



Div Com led committee discusses policy for repair, renovation of structures within 200m periphery of Dal Lake

PJ04

# ‘Operation Sindoor’:Every terror camp in Pak within reach of Indian armed forces: LG Sinha

‘Pak has been taught a lesson, if it dares again, its next seven generations will remember consequences’

■ HT News Network

POONCH/NEWSHERA, MAY 21: Stating that Pakistan and the world know that every inch of its territory hosting terror camps is within the reach of the Indian Armed Forces, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said, “Operation Sindoor” has sent a strong message globally — “This is not the old Bharat. This is New Bharat, which will not tolerate terrorism.”

Interacting with the soldiers deployed at Poonch and Nowshera sector along the Line of Control (LoC), LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer hailed the unparalleled courage and professionalism of the Indian soldiers. “Not just India, but the entire world today acknowledges the bravery of Indian troops,” he said. “Operation

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## LG Sinha announces Govt jobs for NOKs of Pak shelling victims

■ HT News Network

POONCH, MAY 21: Asserting that India wants its people to live in peace, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday announced that the government job will be provided to closest kin of victims, who lost their lives in Pakistan shelling earlier this month.

LG Sinha while addressing the grieving family members, who lost their loved ones due to unprovoked shelling by Pakistan, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, “India is not in favour of war, but when innocent people were killed, the government decided that a decisive action

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## Pak High Commission official in New Delhi declared personal non grata

■ HT News Network/UNI

NEW DELHI, MAY 21 (UNI) India on Wednesday declared a Pakistani High Commission official here as “persona non grata” for indulging in activities not in keeping with his official status.

In a media release, the Ministry of External Affairs said the official has been asked to

leave India within 24 hours.

“The Government of India has declared a Pakistani official, working at the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, persona non grata for indulging in activities not in keeping with his official status in India. The official has been asked to leave India within 24

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## BSF foiled infiltration bid of nearly 50 terrorists in Samba during ‘Operation Sindoor’: DIG Mand

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 21: The Border Security Force (BSF) foiled an infiltration bid of nearly 50 terrorists during “Operation Sindoor” on May 8, a top official of the paramilitary force said on Wednesday. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the BSF, SS Mand, according to the news agency—said, “On May



8 a major infiltration attempt involving 45–50 heavily armed terrorists was thwarted by the alert BSF personnel in Samba district.”

He said, “The group, attempting to sneak into Indian territory under the cover of ceasefire violations, was met with a fierce counter-offensive.

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## No letup in heatwave as Jammu records season’s hottest day, Srinagar seethes at 32.0 degrees Celsius

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR, MAY 21: There is no letup in the heat wave conditions in Jammu and Kashmir as multiple areas, including Jammu, the winter capital of the region, recorded the season’s hottest day on Wednesday.

According to the details available with the news agency—, amidst the forecast of hot and dry weather conditions, Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a maximum temperature of 32.0 degrees Celsius.

Jammu city has recorded the hottest day of the season at 41.4 degrees Celsius, while Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, has also recorded the season’s highest day temperature at 33.2 degrees Celsius.

Several other areas also witnessed scorching heat with Pahalgam recording a day temperature of 25.8 degrees Celsius, Kupwara at 30.0 degrees Celsius, Kokernag at 31.5 degrees Celsius and Gulmarg, a famous ski resort, at 23.2 degrees Celsius. However, in Jammu division, Banihal station recorded a day temperature

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## Operation Sindoor Diplomacy begins as delegations leave for Japan, UAE

■ HT News Network



NEW DELHI, MAY 21: India has initiated a major diplomatic outreach named Operation Sindoor Diplomacy to convey its position on cross-border terrorism as two parliamentary delegations departed on Wednesday for Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), marking the beginning of a multi-nation campaign to highlight India’s concerns, particularly related to Pakistan’s role in terrorism.

According to the details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the first team, led by JD(U) MP Sanjay Jha, will travel to Japan, followed by visits to South Korea (May 24), Singapore (May 27), Indonesia (May 28), and Malaysia (May 31). The delegation comprises MPs from

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## Academic Sessions Restoration: JKBOSE notifies new academic schedule

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) Wednesday notified the new academic schedule following the restoration of academic session from March to November. According to the news agency—, JKBOSE further clarified that due to change in academic calendar in winter Zone areas in 2024, the Annual regular 2025 examination is scheduled to be held in Oct-Nov of 2025 and in summer zone of Jammu division in Feb-March 2026 respectively.

The board further said, “Previous academic calendar is restored from the current year (2025) in

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## NC’s Working Committee passes 7 resolutions, discusses sufferings of shelling-affected areas

Condemns Baisaran terror attack, praises public support against attack, seeks restoration of special status

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21 (KNO): The National Conference (NC) Central Working Committee on Wednesday passed seven resolutions, including the immediate restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

As per details available with the news agency— the meeting was chaired by party president Dr Farooq Abdullah at Nawa-e-Subha. The meeting also



observed a two-minute silence to pay tribute to 26 civilians killed in the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack.

This was the first meeting of the party’s highest deci-

sion-making body after it came to power in Jammu and Kashmir by winning the 2024 Assembly elections.

Sources privy to the

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## Karnah: Army assists in repairing mosque damaged in Pak shelling

■ HT News Network

Kupwara (Karnah), May 21: In a gesture of goodwill and solidarity, Indian Army extended immediate assistance to residents of Chota Gaon Mohalla at Ibkot village in Karnah sector, after a local mosque suffered damage during unprovoked shelling from across the Line of Control (LoC).

The cross-border shelling, initiated by Pakistani forces, caused structural damage to the mosque. The corrugated galvanised iron (CGI) sheets on the roof were torn apart, a solar panel system was destroyed, and the prayer matting inside the mosque was damaged.

