



Pahalgam Terror Attack Fallout :-MHA Asks Several States To Conduct Mock Drills For Effective Civil Defence

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, MAY 5: The Union Home Ministry has asked several states to conduct mock drills on May 7 for effective civil defence, government sources said.

They said the measures to be undertaken include operationalization of Air Raid Warning Sirens and training of civilians, students, etc on the civil defence aspects to protect themselves in the event of a hostile attack.

The sources said measures also include the provision of crash blackout measures, provision for early camouflaging of vital installations and updation of the evacu-



ation plan and its rehearsal.

Tensions have risen between India and Pakistan in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack in

which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed. The government has said that perpetrators of the terror attack

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India suspends Indus treaty protocol, begins reservoir flushing on Chenab
Sluice gates at Baglihar, Salal dams closed without prior notice

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 05: Two weeks after the Pahalgam terror attack, India has significantly reduced water flow to Pakistan by suspending regular protocols under the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and initiating reservoir maintenance activities at key hydroelectric

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11 nights of cross-border firing along LoC fuels fear, cripples tourism

Border hamlet residents abandon daily routines, face economic hardship

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 05: Fear and uncertainty continue to grip residents along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir as Indian and Pakistani

armies exchanged cross-border fire at eight forward posts for the 11th consecutive night on Monday, following a ceasefire violation by the Pakistan Army.

Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked firing across eight forward sectors along the LoC in J&K, violating ceasefire agreements and prompting retaliation

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Cabinet finalises response to Raj Bhavan's queries on business rules

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 5 (UNI) The Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet, Chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, has addressed queries raised by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on the proposed Transaction of Business Rules (TBR).



"Some queries were raised by Raj Bhawan. Omar Abdul-

lah Sahib's Cabinet met on Monday morning and the response has been prepared," said Tanvir Sadiq, the chief spokesman of the National Conference.

Sadiq was responding to queries over the reports that LG Sinha had returned the TBR file—sent

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NEWS BRIEF

CM Omar, top officials resume office at Civil Secretariat Srinagar

SRINAGAR, MAY 5: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and other senior officers on Monday resumed the office at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar. The office at the Civil Secretariat started working here after a gap of six months. According to the news agency—, the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in a post on X, emphasized that his government's priority over the next six months would be "action, accountability, and ensuring that every individual benefits from good governance and development."

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

ACB produces challan against official of BDO Kishtwar, others

JAMMU, MAY 05: Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday said to have produced a challan against the official of Block Development Office (BDO) Kishtwar, employee of Post Office Thakrai and others. "Anti Corruption Bureau produced Challan of case FIR No.32/2017 P/S VOJ (now ACB) u/s 5 (1) (d) (c) r/w section 5(2) of J&K P.C Act Svt. 2006 and sections 120-B/467/468/471 RPC before the Hon'ble Court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Doda,

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Court Restrains Police from Filing Final Report Against Animal Activists

JAMMU, MAY 5, : Justice Muhammad Yousuf Wani of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has directed the Station House Officer (SHO) of Miran Sahib Police Station not to file the final report in a case against three animal activists without the Court's permission.

The case (FIR No. 0033/2025), registered on March 9 under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, involves Devinder Kour Madaan alias Rumpy Madaan (Chairperson of NGO SAVE), Radhika Sharma (JMC volunteer), and Didar Singh

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Waqf Act Challenge: SC defers hearing, transfers case to Justice Gavai-led Bench

■ HT News Network/UNI



NEW DELHI, MAY 5 (UNI) The Supreme Court on Monday deferred the hearing on a batch of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, transferring the matter to a bench led by Justice B.R. Gavai for further proceedings on May 15, 2025.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, and Justices Sanjay Kumar and K.V. Viswanathan took stock of the Centre's earlier assurance that it would not denotify any waqf properties, including those declared as waqf by user or proceed with appointments to the Central Waqf Council and Waqf Boards.

CJI Khanna observed, "We have gone through the counter and rejoinder. Some issues have been raised, especially relating to the registration of waqf properties and figures, which the petitioners dispute. These mat-

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Srinagar Police intensify searches at residents of terrorist aides

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 05: In its continuing persistent action against terrorist associates of proscribed terrorist outfits and in the furtherance of investigation into cases registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), Srinagar Police on Monday intensified searches across multiple locations in the city with the aim to dismantle terror-supporting infrastructure in the district.

A police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Srinagar Police has conducted searches at the residences of Bashir Ahmad Bhat son of

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LG conducts on-site inspection of SASB's office, Yatri Niwas

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 05: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today conducted the on-site inspection and reviewed ongoing construction work of the Office and Yatri Niwas of Shri Amarnath ji Shrine Board at Pantha Chowk, Srinagar.

The Lieutenant Governor ascertained the progress of the work and emphasised on timely completion of the project. He was informed that the construction work of four floors is completed



and the rest of the two floors are expected to be completed by the end of the month of June.

The Lieutenant Governor interacted with the officials and directed them to accelerate the progress of identified works for the conve

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Nomadic mother serves last tea to her kids before falling to gruesome sexual assault Family questions 'unsafe haven' for women folk in Kashmir; demand death sentence to culprits

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 05 The family members of Rubeena (Name Changed) hardly know that she was serving a last tea to her kid's minutes before she was sexually assaulted and killed by four rapists in Nishat area of Srinagar outskirts.

It was the first time it took Rubeena too long to return from the green bushes where in she had gone to graze the cattle. This time she didn't return as she used to.

For a long time when 40-year-old nomad

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Four held after alleged sexual assault, murder of nomadic woman

■ HT News Network/UNI

Srinagar, May 5 (UNI) Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday said they arrested four individuals for allegedly sexually assaulting a nomadic woman in her 40s while she was grazing goats on the outskirts of the city on Sunday.

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Killing of nomadic woman after sexual assault widely condemned

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 05: The political leaders from different parties of Jammu and Kashmir condemned alleged rape and tragic incident in Nishat, which left nomadic women dead on Sunday.

Pertinently, a nomadic woman lost her life after

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Retired Sikh teacher donates land for Muslim graveyard access in Tral Muslims say 'no force can break' their centuries-old brotherhood with Sikhs

■ HT News Network

Tral, May 05: In a touching display of communal harmony, a retired Sikh teacher in south Kashmir's Pulwama district has donated land to create an access path for a Muslim graveyard. This act underscores the strong and lasting bonds between the Sikh and Muslim communities in the region.

Retired teacher Pushwinder Singh, a resident of Saimoh Tral, provided a strip of his land to ensure easy access to the graveyard, which has long been used by the local Muslim community for burials.

Speaking to the news agency—Singh said Kashmir is a land of saints and a prime example of communal harmony, a tradition he believes will continue. Singh said his



ancestors have lived in the area with strong inter-community relations, and while there might be occasional issues within their own religious groups, there have never been problems between different faiths, particularly in Tral.

"I provided land measuring 90x6 ft for the way of the graveyard so that Muslims

won't face any problems when they have to bury anyone," he said.

Singh said whenever a Muslim from the area passes away and is to be buried in the nearby graveyard, he and other Sikhs assist with arrangements like providing light, bricks and other necessities, and stay until all work is completed. "Everyone should take such steps to strengthen brotherhood, as 'humanity comes before religion,'" he remarked.

Local Muslims said they have lived in harmony and brotherhood for centuries, a bond that no force can break.

Ghulam Hassan, a local, said Pushwinder Singh even exchanged land with another person to acquire the specific plot needed for the graveyard access.

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

WOMEN

ic woman Rubeena didn't appear back to the temporary tent, her daughter rushed towards the woods where she saw her mother battling life with blood oozing from her body.

With blood stripped clothes, the nomadic woman who fought against the four rapists was found unconscious. However, seeing her daughter, the goons escaped the spot.

FOR A WHILE, THE DAUGHTER OF the victim who had reached the spot was puzzled and wailed aloud to call the family to the incident spot in woods. "My sister called us after seeing our mother unconscious and in a pool of blood," the victim's family narrates the ordeal while speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Immediately, the nomadic lady was rushed to the nearby health facility for treatment, where she was declared brought dead.

Holding deep sighs and sobs, the daughter of the victim pleaded justice and demanded the culprits should meet the same fate. "We will only find peace when the rapists will be brought to justice. Our mother has left behind little kids. How can we live without our mother," said her daughter.

"Weren't they born from a mother. How can they assault and kill a mother of five. The culprits were Inhumans," she wailed. "We found an accused with blood on his pants due to which he was caught. Otherwise we would have no idea about the culprits."

"The culprits should be hanged till death," she, along with her family and relatives, demanded.

Narrating the moments before the incident the daughter of the victim said that her mother was serving tea to them. "Hardly we knew that our mother was serving the last tea to us."

In the meantime, the body was shifted to Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar for legal medico formalities and was handed over to the family for last rites this morning.

The family reached Dard Wooder, Mammer area of Kangan to bid a tearful farewell to the victim.

The brutal killing of a nomadic woman after being sexually assaulted by four persons in Nishat area of Srinagar on Sunday, has left a scar for Reasi family, who questioned the 'safe haven' for a woman folk in the Valley. The family has been visiting Kashmir every year for the last more than a decade to graze their cattle.

Every eye was numb at Kangan area when a nomadic family, hailing from Reasi, presently living in Nishat, laid to rest their beloved member.

HM

will face severe punishment.

A 30-minute rehearsal for blackout was conducted in the entire Ferozpur Cantonment area on Sunday amid the heightened tensions between India and Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attack.

The rehearsal was conducted on the guidelines of the Cantonment Board/Station Commander.

"The blackout was from 9 pm to 9:30 pm. As per the orders of the senior officers, lights were fully switched off. If any vehicle was found with its light turned on, it was turned off...Police are fully alert. Deployment has been made at all intersections," said Gurjant Singh, SHO, Ferozpur Cantt Police Station.

The government has given the armed forces complete operational freedom to decide on the mode, targets, and timing of India's response in the wake of Pahalgam terror attack. The government has also announced a series of measures, including putting the Indus Water Treaty in abeyance, to send a strong message to Pakistan for its support of cross-border terrorism.

The government convened an all-party meeting after the terror attack and Opposition parties have expressed their full support for any action taken by the government against the perpetrators of the heinous attack.

In the briefing to the Cabinet Committee on Security meeting held a day after the terror attack, the cross-border linkages of the terrorist attack were brought out. It was noted that this attack came in the wake of the successful holding of elections in Jammu and Kashmir and its steady progress towards economic growth and development. Jammu travel guide

India also imposed an immediate ban on the direct or indirect import and transit of all goods originating in or exported from Pakistan, regardless of their import status, effectively halting bilateral trade flows, according to a notification by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. (Agencies)

INDUS WATER

projects in Jammu and Kashmir.

Notably, soon after the Pahalgam attack, India suspended the Indus Waters Treaty, curtailed the Chenab River's water flow to Pakistan, closed the Attari border, revoked SAARC visa exemptions for Pakistani nationals, and ordered their departure within 48 hours.

Diplomatic ties were further scaled back with the mutual expulsion of defence staff,

marking a significant shift in India's policy toward Pakistan.

Official sources familiar with the development informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the government has initiated reservoir flushing operations at the Baglihar and Salal dams on the Chenab River. These operations, previously conducted with prior notice to Pakistan under treaty norms, were carried out without any communication this time, they said.

According to officials, the decision not to notify Pakistan stems from the suspension of the IWT mechanism following the Pahalgam attack that left 26 dead.

The sluice gates at Baglihar and Salal dams were opened initially to flush sediment and later closed, temporarily holding back a significant volume of water that would otherwise flow into Pakistan's Punjab province.

Officials estimate that the downstream water flow has been reduced by nearly 90 per cent.

The National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC), which operates the dams, said the maintenance work was aimed at increasing reservoir capacity and improving power generation.

Baglihar, located in Ramban district, has a capacity of 900 megawatts, while Salal, in Reasi district, produces 690 megawatts. Both projects are classified as run-of-the-river schemes but require periodic sediment removal to maintain operational efficiency.

The current maintenance includes near-emptying reservoirs and operating adjustable spillway gates, temporarily disrupting natural river flow.

India has also indicated that similar flushing work will be carried out at the Kishanganga hydroelectric project on the Jhelum River.

The Kishanganga project has been at the centre of long-standing disputes between the two countries. India's recent actions signal a policy shift towards using its full entitlement of waters under the treaty without the usual bilateral engagement.

Beyond the immediate reservoir activities, India has expedited work on multiple hydroelectric projects in Jammu and Kashmir, including Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar and Ratle. These projects are expected to add over 3,000 megawatts of capacity by 2027-28.

The government described the current steps as part of a broader reassessment of India's approach to water-sharing with Pakistan, prioritising national interests and security concerns over treaty obligations—

PM

governance and development in Jammu and Kashmir. That is our responsibility which we will have to take care of," he stated.

Acknowledging the adverse impact of recent events on the tourism sector, the Chief Minister called for a collective effort to ensure a smooth Amarnath Yatra without any inconvenience to the pilgrims.

He emphasized that the civil administration has its own responsibilities which will have to fulfill at any cost.

On the much-anticipated rail-to-Kashmir project, the Chief Minister expressed hope that the inauguration—originally scheduled for April 19 but postponed due to inclement weather—would happen soon.

"The sooner we inaugurate the bridge and the train, the sooner the rumours will end and the rail will benefit us," he said.

The Chief Minister emphasized that the efforts of the government should become visible in the coming six months in terms of governance, delivery of public services and overall improvement in functioning of the government across Jammu and Kashmir.

He stressed that governance must not remain confined to the Civil Secretariat or government offices alone.

The Chief Minister emphasized the need for start of development activities, implementation of budget announcements and efficient governance amid current challenges.

"After six months, we are back to Srinagar Civil Secretariat office. The environment in which we were hoping the offices would open, expecting normal business did not happen. It has been seen that if situation remains conducive and peaceful, it improves functioning of the government," CM said.

"We need now to focus on things that are under our control and work to ease the difficulties faced by common people," the Chief Minister said in his opening address.

He directed officers to ensure that their efforts during this working season go beyond administrative offices.

"We do not have to restrict our working to the Civil Secretariat as was the case during budget session. Now is the good opportunity to see implementation of projects on the ground," he stated.

Referring to the budget passed in the Legislative Assembly this year in March, CM said that while opinions may differ, the government's obligation lies in its execution.

"But now it is our duty, that the budget that the assembly passed, the budget that this government brought to the assembly and got it approved, we will implement the budget decisions and review meetings shall be held with concerned departments and agen-

cies," he remarked.

He concluded with a call for unity and purpose, "I am here only because I want to deliver something for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. That is my only aim, that is the aim of my colleagues. And I'm sure in that, your aim is the same as well."

CM

Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to HCM Dheeraj Gupta, all administrative secretaries, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir and other senior officers attended the meeting.

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He called upon all departments to concentrate on delivery and accountability. "Let's focus on the deliverables. So that six months from now, when we have to move to Jammu, we can actually sit down with a list of all the positive developments and changes that in spite of the circumstances, we were able to make here," the Chief Minister observed.

Referring to the budget passed in the Legislative Assembly this year in March, CM Omar Abdullah said that while opinions may differ, the government's obligation lies in its execution. "But now it is our duty, that the budget that the assembly passed, the budget that this government brought to the assembly and got it approved, we will implement the budget decisions and review meetings shall be held with concerned departments and agencies," he remarked.

He underscored the importance of utilizing the budgetary allocations and implementing District Capex plan on the ground. "Because this is the works season, he said, noting the brief window available for developmental works, particularly in the winter zone. The Chief Minister informed that a detailed review would be held with the Chief Secretary, Finance Secretary and departments. "Where there would be obstacles, we will take the necessary decisions to remove those hurdles," he said, urging development departments — including Power, R&B, PHE, Health, and Social Welfare — to accelerate their pace of work.

