to obtain date of birth certificate if any body have any objection regardin issuance of Dob certificate he she the contect of bdo singpora with in period of seven days .

Yours faith fully
AB AHAD MALIK
S/O GH QADIR MALIK
R/O SINGPORA

Sopore's Hafiza-e-Quran tops Science stream of Class 12 with 494 Marks

■ HT News Network



Srinagar, Apr 30 (KB): In a shining example of the intersection of religion, discipline, and academic excellence, 17-year-old Hafiza-e-Quran Jannat Shabir Rawa of Sir Syed Colony, Sopore, has been one of the top scorers in the Class 12 Science stream of the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) with a whopping 494 marks. A student of SRMLK Higher Secondary School, Jannat's own life is contradictory. She had memorized the entire Quran in her childhood—a feat that requires an unimaginable amount of concentration and dedication. She is now a perfect example of how religious grounding can lead to studies. "Success demands discipline, not books", Jannat told Kashmir Bulletin (KB). "Being a Hafiza taught me about discipline, time management, and staying away from distractions such as social media. These traits carried over into studying and made sure that there was focus." The tone of Jannat is gentle as she talks about the students who flunked this year. "They should not lose hope. The world is big, and life offers many opportunities. Inshallah, success will be theirs with determination and faith in Allah." With her serenity and maturity that did not betray her age, Jannat also spoke to fellow achievers.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public through medium of notice that i jamsheed ahmad malik s/O Ab Razak malik R/o singpora colony that my daughter namely aysha jan is born on 07-03-2017 now i want to obtain dob certificate if any body have any objection regarding issuance of dob certificate he she the contect of bdo singpora with in period of seven days.

Jamsheed ahmad malla
S/o ab Razak malik
R/o singpora

World Immunization Week 2025 celebrated with enthusiasm at GMC Doda

■ HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 30: Government Medical College (GMC) Doda marked World Immunization Week 2025 with great enthusiasm and academic engagement. The event was held under the guidance of Dr. Suresh Kotwal, Head of the Department of Community Medicine, and witnessed active participation from faculty and students of various departments.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that my DAUGHTER'S DOB has been incorrectly mentioned on his Adhar card 729449246943, as 04/06/2009 FATIMA ALTAF SHAH D/O ALTAF HUSSAIN SHAH while the correct DOB is 11/11/2010 FATIMA ALTAF SHAH D/O ALTAF HUSSAIN SHAH r/o Gund

Chogul now i have applied for the correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection at concerned authority / TEHSIL HANDWARA within a period of 07 days after that no objection will be accepted.

Name: FATIMA ALTAF SHAH DOB 11/11/2010
D/O ALTAF HUSSAIN SHAH
R/O: GUND CHOGUL TEHSIL HANDWARA DIST KUPWARA

PUBLIC NOTICE

MY CAR LOAN FOR THE VEHICLE BEARING NUMBER LA01-0940 ALTO 800 HAS BEEN CLEARED. IF ANY BODY HAS ANY OBJECTION MAY CONTACT SBI BANK LEH CHOKLAMSAR WITHIN THE PERIOD OF 7 DAYS..

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that the name and date of birth of my son, Mohammad Zuhair Shah, son of Javid Ahmad Shah, a resident of Saloosa, Tehsil Kreeeri, District Baramulla, have been incorrectly recorded on his Aadhaar Card 416154659869. This error occurred due to unknown reasons. The correct date of birth is 11-05-2012. I have also applied for a correction in his school records. If anyone has any objections regarding this matter, they may submit their objections to the concerned authority, Assistant Collector Kreeeri, within a period of seven days. After that period, no objections will be entertained.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREEERI (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 AHMAD BIN ISHFAQ S/O ISHFAQ AHMAD HAJAM R/O ODORA Tehsil NARVAW Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 23/12/2022 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREEERI 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 KREEERI

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer WAGOORA)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHAMMAD AATIF MALIK S/O ABDUL HAMID MALIK R/O DOULATPORA Tehsil KREEERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 31/07 /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 KREEERI

District Road Safety Committee reviews enforcement measures in Samba

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, APRIL 30: In a determined move to enhance road safety and minimise road mishaps, District Magistrate Samba Rajesh Sharma today chaired a crucial meeting of the District Road Safety Committee here at the DC Office Complex. The meeting opened with a comprehensive presentation on the Integrated Road Accident Database (i-RAD) and Electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR) platforms by the concerned officials. The presentation highlighted critical data on traffic rule violations, accident trends, and challans issued, forming the basis for informed decision-making. Key areas of focus included launching impactful public awareness campaigns on road safety, identification and rectification of accident-prone black spots and installation of crash barriers and other safety infrastructure at vulnerable locations. Addressing the committee, DM Rajesh Sharma underlined the vital role of public awareness and responsible driving in reducing road accidents, injuries, and fatalities. He called for inter-departmental coordination and a unified approach to foster a culture of safety and mutual respect on roads. To strengthen enforcement, the District Magistrate directed the Traffic Police and Motor Vehicle Department to intensify naka checking and launch special drives targeting traffic violations. He emphasized the need for strict penalties against offenders to ensure deterrence and accountability.

District Doda steps forward under RAMP Programme; Awareness Workshop organized by JKTPO

■ HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 30: The Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO), the nodal agency for the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Program in the Union Territory, organized a District-Level Awareness Workshop at the Conference Hall, DC Office Doda. The initiative is being carried out under the overall supervision of the Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Jammu and Kashmir. The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU), - Grant Thornton Bharat LLP, and the District Industries Centre (DIC) Doda. It witnessed active participation from approximately 50 attendees, including government officials, MSME stakeholders, and representatives from various institutions.

ازنیابت پہلگام

عنوان درخواست منجانب عبدالرشید بٹ ولد غلام رسول بٹ ساکننداری پورہ پہلگام نسبت اجرانی نیگل تیر (دارت جاہ) سرٹیفیکٹ

بحصول لیگل ہیر سرٹفکٹ

ماملمہ مندرجہ الصدمیں پٹواری علاقے سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی۔ مطابق رپورٹ پٹواری وڈ تھتھ سرٹیفیکٹ سائل کی بیوی زونی بیگم زوہر غلام رسول بٹ ساکننداری پورہ پہلگام مورثہ 24/03/2025 فوت ہو چکی ہے متوفی اسپتال مندرجہ ذیل وارثان جائز چھوڑ گیا رشید بٹ متوفی

1.. عبدالرشید بٹ ولد غلام رسول بٹ شوہر متوفی

2.... فاروق احمد پسر //

3... نسارا احمد //

4... رفیقہ بانود خنر متوفی // شادی شدہ

5... روبی جان دختر متوفی //

اس طور کنڈیکل (5) افراد پر مشتمل مطابق رپورٹ پٹواری مندرجہ وارثان جائز کے علاوہ اوکوئی وارثان جائز نہیں ہے سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو وہ اعتراض یا اعتراض ساقط دن کے اندر پیش کرے معاذ گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار پہلگام





DC Pulwama visits NEET Exam Centres, reviews arrangements Ensure adherence to SOPs, transparency in exam conduct: DC

HT News Network

PULWAMA, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, today undertook a comprehensive inspection of all designated centres in the district for the forthcoming NEET (UG) 2025 examination scheduled to be held on May 04. During the visit, DC sought detailed inputs from the concerned officers regarding the preparedness and infrastructural arrangements made at each centre. He thoroughly inspected strong rooms, CCTV cameras and surveillance setup and

reviewed seating plans to ensure compliance with NTA standards. He issued clear directives to the Centre Superintendents to strictly adhere to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) issued by the National Testing Agency (NTA), particularly regarding the receipt, storage, and dispatch of examination material, videography protocols, CCTV coverage, timely opening and sealing of exam packets, and secure handling of OMR sheets. Dr. Qayoom emphasised the importance of coordination among all functionaries to ensure seamless conduct of the examination in a fair,



secure and candidate-friendly environment. DC further focused upon the significance of maintaining the sanctity of the examination process, directing that all procedures pre-exam, during exam, and post-exam be implemented meticulously as per the NTA's guidelines. He enjoined upon the Centre Superintendents, district officers and NTA representatives to work in close synergy to facilitate a smooth and safe environment for all candidates appearing in the exam. DC was accompanied by the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Pulwama and Awantipora, Additional

Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Pulwama, Tral; Chief Education Officer (CEO) Pulwama; NTA City Coordinator and Centre Superintendents. DC further focused upon the significance of maintaining the sanctity of the examination process, directing that all procedures pre-exam, during exam, and post-exam be implemented meticulously as per the NTA's guidelines. He enjoined upon the Centre Superintendents, district officers and NTA representatives to work in close synergy to facilitate a smooth and safe environment for all candidates appearing in the exam.