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## PDP Leader Condemns NC For ‘Resolution’ Demanding Special Status To J&K In Party Meet

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, MAY 21: : People’s Democratic Party (PDP) leader Waheed Para on Wednesday hit out at the National Conference (NC), saying it had passed resolutions for the restoration of special status and statehood to Jammu and Kashmir



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## Boy injured in scuffle outside SP College, hospitalized

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21: A boy was injured in a scuffle that broke out outside SP College in Srinagar on Wednesday, officials said. An official told the news agency—, that the altercation involved a group of boys, during which one boy, sustained injuries, who was immediately taken to hospital for medical aid. “Preliminary reports suggest he was attacked with a sharp-edged weapon,” the official said.

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## IGP Kashmir chairs security review meeting at PCR

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 21: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Zone V.K Birdi took stock of the arrangements for SANJY 2025, Muharram and other upcoming events during a meeting held at the Conference Hall of Police Control Room Kashmir on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by DIG CKR Rajiv Panday, DIG NKR Maq-



sood Ul Zaman, DIG SKR Javid Iqbal Matoo, SSP PCR Kashmir, all district SSpP of Kashmir Zone and other officers, a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—At the onset of the meeting, participating officers briefed the

chair on the security arrangements planned for the smooth and peaceful conduct of Shri Amar-nath Ji Yatra-2025, Muharram, and other significant events.

The officers shared valuable insights from past experiences, emphasizing the need for robust communication channels, seamless coordination among forces, and advanced real-time monitoring systems. Discus

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## LG interacts with troops at Poonch, Nowshera

■ HT News Network

POONCH/RAJOURI, MAY 21: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Wednesday reviewed the security situation along the border and interacted with the brave soldiers deployed at Poonch and Nowshera sector.

The Lieutenant Governor saluted the indomitable courage and gallantry of Army forces personnel in ‘Operation Sindoor’. He said, the invincible power of our Brave Soldiers has ensured a decisive victory for Bharat.

“Dharma has won and Adharma has surrendered before your weapons and might. I am proud that in just a few days our brave



soldiers broke the back of the enemy and today 140 crore citizens are remembering your valour, courage and sacrifice,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said, the entire nation is proud of the bravery and valour of our Armed Forces for giving a strong and decisive response to terrorism and dismantling the terror bases in Pakistan.

“Operation Sindoor is living example of India’s military and strategic might. It has also proved that every inch of Pakistan’s land is today the target of our brave soldiers and the enemy knows that if it indulges in future misadventure then it will not survive.

Operation Sindoor has drawn a new red line. In just 23 minutes, India had brought the masters of Pakistani terrorists to their knees and the next time if they raise their eyes towards Mother India, not a single area of theirs would remain untouched by punishment,” the Lieutenant Governor said—

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## Indigo Pilot Reports Emergency After Srinagar-Bound Aircraft With Over 200 People Caught In Hailstorm

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21: A Srinagar-bound Indigo flight from Delhi with more than 220 people on board experienced turbulence on Wednesday due to inclement weather, prompting the pilot to report the “emergency” to air traffic control at Srinagar. The aircraft later landed safely here and has been grounded, officials said.

Videos of the moments of turbulence have emerged on social media in which panic-stricken passengers could be heard making religious supplications as the plane swayed. One passenger claimed that the nose

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## Pakistan To Extend Closure Of Its Airspace For Indian Flights By Another Month: Report

■ HT News Network

ISLAMABAD, MAY 21: Pakistan has decided to extend the closure of its airspace for Indian flights by another month, a media report said on Wednesday.

Pakistan banned its airspace for India last month after steps taken by New Delhi in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack on April 22.

The ban was imposed for a month until May 23, as under International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) rules that airspace restrictions cannot be imposed for more than one month at a time. Quoting sources, Geo News

reported that the decision to extend the ban is expected to be announced on Wednesday or Thursday, and a Notice to Airmen (Notam) will be issued.

The development comes amid heightened tensions between the two neighbours following India’s precision strikes under ‘Operation Sindoor’ on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people, Jammu and Kashmir tourism

The Indian military has been maintaining that Pakistan pleaded for stopping the military actions

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## CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

### LG

Sindoor is a living example of India's military and strategic might."

Highlighting India's rising global stature, LG Sinha said, "We have already emerged as the world's 5th largest economy and are on our way to becoming the 4th. Every Indian aspires for a Viksit Bharat, while our neighbour, deep in debt and struggling to feed its people, continues to support terrorism."

Sending a stern warning to Pakistan, the Lieutenant Governor said, "This time, the enemy (Pakistan) has been taught a lesson. If it dares again, its next seven generations will remember the consequences."

LG Sinha said that the "Operation Sindoor" has drawn a new red line. "In just 23 minutes, India brought the masters of Pakistani terrorists to their knees and the next time if they raise their eyes towards Mother India, not a single area of theirs would remain untouched by punishment," the Lieutenant Governor added.

Referring to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead, LG Sinha said, "After the attack, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made it clear that the perpetrators would be taught a lesson. The Indian response was swift, strategic, and precise."

He said that during the intervening night of May 6 and 7, 'Operation Sindoor' was launched with a clear mandate: destroy terror infrastructure without causing harm to civilians or military installations. "More than 100 terrorists were eliminated and nine terror camps were wiped out," he said.

LG Sinha revealed that Pakistan was informed in advance that only terror camps would be targeted. However, Pakistan responded with unprovoked firing and shelling in the Poonch region. "Our forces not only repelled the attack but inflicted heavy losses on the enemy," he said, saluting the bravery of the Indian soldiers.

He also paid tributes to the civilians and soldiers who laid down their lives during the confrontation.

"In just three days, the enemy was brought to its knees. Pakistan was left pleading before the international community to intervene," he added.

LG Sinha emphasized that the objective of "Operation Sindoor" was not war but to dismantle the terror machinery. "Today, Pakistan and the world know that every inch of its territory hosting terror camps is within the reach of the Indian Army."

"Dharma has won and Adharma has surrendered before your weapons and might. I am proud that in just a few days our brave soldiers broke the back of the enemy and today 140 crore citizens are remembering your valour, courage and sacrifice," the Lieutenant Governor said—

### NOK

will be taken against the terrorists and the ones who nurture them in their backyards."