Touching on the broader national support for J&K's development, CM Omar shared details of his recent meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying that the highest level in government of India wants to see that in no way should Pahalgam attack derail the process of governance and development in Jammu and Kashmir. "That is our responsibility which we will have to take care of," he stated.

Acknowledging the adverse impact of recent events on the tourism sector, the Chief Minister called for a collective effort to ensure a smooth Amarnath Yatra without any inconvenience to the pilgrims. He emphasized that the civil administration has its own responsibilities which we will have to fulfill at any cost. On the much-anticipated Rail-to-Kashmir project, the Chief Minister expressed hope that the inauguration—originally scheduled for April 19 but postponed due to inclement weather—would happen soon. "The sooner we inaugurate the bridge and the train, the sooner the rumours will end and the rail will benefit us," he said. Reaffirming his commitment to governance, he said, "What we manage to control are the areas of governance that are directly our responsibility. And therein lies the role of all of us sitting in this room... The people have put us here to work together to deliver on their expectations."

He concluded with a call for unity and purpose, "I am here only because I want to deliver something for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. That is my only aim, that is the aim of my colleagues. And I'm sure in that, your aim is the same as well."

Earlier, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo welcomed the Chief Minister and members of the Council of Ministers at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar and said that all arrangements are in place for smooth functioning of offices at Civil Secretariat Srinagar.

LG

The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor and CEO, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board; Shri Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir;

Dr Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar and other senior officials.

OFFICE

He urged officers to adopt a results-driven approach and said the government would redouble efforts to address public grievances and push forward developmental initiatives across the Valley.

Chairing a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat Srinagar to mark the resumption of the annual office shift to the summer capital, Abdullah emphasized that governance should not remain confined to administrative buildings but be felt tangibly on the ground—

BDO

against accused persons namely (1) Irshad Ahmed Kichloo S/O Sh. Ghulam Mohd Kichloo R/O Kichloo Mohalla Kishtwar, the then MPW Panchayat Keshwan, (2) Vijay Kumar S/O Sh. Dev Ram R/O Thakrai, Kishtwar, the then Gramin Dak Sevak, Branch Post office Thakrai and (3) Abdul Samad S/O Sh. Mohd Ramzan R/O Nagrana Keshwan, Kishtwar," a spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

"The instant case was registered on the basis of a verification conducted into the allegations that one Abdul Samad and Officials of Block Development Office, Kishtwar/Post Office Thakrai, Kishtwar in league with each other have committed large scale bungling since 2009 and managed to open 21 fake accounts in the Post Office, Branch Thakrai without their knowledge and after opening these accounts the officials of BDO office Kishtwar prepared fake invoices and credited/deposited money in these accounts. Subsequently payment/wages amounting to Rs.4,32,327/- were released in favour of these 21 alleged fake accounts holders which were opened at Post Office Thakeri and remained operational w.e.f. 08/2009 to 04/2012. In this way, the above named accused persons in connivance with each other misappropriated the amount and caused loss to the state exchequer," the statement added—

COURT

(SAVE member). The directive came while hearing a plea seeking the FIR's quashment.

Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed, representing the activists, argued that the FIR is a retaliatory move after an earlier complaint (FIR No. 0031/2025) was lodged against two locals, Dara Singh and Manga Singh, for alleged cruelty to puppies. He contended the counter FIR was filed to harass the activists and hinder their work.

The Court allowed police to continue investigating but barred submission of the final report under Section 193 of BNSS without prior approval. The petition is listed for further hearing on June 2.

SIKH

Both communities participate in each other's joys and sorrows, united by humanity rather than divided by religion," he said.

Locals said they will continue to live together in brotherhood for generations to come—

POLICE

Abdul Aziz Bhat resident of Sozieth involved in case FIR No. 73/2018 U/S 13,16 ULAP Act of Police Station Rajbagh Srinagar, Tawheed Ahmad son of Abdul Khaliq resident of Goripora Sozieth involved in case FIR No. 73/2018 U/S 13,16 ULAP Act of Police Station Rajbagh Srinagar, Ashiq Bashir Najar son of Bashir Ahmad Najar resident of Soiteng involved in case FIR No. 05/2022 U/S 302, 307 IPC, 7/27 Arms Act 18,19,20 UAPA of Police Station Masiuma and FIR No. 19/2022 U/S 304, 468 IPC 7/27 Arms Act 13,16,18,19,20 UAPA of Police Station Khanyar, Salik Mehraj Dar Son of Mehraj-ud-din Dar resident of Soiteng involved in case FIR No. 20/2023 U/S 121 A IPC, 13,18,39 UAPA of Police Station Nowgam, Umer Adil Dar son of Ghulam Hassan Dar resident of Soiteng involved in case FIR No. 20/2023 U/S 120B, 121 IPC, 13,18,39,40 UAPA of Police Station Nowgam and Bilal Ahmad Mir@Faffu son of Gh Mohammad Mir resident of Parimpora involved in case FIR No. 29/DLI/21/NIA.

The others include Burhan Nazir Khushoo son of Nazir Ahmad Khushoo resident of Berooni Kathidarwaza Rainawari involved in case FIR No. 48/2024 U/S 109 BNS 13,16,19,20,39 UAPA Act of Police Station Khanyar and also involved in Case FIR No. 70/2016 & 126/2016 of Police Station Rainawari (Under PSA), Ashiq Malik son of Abdul Khaliq Malik resident of Panzinara involved in case FIR No. 30/2018 U/S 7/27 Arms Act of Police Station Parimpora and FIR No. 280/217 U/S 147,148,149,152,336,341,307 RPC 7/25 Arms Act. ¾ Exp. Subs Act of Police Station Parimpora (Under PSA), Ishfaq Ahmad Wani son of Late Mohd Amin Wani resident of Hamdaniya Colony Sector 4/A, Mudasir Ahmad Mir son of Mohd Sultan Mir resident of Malikpora Barthana involved in case FIR No. 127/2022 U/S 7/25 Arms Act 13,16,18,38,39 UAPA of Police Station Parimpora. (Under PSA), Irfan Ahmad Lone son of Mohd Abdullah Lone

resident of Bilal Colony Qamarwari involved in case FIR No. 163/2018 U/S 7/25 Arms Act of Police Station Pattan, Irfan Ahmad Seeru resident of Khan-e-Sokhta Nawakadal involved in case FIR No. 156/2024 U/S 13,19,39 UAPA of Police Station Safakadal and Naseer Ahmad Mir son of Mohammad Ashraf Mir, resident of Saderbal, Hazratbal involved in case FIR No. 02/2020 U/S 307, 120-B IPC, 3/4 Explosive Substances Act, and 16, 18 of UAP Act and FIR No.109/2019 under Sections 307, 212, 120-B IPC, 16, 18, 19 UAP Act, and 3/4 Exp Sub Act of Police Station Nigeen.

The searches were conducted in accordance with proper legal procedures in the presence of Executive Magistrates and independent witnesses under the supervision of the officers of J&K Police, the statement reads.

"The searches were carried out to seize arms, documents, digital devices etc. with the objective of evidence collection and intelligence gathering to detect and deter any conspiratorial or terrorist activity against the security of the Nation. This decisive action of J&K Police aims to dismantle the terrorist ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir by identifying and taking legal action against individuals engaged in such anti-national and criminal activities," police said.

"Srinagar Police remains committed to maintaining peace and security in the city. Any individual found furthering the agenda of violence, disruption, or unlawful activities will face strict legal consequences under the law," the statement added—

FOUR

The woman, who suffered grievous injuries in the assault, was rushed to a hospital where she was declared brought dead on arrival last evening, Police said.

Srinagar Police said they acted promptly upon receiving information regarding an attempted sexual assault on a woman by a group of individuals near Nishat.

Following the incident, an FIR under relevant sections of law was registered at Police Station Nishat and investigation was immediately initiated.

"During the course of investigation, four accused persons were identified and arrested," police said. The accused were identified by police as Suhail Bashir Bhat of Asham Sumbal Bandipora; Adil Ali Bhat & Firdous Ahmad Rather both residents of Zeethyar Nishat and Suhail Afzal Bhat of Pahlloo Brein-Srinagar. Family members of the deceased woman said one of the accused, whom they managed to catch at the scene, appeared to be in an inebriated state.

The gruesome incident has sparked widespread outrage, with residents demanding capital punishment for the accused and a complete ban on alcohol consumption.

Nomadic families said this is the first such incident in decades, leaving the community in deep shock.

WIDELY

she was allegedly sexually assaulted in Nishat area on Sunday while all the four persons involved in the act have been arrested by Police. According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), National Conference (NC) expressed grief and said that such acts cannot be allowed to go unpunished.

"The JKNC expresses deep sorrow and strong condemnation over the alleged rape and eventual death of a nomad woman from Reasi. Our heartfelt condolences go out to her family in this moment of profound loss," JKNC wrote on X.

NC General Secretary & MLA Khanyar, Ali Mohammed Sagar, Member of Parliament Mian Altaf Ahmad Larvi and MLA Kangan Mian Mehar Ali have also expressed deep anguish over the incident and extended their solidarity with the bereaved family.

"This tragic incident is a grim reminder of the growing threat of violence against women. Such acts are an affront to our collective conscience and cannot be allowed to go unpunished," reads the post.

Mian Mehar Ali, MLA Kangan in a post demanded fast track investigation into the incident and exemplary punishment to the perpetrators. "A Bakerwal girl has been brutally assaulted and raped, leading to her death, by two men in Nishat area of Srinagar. I demand fast track investigation into the incident and exemplary punishment to the perpetrators," Mehar Ali wrote.

LOC

tion from Indian troops, officials informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). They said Pakistan Army posts initiated unprovoked small arms fire across the LoC in areas opposite Kupwara, Baramulla, Poonch, Rajauri, Mendhar, Naushera, Sunderbani and Akhnoor in Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian Army responded promptly and proportionately, they added. This marks the 11th consecutive night of cross-border firing by Pakistan, amidst rising tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad following the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, which killed 26 people. Meanwhile, locals in the affected areas said they have been living in constant fear since the firing began along the LoC, with many avoiding forward zones and halting daily activities.



CS launches 'Info Connect' – a monthly chronicle of J&K's progress

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 5: In a significant stride towards enhancing government-public communication, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo today unveiled the first edition of 'Info Connect', a monthly magazine published by the Directorate of Information & Public Relations (DIPR). The release ceremony was held in the presence of Commissioner Secretary, Information and GAD, M. Raju, and Director, Information & PR, Nitish Rajora. 'Info Connect' aims to present a comprehensive account of the developmental milestones, policy initiatives, and noteworthy events shaping the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Designed as a rich repository of authentic information, the magazine offers citizens a window into the

evolving socio-economic landscape of the region.

Applauding the initiative, the Chief Secretary hailed the publication as a much-needed platform for disseminating accurate and timely information about the UT. He emphasized that the magazine should not only report government activities but also spotlight key sectors such as tourism, trade, industry, infrastructure, and innovation. Stressing the importance of regular and consistent outreach, the Chief Secretary advised that the magazine become a permanent feature of DIPR's public communication strategy. He noted that such efforts bridge the gap between the administration and the people, creating a dependable channel to inform citizens about various schemes, services, and ongoing projects that affect their daily



lives. Commissioner Secretary M. Raju commended the DIPR team for the timely and well-curated publication, calling it a "powerful tool to counter misinformation and portray the true

picture of development in the region." He encouraged the department to ensure continuous improvement in content quality and prompt dissemination to maximize public awareness and impact.

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Div Com Kashmir inspects operational preparedness of STP Noorbagh

HT News Network



SRINAGAR, MAY 05: In connection with the completion of Comprehensive Sewerage Scheme of Greater Srinagar under JnNURM, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Monday conducted an on-site inspection of the 60 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Noorbagh.

He inspected the operational readiness of the mega project which is expected to significantly improve drainage for nearly one-third of Srinagar city.

Emphasizing the project's critical role in urban sanitation, he instructed the Zonal Manager of NBCC to accelerate all pending mechanical and electrical works to ensure the plant becomes functional by the end of May.

On the occasion, Div Com also interacted with the local residents and listened to their concerns regarding persistent sewer and storm water issues. He assured them that efforts were being intensified to complete the mega project. Div Com was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, officers of Revenue and UEED departments during the visit.

Transport Commissioner interacts with transporter delegations

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 5: Transport Commissioner, Vishesh Paul Mahajan, today interacted with various delegations of transporters to listen to their grievances and demands. During his visit to Transport Bhawan, Srinagar, Vishesh Paul Mahajan, reviewed the newly constructed building of Transport Commissioner's Office. He instructed the Executive Engineer of Roads and Buildings Department to complete the remaining construction work within next 20 days. He also reviewed the delivery of online services and directed the concerned officials to ensure 100% adherence to Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA) timelines. This initiative aims to minimise public footfall in government offices by promoting efficient online service delivery. Additionally, the Commissioner inspected the functioning of the Regional Transport Office (RTO), Srinagar. He emphasised the need to streamline operations and improve the quality of services being provided to the public.

Dr. Farooq asks party functionaries to focus on addressing public issues

HT News Network

Srinagar May 05: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah Monday urged party functionaries to work together effectively to highlight public issues. He made these comments while meeting scores of public delegations and party leaders at party headquarters Nawa-e-Subah. Dr Farooq stressed the critical importance of party office bearers focusing on public issues, as they serve as a vital link between the public and the party. "It is imperative for MLA's, party functionaries to actively address and advocate for the concerns of the people they represent. By prioritizing public issues, we can strengthen our connection with the community and work towards a brighter future for all," he said adding, "In the face of significant challenges and hardships over the past decade, it is our duty to be the voice of the people.

Speaker visits Assembly Complex Srinagar Inspects office functioning, emphasizes smooth operations

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 05: Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today visited the Assembly Complex in Srinagar to review the functioning of various offices.

During his visit, the Speaker inspected several sections within the complex and interacted with the staff.

While reviewing functioning of offices, the Speaker directed the employees to maintain highest level of professionalism and regular attendance, besides ensuring prompt and efficient disposal of files.

Emphasizing the importance of smooth office functioning in Srinagar, the Speaker conducted a detailed review of essential facilities, including availability of potable drinking water and electricity. He also assessed the status of transfer



of official records from Jammu, where a month long Budget session was conducted recently.

He urged the officials to ensure timely disposal of files besides effective functioning of their respective departments. The Speaker was accompanied by Addi-

tional Secretary Legislative Assembly, Bilal Ahmad Bhat and senior officers of Legislative Assembly including Qazi Mushtaq Ahmad, Shabir Ahmad Wani, Mohammad Jamaludin and Fayaz Ahmad Joo. Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim

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Delegations call on Dy CM, raise their issues, concerns

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 05 Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, today met various delegations including scores of individuals at Civil Secretariat here and took stock of their issues and concerns.

The delegations included vocational instructors from Skill Development Department, JKI, ITI, Mechanical Engineering Association, District Ganderbal Contractors' Association, Sericulture department besides several individuals who called on the Deputy Chief Minister and sought prompt redressal of their issues and concerns. The issues mainly pertained to road connectivity, irregular water supply, enhanced electricity bills, pending payments,



regularisation of daily wagers/ contractual staff and allotment of sufficient funds for payment of wages. The deputations brought several issues before the Deputy Chief Minister concerning their respective areas and sought timely redressal of the same.

The Deputy Chief Minister, while interacting with the delegations, assured them that all their genuine issues and problems will be looked

into for redressal at the earliest. The delegations included vocational instructors from Skill Development Department, JKI, ITI, Mechanical Engineering Association, District Ganderbal Contractors' Association, Sericulture department besides several individuals who called on the Deputy Chief Minister and sought prompt redressal of their issues and concerns.

SHEW Mission Shakti Ganderbal organizes awareness programme at Poshan project Kangan

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, MAY 05: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Mission Shakti Ganderbal today organized an awareness cum felicitation programme focused on the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative and other government schemes for empowerment of women at Poshan Project Kangan.

The events aimed to raise awareness about the importance of girls' education and the role it plays in fostering gender equality in the community.