DC Kulgam reviews status of Jal Shakti Abhiyan- Catch the Rain-2025 Initiative

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Wednesday reviewed the progress of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain (JSA-CTR) 2025 campaign in the district, in a meeting held at the Mini Secretariat, here. The meeting held a detailed discussion on ongoing initiatives, existing challenges, and future strategies for effective water conservation and management. Emphasizing the importance of rainwater harvesting in ensuring sustainable water resources, DC urged all departments to accelerate efforts under the campaign. He highlighted the need for inter-departmental coordination to fast-track the imple-



mentation of JSA-CTR projects. Officers from the Rural Development, Forest, Agriculture, Irrigation, Jal Shakti and other depart-

ments apprised the chair of the status of various water conservation initiatives. To strengthen community participation, DC

directed officials to involve NGOs, Pani Samitis, and other local stakeholders. He also issued instructions for the construction of at least five rainwater harvesting structures in every Panchayat to enhance rainwater storage and groundwater recharge. Additionally, DC stressed the importance of regular cleaning and maintenance of water bodies to ensure their long-term sustainability. The meeting was attended by the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Kulgam, Assistant Commissioner Panchayats (ACP), Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Executive Engineers, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Chief Agriculture Officer, Executive Officer Municipal Committee, and other concerned officers.

96 Panchayats in Bandipora achieve TB-Mukt status under NTEP

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 30: Under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP), 96 panchayats of Bandipora district have been declared TB-Mukt (Tuberculosis-Free). To recognize this achievement, the District Tuberculosis Control Society Bandipora on Wednesday organized a Tuberculosis-Free Panchayat Award Ceremony at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora. The event was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, and was attended by Chief Planning Officer Mohammad Maqbool, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rafi Ahmad, District Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Hafeezullah, MS DH Bandipora, BMOs, Medical Officers, paramedical staff, panchayat secretaries and other concerned. While presenting the progress of NTEP in the district, District Tuberculosis Officer informed that out of 151 panchayats in Bandipora, 96 panchayats have achieved TB-Free status.



He apprised that 25 panchayats have been awarded Silver status and 71 have achieved Bronze status based on their performance in TB control initiatives. DC commended the efforts of the health department, frontline workers, and panchayat secretaries for their active participation in achieving this public health goal. He emphasized the need for continued vigilance and community engagement to make Bandipora completely TB-free. The event concluded with the distribution of certificates among the health workers and panchayat secretaries of TB-Free panchayats.

DSEO Baramulla bids farewell to Gh Rasool Lone

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APRIL 30: District Statistics and Evaluation Office Baramulla today organized a farewell function in honour of Gh Rasool Lone, Accounts Official, who retired from active service on April 30, 2025. The event was presided over by Joint Director Planning, Javid Ahmad. Joint Director commended Lone's long-standing commitment, discipline, and integrity throughout his tenure. He noted that Lone's professionalism and dedication have left a lasting impact on the department. Colleagues and staff members shared fond memories and praised Lone's work ethic, describing him as a dependable and sincere official. They wished him good health and happiness in his post-retirement life. The event concluded with the presentation of a memento as a token of appreciation for his valuable contributions.

Farewell Function held at 8th Bn Hqrs of JKAP

HT News Network



Jammu, APRIL 30: A farewell party was held on 30.04.2025 at Bn. Hqrs JKAP-8th Bn. Miran Sahib Jammu under the overall supervision of Sh. Suram Singh-JKPS (SSP) Commandant JKAP-8th Bn. in respect of the below mentioned officers who retired from the Govt. services after attaining the age of superannuation.
1. ASI Madan Lal
2. ASI Bishan Lal
3. HC Ram Prasad
4. HC Sukhvir Singh
5. HC Chuni Lal
6. HC Vijay Kumar
7. Foll Darshan Lal
The role and duties performed by the above mentioned retirees during their service was remembered and appreciated on the said occasion. Jawans and officer the Bn wished them happy and healthy post retirement life to all the retirees. They were awarded regarding their post-retirement responsibilities towards the department & for the civil society. Sh. Bhupinder Singh – Dy.SP, PA/LO/BHM of JKAP-8th Bn and other officers/officials also participated in the said event. At last welfare gifts of Rs. 01lac to each retiree was handed over to them. Said retirees were seen off from Bn. after honored with flower garlands and gifts.

DC Kupwara reviews thematic areas of skill development under ADP

HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan Wednesday convened a meeting of concerned officers at Mini Meeting Hall of D. C. Office, here to discuss various thematic areas of Skill Development under Aspirational District Programme (ADP). On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner enjoined upon the officers to make joint efforts for transformative skill development initiatives that align with the needs of the unemployed youth of the district so that they can earn their livelihood and become self-reliant. The DC directed all con-



cerned departments to identify skill gaps across sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, IT and others. She further called for collaborative efforts with industry partners and training institutes to design localized skill modules that cater to the aspirations of the local popu-

lation. Underlining the importance of youth engagement, the DC also urged for greater awareness campaigns to mobilize participation in ongoing and upcoming skilling programs. After threadbare discussion, various short-term and sector relevant

skill courses were identified for implementation which include Basic Masonry, Digital Literacy & Basic Computer Application, Sozni Embroidery and Handicrafts, Electrician & Wiring, Automobile Repair & Maintenance, Tourism, Retail sales & hospitality, food & beverage, retail sales associate and other related vocational courses. The meeting was attended by Principal GPC Kupwara, CEO, CMO, CAO, CHO, ALC, AD Handicraft/Handloom, Superintendents of ITIs, EOs of Municipalities, besides officers from JKEDI, DIC, NRLM, Social Welfare, NULM and other concerned were present in the meeting.

IUST Hosts 1616th Tree Talk on Biodiversity Conservation

HT News Network

Awantipora, April 30: The Department of Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change (DESCC) at the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Kashmir, organized the 1616th Tree Talk to promote awareness about the importance of biodiversity conservation among students and the wider academic community. Delivering the keynote address, Shri O.P. Sharma, IFS (Retd.), former Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), Government of Jammu and Kashmir, spoke about the ecological, medicinal, and cultural significance of native plant species in the region. He urged students to become "green ambassadors" and underlined the critical role academic institutions play in documenting, protecting, and promoting local biodiversity through youth-led efforts and awareness campaigns. Prof. Humayun Rashid, Professor of Practice at DESCSC, in his address emphasized the importance of integrating community perspectives into sustainable development strategies, noting that local knowledge often holds the key to effective, long-term solutions. Earlier welcoming the participants, Dr. Dharam Chand, Assistant Professor, DESCSC and Coordinator of the Biodiversity and Aromatic Park, outlined IUST's ongoing initiatives in biodiversity conservation. Dr. Sumira Nazir Zaz, Coordinator, DESCSC reinforced the university's commitment to environmental education, in alignment with the NEP 2020 and Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) campaign. The event saw active participation through the students, scholars and faculty members.

LSUC Ganderbal empowers children through Legal Awareness

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 30: Under the aegis of J&K Legal Services Authority and District Legal Services Authority Ganderbal, the Legal Services Unit for Children (LSUC) Ganderbal today organized a legal awareness program for children at PALAASH Child Care Institution (Boys, Kangan). The program aimed to educate children about their rights and responsibilities, promoting legal literacy and empowering them for their rights. Assistant LADC, Ganderbal, Shaheena highlighted the importance of educational opportunities for children, particularly those rescued from trafficking, abuse, and other challenging circumstances. She emphasized that education is key to breaking the cycle of vulnerability and empowering them to rebuild their lives with dignity in society. Assistant LADC, Ganderbal, Romani Syed threw light on specific legal provisions



which protects vulnerable children, including those with disabilities, transgender children, and children at risk of trafficking or abuse. She underscored the importance of awareness and implementation of these provisions to ensure the safety and well-being of children. By highlighting these crucial legal safeguards, her insights empowered the children and caregivers at PALAASH, Child Care Institution to better understand their rights and navigate the legal

system effectively. Assistant LADC, Ganderbal, Aqib UIA had provided clarity on legal provisions, children's rights, and remedies available through legal services for children in need and care. He elaborated on the various legal mechanisms in place to protect children's rights and interests, ensuring that children and caregivers are aware of the support systems available to them. By demystifying complex legal concepts,

his presentation enabled the children to better understand their rights and the resources accessible to them, empowering them to seek help when needed. He also took the opportunity to publicize vital helplines, including NALSA Helpline (15100), Child Helpline (1098), Diyaajan Helpline (14456) and Tele-Manas (14416), among others. In his address, Secretary DLSA Ganderbal, Sheikh Babar Hussain highlighted that this program provided a vital platform for children to learn about their rights, access to justice, and the role of legal services in protecting their interests. He emphasized that the initiative is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of these children, enabling them to assert their rights and make informed decisions about their future. The event saw active participation from members of the Legal Services Unit for Children (LSUC), superintendent and staff members of PALAASH Kangan, and students/children from Govt. Middle School Kangan & PALAASH Kangan also participated.