He said, "By destroying nine terrorist camps inside Pakistan, our armed forces completed their mission. Pakistan was informed in clear terms that neither military infrastructure, nor civilians are our targets, but they took the attack on terror camps as attack on Pakistan."

LG Sinha said, "Poonch bore the maximum brunt of Pakistan shelling and innocent lives were lost. Our armed forces gave them a befitting reply and within 3-days enemy was on its knees begging the world to save it."

He said that administration and every citizen of the country understands the pain of Pakistan shelling victims and "no amount of money is enough" to compensate the loss of precious lives. "Entire nation is proud of Poonch people who despite all odds stood with soldiers," he added.

ANNOUNCES GOVT JOB FOR NOKS OF PAK SHELLING VICTIMS

The Lieutenant Governor announced Government job to the closest kin of Pakistan shelling victims. He said, ex-gratia and other reliefs have been provided and Government of India is committed for further necessary assistance.

"The proper rehabilitation of affected families is my top priority. The J&K administration, under the leadership of PM Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, is committed to ensuring proper rehabilitation, enhanced border infrastructure, and security for the residents of border areas.

We are significantly expanding our efforts to construct individual and community bunkers across Jammu Kashmir, under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE)," the Lieutenant Governor said.

PAYS OBEISANCE AT GURUDWARA NANGALI SAHIB

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor paid obeisance at Gurudwara Dera Santpura Nangali Sahib and interacted with the citizens.

He lauded the residents of Poonch, civil society members and all the communities for their display of courage and social harmony. "Pakistan had shown its cowardice by targeting sacred Gurudwara Dera Santpura Nangali Sahib. In its despicable act, the terrorist country Pakistan had also targeted

temple and mosque. By firing and heavy shelling on our sacred sites, terror state Pakistan had tried to damage our social fabric.

The Lieutenant Governor also reiterated the resolve of Government of India, J&K Administration and Armed Forces for exemplary action against terrorism and those trying to divide the people on religious and sectarian lines.

Later, the Lieutenant Governor visited the Dungus area affected due to shelling, and also took stock of the situation during a meeting with senior administrative and district officials at Poonch.

The Lieutenant Governor directed for necessary measures to ensure restoration of all essential services and supplies and submit an Action Taken Report (ATR) to the Divisional Commissioner's Office and the Chief Secretary's Office.

He further instructed for taking comprehensive assessment for requirements and construction of bunkers, upgradation of medical services at District hospital and strengthening Civil Defence system.

The Lieutenant Governor also appreciated the local administration and security forces for their prompt and responsive measures for the safety and rehabilitation of affected families.

VISITS RAJOURI, NOWHSEARA

The Lieutenant Governor also visited Rajouri and met the families affected due to unprovoked heavy firing by Pakistan.

The Lieutenant Governor paid a visit to the Government Medical College Rajouri and enquired about the well-being of those injured in Pakistan's shelling.

Reviewing the relief and rehabilitation measures, the Lieutenant Governor was briefed by Abhishek Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, on the present situation in the district, and other important matters pertaining to disbursement of relief, availability of essential commodities, medical & emergency services, damage to property and livestock, and requirement of new bunkers in the district.

The meeting also paid homage to Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajouri, Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa, who lost his life due to shelling by the enemy in the civilian area.

Later, the Lieutenant Governor visited Nowshera and took assessment of residential houses damaged by Pakistan's shelling.

He interacted with the local residents and took stock of their issues and grievances. He reaffirmed that the Government of India is committed to people's safety and rehabilitation.

The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo; IG Jammu, Bhim Sen Tuti; Divisional Commissioner, Ramesh Kumar; Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal and other senior officials—

### HEAT WAVE

of 30.4 degrees Celsius, Batote at 30.1 degrees Celsius, Katra at 36.8 degrees Celsius and Bhaderwah at 31.3 degrees Celsius.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said the rise in maximum temperature by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius is expected with the possibility of a heatwave at scattered places of Kashmir division till May 23.

He said that generally hot & dry weather is expected with the possibility of a brief spell of light rain at isolated places mainly towards late afternoon till May 26.

Ahmad said that from May 27 to 31, the weather would remain generally hot & dry with the possibility of a brief spell of light rain and thundershower at scattered places.

Meanwhile, the MeT in its advisory said that a rise in maximum temperature by 1-2 degrees Celsius is expected with possibility of a heatwave at scattered places of Kashmir division till May 23 and fall by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius thereafter.

Also, it reads that a rise in maximum temperature is expected by 2-3 degrees Celsius with the possibility of a heatwave over Jammu division till 26th May.

"Possibility of thunder, gusty winds at isolated places towards late afternoon can't be ruled out," the advisory reads—

### PAK

hours," the media release said.

India also issued a demarche to the Charge d'Affaires of the Pakistan High Commission here asking him to "strictly ensure that none of the Pakistani diplomats or officials in India misuse their privileges and status in any manner".

The latest development in the already embittered relations between the two neighbouring countries comes around a week after they declared one official of each other "persona non grata".

On May 13 night, an official in the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi was declared "persona non grata by India after being found involved in spying activities.

The official was ordered to leave India within 24 hours.

A little later, Pakistan, in a tit-for-tat move, did the same with regard to an official of the Indian High Commission in Islam-

abad, accusing him of engaging in activities incompatible with his privileged status. The official was directed to leave Pakistan within 24 hours. UNI

### DIG MIND

BSF retaliated with heavy mortar fire, neutralizing enemy positions and forcing the infiltrators to retreat."

"We had prior intelligence that a large group was attempting infiltration. Our alert troops identified them early, and within 1.5 hours of engagement, the group was repelled with heavy losses. Our forces responded with precision and intensity, degrading their bunkers and suppressing their firepower," DIG Mand said, according to KNO.

He said that in a decisive and calibrated military operation, the BSF destroyed multiple terrorist hideouts in Pakistan's Sialkot sector along the India-Pakistan International Border during Operation Sindoor, launched in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead.

"Even two weeks after the operation, Pakistani Rangers have reportedly abandoned their posts along the international border, signaling the extent of damage and demoralization inflicted by Indian forces," he added.