On the occasion, awareness was raised on key government initiatives such as the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme, which focuses on the protection, education, and participation of girls, along with other vital programs like Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Tejaswini scheme, Beti Anmol hai scheme, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana and other women related schemes under different departments.



These initiatives provide financial support, health benefits and incentives for girls' education, creating a robust foundation for their future success.

Experts spoke about the transformative power of education and the importance of breaking down societal barriers that limit girls' opportunities.

During the event, Badhaye kits were distributed among 30 nursing mothers of baby girls of Poshan Project Kangan. During the event, Badhaye kits were distributed among 30 nursing mothers of baby girls of Poshan Project Kangan.

Distt admin Srinagar organizes training session under PMAY-U 2.0 survey

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, May 05: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, District Administration Srinagar today organized training sessions for smooth conduct of survey under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U 2.0) at S P College to equip field staff with the necessary knowledge and skills for the survey to identify houseless families in the district.

Additional District Development Com-



missioner (ADDC) Srinagar, Rifat Aftab, who is also the District Nodal Officer PMAY 2.0, presided over the Training

session and provided an overview of the Survey to be conducted under the scheme. She emphasized that the

scheme aims to provide all-weather pucca houses to all eligible urban households across the district with the vision of 'Housing for All'.

She added that the primary objective of the training is to ensure the collection of accurate and verifiable data on urban households to identify eligible beneficiaries under the survey in the district. During the session, District Statistics and Evaluation Officer (DSEO) discussed technical aspects of the PMAY 2.0 mobile application, which shall be used for surveys to capture the important aspects under the scheme.

EDITORIAL

Revival of
Durbar Move a
welcome move

The union territory government of Jammu & Kashmir headed by Omar Abdullah has fulfilled one of the promises made immediately after the 2024 assembly elections by reviving the bi-annual Durbar Move. As soon as the National Conference government assumed office in October 2024 it was promised that the Durbar Move would be revived in the union territory. The same could not be done last year due to the paucity of time.

The people of Jammu region especially, the traders had been demanding the revival of Durbar Move for a long time. The practice of Darbar Move that had been going on since 1873 was banished following the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A on August 5, 2019. The people at that time had said that since a lot of money is incurred on the shifting of offices from Jammu to Srinagar in the last week of April and from Srinagar to Jammu in the last week of October the practice needs to be stopped.

Although most of the people of Jammu region were unhappy with this decision, they could not come out in the open at that time due to some political compulsions. With the passage of time there was resentment among the people on this front and gradually the voices became louder. The National Conference had felt the pulse of people in this regard and the party leaders including the incumbent chief minister had promised revival of Durbar Move.

It is a well established fact that following the opening of Durbar Move offices in Jammu in the first week of November people in large numbers from Kashmir would visit the winter capital on account of one engagement or other. These people would put up in hotels, eat food in restaurants and go shopping for various things in the different markets of the Jammu region. As a result of this there was flow of money and the economy of the region was in a proper shape.

One can hope that the incumbent government lasts its full term and the people of Jammu get benefitted from the revival of Durbar Move. If that happens then the same is likely to bolster the chances of National Conference in the Jammu region in the next assembly elections. Even though the elections are more than four years away still then there are people who will give credit to the National Conference for this development.

From ₹20 a Day to a Furniture Legacy:
The Story of Haji Mohd Akram

DR BASHARAT

Last week, I found myself in the heart of Vasant Kunj, New Delhi, in the company of two close friends, Gul Muhammad and Malik Rashid. We were graciously hosted by our friend Muhammad Afzal; a man whose generosity and grace make you feel instantly at home. Amid the warmth of shared meals and unhurried conversations, we had the good fortune to meet Haji Mohd Akram and Haji Imran—men of few words but profound journeys. Their stories didn't unfold with drama or grandeur, but rather like pages from a weathered journal—each one lined with quiet struggle, modest triumphs, and steadfast resolve. What lingered with me was not just how far they had come, but the humility with which they spoke of every step. For anyone nurturing a dream from humble beginnings, their lives offer not just inspiration: they stand as living proof that endurance, honesty, and belief in one's own hands can shape something truly lasting.

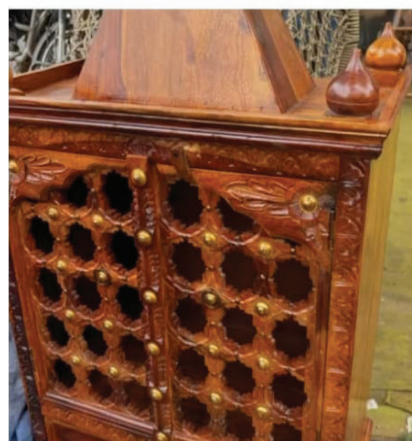
Not every success story begins with big dreams or a business plan. Sometimes, it starts in a small village, with calloused hands, a strong back, and just enough courage to take the first step. That's exactly how Haji Mohd Akram began.

Born and raised in Chek Abdul Rehman, a humble village in the Bijnor district, Akram grew up in a world where people worked hard for every single rupee. Life was basic but honest. From an early age, he worked alongside his elder brother Hasseen Ahmad in their modest family bakery, making biscuits the old-school way—by hand, with love and patience, not machines.

But in 1998, with little more than hope in his heart, Akram made a bold move. He left for Delhi, chasing better prospects. He didn't have fancy degrees, nor a job waiting for him. Just grit and faith. His first job in Mahipalpur paid him only Rs 20 a day—a sum most people today wouldn't look twice at. But for Akram, it wasn't about the money. It was about momentum. He knew if he kept working, things would change.

He found small comfort in what he knew bakery work; and returned to bakery biscuit-making in the city. But he wasn't one to get stuck. He had an itch to try new things, to push his limits.

In 2001, he ventured into a Steel Utensil business. For two years, he gave it his all, but it didn't quite work



out. Some would call it failure. Akram saw it as experience.

Undeterred, he started a small Kiriyana store in the bustling lanes of Sadar Bazar in 2003. There, among the smell of spices and daily hustle, he began understanding business in a new light—dealing with customers, managing inventory, and building trust. For four years, he ran that little store with quiet determination.

Then came another shift; tyres. In 2007, Akram opened a tyre shop in New Manglapuri on MG Road, Delhi. For four more years, he dealt in tubes and treads, learning yet another trade from scratch.

But the real turning point in his journey came when he stepped

into the world of furniture. And not just any furniture—Akram chose to work with Sheesham wood, known for its strength, beauty, and timeless charm. He started small, like always. No shortcuts, no big investors. Just honest work and an eye for detail.

Word slowly spread. His furniture stood out—not just because of the wood, but because of the soul he put into every piece. Today, Haji Mohd Akram proudly owns a registered Sheesham Wood Furniture business on MG Road, Gurgaon, a name trusted by many, running strong for more than 15 years.

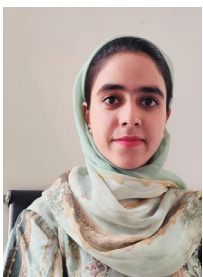
Looking back, Akram's story isn't just about changing careers or setting up shops. It's about resilience. From

a biscuit maker to a utensil trader, a grocer to a tyre dealer—and finally, a successful furniture entrepreneur—he's done it all. No complaints. No excuses. Just pure, consistent hustle.

So the next time you walk past a sleek furniture showroom or admire a handcrafted wooden chair, remember; behind one of those beautiful pieces might lie the story of a man who started with just Rs 20 in his pocket... and built a legacy with his bare hands.

Dr Basharat Khan is a writer, columnist and critic and author of the book "Literary Beats". He can be reached at Chogalwriter76@gmail.com/Devnalshispers.in

Neet Failure: A test of Resilience, not your Worth



TYIMA BILAL

NEET: NEET is more than just an entrance exam. Every year, millions of students pour their heart and soul into preparing for one of India's most competitive and life-changing assessments. The stakes are high, and the pressure even higher. For many, NEET is not just a test, it's a dream nurtured over years of late-night study sessions, whispered prayers, and countless sacrifices, both small and great. It represents the hope of securing a place in a prestigious medical college and stepping closer to a lifelong ambition. For these aspirants, success in NEET is the gateway to becoming a doctor, a dream carried since childhood. But even after months, sometimes years, of relentless studying, sleepless nights, and silent sacrifices, one result can shatter their world. It's not just disappointment, it's heartbreak. The sense of not being enough, despite giving everything,

can leave them lost, questioning their worth. And just like that, the darkest chapter begins, where dreams blur, and hope feels distant.

Failure in NEET is not a Failure in life:

NEET is just one path and not clearing it does not define your intelligence, worth, or potential. It's simply one chapter of your story, one setback, one test of resilience, but it doesn't define you. It doesn't define who you are or how capable you are. You are still the same hardworking, intelligent, capable individual you were before the exam. NEET is merely a test, not of your worth, but of your preparation for one specific field. Many successful people never followed the conventional route, yet they thrived by finding their own path. What truly matters is resilience, self-belief, your spirit, and perseverance to keep moving forward. Failure is not the end but a stepping stone toward growth. It is a natural part of the learning process, teaching valuable lessons that success cannot. It challenges us to rethink our approach and encourage perseverance. Ultimately, failure is not a reflection of our worth but a test of our ability to rise, adapt, and keep moving forward with greater wisdom.

When the expectations feel

**overwhelming:**

Behind every NEET aspirant is a story of parents waking at dawn to make breakfast, working extra hours to afford coaching classes, siblings silently cheering from the sidelines. It's natural to feel disappointed. You have worked hard, perhaps even harder than you have ever had before. And the results didn't reflect your efforts. It's okay to take some time

to process these emotions. Cry, talk to someone, reflect on what went wrong. But don't get stuck in that disappointment. The pain of failure can be a powerful teacher if you allow it to guide you forward instead of holding you back. The most successful individuals in the world have failed many times before they reach their goals. Failure is not the end, it's the beginning of a new chapter, a lesson learned

and a renewed determination.

NEET is just one path: You have other Roads to explore.

Your dream of becoming a doctor may still be alive, but don't feel that NEET is the only road to get there. NEET is just one path, not the only path. Life is full of roads leading to success, fulfillment, and purpose. Sometimes the road less traveled opens doors to even greater opportunities. If you are considering trying again, take the time to assess what went wrong, learn from the experience, and come back stronger. If the weight of another attempt feels too much, or if your heart is calling you in a different direction, know that it's okay to explore the new path. There are so many careers that are equally fulfilling fields like pharmacy, nursing, physiotherapy, paramedical science, biotechnology, clinical pathology, and even research in healthcare sciences. Medicine isn't the only way to make a difference. Beyond healthcare, there's a vast world of careers like Mass communication and Journalism, food technology, business, law, the civil services, social work, teaching, and more.

Your future doesn't have to be defined by a single exam, you have the power to redefine what success means to you. Just listen to your heart, it knows the way.

A final message: This isn't the End.

I know your heart is heavy right now. You gave your best, held onto hope, and waited for this day with dreams in your eyes and the result didn't turn out the way you hoped. It hurts. And it's okay to feel that hurt. It's okay to cry, to be disappointed, to feel lost for a moment. But please remember: one exam does not define your life. NEET is just a stepping stone, not a full stop. Failing it doesn't make you a failure, it means you tried something incredibly hard and brave. That alone deserves respect. You are more than a roll number, more than a rank. Your journey is still unfolding, and this moment, however painful, is not the end. You can choose to try again, wiser and stronger. Or you can choose a new path, one that still leads to purpose and happiness.

Above all, you are loved, needed, and precious, just as you are. Don't let this setback steal your light. You've already proven your courage by coming this far. You can still build a beautiful future. You're not alone, and this is not the end.

In the realm of life, proponents rise from the ashes of defeat, furnished with resilience and an unbreakable spirit, ready to reclaim the victory.

We shall be back stronger.

Shehr-e-Khaas: Where Big Hearts Lived in Small Homes



BY SYED MAJID GILANI

There was a time, not too long ago, when life in Srinagar's Shehr-e-Khaas, the historic Downtown, moved with a gentle rhythm, simple, contented, and gracefully bound by a deep sense of togetherness. The narrow lanes, old wooden houses, bustling courtyards, and centuries-old mosques weren't merely structures of brick and stone, but living witnesses to a society where people's hearts were connected, where neighbours were part of one's own extended family. Though homes were modest and means limited, hearts were generous, and relationships sincere, built upon silent, unspoken understandings that only true communities possess.

In those days, society itself took responsibility for its people. Neighbours cared for one another, not to interfere, but because they genuinely felt for each other. It was natural for an elder to stop a boy or girl and ask where they were going, why they were out late, or how their parents were doing. No one took offence. These were questions asked from the heart, driven by concern and the desire to guide the younger generation along the right path.

One of the most beautiful aspects of that time was the way people shared not only their homes but their joys and sorrows. Whenever a special dish was prepared, Tehri, Halwa, Gaadi, Paachi, Houk Suen, or the winter delicacy Harisa, it was customary to share with the neighbouring homes. Not out of formality, but as a simple, affectionate gesture that said, "You are part of us." Festivals, weddings, and even small moments of happiness were celebrated together. No one hid



their happiness behind doors, and no one bore sorrow alone.

The soul of Shehr-e-Khaas, however, wasn't confined within the four walls of homes. It lived and breathed in the community's daily gathering spots, the waani pend, Kander Waan, hamams, and Naid Waan. These were the neighbourhood's open-air parliaments, where conversations flowed. People of every age and class, elders, youth, the poor, the rich, gathered there to exchange news, debate politics, and discuss matters of society. Family disputes, community issues, and even pressing social concerns were deliberated openly. Respected elders would offer advice, resolve conflicts, and take reformative steps where needed. These informal forums were once the nerve centres of Shehr-e-Khaas, hotbeds of wisdom and social unity. Alas, their voices have now fallen silent, and their presence faded from everyday life.

A vital strength of that era was the strong social checks and balances maintained by elders, relatives, neighbours, and respected family heads. These guardians of morality and harmony watched over society, not with harshness, but with quiet wisdom and a genuine sense of responsibility. Elders were a blessing and a boon, a moral

compass that steered the young and reminded the old of their duties. Disputes and disagreements arose, as they do everywhere, but those conflicts were settled with grace and wisdom. Respected elders, relatives, and neighbours would gather, listen carefully to both sides, and deliver fair, sincere decisions aimed at restoring peace. Their words carried authority not because of any legal standing, but because they came from hearts filled with honesty and a genuine desire to maintain harmony.

Families took great care in preserving the dignity of their women. If any mistreatment happened within a household, it seldom remained unnoticed. The women of the neighbourhood, quick to sense unrest, would quietly intervene, counsel, and, if necessary, take collective steps to protect and resolve. Similarly, if a married daughter visited her parental home too frequently or stayed too long, discreet inquiries would be made, not to interfere, but to gently ensure that all was well. Such social checks kept families united, safeguarded relationships, and prevented matters from worsening in silence.

Children, too, were raised by the entire community. Respect for elders was an unspoken rule. If a

child misbehaved in the street, any elder had the right to correct them, and no parent ever took offence. In fact, families appreciated this collective upbringing, knowing it shaped well-mannered, responsible individuals. Disrespecting elders wasn't just frowned upon, it was considered a moral failing, a stain upon one's family name, and an insult to the very values the community stood for.

Another beautiful aspect of Shehr-e-Khaas was its tender care for the poor and needy. If someone lost their job, fell ill, or faced a rough patch, the neighbourhood quietly arranged help. Meals would arrive at their doorstep, financial support discreetly extended, and every effort made to uphold the dignity of the person in distress. No one was left hungry, abandoned, or humiliated.

Back then, people valued physical visits to their relatives, friends, and neighbours. Joys and sorrows were shared in person, hands held, shoulders offered. The warmth of presence was irreplaceable. In those days, even telephones were a rarity, and today's WhatsApp messages and hurried phone calls didn't exist. People believed in personal visits, arriving at your doorstep to share your joy, offer condolences, or simply sit beside

you in silent companionship. Presence spoke louder than words, and every emotion was felt, not forwarded. Bonds were maintained through real visits, cups of Kehwa and Noon Chai, shared bread, and hours of heart-to-heart conversation. In this well-knotted society and family system, crime and moral decay were minimal.