AHD Jammu bids farewell to retiring Deputy Director

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: The Department of Animal Husbandry organized a farewell programme in honour of the retiring Deputy Director, Poultry, Dr. Sunil Kumar Bazaz, today here at the Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Talab Tillo, Jammu. Director Animal Husbandry Jammu, Dr. Parvinder Singh shared a brief profile of Dr. Sunil Kumar Bazaz's career which began as Veterinary Assistant Surgeon in Kathua district in year 1994. Over the years he served in various capacities in the department before retiring on 30th April, 2025. He further congratulated Dr. Bazaz and thanked him for his dedicated services to the department.

DC Samba flags off 29 Hajj Pilgrims for holy pilgrimage

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner Samba Rajesh Sharma today flagged off a group of 29 Hajj pilgrims on their sacred journey to the holy land of Mecca. The flag-off ceremony took place at the DC Office Complex, Samba, in a spiritually uplifting atmosphere filled with prayers and well-wishes.

The event was organized by the District Social Welfare Office, which has been actively facilitating the arrangements and guidance for the pilgrims. The pilgrims will depart from Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi, on May 4, 2025, bound for Jeddah.

Interacting with the pilgrims, DC Rajesh Sharma extended his heartfelt wishes for a safe, smooth, and spiritually fulfilling pilgrimage. He emphasized the significance of Hajj as a journey of faith, devotion, and unity, and lauded the efforts of the Social Welfare Department for ensuring seamless coordination.

The Deputy Commissioner urged the pilgrims to pray for peace, prosperity, and communal harmony in the region and across the nation. He also assured that all necessary administrative support has been provided to ensure a hassle-free journey for the pilgrims.

The event was attended by officials from the District Administration, Social Welfare Department and family members of the pilgrims.

District Administration Jammu organises anti-drug awareness programme at MAM College

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: As part of its ongoing campaign to combat drug abuse and promote healthy lifestyles among youth, the District Administration Jammu organised an anti-drug Awareness Programme at Government MAM College. The event, part of a series of endeavours, aimed at sensitising students about the dangers of substance abuse. A large number of students, faculty and officials attended the event.

Sub Divisional Magistrate Jammu South Manu Hansa was the chief guest. In his address, the SDM emphasised the need for collective public action to curb the growing threat of drug abuse among the younger generation. He educated students about the harmful effects of drugs on physical health, mental well-being and career prospects, stressing how substance abuse can derail futures and break families.

He urged students to stay alert and adopt positive habits that promote both mental and physical wellness. "Education and awareness are our strongest tools in building a drug-free society," he remarked.

The event was coordinated by Block Development Officer Satwari Sandeep Gupta and Tehsildar Bahu Raju Samyal.

Key resource persons, including Dr. Arti Sharma and Lecturer Amar Singh, delivered impactful sessions highlighting the adverse effects of drug addiction on individuals and society. They addressed the psychological, physical and social repercussions of drug use and offered practical strategies for resisting peer pressure and managing stress through healthy alternatives.

The Students were actively engaged in the interactive sessions. The college administration was encouraged to conduct regular counselling and awareness drives to create a supportive environment for students.

DC Poonch provides Red Cross Aid to TB Patients

■ HT News Network

POONCH, APRIL 30: The Chairman of the District Red Cross Society (Deputy Commissioner) Vikas Kundal today disbursed funds for providing nutritional support to tuberculosis (TB) patients under the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (PMTBMBA) program. He presented a cheque amounting to 71,000 to the Chief Medical Officer and District Tuberculosis Officer. This initiative demonstrates the district administration's commitment to enhancing healthcare access and supporting vulnerable populations in the fight against tuberculosis.

Religious fervor, gaiety mark Kud Mela at Nouri Hanga- Bhaderwah

Thousands gather to witness Traditional Folk Dance, pay obeisance to Devta Nagraj Vasuki

■ HT News Network

BHADERWAH, APRIL 30: The traditional Kud Mela was held with religious fervor and gaiety today at Nouri Hanga-Bhaderwah drawing thousands of tourists and locals. The event showcased the traditional Kud dance, a revered folk ritual of the Chenab Valley, symbolizing spiritual devotion, gratitude to local deities, and harmony. Artists dressed in colourful traditional attire performed the Kud dance to the rhythmic beats of drums and flutes, creating a captivating and spiritual atmosphere.

The event was attended by DDC Member Thakur Yudhvir Singh; Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh; SSP Sandeep Kumar Mehta; Commanding Officer 33 Battalion CRPF, Executive Engineer R&B (PWD), and



other government functionaries. The local administration ensured tight security,

cleanliness, and smooth coordination for the large gathering.

The Kud dance, especially performed in honour of Devta Nagraj Vasuki—the guardian deity of Bhaderwah—has deep historical roots and is traditionally held at night in open fields.

DDC Member Thakur Yudhvir Singh, a key organizer of the event, highlighted how such traditional melas strengthen communal harmony and foster cultural pride among the youth. The presence of CRPF and police officials underlined the commitment to maintaining law and order while celebrating Bhaderwah's rich heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, DC Harvinder Singh praised the local community's dedication to preserving this centuries-old tradition and emphasized the need to promote Bhaderwah as a cultural and tourism hub.

DC Ramban Monitors Ongoing Damage Assessment Across 49 Patwar Halqas

■ HT News Network

DC Ramban Monitors Ongoing Damage Assessment Across 49 Patwar Halqas Ramban, April 30: Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary, who is also as the Chairman of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), has deputed Loss Assessment Teams across 49 Patwar Halqas in the district to evaluate the extent of damage caused by the flash floods, hailstorm, and cloudburst on April 19-20, 2025.

The assessment teams are tasked with documentation of losses in Agriculture, Horticulture, Livestock, private residential and commercial properties, public infra-



structure, and utilities. The Deputy Commissioner is personally monitoring the entire process and issuing necessary directions to ensure thorough and accurate reporting.

So far, Assessment Supervisory Officers, along with officials from all line departments, have conducted spot

visits and organised assessment camps in 38 Patwar Halqas. These teams are preparing detailed damage and loss reports for submission to the District Administration to facilitate appropriate relief and restoration measures.

Tehsildars and BDOs are also actively overseeing the

assessment activities being carried out in their respective jurisdictions. The assessment drive, which commenced on April 29, will conclude on May 1, 2025.

The designated officers stayed overnight in their assigned Halqas to ensure comprehensive on-ground reporting. The extensive drive has been carried out in collaboration with local residents and all concerned departments.

The remaining 11 Patwar Halqas of the district to be covered by assessment Supervisory Officers on May 1, 2025. The assessment teams are tasked with documentation of losses in Agriculture, Horticulture, Livestock, private residential and commercial properties, public infrastructure, and utilities.

ECI strengthens field readiness with 2 day training for electoral officers at IIIDEM

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India, Gyanesh Kumar, today inaugurated a two-day capacity building training programme for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) from Bihar and EROs and BLO Supervisors from Haryana, NCT of Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh at the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), New Delhi.

The training programme is part of the Election Commission of India's ongoing pre-



parations for the upcoming General Elections to the Legislative Assemblies. A total of 369 grassroots election officials are taking part in this mixed-batch training programme.

In his inaugural address, the CEC said that the BLOs and EROs along with the Booth

Level Agents (BLAs) are responsible for ensuring correct and updated electoral rolls and they are to function strictly as per the Representation of People Act 1950, Registration of Electors Rules 1960 and instructions issued by the ECI from time to time. Earlier this month, around 280 BLAs of 10 recognised political parties from Bihar were also trained at IIIDEM. The training has been designed to enhance participants' practical understanding especially in the areas of voter registration, form handling and field level implementation of electoral procedures.

Grand Farewell accorded by chief Education Office/ Dy. Chief Education Office Ganderbal

■ HT News Network

Gandarbal, Apr 29: In an emotionally charged yet grand celebration, the CEO/ Dy. CEO Ganderbal organized a heartwarming farewell party in honour of the superannuation retirement of three beloved officers: "Mr. Sofi Altaf Hussain" (Principal GHSS GANDERBAL), "Mr. Kounser Ji" (Section Officer), and "Mr. Nazir Ahmad Dar Sahab". On Tuesday 29th April 2025 the evening was a beautiful blend of sentiment and splendour, marked by eloquent speeches, heartfelt memories, and generous applause that echoed the immense respect these stalwarts have earned over the decades. Colleagues, friends, and dignitaries gathered to pay tribute to their extraordinary commitment, leadership, and legacy of service in the education department. "Mr. Sofi Altaf Hussain" was lauded for his visionary



leadership, cooperative behaviour, empathetic attitude and dedication that transformed his institution as well various assignments assignment to him, into a beacon of excellence. "Mr. Kounser Ji", known for her quiet strength and administrative precision, was celebrated for her unmatched work ethic and nurturing spirit. "Mr. Nazir Sahab", the ever-reliable cornerstone of support, was remembered fondly for his humility and unwavering service.