DIG Mand praised the high morale and preparedness of BSF troops, emphasizing the leadership of officers on the frontline. He also highlighted the commendable performance of women soldiers, who operated shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts during the high-stakes confrontation. "We are truly proud of our women troops," he said.

Following the setbacks during "Operation Sindoor," Pakistan resorted to drone warfare, attempting to target civilian and military installations in Jammu. However, India's air defense systems and BSF's anti-drone units successfully intercepted these drone incursions. On May 9, Pakistan initiated unprovoked firing along the IB and launched drones aimed at BSF camps and border villages, but all such attempts were neutralized—

### NC

development told KNO that several issues were discussed in the meeting in which nearly 45 members, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, his Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, CM's Advisor, Nasir Aslam Wani, legislators and others participated. The meeting discussed threadbare about the shelling hit areas and the necessary compensation to the affected families.

Several legislators present in the meeting also expressed resentment against the dilly-dallying tactics at the administrative level with regard to the public works.

"The legislators raised issues of how the public works are being delayed and how the mission of the National Conference (NC) is being sabotaged," one of the participants said.

NC spokesperson, Imran Nabi Dar, when contacted, said that the dual-power system was discussed threadbare. The participants have expressed resentment in this regard and pitched for the restoration of statehood.

He added that the dual-power system is not in favour of the people and thus the statehood must be restored at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the meeting passed seven resolutions, including condemnation of violence and tribute to martyrs, reaffirmation of commitment to special status, demand for immediate restoration of statehood, appeal for sustained peace and dialogue, commitment to manifesto promises and condemnation of targeted harassment across the country.

The resolutions include: Condemnation of violence and tribute to martyrs

The Working Committee strongly condemned the horrific Baisaran attack that claimed the lives of 26 innocent individuals, including a young Kashmiri, Syed Adil Hussain Shah. It also denounced the continued cross-border shelling that took the lives of 23 innocent civilians

The Committee expressed deep sorrow and solidarity with the bereaved families. It also paid heartfelt tributes to the Working Committee members and party activists who have passed away since the last meeting, acknowledging their invaluable contributions and unwavering dedication.

Reaffirmation of commitment to special status

The Working Committee unanimously reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status. The Committee reiterated that this is central to the aspirations and dignity of the people and must be addressed without further delay, and we will continue to fight for its restoration.

Demand for immediate restoration of statehood

The Working Committee also urged the Government of India to restore full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir immediately, as promised on the floor of Parliament and repeatedly echoed in the public domain and also as committed by the constitution bench of the Supreme Court.

Appeal for sustained peace and dialogue

The Committee welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire and called upon both countries to uphold peace and explore long-lasting, peaceful solutions to end violence.

Commitment to manifesto promises

The Working Committee reiterated the party's unwavering commitment to the promises made in its manifesto. It reaffirmed its resolve to continue the political and constitutional struggle for justice, peace, and the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir through democratic means.

The Working Committee appreciated the spontaneous and overwhelming support of the people of Jammu and Kashmir in unequivocally condemning the Baisaran attack in Pahalgam. It also acknowledged the compassion and hospitality extended to tourists who found themselves stranded in the Valley during challenging circumstances.

The Committee called upon the Government of India to recognise and respect this powerful expression of solidarity and not squander the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity extended by the people of Jammu and Kashmir. It further cautioned that arbitrary arrests, harassment of youth, targeted use of bulldozers, and intimidation of legitimate media voices will only alienate the very people who have stood firmly for peace and against violence.

### KARNAH

Responding swiftly, the Indian Army helped restore the mosque by repairing the roof, reinstating the solar energy system, and replacing the prayer matting, allowing the place of worship to resume its religious and community functions. The aid was part of the Army's continued humanitarian outreach in border areas affected by conflict.

Grateful villagers expressed deep appreciation for the Army's timely support. Local elders commended the Army not just for its protective presence in the volatile border region, but also for its efforts to stand by civilians in times of crisis.

"One of the shells directly hit the mosque," a resident told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). "The roof was blown off, and everything inside was damaged. The Army provided new tin sheets, a solar panel, and matting. We are thankful."

He added that several homes were also damaged during the shelling and appealed for the construction of more bunkers in the area to protect civilians from future incidents—

### DELEGATIONS

various political parties, including the BJP, TMC, CPI(M), and Congress, alongside former diplomats. Their task is to engage with political leaders, policymakers, think tanks, and media in East Asia to present India's account of recent events and its broader counter-terrorism position.

The second delegation, under Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Shinde, began its outreach in the UAE on May 21. The group will also visit African countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo (May 24), Sierra Leone (May 28), and Liberia (May 31). This delegation includes members from the BJP, BJD, IUML, and other parties, as well as former diplomats.

Before the teams departed, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri briefed all members on India's approach, with reference to the April 22 incident in Pahalgam, where 26 civilians were killed.

The brief was about India's recent retaliatory operations across the Line of Control and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on May 7, followed by missile and drone attacks from the Pakistani side.

A ceasefire understanding was reached between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) on May 10.

The delegations, comprising members from various political parties, are tasked with presenting India's case to international stakeholders. Their engagements will include discussions with foreign ministers, lawmakers, policy analysts, and representatives from multilateral institutions.

Officials involved in the outreach have stated that the delegations will seek to present credible evidence regarding Pakistan's involvement in cross-border terrorism and push for coordinated international action. The broader aim is to diplomatically isolate Pakistan while bolstering global support for India's counter-terrorism efforts.

This outreach is notable for its bipartisan nature. Leaders from both the ruling party and the opposition are participating in a unified diplomatic initiative, reflecting a shared national stance on terrorism.

### ACADAMIC

Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Union Territories."

"The Academic session in case of Kashmir division and winter Zone areas of Jammu division and U.T of Ladakh shall be 2024-25, entailing conduct of the Annual Regular Examinations of the 10th, 11th and 12th classes in October-November 2025," it reads.

It also said that the Academic Session in case of summer zone of Jammu division shall be 2025-26, entailing conduct of annual regular examination of 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th classes in March-April 2026.