The constructive and positive role of elders, be they neighbours, friends, or relatives, kept temptations and wrongdoings in check. Their wisdom, their ability to foresee problems, and gently guide or decisively intervene maintained the social fabric in ways laws alone never could.

When tragedy struck, a death, an illness, or financial hardship, the entire neighbourhood would rally together without waiting for a call. Neighbours arrived with help, kind words, and whatever was needed. From cooking meals for the grieving family to simply sitting beside them in silent solidarity, people stood by each other, providing strength and comfort when it mattered most.

This was Srinagar, with Shehr-e-Khaas as its soul, a place where simple lives were rich in values, family bonding, and relationships. But sadly, those precious bonds are breaking. Today, the same streets

that once echoed with friendly greetings, innocent laughter, and neighbourly concern now seem quiet and detached. People have withdrawn into their own busy lives, hesitant to engage or intervene. Joys are celebrated in isolation, tragedies go unnoticed, and families suffer in silence. Where wise elders once settled disputes with heartfelt counsel, legal complaints and cold courtrooms now take their place. The absence of social checks, the fading watchfulness of elders, and the neglect of family and neighbourhood heads have left a void that has made society colder and weaker. Respect for elders has faded, and the younger generation often grows up unaware of the warmth of a shared upbringing.

We haven't merely lost customs, we've lost the very soul of our community. The traditions that once made Shehr-e-Khaas a shining example of kindness, unity, and moral strength now survive only in fading memories and the teary-eyed stories of those old enough to remember.

As material comforts have multiplied, hearts have shrunk. Big homes now shelter lonely hearts, and streets that once celebrated life together echo only with the hurried, indifferent footsteps of strangers. The warmth, closeness, and silent moral guidance of Shehr-e-Khaas are quietly disappearing.

And with every bond that breaks, we lose not just a tradition or a custom, but a piece of our identity, our history, and our collective soul.

May the memories of those golden days remind us of what we have lost, and perhaps, one day, lead us back to a life where hearts are bigger than homes, where neighbours are family, and where the streets of Shehr-e-Khaas once again ring with greetings, laughter, and the gentle wisdom of its people.

Syed Majid Gilani is a writer who reflects on human emotions, family bonds, moral values, and heartfelt experiences drawn from the rich tapestry of real life. He can be reached at syedmajid6676@gmail.com

The silent strength of distance: A dignified response to disrespect



JAWAID IQBAL
TEACHER FROM ZONE MAWER

In a society teeming with noise, conflict, and emotional turmoil, disrespect has sadly become a common currency in human interaction. Whether in the form of casual insolence, deliberate humiliation, or subtle disregard, it stings, unsettles, and often provokes retaliation. But there lies a rare strength in not reacting – a nobility in restraint. As the wise often say: Distance is the only answer to disrespect.

When someone disrespects you, the instinctive urge is to defend your dignity with arguments, explanations, or even confrontation. Yet, in doing so, you often give your offender precisely what they seek: your attention, your energy, and your emotional investment. Disrespect thrives on reaction; it grows in the soil of drama

"Distance is not a retreat – it is a declaration of worth. In a world where noise demands attention, choosing silence is power. When disrespect tries to draw you in, let your absence speak volumes. Preserve your peace, protect your energy, and remember: dignity is never loud – it walks away with grace."

and disputes.

The more dignified and powerful response is silence coupled with distance. Not the silence of helplessness, but of quiet self-assurance. Not the distance of pride, but of self-respect. By walking away – not in defeat, but in strength – you make a bold statement: that your peace is too valuable to be disturbed by those who cannot value

you.

In personal relationships, this principle is especially vital. Trying to change people who repeatedly belittle or undermine you is like pouring water into a broken vessel. You drain yourself to fix what does not wish to be whole. Here, distance is not just a defense – it is healing. It grants space for reflection, for self-renewal, and for the emergence of new, respectful connections.

In professional environments too, it is often wiser to disengage than to entangle oneself in unnecessary conflict. Reacting to every slight or insult only tarnishes one's own image and gives petty individuals a stage they do not deserve. Maintaining a calm distance keeps your focus intact and your energy preserved for higher pursuits.

To the readers of this humble column, let this serve as a gentle reminder: not every battle is worth fighting, not every insult deserves a reply. Sometimes the most articulate response is your absence. In the realm of dignity, distance speaks louder than words.

Let your silence echo your strength. Let your distance reflect your worth.

Dr. K. Kasturirangan: A Visionary Architect of India's Space and Education Renaissance

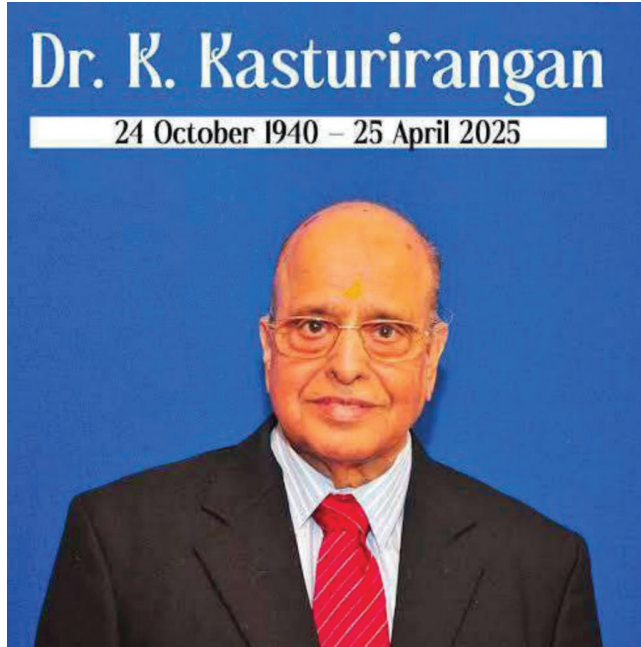


JAVAIID BHAT

India Mourns the loss of Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan, an eminent space scientist and Education reformer, who passed away on April 25, 2025 at the age of 84 at Bengaluru. His death marks the end of a remarkable era in India's Scientific and Educational advancement.

The former Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation, is celebrated not only for his pioneering contributions to India's space program but also for his visionary leadership in shaping the future of education in India. One of his most impactful contributions in recent years has been his chairmanship of the committee that drafted the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, a landmark reform in India's education landscape.

Dr. Kasturirangan holds a Ph.D. in experimental high energy astronomy and is known for his instrumental role in developing India's



remote sensing and satellite capabilities. Under his leadership, India launched several major satellites, including INSAT, IRS, and the early stages of the Chandrayaan mission. His scientific achievements earned him numerous awards, including the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan.

In 2017, the Government of India appointed Dr. Kasturirangan to head the committee tasked with drafting a new education policy for the country, replacing the decades-old National Policy on Education of 1986. With deep insight, strategic vision,

and a consultative approach, he led a multidisciplinary team of experts to frame a policy that is holistic, flexible, and rooted in Indian ethos, while aligning with global standards.

The National Education Policy 2020, approved by the Union Cabinet in July 2020, aims to overhaul the Indian education system to make it more learner-centric, skill-oriented, and future-ready. Dr. Kasturirangan's influence is evident in every aspect of the policy, which emphasizes:

1. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as a foundation for lifelong learning.

ing.

2. A 5+3+3+4 curricular structure, replacing the traditional 10+2 system.

3. Introduction of mother tongue/local language as medium of instruction till Grade 5.

4. Integration of vocational education and life skills.

5. Promotion of multidisciplinary education and flexibility in subject choices.

6. Establishment of the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF).

7. Emphasis on teacher training and accountability.

Dr. Kasturirangan's ability to blend scientific rigor with cultural sensitivity and policy acumen has resulted in an education framework that aspires to transform India into a knowledge superpower. His work on NEP 2020 reflects his belief that education must nurture creativity, critical thinking, and character in addition to academic excellence.

Dr. K. Kasturirangan stands as a towering figure whose contributions go far beyond science. His leadership in drafting NEP 2020 is a testament to his unwavering commitment to nation-building through education. As India implements the policy, his vision continues to guide the country toward an inclusive, innovative, and intellectually vibrant future.

DC Poonch reviews working of Animal, Sheep Husbandry Departments Asks for setting up first aid camps along migratory routes for nomad herders

HT News Network

POONCH, MAY 05: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to assess the performance of the Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry Departments in the district. The meeting focused on implementation of schemes, operational challenges, and the status of key initiatives under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP). The Officers from twin departments presented detailed updates on departmental activities, with special mention to the execution of HADP initiatives for Dairy Development, Poultry Development, Fodder Resource Management, and Artificial Insemination, besides integrated

sheep development projects, ATMA and CSSs. The Deputy Commissioner called for effective grassroots implementation to ensure the benefits of these schemes reach every eligible beneficiary. Reviewing the registrations on the DAKSH portal, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for increased enrollment and timely completion of courses by farmers. He directed that the DAKSH Kissan Lecture series be translated into Gori and Pahari to improve comprehension and outreach among local communities. The meeting also evaluated progress on Kisan Credit Card (KCC) saturation in the Dairy and Poultry sectors, with the DC instructing officers to aim for 100% coverage of farm-operating



families. Commending the district's strides in poultry hatching initiatives,

he urged continued focus on capacity building and farmer support.

Under the National Artificial Insemination Programme (NAIP), the Deputy Commissioner set strict timelines for target achievement and called for aggressive awareness campaigns to educate livestock owners about the benefits of artificial insemination. Reviewing the achievements under the Sheep Husbandry sector, the Deputy Commissioner assessed ongoing field activities including dipping, vaccination, breeding, and fodder seed kit distribution. He directed for the establishment of first aid camps along migratory routes to ensure timely veterinary support for nomadic herders during their seasonal movement to highland pastures. He also emphasized full implementation of the four HADP linked projects under Sheep Husbandry. Lastly, the Deputy Commissioner

instructed both the departments to meet the set targets for the financial year 2025-26 in a time bound manner. He stressed the need for robust awareness campaigns and inter-departmental coordination to ensure smooth execution of schemes and effective delivery of services to the grassroots. Reviewing the achievements under the Sheep Husbandry sector, the Deputy Commissioner assessed ongoing field activities including dipping, vaccination, breeding, and fodder seed kit distribution. He directed for the establishment of first aid camps along migratory routes to ensure timely veterinary support for nomadic herders during their seasonal movement to highland pastures. He also emphasized full implementation of the four HADP linked projects under Sheep Husbandry.

Distt admin Budgam accords warm farewell to outgoing GM DIC

HT News Network

BUDGAM, MAY 05: District Administration Budgam today organized a farewell function for the outgoing GM DIC Waseem Raja on his transfer from District Budgam. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo; ADDC, ADC, ACR, CPO, Executive Engineers, senior district officers and other officials were also present. Speaking on the occasion, DC said, "Outgoing GM DIC, Waseem Raja, served the district with great zeal and sincerity, excelling not only in his departmental responsibilities but also in the additional assignments entrusted to him by the District Administration, especially during the JK Assembly elections of 2024." He added that all the assignments given to the officer were completed sincerely and well in time. DC further said the workmanship & dedication of the officer will be missed in the district. All the officers present in the function extended their best wishes to Waseem Raja for his future assignments.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Riyaz Ahmad Najar, F/O Shifa, studying in Linton Hall School Rajbagh Srinagar, intend to correct my daughter's Name in school record from: Shifa D/O: Riyaz Ahmad Najar to Mahira D/O Riyaz Ahmad Najar. Objections if anyone Have Any Objections in this Regard He /She may contact Linton Hall School Rajbagh, Srinagar within a period of seven days. After That No objection will be entertained.

Name:- Riyaz Ahmad Najar

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار کھن پٹہ

عنوان درخواست منجانب سید مرزا الدین ولد سید حسین شاہ ساکبرالی ہرن نسبت اجرائی لیگل ہیر (وارث جائیداد) سرٹیفیکٹ بحق وارثان متوفی اشتہار ہیرا اد اگاہی ہر خاص و عام ماملہ مندرجہ الصدمہ زمین پٹاری ملحقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی۔ مطابق رپورٹ پٹاری وڈ پٹہ سرٹیفیکٹ سائل کا والد متوفی سید حسین شاہ ولد سید شاہ ساکبرالی ہرن مورخہ 27/05/2025 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے متوفی پیچھے مندرجہ ذیل وارثان جائیداد چھوڑ گیا رشتہ براہ متوفی

1. سیدہ بیگم زوجہ سید حسین شاہ زوجہ متوفی، 75 سال گھریلو کام
2. ...افر وڈہ بیگم دختر سید حسین شاہ، 48 سال //
3. ...ظاہرہ بیگم دختر سید حسین شاہ، 45 سال //
4. ...سید مرزا الدین ولد سید حسین شاہ، 45 سال دوکانداری
5. ...سید سید کینہ دختر سید حسین شاہ، 40 سال گھریلو کام
6. بیگم کینہ دختر سید حسین شاہ، 43 سال

اس نوٹیفکیشن (06) افراد پر پیش ملحقہ رپورٹ پٹاری مندرجہ وارثان جائیداد کے علاوہ اور کوئی وارثان جائیداد نہیں ہے سرٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ دن کے اندر پیش کرے معاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار

PhysicsWallah students excel in JKBOSE 2025 exams

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, May 5: Education company, Physicswallah's (PW) has announced that 117 of their students have scored 490 and above in the recently announced JKBOSE 2025 Class 10th results. Furthermore, 132 PW students scored 450 and above in the Class 12th examination held by the same board, with nine students securing ranks within the top ten. Among the 117 PW students who scored 490 and above in the JKBOSE Class 10th exams are Arbeena Bilal (498), M Aseeb Wani (497), Munazah Khursheed (496), Qareeha Wani (495), Sehnim (495), Tamana Gul (494), Bilal Ahmad Mir (493), Salman Khan (492), Hurain (491) and Aiman Abbas (490). Additionally, a few PW students, out of 132 who scored 450 and above in the JKBOSE class 12th examination and secured top ranks are Rasiya (Rank 3 - 492), Arbeena Yaseen (Rank 4 - 491), Aniket Kundal (Rank 4 - 491), Mohammad Tabin (Rank 5 - 490), Maviya Mohi-U-Din (Rank 7 - 488), Shahzain Abbas (Rank 7 - 488), Poonam Jangral (Rank 9 - 486), Abida Javeed (Rank 10 - 485) and Shahana Suhail (Rank 10 - 485). These students had enrolled in paid and free online batches offered by PW, including Udaan 2025, Lakshya NEET 2025, Lakshya JEE 2025, 10th Board Booster, Warrior 2025, Kohinoor JKBOSE, Baaz JKBOSE and Harmukh JKBOSE. Alakh Pandey, Teacher, Founder & CEO of PhysicsWallah, said, "These results reflect the students' hard work and dedication, and we should applaud their achievement. For those who didn't score as expected, remember, one result doesn't define your potential. This is just the beginning, and it is important to face the future with confidence." PW JKBOSE Wallah provides students with video lectures, exam tips and tricks, important questions for board preparation and revision sessions. PhysicsWallah (PW), an education platform, was founded in 2020 by Alakh Pandey and Prateek Maheshwari. Headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, PW aims to democratize education through online, offline and hybrid platforms. Initially launched as a YouTube channel in 2016, PW now offers education to students through its YouTube channels, including vernacular languages. PW aims to create a hybrid education ecosystem in the country by establishing tech-enabled offline and hybrid centers in cities nationwide. PW's offerings span various educational segments, including test preparation, a skilling vertical, higher education, and education abroad. PW has raised funding from investors, including Hornbill Capital, Lightspeed Ventures, Westbridge and GSV Ventures.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that in my daughters Aadhaar card, her name has been incorrectly entered as Hoorain instead of Hoorain Iqbal. Now I have applied for the necessary correction. If anyone has any objection regarding this correction, they are requested to contact the concerned authorities within seven days from the date of this notice. No objections will be entertained after that period.