DC Udhampur convenes public outreach camp at CFC Chenani

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 30: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai today presided over a public outreach camp at CFC Chenani.

The camp provided the residents a platform to voice their concerns and grievances directly to the district administration.

The event witnessed the participation of DDC member Usha Devi; Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajinder Singh; SDM Chenani Dr. Ranjeet Singh Kotwal, former Sarpanches, Panches and a large number of local residents from the adjoining panchayats of Block Chenani.

During the outreach camp, the locals projected several pressing demands, seeking adequate staff at Higher Secondary School Sudh Mahadev, Upgradation of Girls High School Chenani to Higher Secondary School, Building for Higher Secondary School Basht, Blacktopping of Gorikund road, Blacktopping of circular road in Chenani Town, Proper Parking facility in Che-



nani town, finalization of campus land and starting of academic session of KV Mantalai, establishment of Indoor Sports Stadium at Chenani, Proper waste disposal facility in Chenani Town, identification of proper source of water for JJM schemes, promotion of Homestays for Tourism Purpose, Establishment of sub-division Employment and Counseling Centre at Chenani.

While interacting with the public, the DC said that extensive development is taking

place in Block Chenani and the district administration is fully committed for overall development of the district. Responding to complaints regarding non issuance of NOC by PDA for renovation, she said that bottlenecks are being removed to ease the process. She emphasised that all the demands raised would be resolved on priority. The DC also briefed the people regarding the Government schemes such as the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, JK

Samadhan Portal and other beneficiary-oriented and income-generating initiatives. The DC issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned authorities for earliest possible redressal of grievances. Later, the Deputy Commissioner, accompanied by Member Legislative Assembly Chenani, Balwant Singh Mankotia, conducted a site inspection for the construction of an alternate link road from the Police Station to the new Bus Stand in Chenani.





Commissioner Secretary H&UDD, Commissioner JMC visit animal care facilities in Jammu

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: Commissioner Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Mandeep Kaur and Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. Devansh Yadav, conducted an extensive visit to the Municipal Animal Care Centre at Roop Nagar and the SPCA Centre at Chowadhi.

They reviewed the progress on Animal Birth Control (ABC) program besides taking stock of associated civil works. At Municipal Animal Care Centre, Roop Nagar, the dignitaries inspected the ongoing ABC program and reviewed the condition of sick and injured stray animals under treatment.

Mandeep Kaur emphasized the importance of maintaining hygienic conditions, providing timely medical treatment and ensuring humane handling of all animals. She interacted with the veterinary staff, directing them to maintain efficient records. She stressed the need to expand



outreach efforts for stray dog sterilization to effectively manage their population. At SPCA Centre Chowadhi, the officers visited the upcoming ABC Centre there, taking a comprehensive review of the

ongoing civil works. H&UDD Commissioner Secretary exhorted upon the concerned to expedite the construction and operational preparations. The new facility is expected to significantly boost the

sterilization capacity, helping scale up stray dog sterilization efforts across the city. She asked the engineering and veterinary teams to ensure timely project completion and infrastructure readiness. Abdul Star, Joint Commissioner (Health and Sanitation), Dr. Gaurav Chowdhary; Animal Welfare Officer, Ashwani Mitra; DFO Urban; Executive Engineers from the Electric, Civil and Project Divisions of JMC and other concerned officials were present on the occasion. They reviewed the progress on Animal Birth Control (ABC) program besides taking stock of associated civil works. At Municipal Animal Care Centre, Roop Nagar, the dignitaries inspected the ongoing ABC program and reviewed the condition of sick and injured stray animals under treatment. Mandeep Kaur emphasized the importance of maintaining hygienic conditions, providing timely medical treatment and ensuring humane handling of all animals. She interacted with the veterinary staff, directing them to maintain efficient records.

DDC inspects developmental projects in Poonch

HT News Network

POONCH, APRIL 30 District Development Commissioner Vikas Kundal today asked the executing agencies to expedite pace of work on the Major Bridges on NH144A and the Minor Bridge at Sukha Katha. He was inspecting progress of work on different projects, including road projects in different parts of the district. The DDC was accompanied by OC GREF, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Tehsildar Haveli and other concerned officers.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner received detailed briefings on the construction progress by OC GREF and reiterated the need for acceleration.

The DDC also directed ACP and staff of RDD to expedite various Rural Development Works and ensure quality.

DHS-J accords warm send off to retiring Senior Assistant

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: Directorate of Health Services Jammu today accorded a war send off to Prathma Devi, Senior Assistant on her superannuation here at a function organised in the premises of the Directorate.

Director Health Services Jammu Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar appreciated her sincerity and helping nature towards all the employees and wished her a healthy and prosperous post retirement life.

Deputy Director Dentistry Dr. Sanjay Sharma complimented Mrs Prathma for her devotion towards her work. The staff wished her good health and success in her future endeavours.

3rd Contact Session of Sector Connect Training Program on FEPOH concludes at DHS Jammu

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 30: The Third Contact Session of the Sector Connect Training Program on Field Epidemiology in One Health (FEPOH) concluded successfully in Jammu today.

In this final contact session, district teams from across the Jammu division presented their field assignments, showcasing practical applications of the One Health approach and highlighting key observations, challenges, and solutions from their respective sectors. The event also featured cross-sectoral talks that enriched interdepartmental understanding and emphasized collaborative disease surveillance and response strategies.

The event brought together experts from the Health, Animal Husbandry, Wildlife, and Food Safety departments, marking the culmination of a significant phase in building cross-sectoral capacity for integrated public health response. Organized in collaboration with State Surveillance Unit of the Directorate of Health Services Jammu, the program, a collaborative initiative of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), sought to fortify integrated public health response through the transformative One Health approach. The training aimed to further enhance the ability of field-level professionals to address complex public health challenges at the human-animal-environment interface.

The valedictory session was attended by Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar, Director Health Services Jammu; Dr. Poonam Sethi, Deputy Director Schemes; Dr. Sanjay Sharma, Deputy Director Dentistry; Madan Lal Magotra, Deputy Commissioner Food Safety and Dr. Anil Kumar, Principal Advisor, NCDC New Delhi. The session commenced with a welcome address by Dr. Harjeet Rai, State Surveillance Officer Jammu, who extended a warm welcome to all dignitaries, mentors, and participants. He appreciated the commitment of all departments involved and highlighted the relevance of continued inter-sectoral coordination in preventing and controlling zoonotic and other emerging public health threats.

District Level Advisory Committee reviews implementation of FSSA Act in Poonch

HT News Network



POONCH, APRIL 30: A meeting of the District Level Advisory Committee (DLAC) on Safe Food and Healthy Diets was convened today under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal at the DC Office Complex. The meeting focused on reviewing measures to ensure the quality of food in the district, emphasizing the effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA).

Key discussions included food safety measures, the role of various stakeholders, and the need for fast-track training and certification for food business operators, Anganwadi centres, and school cooks to ensure hygienic food services. The DC urged officers to maintain hygienic standards in food served at temples, ziyarats, and Gurudwaras.

Highlighting the importance of food safety for public health, Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal instructed officers to ensure the availability of quality food in the market and to establish inspection squads to monitor and prevent the sale of unhealthy or expired products.

He also stressed on the promotion of the Eat Right movement and millet cultivation in the district.

The meeting was attended by GM DIC, PO ICDS Poonch, CEO, CMO, CAO, AD FSC & CA, and other key officials.

NCORD meeting: DM Reasi calls for stepping up anti-drug measures

HT News Network

REASI, APRIL 30: A meeting of the District Level Committee under the Narco Coordination Center (NCORD) was convened today under the chairpersonship of District Magistrate Reasi Nidhi Malik here at the DC Office Complex. The meeting aimed to formulate a comprehensive strategy to combat the menace of drug abuse in the district. The DM reviewed key aspects, including bails and acquittals in NDPS cases, seizures of drugs in commercial quantities, and the adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in handling such cases. She emphasized the



need for a multi-pronged approach focusing on enforcement, treatment, and awareness to effectively tackle the drug menace. The DM emphasized the need to intensify actions against drug abuse and trafficking. Special

focus was laid on monitoring and eliminating poppy cultivation. She instructed the local police to identify hotspots where drug peddling and addiction are prevalent and take strict action against offenders. Recognizing the importance of

community involvement, DM Reasi directed the Block Development Officers to organize drug awareness camps in collaboration with other departments in their respective jurisdictions. SDMs were instructed to supervise these camps to ensure their effectiveness. The District Magistrate further instructed that participation details of these awareness initiatives be properly and timely uploaded on the official portal for transparency and accountability. She specifically stressed that such awareness programs should be regularly conducted in schools and colleges, with the objective of sensitizing the youth about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

DDC Vice-Chairperson Udhampur advocates people-centric planning

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 30: Vice Chairperson District Development Council Udhampur Juhi Pathania today called for formulation of a holistic and inclusive Area Development Plan to achieve participatory governance and grassroots level development. While having detailed discussions with ADDC (CEO, DDC) Rajinder Singh, the Vice Chairperson Pathania underscored the importance of aligning gram sabha proceedings with the legal framework laid out in the Panchayati Raj Act and relevant rules and procedures. Emphasizing the foundational role of community involvement, she stated that people must be adequately informed and mobilized ahead of gram sabhas through traditional methods such as drumbeating, public announcements, and visible notices at key locations like panchayat ghars, chowks, and chaurahs. "Development plans must resonate with the genuine aspirations of the people," she remarked.