In 2024, the Council of Ministers Decision accorded the sanction to the restoration of the academic calendar from March-April to November-December for classes 1st to 9th.

The government had said that "For the session 2024-25, the restoration of the previous academic calendar (November-December session) shall be done with respect to classes 1st to 9th whose examinations shall be held during the months of November-December, 2024."

It had further said that for the students of classes 10th to 12th, the restoration of the Academic Session (to November-December session) shall be done from the academic session 2025-26.

Earlier in 2022, the Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education and School Education Department has said that the Uniform Academic Calendar shall be followed from academic year 2022-23—

### PDP

in a party meeting instead of the legislative assembly. Fine dining reservations Jammu and Kashmir tourism

"So, the National Conference, armed with a brute mandate of 50 MLAs, passed a resolution on special status and statehood — not in the J&K Assembly, where such matters belong, but in its party office, Nawai-i-Subh. "Let that sink in. What's next? A cabinet meeting in the party office?" Para posted on his X handle.

He was reacting to the NC Working Committee passing a series of resolutions at its meeting on Wednesday, which included reaffirmation for the restoration of special status to Jammu and Kashmir. It also passed a resolution calling on the Centre to restore statehood to the Union Territory immediately.

The ruling NC's Working Committee also discussed the prevailing situation in Jammu and Kashmir in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack and armed confrontation between India and Pakistan, sources said.

The meeting began with the participants observing a two-minute silence as a mark of respect to those killed in the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22.

The meeting was chaired by NC president Farooq Abdullah. J-K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who is vice president of the party, was also present.

"JKNC Working Committee meeting was held at party headquarters in Nawa-I-Subh, Srinagar, under the chairmanship of president Dr Farooq Abdullah. Honourable CM Omar Abdullah (@OmarAbdullah) was also present," the ruling party posted on its X handle. (Agencies)

### BOY

Meanwhile, police have taken up the investigation into the matter and more details are awaiting.

The boy was later identified as Suzain Wani, a resident of Fateh Kadal Srinagar—

### IGP

sions focused on strengthening the existing security infrastructure, enhancing surveillance tactics, and optimizing personnel deployment along the key locations.

IGP Kashmir conducted a detailed review of the security framework and directed the officers to ensure the installation of CCTV cameras at all strategic locations. He emphasized the need for adequate manpower deployment at each camp and sensitive areas to maintain a secure environment.

V K Birdi also stressed the importance of intelligence-driven operations, timely threat assessments, and proactive measures to mitigate potential risks, ensuring the safety of all participants.

The meeting concluded with a strong commitment from all the officers to ensure smooth and peaceful conduct of the forthcoming events—

### AIR

after India hit eight military installations in Pakistan on early May 10 in response to Pakistan's attempts to target Indian military bases.

This is not the first time Pakistan has imposed such restrictions. Pakistan closed its airspace for Indian flights during the 1999 Kargil conflict and the 2019 Pulwama crisis. (Agencies)

### INDIGO

of the plane was damaged but there was no official word on it.

"Indigo flight 6E2142 enroute Delhi to Srinagar experienced bad weather (hail storm), emergency reported by Pilot to ATC SXR (Srinagar)," an official of the Airport Authority of India said here.

He said the flight landed safely at Srinagar at 6.30 PM. "All aircrew and 227 passengers are safe and the flight is declared AOG by the airline," he said.





## J&K Govt Tightens Rules On HRA Claims After Transfers

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, May 21: The Finance Department of the Jammu and Kashmir Government has issued a circular asking Treasury Officers to ensure strict adherence to rules regarding House Rent Allowance (HRA) and City Compensatory Allowance (CCA) claims by government employees transferred from Jammu or Srinagar to other parts of the Union Territory.Fine dining reservations.

## Land Mafia Looting Karewas from Sholipora to Khansahib in Budgam

■ HT News Network

Budgam, May 21, : In a blatant violation of environmental laws and the Land Revenue Act of 1996, large-scale illegal excavation of Karewas is reportedly taking place from Sholipora to Khansahib in Central Kashmir's Budgam district. Locals have accused the Land Mafia' of looting the mineral-rich soil while the authorities turn a blind eye. Locals have taken to social media to express their anger, tagging the District Mineral Officer Budgam and questioning the administration's silence on the matter. They allege that despite repeated appeals, no concrete action has been taken to stop the illegal activity."This is not just land theft, it's an environmental disaster in the making. These Karewas are a natural heritage and crucial for horticulture and agriculture. Their destruction will have long-term consequences," said a concerned resident of Khansahib.Environmentalists have also raised alarm, saying that the unregulated digging has already caused irreversible damage to soil fertility and the local ecosystem. Locals allege that heavy machinery is being used to dig out earth from the Karewas, which is then sold for construction and landfilling purposes, violating multiple sections of the J&K Land Revenue Act and environmental protection laws. Despite visible destruction and public outcry, the district administration, particularly the Geology and Mining Department, is yet to act decisively. Calls are growing louder for immediate intervention and strict legal action against those involved."If the authorities continue to remain inactive, the day is not far when these fertile plateaus will vanish, leaving behind only dust and devastation," a local activist warned.Concerned locals from Budgam have demanded a halt to the illegal mining and strict enforcement of existing laws to safeguard the fragile Karewa ecosystem. [KNT]

## Peoples Conference pays glowing tributes to Shaheed Abdul Gani Lone on his Martyrdom Anniversary

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 21: Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference today solemnly commemorated the martyrdom anniversary of Shaheed Abdul Gani Lone, paying floral tributes and remembering his unmatched contributions at the party headquarters in Church Lane.Leaders and workers gathered to honour the legacy of a visionary who laid down his life for the ideals of peace, dignity, and dialogue in Jammu and Kashmir."Remembering my father Abdul Gani Lone who was killed by gunmen on this day 23 years ago," reflected JKPC President Sajad Gani Lone, leading the commemoration. "He sacrificed his life in pursuit of his dream for peace. Those were even darker days than today.Speaking the truth often invited retribution. Never in these 23 years has the need for peace dawned on us as it has in the last thirty days. May Allah grant him Jannat."