Mohd Iqbal Sheikh
F/O: Hoorain. Iqbal
R/O: Saimooh Tehsil: Tral, District Pulwama

DC interacts with students at Girls Higher Secondary School Doda

HT News Network

DODA, MAY 05: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Doda, Harvinder Singh, conducted an interactive session with students at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, here today. The visit aimed to inspire students and address their concerns, especially in light of the recently declared 10th and 12th examination results. During the session, the DC emphasized the importance of education as the foundation for personal and professional growth. He encouraged students to stay curious, participate actively in academics and co-curricular activities, and to pursue their dreams with confidence.

The programme included a lively question-and-answer round, where the students posed thoughtful queries. The DC appreciated their enthusiasm and urged them to think critically, remain disciplined, and work consistently towards their



goals. In a move to support students' mental well-being, the DC shared the Telemanas helpline number '14416'. This helpline provides counselling for those facing stress or personal challenges affecting their mental health.

The event was attended by the Chief Education Officer, Principal of the host school, other functionaries and staff members. The session served as a meaningful platform for students to voice their concerns and seek guidance.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that my Name and dob has been incorrectly mentioned on his Adhar card, 972167946370 as name and DOB 19/03/2000 sumiya Akhter file his correct name and DOB IS, 10/07/2002: SUMAYA RAHIM D/O ABDUL RAHIM WANI R/O WARAPORA MAGAM now I have applied for the correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection concerned authority /UIDAI office within a period of 07 days after that no objection will be accepted.

Name: SUMAYA RAHIM / DOB 10/07/2002
D/O ABDUL RAHIM WANI
R/O: WARAPORA MAGAM/TEHSIL HANDWARA DIST KUPWARA

PUBLIC NOTICE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGISTER TRANSPORT OFFICE LAHDC KARGIL

HPA CANCELLATION.

IT TO BE NOTIFIED FOR GENERAL PUBLIC INFORMATION THAT OBJECTION IF ANY TO THE PROPOSED HPA CANCELLATION OF VEHICLE NUMBER JK076317 SHALL BE FILLED IN WRITING IN THE OFFICE OF THE ARTO KARGIL WITHIN THE PERIOD OF 7 DAYS.

NUMBER: ARTO/K/2025/39

DATE :05-05-2025

HAJI MOHD S/O SHEIKH GHULAM HAIDER TUMAIL.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It's being informed to all that I have Lost original discharge certificate S.no.052 class 8th HEMMU JAN D O B : 01/08/2011 D/o BILAL AHMAD RATHER MOTHER'S NAME SHEHEEMA AKHTAR R/O SOYAN DEVALGAM MADM.NO.175 School name GOVT BOYS MIDDLE SCHOOL DEVALGAM (ZONE BIDDER) Contact number 6005829191

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is being notified that my name on my bank account number 0122040800009260 branch pahalgam has been wrongly mentioned as Mushtaq Chohan . my actual name as per Aadhar is Mushtaq Ahmad gojar Chohan C/o Nazir Ahmad Gojar Chohan khaleen gojrani batkoot pahalgam JAMMU AND KASHMIR If anyone have queries please contact the branch office Or call 6006959049

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my father's name ALI MOHD MALIK S/O MOHD ABDULLAH MALIK R/O KHESIPORA . Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040000270 wants to be registered on my name MOHD ASSADULLAH MALIK S/O ALI MOHD MALIK R/O KHESIPORA KREERI . If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name: MOHD ASSADULLAH MALIK
S/O ALI MOHD MALIK
R/O KHESIPORA KREERI
DIST: BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 8th pass certificate at somewhere . Now i am applying for its duplicate if anybody having any objection in this regard he / she may file his/her objection in the office of GOVT BOYS MIDDLE SCHOOL TAKIYA YOUSUF SHAH /ZEO office CHANDDOOSA BARAMULLA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name: RUKHSANA RASHID
D/O ABDUL RASHID WANI
R/O TAKIYA YOUSUF SHAH
Zone : CHANDDOOSA
DIST: BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as HAJI QUIYUM PEERZADA in my driving licence bearing licence no JK -05 2008 0006337 while my corrected name is ABDUL QUYAM as per aadhar card which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he / she may file his/her objection in the office of ARTO BARAMULLA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name: ABDUL QUYAM
S/O PIR GHULAM HASSAN

PUBLIC NOTICE

CORRECTION IN D.O.B

MY D.O.B HAS BEEN WRONGLY

MENTIONED IN SCHOOL RECORDS AS

24-11-2013 INSTEAD OF 24-11-2014. NOW I

WANT ITS CORRECTION. ANYBODY

HAVING ANY ISSUE MAY CONTACT

HEADMASTER GOVERNMENT MIDDLE

SCHOOL DOKS CHOSKAR WITHIN THE

PERIOD OF 7 DAYS.

ZAINAB BANOO D/O MOHD. BAQUIR R/O

DOKS CHOSKAR. D/O/B 24-11-2014



Progress of key performance Indicators under ADP reviewed at Kupwara DC enjoins officers to ensure maximum coverage of these social security schemes

HT News Network

KUPWARA, MAY 5: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today convened a meeting of concerned officers at D.C Office Kupwara to review the progress of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under Aspirational District Programme (ADP) for the ensuing Financial Year. Addressing the meeting, DC stressed upon all the officers to work with added zeal and energy to gear up the progress of Key Performance Indicators under Aspirational District Programme. She impressed upon them to work

in close coordination to ensure saturation of various centrally sponsored schemes including Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, Atal Pension Yojana and other schemes. On the occasion, DC set the targets upon various departments for saturation of these centrally sponsored schemes which will improve the overall results under the Aspirational District Programme. The Rural Development Department Kupwara was directed to ensure cent percent coverage of Job Card holders under the Surkasha Bima Yojana which will protect the workers against financial losses resulting from



accidents leading to death or disability. Similarly, Agriculture, Horticulture,

Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry departments will have to cover 5000 farmer beneficiaries each

in the first instance to enroll them under Atal Pension Yojana aimed at providing a guaranteed minimum pension to the beneficiaries at the age of 60 years.

Lead District Manager Kupwara was asked to share the checklists with the respective departments, mentioning all the formalities of the schemes for proper enrollment of the beneficiaries.

The departments were directed to hold awareness cum enrollment camps along with banks for timely registration of the beneficiaries.

DC enjoined upon the officers to ensure maximum coverage of these social security schemes which are

targeted for the benefit and welfare of the population. The Rural Development Department Kupwara was directed to ensure cent percent coverage of Job Card holders under the Surkasha Bima Yojana which will protect the workers against financial losses resulting from accidents leading to death or disability.

Similarly, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry departments will have to cover 5000 farmer beneficiaries each in the first instance to enroll them under Atal Pension Yojana aimed at providing a guaranteed minimum pension to the beneficiaries at the age of 60 years.

District-level awareness workshop under RAMP scheme organised for MSMEs at Bandipora

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, MAY 05: District Administration Bandipora today organised a District level awareness workshop under RAMP (Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance) scheme at Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

The district level awareness workshop for SIP implementation was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, and was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Zaffar Husson Shawl; Chief Planning Officer, officials from District Industries Centre Bandipora, JK Trade Promotion Organization, Lead bank Bandipora, Handloom and Handicrafts departments and artisans. During the event, DC highlighted the importance of such



schemes and reiterated the government's commitment to empower and support budding entrepreneurs through schemes like RAMP, which will create livelihood opportunities for our

youth. This program is aimed at uplifting and guiding small unit holders and artisans in the district. On the occasion, Qadri stressed that new industrial estates are being set up in

Chewa, Nowgam and Ajas, which will provide spaces for budding entrepreneurs and skilled youth to set up their own units and businesses. He emphasized that success in such ventures requires dedication and strong willpower. He praised the District Industries Centre (DIC) Bandipora for its continuous efforts to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship in the region.

The workshop also aimed to sensitize artisans, and aspiring entrepreneurs about the benefits and opportunities under the RAMP scheme and how they can take advantage of them. The workshop also aimed to sensitize artisans, and aspiring entrepreneurs about the benefits and opportunities under the RAMP scheme and how they can take advantage of them.

DC Shopian reviews health sector, stresses improving services

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, MAY 05: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting of officers in order to review the health care sector of the district.

Various health services including construction of new government accommodations for health centers, maternal and child health, dialysis, tele-radiology and diagnostic services, human resources and implementation of national health programs, monitoring and regulation of psychotropic drugs were reviewed in the meeting along with analysis of health indicators.

Progress and achievements of District Hospital, CHCs, PHCs and other centres were presented for deliberation



and a way out discussed for further improvement of healthcare across the district.

DC asked for improving parameters spanning across the wide spectrum of healthcare services, government welfare schemes and other indicators. The need to strengthen the Jan Aushdi & Prescription Audits and

PMJAY performance was stressed also on the occasion along with Blood bank and emergency services.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Dr. Nisar Ahmad Lone; ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; ACR, SDM, CMO, DNO Ayush, DIO, DSEO, MS DH, BMOs, Asst. Drug Controller, Drug Inspectors and other concerned officials.

SR Theatre GBL and Coffee Cafe Club Activities to enhance the creativity hidden in youth's

HT News Network



Ganderbal/ May 5 Cultural activities in Ganderbal, a cultural group called SR Theatre and Coffee Cafe Club are in full swing and local youth's are participating in these activities. The head of the SSR Theatre Sahil Shafi said that such cultural activities are aimed at hiding with youth's and other young children from all over the district. He is also proud to be adorned with coffee cafes clubs. In addition he said, "We are grateful to all the great artists of Ganderbal who praised our move raising our morale and helping us to enhance the creative skills hidden in the youth and kept ourselves in a lot of time. For months young people have been engaged in attracting girl's to theatre and other cultural activities and on the last Sunday of each month the club continues to meet with senior and junior artists at the club.

MLA Nizamuddin Bhat Inaugurates ICU at District Hospital Bandipora, Emphasizes Patient Care

HT News Network

Bandipora, May 5: In a significant step towards strengthening healthcare infrastructure in the region, Hon'ble MLA Bandipora, Mr. Nizamuddin Bhat, inaugurated the newly established Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at District Hospital Bandipora today. The MLA, accompanied by the Medical Superintendent Dr. Masrat Iqbal Wani, toured various sections of the hospital to assess the quality of services being provided. During his visit, he interacted with patients and their attendants, seeking direct feedback on the healthcare facilities and patient care standards. Expressing satisfaction over the improvements in the hospital, MLA Bhat reiterated his commitment to enhancing health services in the district. "Patient care is our topmost priority. I am pleased to see positive changes in the functioning of the hospital and assure continued efforts to provide accessible and quality healthcare to the people of Bandipora," he stated.

Awareness programme on NALSA, LSUC held at Budgam

HT News Network

BUDGAM, MAY 05: In order to educate children about their rights and responsibilities, promoting legal literacy and empowering them for their rights, Legal Services Unit for Children (LSUC) Budgam today organized a legal awareness program for children at PALAASH Child Care Institution (Boys), Budina Budgam. The event was held under the supervision of O.P. Bhagat, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Budgam and under the guidance of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Budgam and Ubaid-ul-Khazir, District Social Welfare Officer Budgam. In her presidential address, Secretary DLSA Budgam 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. She 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.

Chief LADC, Budgam, Latief Ahmad Khan emphasized the pivotal

role of the NALSA scheme 2024 in creating child friendly legal services available to children. He highlighted the need for a compassionate approach in addressing the legal needs of children, and stressed on equipping children with the knowledge of their legal and constitutional rights.

Children of Palaash enthusiastically and actively participated in the programme. The event also saw active participation from

members of the Legal Services Unit for Children (LSUC), superintendent and staff members of PALAASH Budina Budgam.

The event underscores the commitment of J&K Legal Services Authority and DLSA Budgam towards nurturing a legally aware and empowered younger generation, and their efforts align with the mission to provide accessible justice and support to vulnerable sections of society including children. She 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. Chief LADC, Budgam, Latief Ahmad Khan emphasized the pivotal role of the NALSA.

Training programme on e-Office held at Kulgam

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, MAY 05:

To enhance digital governance and streamline official functioning, District Administration Kulgam today organized a comprehensive training programme on the e-Office system for government employees at the District Headquarters, here.

The training session, held under the supervision of ADDC Kulgam, Altaf Ahmad Khan, aimed at familiarizing employees with the features and functionalities of the e-Office platform to ensure efficient, transparent and paperless working in government offices.

During the session, master trainers were also nominated who will further facilitate training at various departmental levels and provide handholding support for effective implementation of the system.

District Informatics Officer NIC, Expert from IT department civil Secretariat, Shabeer Ahmad were also present during the training session. During the session, master trainers were also nominated who will further facilitate training at various departmental levels and provide handholding support for effective implementation of the system.



ADDC Rajouri reviews implementation of Mission YUVA, Associated Employment Schemes

HT News Network

RAJOURI, MAY 05: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Raj Kumar Thapa, today reviewed the implementation of Mission Yuva schemes, here at a meeting. The ADC, who also serves as the District Nodal Officer for interdepartmental collaboration and implementation of Mission YUVA convened the meeting during a visit to the Office of the Deputy Director Employment, where he assessed the progress made under the Mission YUVA initiative. Deputy Director Employment Mohd Nawaz briefed the ADC about the ongoing schemes and



activities being carried out under Mission YUVA. He gave a detailed overview of various youth-centric programs, including MUMKIN, TEJASWINI and Spurring Entrepreneurship Initiatives, highlighting the achievements and targets set for the district. The ADC conducted a comprehensive review of these schemes and emphasized the need to provide timely benefits to the eligible youth. He also stressed the importance of maintaining regular communication with the YUVA DOOTs, ensuring that all instructions and updates from higher

authorities are promptly shared to facilitate potential entrepreneurs. The ADC underlined the transformative potential of Mission YUVA in promoting entrepreneurship and self-reliance among the youth and called upon all stakeholders to contribute proactively towards the successful realization of its objectives.

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Kishtwar: Rent Assessment committee approves 19 Cases

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MAY 05: The District Rent Assessment Committee, which met here today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan approved 19 rent cases. The rent cases pertaining to Police, Army, FCS&CA, JKRLM, Education, Health, Sheep Husbandry, RDD, Handicrafts, Agriculture, PWD and ISM Department were approved by the Committee after thorough assessment. The Deputy Commissioner instructed the officers to pay rent to the concerned owners of land and structures on time and ensure the safety of government/rented property. He further directed the District Officers to pay the approved rent only after proper verification of records. The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal, ASP Pardeep Singh, AD Handicraft Pardeep Shan, CAO and other Officers and staff.

Anti-Drug awareness camps held across Rajouri District amid massive public participation

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, MAY 05: As part of the ongoing Drug-Free Rajouri campaign under the aegis of the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, a series of awareness camps were organized today across 19 blocks of the Rajouri district on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma.

The initiative witnessed overwhelming participation from the general public, cutting across all age groups. People turned up in large numbers, showing their commitment to creating a drug-free society and extending support to the administration's efforts.

Block Development Officers (BDOs) actively participated in the awareness camps and played a key role in mobilizing local communities. The Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs) and Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) closely monitored and participated in the camps to ensure smooth execution and maximum outreach.

During the camps, informative videos were screened to highlight the ill effects of drug abuse and the importance of community involvement in eradicating the menace. The sessions focused on preventive education, early intervention, and community-level action against substance abuse.

The general public widely appreciated the initiative and lauded the district administration for taking proactive steps to raise awareness and safeguard the youth from the dangers of addiction.

The District Administration reaffirmed its commitment to intensify the campaign further and sought the continued cooperation of citizens in building a healthier and drug-free Rajouri.