She reiterated that true Panchayati Raj entails not just planning but active participation of citizens in the execution of development



schemes. The meeting witnessed participation from several stakeholders, including former Sarpanch Arti Sharma and prominent members of civil society. Highlighting the transformative potential of the Jal Jeevan Mission, Vice Chairperson Pathania laid strong emphasis on transforming the Jal Jeevan Mission into a vibrant, people-centric movement. "Water is not just a resource, it is a right. The Jal Jeevan Mission must not be seen as just a government scheme but as a collective movement of the people," asserted Juhi. She advised the identification of affordable and practical targets and stressed the urgency of initiating long-pending tendered works under the scheme.

She advocated for widespread community engagement, urging local bodies to identify practical, affordable targets and reliable sources of water supply tailored to each region's specific needs.

DIC Udhampur bids farewell to retiring Senior Assistant Rakesh Kumar

HT News Network



UDHAMPUR, APRIL 30: The District Information Centre Udhampur today organized a warm and impressive farewell ceremony in honor of Rakesh Kumar, Senior Assistant at the Information Department, TIC Ramnagar, who retired from government service today after an illustrious and dedicated career.

The farewell programme was attended by District Information Officer Rajinder Digra along with other officials and staff of the department.

The DIO and other officials lauded the invaluable contribution of Rakesh Kumar to the department. They appreciated his commitment, sincerity and the professionalism he exhibited during his years of service.

While extending best wishes for his retired life, the DIO expressed hope that his vast experience and work ethics would continue to inspire others in the department.

The programme concluded on an emotional note, with colleagues and peers sharing fond memories and extending heartfelt wishes for his future endeavors.

Later, as a mark of respect and affection, a memento was presented to the retiring employee during the farewell function. While extending best wishes for his retired life, the DIO expressed hope that his vast experience and work ethics would continue to inspire others in the department.

DC gives away Registration Certificates to newly formed Industrial Handicrafts Cooperative Societies at Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 30: In a significant step towards empowering the artisan and weaver community, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rajesh Kumar Shavan today distributed registration certificates to newly constituted Industrial Handicrafts Cooperative Societies formed under the Financial Support Scheme of the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Jammu.

The event, held in the presence of

Assistant Director Handicrafts, Pardheep Shan, marked the formal recognition of two cooperative societies—United Crewel and Vibrant Crewel Handicrafts INDUSCO Ltd.—registered with the Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Jammu. The societies have been established under the Self-Reliant Cooperative Act, 1999, aimed at fostering micro-enterprises rooted in traditional crafts. As per the provisions of the scheme, each registered society comprising 11 artisans/weavers will be entitled to financial assistance of Rs.



1.00 lakh, disbursed in two equal non-refundable installments. The scheme also includes dedicated marketing support to enhance the visibility and market reach of local crafts.

The DC lauded the Handicrafts Department and emphasized the importance of expanding the scheme's reach to include more artisans and weavers.

He instructed the Assistant Director to intensify outreach and registration efforts across the district to ensure that the benefits of government schemes are widely disseminated.

Also present at the event were Mr. Abid, Supervisor INDUSCO, along with officials and staff from the Handicrafts Department, market reach of local crafts.

The DC lauded the Handicrafts Department and emphasized the importance of expanding the scheme's reach to include more artisans and weavers.

He instructed the Assistant Director to intensify outreach and registration efforts across the district to ensure that the benefits of government schemes are widely disseminated.





India, UK close to clinching trade deal as Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal wraps up talks in London

AGENCIES

LONDON/NEW DELHI, APR 30 (UND)

India and the UK are close to clinching a free trade deal, following the talks held between the two sides during the London visit of Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal told a business roundtable in London on Tuesday that “25 of 26 matters have been agreed” upon during the negotiations, Politico quoted him as saying.

Amanda Brooks, director general for Trade Negotiations at the Department for Business and Trade, told reporters that a trade deal with India is close.

However, Minister Goyal had raised outstanding issues in a meeting with UK Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds. These included India's calls for a carve-out from Britain's forthcoming tax on high-emissions imports like steel and aluminium that the UK government has promised to roll out in 2027, Politico said.

Other issues include the description of Indian territory in the deal and the sunset clause in the pact's parallel investment treaty.



Both nations had begun talks on a bilateral trade deal in early 2022, however, the talks stalled.

After the Labour government came to power last year, Trade Secretary Reynolds travelled to Delhi in February this year to restart the negotiations. A breakthrough in the talks came after India accepted Britain would only offer minor changes to its visa regime, with the two sides closing the mobility chapter of the deal in recent weeks.

Politico quoted a UK official as saying that the new rules will lead to “only 100 new visas for Indian workers per year”.

A No. 10 spokesperson said on Tuesday afternoon that negotiations were “constructive and productive”. They added: “We’ve been clear that we will only sign a deal in our

best interest.”

Meanwhile, Minister Goyal posted on X on his meetings in the UK.

“Wonderful to be joined by @DavidLammy, Secretary of State for

@FCDOGovUK at the joint India-UK business reception held at Lancaster House.

“Addressed the gathering along with UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade @JReynoldsMP and spoke about the bright future ahead for the India-Great Britain partnership.

“Immensely grateful for the warm and gracious hospitality extended by our UK partners. Looking forward to tangible outcomes of our shared vision.

“It was a pleasure to meet @RachelReevesMP, Chancellor of the Exchequer along with @JReynoldsMP, Secretary of State

for Business and Trade, UK.

“Had a fruitful exchange on advancing India-UK economic ties and further building on our strong partnership.”

Goyal also met with Mark Tucker, Group Chairman HSBC.

“Exchanged views on sustainable finance, innovation-led investments, strengthening India's integration with global financial systems & HSBC's plans to expand their presence in India.

“Delighted to learn that Mr. Tucker along with the entire HSBC Board will be visiting our country later this year.

“Under the leadership of PM @NarendraModi ji, India is truly emerging as a global hotspot for investments.

He also addressed the India-UK Business Roundtable.

“Addressed the India-UK Business Roundtable, bringing together prominent business leaders and CEOs from both countries.”

“Highlighted opportunities to strengthen economic ties, drive innovation-led growth, and expand investment avenues between India and the UK.

Bengal CM Mamata announces ex-gratia for fire victims in Kolkata

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, APR 30 (UND)

Hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia for the victims of the Kolkata fire, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said that the state government would provide ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

“State Government will give an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased, while the injured persons will get 50,000 each,” the Chief Minister wrote on her X handle.

“Continuing to monitor the fallout of the unfortunate fire incident at a private hotel (Rituraj) in the Burrabazar area and appreciate the Fire Services' and police efforts in rescuing around 99 persons from out of most adverse circumstances,” she wrote.

Reiterating my condolences and solidarity, Mamata wrote, “Also thankful to the local people for their cooperation and help in rescue operations.



It has been preliminarily reported to me that those who died were victims of suffocation/ jumping etc. Further investigations are going on.”

The announcement comes shortly after Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the loss of 14 lives in a fire at Burrabazar in Kolkata's central business district and announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured from the PMNRF (Prime Minister National Relief Fund).

“Anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire mishap in Kolkata. Condolences to those who lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon,” the Prime Minister wrote on his official X handle.

“An ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakhs from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000,” he added.

Earlier, the Chief Minister, who was in Digha for the inauguration of the newly constructed Jagannath Temple, contacted Mayor Firhad Hakim and the Kolkata Police Commissioner to inquire about the tragic fire.

In a message shared on her X handle, she expressed her sorrow, stating, “My heart goes out to the victims of the fire incident that occurred at a private hotel (Rituraj) in the Burrabazar area.”

Mamata mentioned that she had been closely monitoring the rescue and firefighting operations throughout the night

and had mobilized additional fire brigade services to the area.

In one of the most devastating fires in recent memory, 14 people lost their lives on Tuesday night at a hotel near Falpatti Machhua in Burrabazar, central Kolkata. Preliminary investigation has revealed that those killed were not burned but were choked by the thick smoke within the building.