## Dr Bashir Veeri Slams PDP for Circulating Edited Video Clips, Says Nayeem Akhtar Should Not 'Stoop So Low'

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 21, : National Conference legislator Dr Bashir Ahmed Veeri Wednesday launched a scathing attack on the People's Democratic Party, accusing it of circulating edited video clips of him on social media to twist his statements and mislead the public.Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a National Conference Working Committee meeting, Dr Veeri expressed strong displeasure over what he termed as "deliberate distortion" of his remarks to suit PDP's political narrative. "They took a small portion of my video, edited it out of context, and posted it online to create the impression that lawmakers in Jammu and Kashmir are powerless. This is a dishonest attempt to score political points," Veeri said.Taking direct aim at senior PDP leader Nayeem Akhtar, Veeri remarked, "He is an elderly fellow. He should not stoop so low. At this stage in his career, one would expect maturity and responsibility, not manipulation and mischief."Veeri held PDP squarely responsible for the current political and administrative mess in Jammu and Kashmir, blaming the party for aligning with the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2015.

# Govt Committed to transparency, timely redress of public grievances: Satish Sharma

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21:- Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today said that the government is committed towards ensuring transparency, accountability and timely redress of public grievances.

The Minister was interacting with scores of deputations who called on him here today.The delegations who met the Minister included former employees of the Jammu and Kashmir State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC), representatives from the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) and representatives of Ganderbal district.

The delegations projected a series



of demands pertaining to employee welfare, public service delivery and administrative support.

The former SRTC employees highlighted issues regarding pension ben-

efits and compassionate appointments for the families of deceased staff members. They urged upon the government to expedite resolution of their long-pending service-related grievances.

The representatives from the Food and Supplies department highlighted logistical challenges and the need for better infrastructure to ensure timely delivery of essential commodities, especially in remote and rural regions. They called for modernizing supply chain mechanisms and addressing workforce shortages in critical areas.

The Ganderbal deputation focused on local developmental concerns, including the need for improved road connectivity, access to quality health-care and enhanced support for education and youth employment initiatives.

Satish Sharma, responding to issues raised by the delegations, assured them that all their concerns would be examined by the concerned departments for appropriate action at the earliest.

## Wedding dreams turn to ashes as fire engulfs 5 houses in Srinagar's Nawakadal

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 21 : A family's preparations for an upcoming wedding were reduced to ashes after a massive fire broke out in the congested Nawakadal area of Srinagar on Tuesday late night, damaging at least five residential houses and destroying all belongings, including the trousseau of a bride-to-be. The fire shook the area and has left residents in trauma. Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Nazir Ahmad, the girl's uncle, said the fire broke out suddenly late at night.

"We were coming out of the masjid when we heard shouts about a fire nearby. Within minutes, the flames had engulfed several houses. The area is densely packed, and we couldn't even get close to douse the flames," he said.

Ahmad said the family was preparing for the wedding of his daughter, who works as a private school teacher. "We had planned her marriage for August. All the preparations, clothes, jewellery, and household items we bought for her wedding have been gutted in the fire. All our dreams were destroyed in seconds," he said while wiping tears. The locals from the area said they are thankful the Fire & Emergency



Services (F&ES) Department and other authorities arrived on time, otherwise more houses would have been reduced to rubble.

Meanwhile, officials from the Fire Services department told KNO that five residential houses, double and three-storeyed, were involved in the fire, and the fire was caused by an electrical short circuit.

They said the attic portions, roofing, ceiling, furniture, and household goods of two double-storey houses were severely damaged. Meanwhile, three other houses suffered partial damage to their upper floors and roofing.

They added that two scooties bearing registration numbers JK01T-0210 and BL3SDW-1138 were also damaged in the incident, while there were no reports of any injuries. Authorities have launched an assessment of the losses.

## DLSA Srinagar organises awareness programme on LSUM

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, in collaboration with Vitasta Law College, Srinagar, organized an awareness programme today on the legal provisions relating to mental illness and persons with intellectual disabilities (LSUM).

The event aimed to sensitize future legal professionals and the academic community about the legal challenges and support mechanisms available for vulnerable sections of society.

The programme was held under the chairmanship of Tasleem Arief, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and under the supervision of Sajad Ur Rehman, Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, besides attended by Rakib Zia, Principal of Vitasta Law College; Fatima Shah and Nosheen Ismail, Assistant Professors; Advocate Suhaila Ali, Panel Lawyer of DLSA Srinagar & Para Legal Volunteers of the Authority and the Law Students of the Vitasta Law College.

## NASHA MUKT BHARAT ABHIYAAN : Police Organizes Medical Camp in Srinagar under Civic Action Programme

■ HT News Network

Srinagar :Police organized free medical camp under the aegis Civic Action Programme ( CAP ) 2024-25.This initiative is part of larger "Nasha MukT Bharat Abhiyaan" campaign, launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to combat substance abuse and promote a drug-free and healthy society.Srinagar Police organized free medical camp for the general public under CAP 2024-25 at Panchayat Ghar, Fakir Gojri, Harwan. The camp provided free medical



consultations and medicines to around 100 residents of the area. The medical camp was inaugurated by SP East Srinagar, and attended by SDPO Nehru Park, SHO Harwan and other officers were also present at the event.The primary aim of the camp was to extend essential

healthcare services to the local population.Doctors from Police Hospital Srinagar and Sub-District Hospital, Hazratbal examined the patients and provided medical advice based on diagnoses, assisted by paramedical staff from these hospitals and MI Room DPL.Srinagar. The team conducted thorough medical assessments and dispensed high-quality medicines free of cost, tailored to each patient's specific needs.The event also featured awareness sessions on hygiene, preventive healthcare, and the severe consequences of substance abuse.

## Div Com led committee discusses policy for repair, renovation of structures within 200m periphery of Dal Lake

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21: To frame a comprehensive policy to address the issue of repair & renovation of houses & buildings within 200 meters of Dal Lake, a meeting of committee members was held under the chairmanship of Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today, here.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Vice Chairman, LCMA; Vice Chairman, Srinagar Development Authority; Director, Tourism Kashmir; Member Secretary, PCC; Chief Engineer, UEED; Chief Town Planner, Kashmir and HOD, Department of Environment Science University of Kashmir.