JKTPO organises RAMP awareness workshop at Rajouri to empower local MSMEs

■ HT News Network



RAJOURI, MAY 05: The Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO), in collaboration with the State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) Grant Thornton Bharat LLP and the District Industries Centre (DIC), on Monday organised District-level Awareness workshop here at Government ITI to build awareness and promote adoption of RAMP-interventions among MSMEs, entrepreneurs, and key stakeholders.

The RAMP initiative is being implemented under the overall supervision of the Industries and Commerce Department of Jammu and Kashmir, with the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) serving as the nodal agency. As many as 60 participants, including MSMEs, students and local stakeholders attended the Workshop. The session was led by General Manager of DIC Farid Ahmed Kohli, who served as the Chief Guest. He was joined by ITI Principal Ujwal Mahajan and President of the Industrial Association Rajouri Haji Mohammad Shafi.

The representatives from SPIU - Grant Thornton Bharat LLP delivered an in-depth overview of the RAMP program, highlighting its key components such as access to credit, skilling, technology upgrades, and marketing support for MSMEs. They stressed the necessity of coordinated efforts among all stakeholder departments to ensure the smooth implementation of RAMP interventions at the district level. The workshop was part of a series of district-level outreach initiatives under RAMP, aimed at promoting convergence, strengthening last-mile implementation, and ensuring that government schemes reach grassroots stakeholders in the MSME ecosystem.

The RAMP scheme is a World Bank-supported initiative by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, aimed at improving the performance and resilience of MSMEs across India. JKTPO is the nodal agency for implementing RAMP in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

Amarnathji Yatra 2025: Div Com reviews development plan for augmentation of civic amenities en-route Jammu Division

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 05: Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar today chaired a meeting to review the development plan for augmentation of civic amenities and renovation works for smooth conduct of Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2025 enroute Jammu division. The meeting attended by MD JPDCL, Commissioner JMC, Deputy Commissioners of Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Udhampur, Reasi, Ramban and officials from Tourism, RDD, PWD, Health and Jal Shakti discussed the execution of the identified works as per the approved works plan. The Divisional Commissioner directed the District Administrations and concerned Heads of departments for floating the tenders of the works at the earliest. The district wise works approved included repair, renovation and augmentation of basic amenities such as power, water, Toilet facilities at the various lodgement centres in the districts en route the annual holy pilgrimage. The Divisional Commissioner directed MD JPDCL to start work for



providing power supply to the lodgement centres and Yatra camps at Lakhanpur Kathua, Bhagwati Nagar Jammu and in Chanderkote Ramban and illumination

works. He further asked the Commissioner JMC and Deputy Commissioner Jammu to start the process for tenders of works at Yatra camp Bhagwati Nagar Jam-

mu. The officials of RDD and JMC apprised the Divisional Commissioner about the tenders to be floated for mobile toilets, sanitation works and hiring manpower. The health department was asked to start the stocking of medical supplies and readiness of Ambulances for the holy pilgrimage at Yatra camps and lodgement centres. The PWD was asked to look after the works of installation of waterproof hangers, temporary sheds at Yatra camp Bhagwati Nagar. The Deputy Commissioners were asked to monitor the progress of works for its quality execution and timely completion. The meeting attended by MD JPDCL, Commissioner JMC, Deputy Commissioners of Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Udhampur, Reasi, Ramban and officials from Tourism, RDD, PWD, Health and Jal Shakti discussed the execution of the identified works as per the approved works plan. The Divisional Commissioner directed the District Administrations and concerned Heads of departments for floating the tenders of the works at the earliest.

DC Office Samba conducts training for PMAY Urban 2.0 Survey

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, MAY 05: In a significant step towards realizing the vision of "Housing for All" under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0), the District Administration Samba conducted a comprehensive training program aimed at equipping field personnel with the skills and tools to carry out the upcoming survey targeting houseless households in urban areas. The training program, held under the supervision of Additional District Development Commissioner Champa Devi Thakur—who also serves as the Nodal Officer for PMAY-U 2.0—brought together officials from various departments, including District Statistics & Evalua-



tion Office, Municipal Committee Samba and Education Department. It also featured the participation of master trainers, survey supervisors, and surveyors designated for the mission. In her inaugural address, the ADDC emphasized the critical role of accurate and diligent surveying in ensur-

ing the success of the PMAY-U 2.0 initiative. She called upon all surveyors to uphold integrity and thoroughness in identifying genuine beneficiaries. Rupinder Kaur, District Statistics & Evaluation Officer, highlighted the importance of inter-departmental coordination for smooth execution of the

program. Key focus areas of the training included understanding scheme guidelines, mastering the survey methodology and digital tools, and ensuring that only eligible houseless households are identified for inclusion. The training aimed to bolster the operational readiness of all involved stakeholders and ensure a data-driven, transparent rollout process. This initiative underscores the government's unwavering commitment to inclusive urban development. PMAY-U 2.0 targets the construction of pucca houses for 1 crore urban residents across India, aiming to bridge the housing gap and elevate the quality of life for the urban poor.

PMAY-U 2.0 Survey: Training imparted to Surveyors at Udhampur

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MAY 05: A one-day training program under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban 2.0 was organized today for supervisors and surveyors here at Conference Hall DC Office Complex Udhampur. The session was formally inaugurated by Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Singh.

Addressing the training programme, the ADDC highlighted that the PMAY-U 2.0 scheme is a flagship initiative aimed at ensuring "Housing for All" by providing all-weather pucca houses to eligible beneficiaries residing in urban areas. He urged the surveyors and supervisors to work with utmost dedication and accuracy while conducting the surveys so that a comprehensive and authentic database of eligible beneficiaries is created.

The District Statistics and Evaluation Officer provided participants with a detailed overview of the various data points in PMAY mobile application to be collected during the household surveys. In addition, he addressed several queries raised by the participants and ensured clarity on technical and procedural aspects of the data collection process.

The training program aimed to build the capacity of field-level functionaries to ensure effective implementation of PMAY-U 2.0 across the district.

DC Jammu provides computers for education of rehabilitated street children

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 05: Deputy Commissioner Jammu Sachin Kumar Vaishya today handed over computers and printers to Government Girls High School Gandhi Nagar, where rehabilitated street children are being provided education by the district administration. Additional District Development Commissioner Sher Singh was also present on the occasion.

The Deputy Commissioner said that every effort is being made to ensure that children feel encouraged to pursue their studies. He added that



the provision of the gadgets will aid the staff and contribute to the learning experience of children. "Families of these children are also being counselled and motivated to continue their wards' education," he stated.

At present, 83 such children are enrolled and studying alongside other students at the school. The initiative aims to strengthen digital learning infrastructure and support staff in delivering effective education.

PMAY-U 2.0 Survey Training programme held for Supervisors, Surveyors at Rajouri

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, MAY 05: A one-day training programme for supervisors and surveyors was successfully conducted today at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Rajouri to facilitate the upcoming House-to-House Survey under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0. The programme was organized under the overall supervision of Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa, Additional District Development Commissioner and Nodal Officer PMAY-U, and coordinated by District Statistics and Evaluation Officer Sandeep Kumar Sharma.

The training witnessed enthusiastic participation from supervisors and field



investigators drawn from the Municipal Committees of Rajouri and Thannamandi. The primary objective of the session was to equip field functionaries with the requisite knowledge and skills for effective and accurate data collection in urban areas of the district.

J&K Bank Branches felicitated for effective implementation of Govt Schemes in Doda District

■ HT News Network

DODA, MAY 05: A felicitation ceremony was held to honour the remarkable performance of J&K Bank branches across District Doda for their outstanding role in implementing various Government Sponsored Schemes aimed at empowering youth, boosting self-employment, and promoting sustainable development.

The event was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and attended by Zonal Head J&K Bank Arshad Qadri, XEN PDD, officials from the District Industries Centre (DIC), Khadi & Village Industries Board (KVIB), NRLM, and successful branch heads of J&K Bank. The initiative celebrated the dedication of the banking sector in extending timely financial support under major welfare programmes.

During the event, Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to the branch heads who demonstrated exceptional performance in implementing schemes such as the Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment



Generation Programme (JKREGP), Artisan Credit Card (ACC), Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), PM Vishwakarma, and PM Suryaghar. These schemes have significantly contributed to employment generation, women empowerment, promotion of micro-enterprises, and the adoption of clean energy solutions in rural areas. DC Doda appreciated the commitment of J&K Bank and assured full cooperation from district adminis-

tration and line departments for smooth scheme execution. Zonal Head Doda Arshad Qadri, in his address, highlighted the proactive approach of the bank in supporting local entrepreneurship and rural development. He informed that more than Rs 111 crore has been disbursed under various schemes in the last financial year. Notably, Zone Doda now leads in agricultural financing across the region, a testament to the bank's grassroots outreach and efficient service delivery. He also emphasized the importance of financial literacy, encouraging more citizens to avail benefits of government initiatives.

In his concluding remarks, the DC praised the successful implementation of the PM Suryaghar Scheme by both J&K Bank and JKPDC Doda, focusing on the promotion of rooftop solar installations. He called for sustained collaboration between financial institutions, government departments, and local communities to enhance entrepreneurship, ensure inclusive growth, and achieve the vision of a self-reliant and energy-efficient Doda. The felicitation event reinforced the importance of a united approach toward economic upliftment and sustainable development in the district.

MLA Pawan Gupta, DDC Chairman inaugurate Blacktopping work on Chakhad-Dabrah Road, Bridge over Birma Nallah

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MAY 05: In a major infrastructure milestone for rural Udhampur, MLA Pawan Kumar Gupta today inaugurated the blacktopping of 1.6-kilometre road stretch and a newly constructed 43-meter span motorable bridge over Birma Nallah, providing critical short-route connectivity between Chakhad and Dabrah villages. The new link will reduce travel distance by approximately 10 kilometres, bringing much-needed relief to local commuters. The project has been undertaken with a total estimated cost of 281.74 lakh for the 1.6-kilometre road construction and 172 lakh for the motorable bridge under the Languishing Projects Scheme. Executed under the supervision of the Public Works Department (PWD), the road and bridge now



offer seamless access across the previously challenging Birma Nallah terrain. The inauguration ceremony was also attended by District Development Council (DDC) Chairman Lal Chand, who appreciated the MLA's commitment to rural connectivity and citizen welfare. He emphasized that such projects are vital

for bridging developmental gaps and empowering remote communities. Speaking to a gathering of local residents, Pawan Kumar Gupta stated "The completion of this road and bridge marks a major step forward for the people of Chakhad and Dabrah. It is more than just a road — it is a direct route to opportunity, safety,

and progress. Saving 10 kilometres of travel daily will significantly improve the lives of the people here." The 43-meter bridge over Birma Nallah now provides uninterrupted access between two sides of the region throughout the year, replacing the previous dependence on seasonal and often hazardous crossings. Former panches, sarpanches, PWD officials and villagers were present in large numbers. The MLA instructed the officials to maintain high standards of quality and sustainability in all developmental works while ensuring transparency and timely delivery. Residents expressed heartfelt gratitude to MLA Pawan Kumar Gupta and DDC Chairman Lal Chand for their initiative, stating that this long-awaited project will improve school transportation, emergency healthcare access, agricultural trade, and daily commutes.

Preparation for upcoming National Lok Adalat reviewed at Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MAY 05: A virtual meeting was held today at the Conference Hall of the District Court Complex Udhampur to discuss preparations for the upcoming National Lok Adalat scheduled on May 10, 2025. The meeting was attended by representatives from the banks and insurance companies operating in Udhampur and their respective advocates.

The meeting was chaired by Principal District and Sessions Judge (Chairman DLSA) Virinder Singh Bhou, along with Addl. District and Sessions Judge Kamlesh Pandit. The primary objective of the meeting was to review pending cases and discuss strategies for efficient case management and settlement of disputes through the Lok Adalat. By promoting amicable resolution, the meeting aimed to reduce court backlogs and provide relief to litigants. The meeting focused on collaboration between the judiciary and financial institutions, underscoring the importance of mutual cooperation in resolving disputes. By leveraging the Lok Adalat platform, the stakeholders aimed to achieve speedy and cost-effective resolutions, benefiting all parties involved.

DIPR Cultural unit promotes anti drug campaign at GMHSS Camp Roopnagar

HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 05: A Cultural Awareness Programme themed "Nasha Mukht Bharat" (Say No to Drugs) was organized today by the Cultural Unit of the Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR), Jammu at Government Mixed Higher Secondary School Camp Roopnagar.

The purpose of the initiative was to generate awareness about the harmful consequences of drug abuse and to advocate for a drug-free society. Artists from the Cultural Unit, Jammu engaged the audience with theme-based songs, effectively illustrating the impact of drug addiction on individuals, families, and society as a whole.

Present at the event were Lecturers, Teachers and students of the School. Principal of school Pushpa Bhatt and students shared their viewpoints on the topic and emphasized its relevance to the audience. The School Principal lauded the Department of Information and Public Relations for hosting such an impactful event aimed at spreading awareness. The programme was conducted under the directions of Joint Director Information Jammu Deepak Dubey and under the supervision of Cultural Officer Jammu, Mukesh Kumar Sharma.

Sea Shell Exhibition held at District Police Lines Ramban

HT News Network

RAMBAN, MAY 05: A unique SeaShell Exhibition was today organized by the Police and District Administration Ramban here at District Police Lines Chandrog. The exhibition was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary, in the presence of Senior Superintendent of Police Kulbir Singh and members of the Leaf Monkey Hiking Club which collaborated in hosting the event. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of different schools. The young visitors were sensitized by Er. Robin Koul, Varun Nagar and other organizers about the fascinating world of seashells, their origins, ecological significance, and role in marine biodiversity. The diverse collection of shells on display, ranging from rare species to artistically shaped ones, captivated the attention of the students and sparked curiosity about marine life and environmental conservation. The Deputy Commissioner, while interacting with the students, encouraged them to explore the natural world with curiosity and scientific temper. He appreciated the collaborative efforts behind the exhibition and emphasized the importance of such educational initiatives in promoting environmental awareness among youth. Talking to media persons on the sidelines of the event, DC Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary said, "This exhibition is not just about showcasing natural artifacts; it is a step towards sensitizing our younger generation.

Empowering Youth for a Drug-Free Future: IEC Campaign held at GGHS Doda

HT News Network



DODA, MAY 05: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, an impactful IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) campaign was organized here at Government Girls Higher Secondary School. The event aimed to raise awareness among students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of building a drug-free society. Koshal Sharma, a representative from the Youth Services & Sports Department, delivered a powerful and heartfelt speech, urging students to stay away from drugs and become ambassadors of change in their communities. Mr. Sharma highlighted the devastating impact of substance abuse on individuals, families, and society at large. He encouraged students to take an oath to live a healthy and drug-free life, stressing that the youth are the backbone of the nation and their well-being is essential for a prosperous future. The campaign aimed not only at spreading awareness but also at fostering resilience and positive mental health among young minds through education and collective commitment. The event was held under the overall supervision of Principal Surinder Singh Baloria, who emphasized the role of educational institutions in shaping responsible citizens. The program was efficiently anchored by Miss Sumaiya, who kept the audience engaged and motivated throughout the session.

DC Reasi reviews progress of work on DAK Expressway

HT News Network

REASI, MAY 05: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik today chaired a meeting with stakeholders, including officials from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to review the progress of work on Delhi-Amritsar-Katra (DAK) Expressway. The meeting focused on resolving pending issues related to the portion of the expressway falling under in the District. The DC assured all stakeholders of full support in removing any hurdles to facilitate the swift completion of this important project. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the follow-up actions from the previous meeting. NHAI representatives informed that several previously discussed issues have now been successfully resolved and work is progressing smoothly.