Kolkata police formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the matter.

BJP, however criticised the Chief Minister for her insensitivity. ““Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already announced Rs 2 lakh for the families of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

In contrast, the state government remains silent. Twelve hours after the fire broke out, the words of condolence from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee appear insincere and insensitive,” BJP IT chief and co-in-charge for Bengal Amit Malviya had written on his X handle.

Government decides to hold caste census



AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, APR 30 (UND)

In a landmark decision, the government on Wednesday decided to include caste enumeration in the forthcoming census, marking the first such step since independence.

The decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

“As per article 246 of the Constitution of India, the subject Census is listed at 69 in the Union list in Seventh Schedule. According to the Constitution of India, Census is a Union subject,” Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw said at a media briefing.

He said, “Some states have conducted surveys to enumerate castes. Some states have done this well, while some others have conducted such surveys purely from a political angle in a non-transparent way. Such surveys have

created doubts in society.”

Vaishnaw said, “Considering all these facts, and to ensure that our social fabric is not disturbed by politics, caste enumeration should be transparently included in the Census instead of surveys. This will strengthen the social and economic structure of our society while the nation continues to progress”.

It may be mentioned that the main Opposition party, the Congress and especially Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had been demanding caste census. He had raised the issue at various platforms including the Lower House.

The Minister added, “This demonstrates that our government is committed to the values and interests of our society and country, like in the past when our government had introduced 10 percent reservation for the economically weaker sections of the society without causing stress in any section of the society.”

Former RAW chief to head National Security Advisory Board



AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, APR 30 (UND)

The government on Wednesday reconstituted the National Security Advisory Board and appointed former Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) chief Alok Joshi as its new chairman.

The revamped seven-member board includes several high-ranking military, Naval, Air Force officials, besides top Indian Police Service officials as its members.

This decision was taken at a high-level meeting convened by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan and security situation in the country.

The reconstitution of the board is to strengthen security system as the board plays a critical role in providing long-term strategic analysis and policy recommendation to the government on national security and foreign affairs matters.

The new members of the board are Air Marshal PM Sinha, Lt General AK Singh, Rear Admiral Monty Khanna, and two former Indian Police Service officers -- Rajiv Ranjan Verma and Manmohan Singh. Moreover, B Venkatesh Varma, who served in the Indian Foreign Service, has also been appointed as the member of the seven-member board.

Pro-Pak media accounts' claims about Lt Gen Suchindra false: Govt

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, APR 30 (UND)

The government on Wednesday refuted the claims made by some Pakistan-backed social media accounts that Army's Northern Commander Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar has been removed from his post after the Pahalgam terror attack.

The Press Information Bureau (PIB) of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in a post on social media platform X said, “Several pro-Pakistan social media accounts falsely claim that Northern Commander Lt

Gen Suchindra Kumar has been removed from his post after the Pahalgam incident”.

The PIB further said that Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar has not been removed but is attaining superannuation on April 30 and Lt Gen Pratik Sharma has been appointed as the new Northern Army Commander in his place.

The PIB on Tuesday on its X handle had said that several Pakistan-backed social media accounts have been deliberately circulating false and misleading propaganda following the Pahalgam terror attack.

SC questions advocate Prashant Bhushan on India's poverty status

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, APRIL 30 (UND)

The Supreme Court on Wednesday posed a pointed question to advocate Prashant Bhushan, asking whether India still carries the tag of a poor country, while hearing a suo motu matter related to the welfare of migrant workers during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The query came from a bench comprising justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh after Bhushan presented data suggesting a rise in poverty levels since 2011.

“Mr. Bhushan, 2011, now we are in 2025. Are we still



carrying the tag of being poor? Are we still on the premise that this country hasn't progressed? What is troubling us is that in 2011, 70% of people were poor – now it has increased to perhaps 80%?” the bench remarked during the hearing.

Bhushan clarified that

the observation was not based on his personal opinion but was supported by statements from former chief economists who have also pointed to a rise in poverty in recent years.

The discussion unfolded during proceedings in a suo motu petition initiated

by the court in 2020 to ensure welfare measures for migrants affected by the nationwide pandemic lockdown.

Appearing for the Central government, additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati submitted that the Centre has complied with the directions issued by the court.

However, Bhushan contended that several shortcomings still persist in the implementation of welfare schemes for migrant workers.

Due to a special bench matter scheduled post-lunch, the Supreme Court deferred further hearing to the next date.

Don't rub it- Sip these drinks to help protect your skin



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

It's hard not to love a sunny day, but we all know the risks associated with prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays.

As temperatures increase, summer sun can leave your skin dry, tight, and more susceptible to irritation and inflammation.

Drinking something makes sun sense. Certain drinks can help protect against sun damage due to their antioxidant content, which can help combat the effects of UV radiation. Drinking 250 millilitre a day can reduce UV damage by more than 26 per cent.

Staying hydrated during the hot summer months prevents heat-related illnesses like

hyperthermia. The skin contains 64 per cent water, and it plays a crucial role in its natural UV protection capabilities.

Hydration goes a long way to help support your skin's ability to heal and protect itself. Avoid drinks with a high sugar or caffeine content - these may counteract your hydration efforts.

Taking a combination of these nutrient-rich drinks on a regular basis can provide you with an extra layer of security that may help avoid a sunburn

1---Berry Smoothies----

Berries, the favourite summer fruits, can offer some protection against UV damage due to their high antioxidant content, which can help neutralise free radicals and reduce oxidative stress on the skin.

Blueberries are rich in powerful antioxidants that fight off free radicals that can damage skin due to sun exposure and stress. Blueberries are even more powerful if

they're a wild variety.

Some studies suggest that certain antioxidants, like those found in berries, can help protect against UV damage.

Specifically, berries like blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries are known for their antioxidant properties, which may help protect against the harmful effects of UV radiation.

Try drinking this sun protection smoothie before spending time out in the sun. It is full of antioxidants, healthy fats, omega-3s, and other important nutrients your skin needs to protect itself from sun damage.

Take a glass bowl and put 40 gm Frozen Mulberry , 40 gm Frozen Raspberry, 40 gm Frozen Blueberry , 100 gm Frozen Banana , 40 ml Oat Milk , 30 gm Yoghurt, a few fresh berries for garnishing, Banana slices for garnishing, Mixed Seeds, Toasted Almonds, Chia Seeds and Granola for garnish. Put all the ingre-

dients in a blender and blend until very smooth. Make sure all the berries and banana are frozen to get a nice, thick smoothie. Pour the content in a bowl and garnish with slices of bananas and some fresh berries on top. Sprinkle some chia seeds, granola, and toasted almonds for the crunch and some nutty flavour.

While these nutrient-rich, whole foods may support the health of your skin when exposed to UV light, keep in mind that they're not a substitute for sunscreen.

2---Aloe Vera Juice----

Did you know that aloe vera is sometimes referred to as the 'burn plant' due to its tendency to treat burns? It has been used for thousands of years in treating burns and easing sunburn symptoms.

Aloe vera juice contains anti-inflammatory properties which help to calm skin conditions from UV rays .

Aloe vera is the most effective component for

hydrating the skin dried due to sun exposure

Aloe Vera stimulates skin restoration after sunburn and hydrates and moisturises the skin. It also relieves rashes and irritations on the skin.

Aloe vera also stimulates collagen production to improve elasticity and dryness within the skin. Aloe vera can be found as a juice or a gel. The juice can be thought of as the sap, as it comes from the leafy part of the aloe plant. The gel, on the other hand, is a thick substance that comes from the inner parts of the plant.

Generally, aloe vera juice can be consumed as a drink, while the gel is often applied topically.

Select pure, unsweetened aloe vera juice and drink moderately.

If you choose to ingest aloe vera, make sure to wash the gel or skin thoroughly to remove all traces of latex. The latex has an unpleasant bitter taste and may cause harmful side effects.

Don't eat aloe vera lotions and gels sold as skin care products. They aren't meant to be ingested and may contain other ingredients that aren't safe to eat.

3--Watermelon: ---

Watermelon can act as a natural sunscreen and skin repair.

Watermelons contain an antioxidant called Lycopene,, a powerful antioxidant commonly found in red-coloured fruits and which can help act as a natural sunscreen.

Lycopene can eventually act as a natural sunblock, which absorbs both UVA and UVB radiation.

If you consume watermelon regularly for a few weeks.

It also helps as an anti-ageing ingredient.

Lycopene helps to protect skin cells from harmful sun rays.

It replenishes these cells and helps your skin act as a natural filter while allowing enough sunlight through for vita-

min D production. Lycopene can help prevent wrinkles, strengthening the elasticity of skin tissues.

When eating watermelon, try to serve it with some oil, such as salad dressing or olive oil, because this increases lycopene absorption.