The meeting discussed and deliberated on the agenda points which includes to lay down the norms/eligibility conditions for declaring a building to have been constructed legitimately, prior to imposition of ban by the Hon'ble High court.

It also discussed norms for granting permissions by the BOCA LCMA for carrying out repair/renovation/reconstruction of the legitimately constructed buildings within



200 meters of the Dal/Nigeen Lakes, prior to imposition of ban on 19.07.2002.

The members also discussed prescribing norms to be followed by the buildings granted permission for repair/renovation/reconstruction for ensuring scientific and proper waste disposal.

Further, measures for sustainable construction using alternate technologies in order to make the construction process lake friendly and norms for maintaining aesthetics and heritage patterns were also discussed.

## H&H Deptt Kashmir, NIFT Srinagar host Capacity Building Workshop on Packaging & Branding under RAMP

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 21: As part of its continued efforts to strengthen the MSME ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir, Department of Handicrafts and Handloom (H&H), Kashmir, successfully organized a one-day capacity building programme under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) initiative. RAMP is an ambitious flagship scheme of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of India, supported by the World Bank. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat presided over as the chief guest while officials from District Administration, Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir and Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) were also pres-

ent. Programme witnessed enthusiastic participation of over 100 artisans and craftsmen from district Srinagar, Budgam, and Ganderbal, who benefited from expert sessions and practical insights into product packaging, branding, and market readiness - essential components for expanding their reach into national and international markets. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner highlighted Srinagar's identity as a historical, cultural, and craft heritage hub and emphasized the need to preserve and promote the region's centuries-old artisanal traditions through modern means of branding, packaging, and market integration. He underlined the importance of grassroots awareness about government schemes

and expressed satisfaction over the department's proactive approach in conducting such programmes.

Dr. Bhat also engaged directly with artisans, encouraging open dialogue and collecting valuable feedback to strengthen future initiatives. He noted, "Srinagar City is a living museum of craft and heritage. Our artisans are the torchbearers of this legacy, and through such programmes, we can ensure they receive the support, training, and exposure they deserve to thrive in a competitive marketplace."

Subject experts and faculty members from NIFT Srinagar conducted the technical sessions by delivering focused modules on modern branding techniques, design aesthetics, market trends, and sustainable packaging solutions tailored to local crafts.

## Ghulam Hassan Mir Pays Tribute to Martyrs Ab Gani Lone and Molvi Mohammad Farooq

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 21: Former Cabinet Minister and Senior Vice President of the Apni Party, Ghulam Hassan Mir, has paid solemn tribute to the late Khawaja Abdul Gani Lone and Mirwaiz Molvi Mohammad Farooq on the anniversary of their martyrdom.In his message, Mir stated,"On this solemn day, we remember the supreme sacrifices of Khawaja Abdul Gani Lone Sahib and Mirwaiz Molvi Mohammad Farooq Sahib, who fell to militancy on this date. Their loss remains a deep wound in our collective memory, and their contributions to the socio-political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir shall never be forgotten."KNS



EDITORIAL

Get up and solve problems of common masses

When the elections for the assembly of the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir were held in September-October last year the people were hoping that their day to day problems would be solved. Seven months down the line most of the people feel that they continue to be disempowered and there is no end to their daily problems. Many among them believe that they committed a mistake by taking part in the elections and then voted for the National Conference.

A senior leader of the National Conference who is also a legislator from South Kashmir a few days back said that the government is not able to transfer even a Safai Karamchhari and not to talk of bigger things. Once a law-maker feels disempowered one can easily feel the situation of the common masses. They are at the receiving end since most of the problems being faced by them are not addressed by the concerned quarters. The government needs to be proactive in solving the daily problems of the common people.

It is imperative that the officers manning the different government departments are taken to task in case they fail to deliver and do justice with the people. It has been observed that some of the officers receive applications from the common masses on different civic issues and when the time for action arrives, these people make excuses and express their inability to do the job. This trend needs to be stopped at the earliest so that there is effective governance with people being the ultimate beneficiaries.

There is a general notion among the people that the bureaucrats give a damn to the orders and directions of the ministers. In such a scenario there is a clash between the bureaucracy and the ministries and at the end of the day the development projects launched for the betterment of people are disbanded. Once projects are shelved then there is no relief for the common masses and they get dejected every now and then.

The chief minister and his cabinet colleagues should take a proper note of the problems of the common masses and take every step to solve such problems. These people should keep in mind that they have to go to the masses in 2029 when the next elections for the assembly are scheduled to be held. In a democracy the ultimate power lies with the people and the common masses have the power to bring down any government any time.

The screen person speaks the truth  
Influencers, wake up! Responsibility should also go viral



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABHI

In today's digital age, social media has become an integral part of our lives. It is not only a powerful medium of communication, but has also become an important platform for public opinion formation, social awareness and political debate. The influence of influencers on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook is no longer limited to entertainment, but they have also started guiding public thinking on social and political matters. In such a situation, it is natural to ask whether these influencers should have any moral or legal accountability? Should they also follow impartiality like is expected from journalists?

Social media influencers are people who have thousands or millions of followers. Their thoughts, reactions, reviews and comments influence people. Many brands and companies promote their products with the help

of these influencers. Now this influence is not only economic, but it has also penetrated deeply into the social and political sphere.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and the assembly elections in many states, it was clearly seen how social media influencers are playing the role of campaigners for political parties. They directly share posts, make videos or conduct live debates in support or opposition of a particular party. Most of these posts contain promotional material, but it is not clear whether it is 'paid' or not. There is a guideline of the Election Commission to monitor paid news in traditional media, but this new world of social media does not have this control.

The Supreme Court and various High Courts have also expressed concern from time to time about the monitoring of misinformation, hate speech and election campaigns on social media. Technology may have given people freedom of expression, but when this freedom is exercised without any responsibility, it starts weakening democracy.