However, two issues, including land mutation issue and one land dispute case were discussed today. The DC assured that one of these matters would be resolved by the evening, while the others would be addressed within two days. The Deputy Commissioner gave clear instructions

to NHAI to take immediate and appropriate action regarding residential structures that have developed cracks due to land cutting and excavation activities related to the expressway construction. She emphasized that it is NHAI's responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of affected residents. Any damage or loss caused due to construction activities would be solely the responsibility of NHAI. Safety must be the top priority. The DC instructed NHAI officials to promptly assess the extent of damage to affected houses and carry out the necessary repair work to restore their structural integrity. She stressed that repairs must ensure the houses are made safe and fit for habitation. The meeting was attended by ACR Reasi Nitin Verma, Project Director Anuj Kumar, Site Engineer Abhishek Tagotra and Project Manager from AFCO.

DC reviews progress of PMGSY works in Kishtwar district

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MAY 05: Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) projects being executed in different parts of the District. At the outset, Ex-En PMGSY apprised the Deputy Commissioner of the current status and challenges faced in the execution of the PMGSY projects. A detailed review was conducted of key road projects including Marwah to Mulwarwan Road, Yurdoo to Qaderna Road, Margan Top Boundary to Mulwarwan Road, Ikhal to Lopa-ra Road, Atholi to Pallali Road, Gahan to Chandali Road, Cherji to Semna Bhata Road, Kuleed to Hular Road, Palali to Machail Road, Tikkan to Mori Road, Sohal to Chitto Road, Kundal to Affani Road, Kuriya to Keshwan Road, Kandni to Ohli Road and other important projects. Seeking details of project status, the Deputy Commissioner asked for the intervention of the State Quality Monitoring Team to conduct quality checks on Margi to Sukhnai Road, and other road projects in the district. Emphasis was laid on close monitoring



and completion within a one-year timeframe. To strengthen on-ground development, the DC instructed the field officers and Officials including AEEs and JEs, to remain stationed in remote areas. Concerned Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Tehsildars were assigned the responsibility of regularly monitoring of the projects. Additionally, a committee comprising ACR and Tehsildar Kishtwar was constituted by the DC to examine and resolve issues concerning the Hular to Kuleed Road in a time-bound manner. Strict directives were issued to the PMGSY department to take disciplinary action, including blacklisting of non-performing contractors. The DC reiterated the administration's zero-tolerance policy towards substandard work and stressed the importance of quality control.

PMAY Urban 2.0 Survey Training imparted to field staff at Reasi

HT News Network

REASI, MAY 05: A comprehensive training program was conducted for field functionaries today in the DC Office Conference Hall ahead of the household survey under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) Urban 2.0.

The initiative aims to identify eligible households to provide them with pucca houses and basic amenities, aligning with the mission of "Housing for All" in urban areas. The training session was attended by Nodal Officer PMAY-U (Additional District Development Commissioner - ADDC) Sukhdev Singh Samyal; District Statistics & Evaluation Officer (DSEO) Ashok Kumar and the Executive Officer of the Municipal Committee Katra. The Master Trainers from the Education Department imparted training to the supervisors and surveyors deployed for the survey. The training focused on equipping participants with the necessary skills to conduct the survey efficiently, ensuring accurate data collection through the PMAY Urban 2.0 framework. Topics covered included the use of the survey mobile application, adherence to modified eligibility criteria, and methodologies for identifying houseless households in urban areas of Reasi. The session emphasized the importance of transparency, timeliness, and community engagement to achieve 100% saturation of the scheme. ADDC Sukhdev Singh Samyal underscored the significance of the survey in transforming the lives of houseless families by providing them with dignified housing. He urged the surveyors to adopt best practices and work diligently to ensure no eligible household is left out. DSEO Sh. Ashok Kumar highlighted the role of inter-departmental coordination in streamlining the process, while the Executive Officer of Municipal Committee Katra stressed the need for localized strategies to address the unique challenges of urban areas like Katra. The master trainers from the Education Department played a pivotal role in guiding the supervisors and surveyors, providing hands-on training on data entry, verification processes, and resolving field-level challenges.

Final Publication of Electoral Rolls – Special Summary Revision, 2025 with respect to 01.04.2025 for Assembly Constituency 77-Nagrota

HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 05: District Election Officer, Jammu handed over copies of Final Electoral Rolls to the representatives of Political Parties consequent to the successful conclusion of Special Summary Revision, 2025 which was started on 8th April, 2025, in the 77-Nagrota Assembly Constituency with respect to 01.04.2025 as the qualifying date. Further, the public of the Assembly Constituency is informed about publication of the Final Electoral Rolls. The Revision process was preceded by, ratio-

nalization of Polling stations of 77-Nagrota AC resulting in the increase of 5 Polling stations, thus raising the total number of Polling stations to 150 from earlier 145. The process involved active participation of Booth Level Officers (BLOs), public awareness through SVEEP initiatives, and collaboration with political parties, educational institutions, and civil society groups to reach every eligible voter. It also included awareness through a dedicated van with state of the art facilities provided by the CEO known as "Democracy on Wheel". To facilitate maximum participation, four Special Camp Days were organized across all polling stations



within the constituency on 12th, 13th, 19th and 20th April 2025. During these camps, eligible electors engaged enthusiastically in the registration process. All operations of the SSR were conducted in a transparent manner which includes meetings with stakeholders and sharing of claims and objections on weekly basis.

The Final Electoral Rolls are now available for public inspection at all Polling Stations in 77- Nagrota Assembly Constituency, Offices of the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and Assistant EROs and the official website of the CEO J&K "https://ceojk.nic.in". DEO Jammu while handing over the copies

to the Political parties advised all political parties as well as Electors in general to verify their name in the final list, note their EPIC number, Part number, and Serial number and any person aggrieved with any decision of the ERO can file an appeal to the District Magistrate.

The District Election Officer, Jammu, appreciates the dedicated efforts of the field staff, BLOs, nodal officers, and the cooperation of citizens in successfully completing this crucial democratic exercise and urged all to continue strengthening the electoral process by being informed, aware, and active participants in democracy.



Ahead of retirement, CJI Khanna assigns Waqf Amendment Case to Justice Gavai-led Bench

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAY 5 (UNI)

In a key development, the Supreme Court on Monday announced that the constitutional challenge to the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 will no longer be heard by the bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna, and will instead be taken up by a bench headed by Justice B.R. Gavai on May 15.

The shift comes in light of CJI Khanna's impending retirement on May 13, with the Chief Justice observing that the matter requires detailed arguments even at the interim stage and should be heard at length on a "reasonable day" by another bench.

"This matter has to be heard on any reasonable day. It will not be before me," said CJI Khanna, sitting alongside Justices Sanjay Kumar and K.V. Viswanathan.

"We have gone through the counter and rejoinder. Yes, some points have been raised on registration and disputed figures. It needs to be dealt with thoroughly. I do not want to reserve any judgment or order even at the interim stage."

The court then directed



that the matter be listed before Justice Gavai's bench on May 15 for further proceedings both interim and final.

During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, respectfully remarked, "We would have loved to pursue your Lordship as every contention has an answer. But we cannot embarrass you because there is no time."

In a lighthearted moment, Mehta added, "It is painful to remind your Lordship [of the retirement]," to which the CJI responded with a smile, "No, no I am looking forward to it."

The petitions before the apex court challenge the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, which was passed by the Lok Sabha on April 3 and cleared by the Rajya Sabha on April

4. It received Presidential assent on April 5.

The amendment seeks to revise the regulation of waqf properties assets dedicated for religious or charitable use under Islamic law by, among other things, removing the concept of "waqf by user" from the statute.

This removal, petitioners argue, threatens the status of historical mosques, graveyards, and religious sites without formal documentation, many of which have existed for centuries.

Multiple petitions have been filed, including by Congress MP Mohammad Jawed and AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi, who claim the law discriminates against Muslims and interferes with their constitutionally protected right under Article 26 to manage their religious affairs.

The Union government, in its affidavit, defended the amendment as a necessary reform to curb misuse. It cited a 116 per cent increase in waqf land after the 2013 amendment, alleging that "private and public lands were being arbitrarily claimed as waqf," infringing on citizens' and government's property rights.

Regarding the exclusion of "waqf by user," the Centre stated that the change does not curtail the right to dedicate property to God, but ensures dedications follow statutory procedures.

The Centre also rebutted objections over the inclusion of non-Muslim members in the Central and State Waqf Boards, arguing that their presence is minor and only aims to ensure diversity and transparency, not interference with religious rights.

Meanwhile, six BJP-ruled States, Haryana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Assam have also approached the Supreme Court in support of the amendment, contending that unregulated waqf claims have serious administrative and legal implications.

Nitin Gadkari inaugurates and lays foundation stones for Rs 3,900 cr national highway projects in Telangana

AGENCIES

HYDERABAD, MAY 5 (UNI)

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for several National Highway projects worth about 3,900 crore at a public programme held in Sirpur Kagaznagar, Komaram Bheem District, on Monday.

Speaking at the public meeting, Gadkari acknowledged the unique historical and cultural significance of Adilabad district, noting that the people of the region have long struggled for land and livelihood.

He emphasised that Adilabad remains socially and economically backward, with a strong need for employment opportunities.

Highlighting the critical role of infrastructure in national development, Gadkari said, "A country with good roads is a developed country. Agriculture, employment, transport, and infrastructure are the pillars of national progress."

He added that the Centre is fully committed to the development of Telangana.

The Union Minister



noted that the central government is undertaking key infrastructure projects to enhance inter-state connectivity. This includes the construction of bridges and underground tunnels in challenging terrains.

He announced several upcoming projects to improve road connectivity between Telangana and Maharashtra and to link important spiritual destinations like Bhadradi, Basara, and Medaram via highways.

Gadkari also revealed plans for a new greenfield road from Suryapet to Devarapalli and the construction of the Vijayawada-Nagpur corridor. Additionally, he assured that the expansion of the Jagityala-Karimnagar highway will be expedited.

He reiterated that under the PMGSY (Prad-

han Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana), road-building efforts are being accelerated nationwide to support economic growth, reduce travel time, and enhance rural connectivity.

Union Minister and Telangana BJP President G Kishan Reddy stated that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, national highway development has significantly advanced across the country, including in Telangana, where 32 districts are now connected by national highways.

He highlighted that over 5,000 km of highways have been constructed in the state under the leadership of Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari. The latest addition includes projects worth Rs 3,900 crore in Adilabad and Nizamabad

districts.

Kishan Reddy also noted progress in railway connectivity, industrial development, and energy projects. These include the Kazipet railway coach factory, Ramagundam power and fertiliser projects, and one of the seven national mega textile parks allotted to Telangana.

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, expressed concern over the deteriorated condition of the Hyderabad-Karimnagar-Mancherial (Rajiv) Highway and stated that the Centre is ready to upgrade it to National Highway status, pending resolution of issues by the state government.

He emphasised that infrastructure development under the Modi government has transformed backward regions like Adilabad and praised the Centre's commitment to connectivity, industry, and social welfare schemes, including Ayushman Bharat and free food grain distribution.

Telangana Panchayat Raj Minister Dr. Danasari Anasuya Seethakka, along with MPs, MLAs, and other dignitaries, participated in the programme.

Five of family die after fire in building in Kanpur

AGENCIES

KANPUR, MAY 5 (UNI)

Five members of a family, including a couple and their three minor daughters, were killed when a building caught fire in the Chamanganj area of Kanpur city here in Uttar Pradesh, police sources said here on Monday.

Police sources said that the incident took place in Gandhi Nagar, where a five-story building caught fire late on Sunday night. "There was a shoe factory on the lower floors of the building, whereas its



owner, along with his wife and three daughters, lived on the upper floors," they said.

Police sources said it is being suspected that the fire which broke out due to a short circuit spread rapidly and engulfed the

upper floor. "On getting the information, senior officers along with local police and fire tenders reached the spot and launched a rescue and relief operation. A team of State Disaster Relief Force (SDRF) was also called on the spot,"

they said.

Police sources said that after several hours-long efforts, the firefighters managed to control the fire early on Monday morning. "Five persons trapped inside the building were taken out and sent to the hospital, where doctors declared them dead. The deceased are said to be identified as Danish, his wife Nazneen and three minor daughters. However, the names of the deceased will be declared after identification by the relatives," they said. A senior officer said that the cause of the fire is being investigated.

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAY 5 (UNI)

Senior Congress leader KC Venugopal has been appointed as the chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which was constituted with effect from May 1.

According to a statement by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, Venugopal will continue as the chairperson till April, 2026.

The PAC, the oldest and most prestigious parliamentary panel, is reconstituted every year to examine the accounts detailing the appropriation of funds approved



by Parliament for government expenditure, and such other accounts laid before Parliament as accounts of autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies.

The committee also

examines the reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on various subjects like Civil, Defence, Posts, Railways and Taxation. Besides, it also examines the C&AG reports on performance

appraisals of various centrally sponsored schemes and also on subjects selected suo moto.

Since 1967, a convention has been established whereby an eminent leader from Opposition in Lok Sabha is appointed as the chairperson of the PAC.

In the past, the panel was chaired by NG Ranga, MR Masani, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Jyotirmoy Basu, HN Mukherjee, PV Narasimha Rao, R Venkataraman, Murli Manohar Joshi and others.

Since its inception, the PAC has presented 1,804 reports.

Trinamool with Centre on issues of internal and external affairs post-Pahalgam attacks : Mamata

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, MAY 5 (UNI)

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday reiterated that they are with the Union government on the issues of internal and external security,

"We have clearly said our party (Trinamool Congress) is with the government on the issues of internal and external security. We are not doing divide and rule here," the TMC supremo told reporters as she is visiting Murshidabad to see the situation there.

She also talked to the people, affected during Waqf protests on April 11 and April 12.

Banerjee would halt at Berhampur and hold an administrative meeting there. She will also go to Dhulian and Suti on Tuesday to meet the people.

"I could have gone to Murshidabad earlier, but if there is no peace and stability, we should not go



there and disturb. Today I am going there because it is now stable. I will reach Berhampur and hold a review meeting. Tomorrow I will visit Dhulian and provide the necessary compensation to the people whose houses and shops have been damaged."

Banerjee's visit to Murshidabad by roads happened nearly three weeks after the border district witnessed bloody communal violence during the protest against the Waqf (Amendment) Act. The protest on April 11 turned violent, leading to two deaths, several injuries, and mass displacement.

Banerjee said she would go by roads since the helicopter travel would be dangerous owing to weather.

On the raging Digha Jagannath temple controversy, Banerjee said they respect the temple of Puri and also respect Jagannath Dham. "We respect the temple in Puri and we also respect Jagannath Dham. Kalli temples and Gurdwaras are everywhere across the country. Temples are there and in all places. Why is so much anger on the issue," asked the Bengal CM, who was present during the inauguration of Jagannath temple in Digha on April 30.

Israeli army calls up tens of thousands of reservists to expand Gaza offensive

AGENCIES

JERUSALEM, MAY 5 (UNI)

Israel's military has begun issuing "tens of thousands" of call-up orders for reservists to intensify its offensive in the Gaza Strip, a senior defence official said on Sunday, vowing to increase pressure on Hamas to free hostages.

Eyal Zamir, Chief of the General Staff of the Israel Defence Forces, announced the move during a visit to a naval commando base.

"This week we are issuing tens of thousands of call-up orders to our reservists to intensify and expand our operations in Gaza," Zamir said. "We are increasing pressure in order to bring our hostages home and to defeat Hamas."

He added that as part of the expanded offensive, the military would operate "in additional areas" in the enclave and destroy "all militant infrastructure".

Zamir stated the reservists would also be

deployed to other areas, including the northern border near Lebanon and Syria and the occupied West Bank.

The announcement followed a weekend where Israeli forces struck more than 100 sites across the Gaza Strip, targeting militant cells, underground infrastructure, and military compounds, the army said in a statement.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his coalition partners have vowed to continue the war until Hamas is defeated, despite mounting public pressure in Israel for a ceasefire agreement that could secure the release of 59 hostages Israel says are still held in Gaza.

Israel ended a two-month ceasefire with Hamas in March and resumed its air and ground operations. According to the health authorities in Gaza, more than 52,000 Palestinians have been killed since the Israeli offensive began in October 2023.