4--Cucumber and Mint Infused Water

Both cucumber and mint contain antioxidants that can help protect against cell damage caused by free radicals, which can contribute to sun damage. I like to drink this first thing in the morning to kick-start my day.

Cucumber and mint-infused water can offer some benefits for sun protection, primarily through hydration and antioxidant support.

Cucumbers possess cooling and hydrating qualities, while mint provides a refreshing flavour and antioxidants, resulting in mild anti-inflammatory effects.

Take 8 cups filtered

water, 2 cups thinly sliced cucumber, 2 small lemons, rind removed and discarded, sliced and ½ cup packed fresh mint leaves, torn.

Stir water, cucumber, lemons and mint together in a large pitcher. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours to blend flavours. Strain out solids, if desired.

Take 1 litre of water, a small handful of mint leaves, 1 piece of ginger, a handful of slices of cucumber and a few slices of lime. Add a few slices of lime to a 1-litre bottle. Take a 1 piece of ginger, slice and press down a bit. Add a small handful of mint leaves.- Keep refilling the bottle the whole day and drinking with this infusion. This will help you increase your water intake and also drink it 30 minutes before and after each meal.

The author is internationally famous beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India

AI models fall short in predicting social interactions, shows research

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Artificial intelligence (AI) systems failed at understanding social dynamics and context necessary for interacting with people and the problem may be rooted in the infrastructure of AI models, Johns Hopkins University research said on Thursday.

Humans, it turned out, are better than current AI models at describing and interpreting social interactions in a moving scene - a skill necessary for self-driving cars, assistive robots, and other technologies that rely on AI systems to navigate the real world, said the researchers from the top US university.

"AI for a self-driving car, for example, would need to recognise the intentions, goals, and actions of human drivers and pedestrians. You would want it to know which way a pedestrian is about to



start walking, or whether two people are in conversation versus about to cross the street," said lead author Leyla Isik, an assistant professor of cognitive science at Johns Hopkins University.

"Any time you want an AI to interact with humans, you want it to be able to recognise what people are doing. I think this sheds light on the fact that these systems can't right now," Isik added.

To determine how AI models measure up compared to human perception, the researchers asked human participants to

watch three-second vid-eoclips and rate features important for understanding social interactions on a scale of one to five.

The clips included people either interacting with one another, performing side-by-side activities, or conducting independent activities on their own.

The researchers then asked more than 350 AI language, video, and image models to predict how humans would judge the videos and how their brains would respond to watching. For large language models, the

researchers had the AIs evaluate short, human-written captions.

The results provided a sharp contrast to AI's success in reading still images.

"It's not enough to just see an image and recognise objects and faces. That was the first step, which took us a long way in AI. But real life isn't static. We need AI to understand the story that is unfolding in a scene. Understanding the relationships, context, and dynamics of social interactions is the next step, and this research suggests there might be a blind spot in AI model development," Kathy Garcia, a doctoral student working in Isik's lab, explained.

Researchers believe this is because AI neural networks were inspired by the infrastructure of the part of the brain that processes static images, which is different from the area of the brain that processes dynamic social scenes.

Ditch the Fridge Water & Switch to Earthen Pots to Beat the Heat This Summer

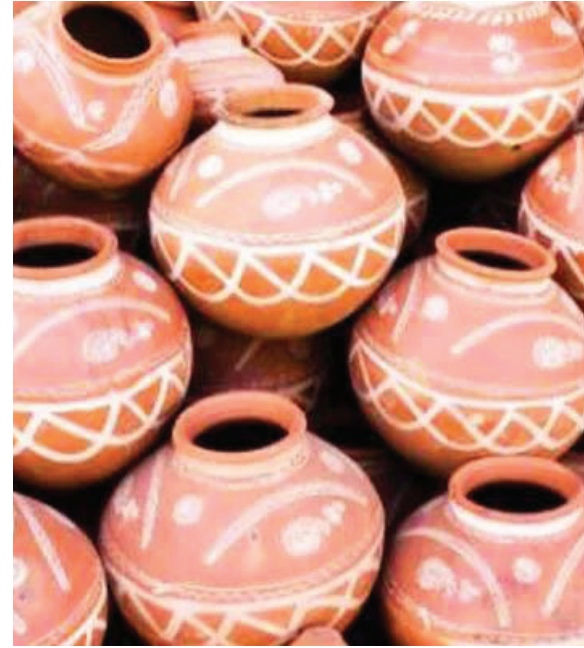
The scorching sun and rising temperatures often tempt us to reach for an ice-cold drink. While a chilled plastic bottle from the fridge may seem refreshing, drinking ice-cold water regularly can do more harm than good.

A healthier and more sustainable alternative is water stored in earthen pots-also known as matka or clay pots. These traditional containers offer a host of health and environmental benefits.

Health Benefits of Drinking Water from Earthen Pots

1. Natural Cooling Effect
Clay pots cool water naturally through their porous structure, allowing slow evaporation that brings down the temperature-an energy-free cooling method that's perfect for summer.

2. Gentle on the Throat
Unlike fridge water, which can be too cold and harsh, matka water



is soothing and less likely to cause sore throats or colds.

3. Naturally Alkaline Water
Clay is alkaline in nature and helps balance the pH level of water by neutralizing acidity. This supports better digestion

and reduces acid-related issues.

4. Boosts Metabolism
Water stored in clay pots may contain trace minerals from the clay, which can help stimulate metabolism and aid overall health.

5. Mild Detoxification

The tiny pores in the clay act as a basic filter, potentially removing some impurities and enhancing the water's quality-though it's not a substitute for proper purification.

Environmental & Practical Benefits

1. Eco-Friendly
Clay pots are 100% natural, biodegradable, and plastic-free. They also don't rely on electricity, making them an environmentally sustainable choice.

2. Cost-Effective
Affordable and durable, earthen pots require no maintenance or power-just fill and use.

3. Enhances Taste
Many people say that water from clay pots has a naturally sweet, earthy taste that's more refreshing than refrigerated water.

Switching to earthen pots isn't just a throwback to tradition-it's a smart, health-conscious, and planet-friendly move.

Centre extends financial aid to indigenous indoor air purification solution

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

In a significant step toward advancing indigenous clean air technologies, the government on Thursday extending financial support to Gurugram-based Urban Air Labs for their unique project in this field.

The financial assistance by Technology Development Board (TDB), under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), is given to the company for their project, titled "Development & Commercialization of a Made in India Efficient Wall-Mounted Air-Purification System for Indoor Premises."

This intervention marks a commitment to improve the Air Quality Index (AQI) indoors through innovative, plant-based purification systems that remove both particulate and gaseous contaminants.

TDB's financial assistance to this promising startup underscores its



confidence in the project's potential to deliver sustainable, science-backed air purification solutions.

The support aims to promote innovation in climate-responsive technologies while strengthening India's self-reliance under the 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' missions, said Ministry of Science and Technology.

The core technology harnessed in this product blends natural plant-based filtration with advanced engineering. Based on

the 'Urban Munnar Effect' and a patented innovation called 'Breathing Roots', the system enhances the natural air-purifying capacity of leafy indoor plants.

Air from the room is pulled toward the plant leaves, then directed into the soil-root zone, where the purification process intensifies. The device features a centrifugal fan that creates suction pressure, allowing the purified air-processed through the roots-to be released

in 360 degrees across the indoor space.

Fitted within a specially designed planter box, the 'uBreathe Life' system stands out as a compact, aesthetic, and effective wall-mounted solution tailored for homes, offices, hospitals, and other indoor environments.

It directly addresses the growing public health concern over poor indoor air quality and represents a game-changing innovation in the field of sustainable air purification.

"TDB's support to Urban Air Labs reflects our mission to back indigenous solutions that address pressing environmental challenges. The fusion of biotechnology and engineering in this project offers a scalable, sustainable way to enhance indoor air quality, aligned with the nation's clean technology goals," said Rajesh Kumar Pathak, Secretary, TDB.

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

A common diabetes drug can help reduce pain in people with knee osteoarthritis (OA) and obesity, as well as delay the need for knee replacements, revealed a study on Friday.

Researchers from Monash University in Australia showed that metformin -- commonly prescribed to treat type 2 diabetes -- can reduce knee arthritis pain in people without diabetes.

"Metformin is a potentially new and affordable way to improve knee pain in those with knee OA and overweight or obesity," said lead researcher Professor Flavia Cicuttini, who heads Musculoskeletal Unit at the varsity.

The six months-long randomised clinical trial, performed entirely as a community-based study using telehealth, involved 107 participants with pain from knee osteoarthritis



(73 women and 34 men), with a mean age of 60. The participants took up to 2,000 mg of metformin daily for six months. Others took the placebo. None had diabetes.

Knee pain was measured on a 0-100 scale, with 100 being the worst.