Cancers kill nearly 14,000 people per year in Cambodia: PM

AGENCIES

PHNOM PENH, MAY 5 (UNI)

Cambodia recorded about 20,000 new cases of cancers, with nearly 14,000 deaths a year, Prime Minister Hun Manet said here on Monday.

"The number is high if compared to our country's population of 17 million," he said in a speech during the launch of the National Cancer Control Plan 2025-2030.

The plan was designed to reduce new cases and deaths from cancers, he said, adding that it would improve access to quality cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment and care.

The prime minister said that to reduce cancer risk, people should focus on a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, grains, and protein, and engage in regular physical activity.

He also advised relevant authorities to regularly check on the safety and quality of food, fruits and vegetables in order to pre-



vent chemical contaminants that could potentially cause cancer.

Health Minister Chheang Ra said liver cancer is the most common type of cancer among people in Cambodia, followed by lung, breast, colorectal, and cervical cancers.

"About 38 people die of cancers every day in Cambodia," he said.

In the Southeast Asian country, the Luong Me Hospital, located in the southwestern outskirts of Phnom Penh, is the largest facility specializing in cancer treatment and care.

3 killed, 30 injured as bus overturns on Mumbai-Goa highway

AGENCIES

Mumbai, May 5 (UNI)

Three people were killed and over 30 others were injured after a private bus overturned at Karnala Ghat on the Mumbai-Goa Highway, official said here on Monday.

The accident occurred around 11 pm on Sunday near Panvel in Raigad district, as the bus navigated a sharp bend in the hilly stretch.

The private bus carrying 35 passengers from Mumbai to the Konkan region suddenly lost control. The fire brigade and police rushed to the scene after receiving information about the incident.

Passengers trapped inside the bus were rescued, and the injured were admitted to MGM Hospital Panvel for treatment.

Among the injured is a child who lost a hand in the impact.

Reducing salt intake most cost-effective strategies to boost health: Experts

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Reducing salt intake is one of the most cost-effective strategies to boost health, said experts as salt consumption in India is exceeding safe limits, contributing significantly to the growing burden of non-communicable diseases.

Doctors and public health leaders called for stronger physician-led campaigns, reformulation of packaged foods, and consumer education to curb India's rising salt crisis, at The Salt Fight 2025: Say NO to Na workshop organised by the Delhi Medical Association (DMA) and other organisations.

Addressing modifiable risk factors like excess salt intake is critical to reversing the country's non-communicable disease burden, which accounts for nearly 65 per cent of



all deaths, said Dr Vinod Kumar Paul, Member, of NITI Aayog, during the event, held in the national capital.

"Reducing salt intake may seem simple, but it is among the most cost-effective strategies available. It is not enough to know the risks -- we must focus on what works. Practical campaigns and evidence-based solutions must be scaled urgently," he added.

Further, quoting global research, Paul noted that cutting salt intake by 30 per cent could reduce hypertension prevalence by at least 25 per cent,

helping prevent conditions non-communicable diseases such as heart attacks, strokes, and kidney disease.

According to health data, the average salt consumption in India stands at nearly 11 grams per day, far exceeding the WHO-recommended limit of 5 grams. Excess salt is often consumed unknowingly through processed foods, restaurant meals, and packaged snacks.

Dr Girish Tyagi, President of the Delhi Medical Association, stressed that physicians had a vital role in making salt reduction a part of routine clinical

practice.

"Salt reduction should not be a footnote during patient consultations. It must be central to our health advice, encouraging low-sodium options and greater awareness about hidden sources of salt," he said.

Dr Atul Goel, Director General of Health Services, New Delhi, linked salt excess to broader issues in modern lifestyles.

"Processed foods, refined oils, and excessive salt are harming us slowly. Even medicines and injectable products may contain sodium. Reducing salt by even 2 grams a day can protect millions," he said.

The experts also discussed the importance of food industry reformulations, mandatory front-of-pack salt labelling, taxation on high-salt foods, and promoting low-salt recipes that do not compromise taste.

New biosensor platform to detect preeclampsia in pregnant women in 30 minutes

AGENCIES
CHENNAI

A team of Indian researchers has developed a new biosensor platform that can test and diagnose preeclampsia -- is a life-threatening complication caused by hypertension -- among pregnant women in 30 minutes.

Preeclampsia, which typically develops after 20 weeks of pregnancy, affects 2-8 per cent of pregnancies worldwide.

While traditional methods to detect preeclampsia are time-consuming, and require huge infrastructure and trained personnel, the new platform offers rapid, on-site, and affordable screening at an early stage. Timely treatment is crucial to minimise both maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality rates.

The team led by the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT) Madras, along with the



Vellore Institute of Technology developed the Plasmonic Fibre Optic Absorbance Biosensor (P-FAB) technology using fibre optics sensor technology.

They focussed on Placental growth factor (PlGF) -- an angiogenic blood biomarker used widely for the diagnosis of preeclampsia.

"The P-FAB technology was able to detect PlGF at a femtomolar level using polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) based U-bent polymeric optical fiber (POF) sensor probes," said Prof. V.V. Raghavendra Sai, Biosensors Laboratory, Department of Applied Mechanics and Biomedical

Engineering, IIT Madras.

The 'PlGF' biomarker peaks at 28 to 32 weeks in normal pregnancy but in the case of women with pre-eclampsia, it decreases by 2 to 3 times after 28 weeks of pregnancy.

The new POF sensor probes could measure PlGF within 30 minutes using the P-FAB strategy. The clinical sample testing confirmed the accuracy, reliability, specificity, and sensitivity of the P-FAB-based POF sensor platform, thereby paving the way for cost-effective technology for PlGF detection and its potential for pre-eclampsia diagnosis. "The biosensor plat-

form developed by the research team is simple and reliable, paving the way for affordable diagnosis. It can also lead to increasing the test coverage of Placental growth factor (PlGF) biomarker tests, thereby resulting in a potential for a significant impact on the management of pre-eclampsia and towards reduction in the global burden of mortality and morbidity from preeclampsia," Sai added.

The study, published in the reputed journal Biosensors and Bioelectronics, showed that the POF platform has potential applications for detecting other communicable and non-communicable diseases such as cancer, tuberculosis, Alzheimer's, etc. It eliminates the use of harsh chemicals and utilises recyclable POF.

It can also be used in remote and resource-limited settings for pre-eclampsia diagnosis, said the researchers.

New tech using body fluids to make accurate diagnosis of arthritis in just 10 minutes

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

A team of Korean researchers has developed a new technology that uses body fluids to make accurate diagnoses of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis in just 10 minutes.

Studies show that more than 50 per cent of the population aged 65 and older experience symptoms of osteoarthritis, while rheumatoid arthritis is known to be a serious chronic disease that affects approximately 1 in 100 people throughout their lifetime.

Although osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis may appear similar, they differ in both their causes and treatments, making accurate differentiation at the early diagnosis stage critically important. Until now, diagnosis has relied on X-rays, MRI scans, and blood tests, which are time-consuming, costly, and limited in accuracy.



Researchers from the Korea Institute of Materials Science (KIMS), in collaboration with Seoul St. Mary's Hospital focussed on synovial fluid, found in the human joints.

The research team examined the differences in the composition of metabolites -- byproducts of chemical processes occurring within the body -- in synovial fluid.

By analysing these metabolic differences, they developed a technology capable of distinguishing between osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis within 10 minutes, as well

as assessing the severity of rheumatoid arthritis.

The research team utilised Surface-Enhanced Raman Scattering (SERS) technology, a phenomenon in which the optical signals of molecules are amplified several million times. This technology amplifies signals from trace molecules present in synovial fluid and, through a combination

of AI-based analysis and mathematical algorithms, detects minute substances responsible for arthritis.

In addition, the team developed a simple and rapid diagnostic method

using a sensor composed of a sea urchin-shaped gold nanostructure formed on a paper surface with high moisture absorption, enabling efficient detection via body fluids.

The researchers conducted tests using this technology on 120 patients.

The findings, published in Small, a globally renowned scientific journal in the field of nanomaterials, showed that osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis could be diagnosed and distinguished with an accuracy of over 94 per cent.

Furthermore, the technology achieved over 95 per cent accuracy in determining the severity of rheumatoid arthritis. These findings demonstrate that the technology not only significantly reduces the time and cost of arthritis diagnosis but also ensures a high level of diagnostic accuracy.

Covid-19 vaccines have no lasting impact on metabolic health: Study

AGENCIES
SYDNEY

Covid-19 vaccines do not cause significant metabolic changes, easing concerns about potential long-term side effects, according to a study on Monday.

The research led by researchers from Murdoch University in Australia followed 33 participants over 480 days, tracking 167 metabolic markers across 28 time points, Xinhua news agency reported.

The results showed no meaningful impact on key health indicators, including inflammatory markers, cardiovascular risk factors, and molecules involved in energy metabolism.

"This real-world study shows that Covid-19 vaccines are safe and don't cause significant metabolic changes," said lead author Ruey Leng Loo, Associate Professor at the varsity.

"Our findings help coun-



ter misinformation and support confidence in vaccination," Loo said.

Published in the Journal of Molecular Medicine, the research compared vaccinated participants with a control group who had never contracted Covid, as well as individuals who had experienced mild infections.

The metabolic profiles of vaccinated individuals closely matched those of the control group, further

indicating that vaccines do not trigger major biological shifts, the study said.

Metabolic markers, including 34 cytokines, 112 lipoproteins, and 21 low-molecular-weight metabolites, remained largely stable post-vaccination.

While a slight, temporary increase in the inflammation-related marker Chemokine IP10 was observed after the third dose, levels remained within the normal range

and returned to baseline before subsequent vaccinations, Loo said.

In contrast, even mild Covid infections were found to cause more pronounced metabolic disruptions than vaccination, she said. The expert noted that multiple doses do not produce the same biological disturbances seen after infection.

"While mild SARS-CoV-2 infections can cause more pronounced metabolic changes, the temporary fluctuations we observed after each vaccination were minor in comparison," Loo said.

"These findings offer further reassurance to those hesitant about vaccination, demonstrating that multiple doses do not cause the same biological responses as the Covid-19 infections.

Although the results are promising, the team stressed the need for further research with larger and more diverse groups.

Israeli researchers discovered stress in pregnancy affects baby's brain before birth

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM

Israeli researchers have discovered that stress experienced by mothers during pregnancy affects the fetus's brain.

The discovery led by researchers from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HU) could pave the way for new treatments or interventions to support a baby's healthy development after birth, Xinhua news agency reported.

Published in the journal Molecular Psychiatry, the study revealed that maternal stress during pregnancy could "reprogramme" key molecular pathways in the foetus, particularly the cholinergic system -- a network of nerve cells responsible for regulating stress responses and inflammation.

The researchers analysed blood samples from 120 newborns and their mothers collected at birth, focusing on small



RNA molecules known as tRNA fragments (tRFs), many of which originate from mitochondrial DNA.

These molecules play a critical role in regulating cellular functions and responses to stress.

"We found that even before babies take their first breath, the stress their mothers experience can shape how their

bodies manage stress themselves," said Prof. Hermona Soreq, from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The study also uncovered major differences between male and female infants. Baby girls showed a sharp decrease in specific tRFs, called Cholino-tRFs, which are involved in the produc-

tion of acetylcholine -- a brain chemical crucial for memory and immune function.

While baby boys showed elevated levels of an enzyme (AChE) that breaks down acetylcholine, suggesting a diminished capacity to manage stress.

Using machine learning, the researchers determined with 95 per cent accuracy whether baby girls had been exposed to maternal stress during pregnancy based on their RNA profiles.

This discovery may help explain why children exposed to stress in the womb are more likely to face mental health or developmental challenges later in life.

The researchers said the findings could raise awareness and lead to better support for pregnant women under stress, even if they don't have a formal diagnosis of anxiety or depression.

Chemicals in food containers, medical equipment behind spike in heart disease deaths: Lancet

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Daily exposure to certain chemicals used in plastic items like food containers or medical equipment could be linked to an increase in deaths due to heart disease worldwide, according to a study published in the journal Lancet eBiomedicine on Tuesday.

Researchers at New York University Langone Health said that the chemicals, called phthalates, are in widespread use globally.

Phthalates found in cosmetics, detergents, solvents, plastic pipes, and bug repellants have for decades been linked with an increased risk of conditions ranging from obesity and diabetes to fertility issues and cancer.

The new study focused on a kind of phthalate called di-2-ethylhexyl phthalate (DEHP), which is used to make food con-



tainers, medical equipment, and other plastic softer and more flexible.

Previous studies linked their exposure with an overactive immune response (inflammation) in the heart's arteries, which can potentially lead to heart attack or stroke.

However, the new analysis estimated that DEHP exposure contributed to 356,238 deaths, or more than 13 per cent of all global mortality from heart disease in 2018 among men and women ages 55 through 64.

"By highlighting the connection between

phthalates and a leading cause of death across the world, our findings add to the vast body of evidence that these chemicals present a tremendous danger to human health," said lead author Sara Hyman, an associate research scientist at NYU Grossman School of Medicine.

For the research, the team used health and environmental data from dozens of population surveys to estimate DEHP exposure across 200 countries and territories. The information included urine samples containing chemical breakdown

products left by the plastic additive.

The Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific bore a much larger share of the death toll than others -- about three-fourths of the total.

It is because these countries face higher rates of exposure to the chemicals, possibly because they are undergoing a boom in plastic production but with fewer manufacturing restrictions than other regions, the researchers explained.

"Our results underscore the urgent need for global regulations to reduce exposure to these toxins, especially in areas most affected by rapid industrialisation and plastic consumption," said Leonardo Trasande, from NYU Grossman.

Trasande stated that the overall death toll from heart disease connected to these chemicals is likely much higher.



India & Australia extend dominance in annual rankings update

AGENCIES

DUBAI, MAY 5 (UND)

Australia remains at the top in Tests, India leads the two white-ball formats, while Sri Lanka emerge big winners as the yearly ICC rankings refresh brings big movements across formats.

The latest rankings rate all matches played since May 2024 at 100 percent and those of the previous two years at 50 percent.

Reigning World Test Championship holders Australia have retained their top spot in the ICC Men's Test Team Rankings, though their lead was trimmed from 15 to 13 points after the annual update.

Pat Cummins' side boasts a rating of 126, staying well in front of the chasing pack.

Ben Stokes-led England made a big jump, moving up into the second place, overtaking both South Africa and India. Their improved position comes on the back of winning three out of their four Test series in the past year. England's rating points climbed to 113, while South Africa (111) and India (105) each slipped one place to third and fourth, respectively.

The rest of the top 10 remains unchanged, with New Zealand holding fifth place, followed by Sri Lanka, Pakistan, West Indies, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.

Only 10 teams are currently ranked in the Test table. Ireland need to play one more Test in the next 12 months to qualify for a ranking, while Afghanistan must play three more matches to join the list.

In the ODI rankings, India have strengthened their grip at the top on the back of a victorious ICC Champions Trophy 2025 campaign, improving their rating points from 122 to 124, an ICC report said.

Coming in second place are the runners-up at the Champions Trophy, New Zealand, overtaking their Trans-Tasman rivals Aus-



tralia, who now occupy third spot.

Sri Lanka, who had a rampant run at home in recent months, including ODI series wins against India and Australia, are in fourth place after gaining five rating points, leapfrogging Pakistan (fifth with a gain of one point) and

South Africa (sixth with loss of four points) in the process.

Afghanistan also climbed the ladder - moving to seventh following a four-point improvement - at the expense of former world champions England, who fell to eighth after dropping four points.

West Indies, meanwhile, rose to the ninth spot after gaining five points to surpass Bangladesh,

who dropped to tenth with a four-point decline.

Elsewhere in the rankings, the USA Men's side were the biggest movers by rating points, gaining six points while remaining in 15th place. Below them, Oman climbed above Canada into 16th spot. The remaining teams held their positions in the table.

In T20Is, the current ICC Men's T20 World Cup champions India are placed at the top, although their lead over the second-placed Australia has reduced from 10 to nine points.

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