In the results, published in JAMA, the metformin group reported a 31.3 point reduction in pain after six months, compared to 18.9 for the placebo group. This was considered a moderate effect on pain.

Knee OA treatments include lifestyle approach-

es such as exercise and weight loss, which patients often find difficult, and medications such as paracetamol, topical anti-inflammatory creams, and oral anti-inflammatory medications which have small benefits and may be unsuitable for some patients for safety reasons.

Professor Cicuttini said effective treatments that improved knee pain in osteoarthritis were limited. She said this led some patients and their doctors to seek alternative treatments including surgery.

This resulted in major problems managing knee

OA, including an increase in the rate of knee replacements performed for earlier stages of OA.

Professor Cicuttini said metformin now provided GPs an alternative they could offer patients in addition to managing weight and increasing activity.

"Metformin works in a number of ways on the knee, including affecting low-grade inflammation and other metabolic pathways that are important in knee OA," she said.

Stating that Metformin is "low-cost and safe medication," the expert noted it "has the potential to delay people having knee replacements before they are absolutely needed. If people on metformin have less knee pain and are able to do more physical activity, then knee replacements can wait."

However, the researchers also called for a larger clinical trial as the study had a small sample size.



India to play Thailand in FIFA International Friendly in June

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, APR 30 (UNI)

The India senior men's national team will play a FIFA International Friendly match against Thailand on June 4, at the Thammasat Stadium in Pathum Thani, Thailand.

The Blue Tigers, who are currently embroiled in their AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers Final Round campaign, will play the friendly against Thailand as a part of their preparation for their Group C qualification match against Hong Kong, China, on June 10.

India are ranked 127th in the FIFA Rankings, while Thailand are 99th.

Novak Djokovic withdraws from Italian Open

AGENCIES

ROME, APR 30 (UND)

Novak Djokovic will not take part in the Italian Open next week in another blow to the 24-time Grand Slam winner's preparations for Roland Garros.

Djokovic has competed in Rome in every season since 2007 and has won the event six times, most recently in 2022.

However, organisers of the tournament announced on social media, that the Serb will not play in 2025, with no reason given.

Djokovic added on Instagram: "Rome, I will miss you. I hope we meet next year."

Zimbabwe fast bowler Muzarabani blessed with rapid rankings rise

AGENCIES

DUBAI, APR 30 (UND)

Zimbabwe quick Blessing Muzarabani has been the big winner following the latest update to the ICC Men's Test Player Rankings.

Muzarabani picked up nine wickets in a Player of the Match performance as Zimbabwe registered an impressive three-wicket triumph over Bangladesh in the first Test in Sylhet and the tall right-arm rose up the bowling rankings as a result to reach a new career-best rating of 705 points.

He is just the second Zimbabwean bowler to surpass the 700-point barrier in Test cricket.

The 28-year-old pacer rises four places to move to 15th overall on the rankings list for Test bowlers, with India seamer Jasprit Bumrah still maintaining his spot at the head of proceedings.

RR bank on teen star Suryavanshi against lusty MI

AGENCIES

JAIPUR, APR 30 (UND)

Reeling at ninth on the points table with only three wins in ten outings, Rajasthan Royals are clinging to faint playoff hopes and will be banking heavily on teenage sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi and opener Yashasvi Jaiswal to deliver again when they face a red-hot Mumbai Indians in Match 50 of the IPL at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium here on Thursday.

Having suffered five successive defeats, RR finally returned to winning ways with a spectacular chase of 210 runs against Gujarat Titans, thanks to a 35-ball century by 14-year-old Suryavanshi—the second-fastest in IPL history. Jaiswal provided firm support with an unbeaten 70 off 40 balls as Rajasthan cruised home in just 15.5 overs.

Despite that morale-boosting win, Rajasthan remain in a precarious position. Their middle-order, comprising Riyan Parag, Dhruv Jurel, Shimron Hetmyer and Nitish Rana, has struggled for consistency. With only 187 runs in nine games, Hetmyer's underperformance has particularly hurt Rajasthan's cause.

On the bowling front, Jofra Archer has been the lone bright spot, claiming 10 wickets at an economy rate of 9.57. Wanindu Hasaranga and Maheesh Theekshana have picked up wickets but have leaked runs at crucial moments, while pacers Tushar Deshpande and Sandeep Sharma have lacked discipline.

In contrast, Mumbai Indians enter the contest with five straight wins and a surge in momentum. Sitting second on the table with 12 points from 10 games, the Hardik Pandya-led side thrashed Lucknow Super Giants by 54 runs in



their last outing, amassing 215 for 7.

The backbone of Mumbai's batting has been Suryakumar Yadav, who is in sublime form with 427 runs from nine matches at an average of 61 and a strike rate of 169.44. His last three scores - 68* off 37, 40* off 19, and 54 off 28, underline his dominance in the middle order. Tilak Varma and Naman Dhir have provided useful cameos, while skipper Pandya has contributed with both bat and ball.

Mumbai's bowling unit is finding its rhythm at the right time. Jasprit Bumrah returned to form with a 4 for 22 performance against LSG, while Trent Boult has been effective in the powerplay and at the death. Deepak Chahar has eight wickets to his name, though he remains expensive in the latter overs. Corbin Bosch, a recent inclusion, impressed with a quickfire 20* and figures of 1 for 26.

The pitch at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium is expected to be balanced, with true bounce assisting batsmen who can settle early. Dew in the evening

could hamper spinners, making bowling first a preferred choice. Historically, the venue favours chasing sides, with 39 of the 61 domestic T20 matches played here won by the team batting second.

Weather conditions are set to be hot and dry, with no threat of rain. Temperatures are expected to hover around 30-34°C during match hours, and cloud cover could increase later in the evening without causing any interruptions.

RR won their last head-to-head meeting against Mumbai on April 22, 2024, chasing down 179 for 9 with ease. But Mumbai's current form makes them the favourites this time around, with bookmakers placing them ahead with a 59% win probability compared to RR's 41%.

Should Rajasthan fail to secure victory, they will all but crash out of the play-off race. For RR to pull off an upset, their young opening duo of Suryavanshi and Jaiswal must once again fire against the pace duo of Boult and Bumrah.

Predicted XI: Rajasthan Royals: Yas-

hasvi Jaiswal, Vaibhav Suryavanshi, Nitish Rana, Riyan Parag (c), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Shimron Hetmyer, Wanindu Hasaranga, Jofra Archer, Maheesh Theekshana, Sandeep Sharma, Yuvraj Singh Chahal. Impact Player: Shubham Dubey.

Mumbai Indians: Ryan Rickelton (wk), Rohit Sharma, Will Jacks, Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya (c), Naman Dhir, Corbin Bosch, Trent Boult, Deepak Chahar, Karn Sharma. Impact Player: Jasprit Bumrah.

Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe by an innings & 106 runs



AGENCIES

CHATTOTGRAM, APR 30 (UND)

Spinners reigned supreme as Bangladesh thumped Zimbabwe by an innings and 106 runs in the second Test of the two-match series against Zimbabwe here on Wednesday.

Mehedi Hasan Miraz picked up a five-wicket haul, Taijul Islam scalped three, while Nayeem Hasan chipped in with a solitary wicket as spinners accounted for nine wickets to bundle out Zimbabwe for 111 in the final session on Day 3. After Bangladesh posted 444 in response to the visitor's 227.

The Tigers amassed 444, thanks to Miraz's 104 and a 41-run knock from tailender Tanzim Hasan Sakib after Shadman Islam's 120, giving

the Tigers a 227-run lead.

Zimbabwe's reply got off to an abysmal start as they lost half their side for just 69 runs on the board. Opener Ben Curran scored 46 and tried to hold one end but the spin challenge proved too steep for the visitors.

Taijul Islam, who took five wickets in the first innings, removed Brian Bennett (6) and Nick Welch (2) before the Tea interval.

Nayeem Hasan then joined the party with the dismissal of Sean Williams.

There was a 47-run partnership between Ben Curran and Craig Ervine, but then Miraz returned to strike a triple blow. From 69 for three, Zimbabwe suddenly became 73 for six with Curran holding up one end, the Daily Star reported.

This is the first time in 16 innings at home that Bangladesh have managed to get past 400.

Miraz was the last man out, for 104 runs, as Bangladesh bossed the third day's play thus far.

Taijul Islam (20) was the only wicket to fall on the morning, becoming the fourth victim of leg-spinner Vincent Masekese, who is on debut. Tanzim Sakib (41) was the next to fall in the second session before Miraz's dismissal wrapped up the innings.

Vincent Masekese finished with a five-wicket haul on debut.

Zimbabwe, who lead the two-match series 1-0, had scored 227 in their first innings after having won the toss.

Brief score: Zimbabwe: 227 & 111 Bangladesh: 444

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