Today, anyone can become a journalist - with a smartphone and an internet connection. In such a situation, there is a thin line between journalism and the role of influencers, which needs to be clearly marked.

There is a code of conduct for journalists, there is a Press Council, there is accountability of news organizations. But no such mechanism exists for social media influencers.

Two things are important here - one, the freedom of influencers and second, their responsibility. Freedom does not mean that they spread any kind of information or idea without checking the facts. If they are propagating a political ideology or influencing public opinion in favor of a particular party, then it is important that they do it in a transparent manner and it is clear that they are working under an agenda.

Apart from this, considering the posts or videos of influencers as paid promotion, the Election Commission should also make clear rules for this. Just as the fee for advertisements in TV and newspapers is fixed and its declaration is mandatory, in the same way promotional posts on social media should also be monitored.

After all, the strength of democracy lies in its transparency and fairness. If any medium - be it traditional media or social media - behaves in a biased manner, it affects public opinion and weakens the roots of democracy.

On the other hand, many influencers may argue that they are free citizens and have the right to support

any idea. This argument is correct to some extent, but when a person or group is influencing the opinion of millions of people through their ideas, then they also have a social and moral responsibility.

Influencers must understand that their words are not limited to entertainment or promotion of beauty products, but they can also influence social concerns and democratic processes. With this influence, they must also accept accountability.

It is time that the government, Election Commission, and society take concrete steps in this direction. Social media platforms should also monitor the activities of their users and make technical arrangements to identify paid advertising. Also, a framework should be created that brings influencers under the ambit of code of conduct and also binds them to transparency and fairness.

The need of the hour is that we should not only talk about freedom of expression but also give equal importance to its responsibility and accountability.

For the success of democracy, it is essential that every platform, every medium and every voice is fair, responsible and truthful - be it a newspaper editorial, a TV debate or an Instagram post.

Childhood would be missing in a spree of marks

VIJAY GARG

The results of the A Dhiqtar board examinations have come. Seeing the result, there was a cry of congratulations somewhere, so there was a silence. No one is willing to think that any kind of exam is not the final exam of life nor does everything depend on the outcome of any one exam. Life always gives opportunity and sometimes gives. ultimately knowledge and talent matters only. The permanent success and failure of life depends on these. Often such illustrations are seen in the society that the hard work done with patience and consistency is ultimately proven fruitful even after scoring less marks in board examinations or initial failure found in competitive exams. But despite all such illustrations, the pressure of the board and competitive exams appear to be a missing childhood on one hand, then on the other hand, the uptake of passing the yen ken prakara and collecting more and more marks is also visible. And stress is the question whether one's knowledge or personality from a

piece of paper can be assessed overall? Does the success of any one exam depend only on failure? How helpful are these exams in real exams of life? These are known to have a tendency to run away from behind the points without fail. Assuming more receipts to be the sole criterion of success there is no discussion of virtues or values like sociability, sensitivity and creativity anywhere. If a student's receipts are less, but he/she meets the moral, social, cultural, and practical instruments, shouldn't it all be his/her qualification criteria? Should his dialogue skills, leadership abilities, service-sense, reflexes towards nature-surroundings etc. not be assessed. If look at the human achievements of the last hundred years, then the people who give direction to humanity1, the big exploits were not the people who scored the highest marks in the Vidyalyai exams, but many of them were weak or weak or slippery in the rate in the sight of the then teaching- mechanism. While his knowledge about the society was a must-have and approach wider. By becoming a part of the

blind race of points, is it not appropriate that we would have serious contemplation and extensive discussions on why our teaching-institutions do not meet the criterion of global standards? Why is the absence of our educational institutions and universities fundamental research and scientific- practical approach reflected? Why our educational institutions don't promote innovative experiments, innovative practices, analytic trends ? Why most of the students who came out of our educational institutions don't become self-reliant and self-reliant ? Why do they get to see lack of office efficiency and efficiency? Why they can't face life's challenges with courage and confidence ?

Suicide pressure of competition of points is tragic. Under this pressure children are becoming mutually rivals than to become allies. Such blind competition makes them lonely and selfish by centering the egos of something, pushing something to the trough of endless frustration. It is the fact that a person in competition and jealousy despise the cooperation, harmony and beauty rampant in nature. He

begins to have a competitive spirit towards his home-family, society and the nation as well. At times, he also gets bitter and ungrateful towards his own. But ironically, we have been learning to overtake others since childhood. Whereas, we should learn of togetherness, cooperation and harmony. 'Life is more essential than a struggle, knowing that life is a continuous practice of 'cooperation and balance'. In this round with the Galacat competition of marks, the sab-jabag of success shows | and the coaching institutes sell dreams make a separate foul. They deal with success from parents. They do not show endless list of all failed candidates and their pain behind the shining star faces of successful candidates and raised claims. Who has seen the syah bitter truth behind the rotten carpet? The mindset of becoming or being a millionaire overnight also blunts our spontaneous power of thinking. Through deceptive propaganda or offensive ads, naive innocents and dreams for them in the whites of their eyelids are seduced by all the parents. At times, parents

tend to forget to put their dream burden on their tender shoulders unknowingly without considering their children's interest and ability. Children carry loads of their dreams forget their instinctive-natural childhood and life. The children could do anything else. Some could have become better, but they are pushed into an endless race and crowd of competitive exams because of the sheepfold. Well, if they succeeded, they failed, all their lives could not get out of the guilt of that failure. Then innate haas from their lips and inner joy from life, glee vanishes. Society and institutions have to think that these children or students are not products and live human beings. So your offspring will have to focus on the development of their overall, balanced and multi-dimensional personality rather than the blind competition of points and the endless race. | Children | There are no number-collecting machines. Not every child is a book, one is a whole world, ?with many dreams and possibilities. Every child has some talent or fundamental trait. Just need to move or give the right

direction. Many things happened even though every child is different, his thinking, interest, trend, background and talent vary. The child should refine and mange in the same field which has interest and qualification. This would go on to earn that expertise in the subject of his interest and ultimately prove his sublime. Not a little skilled and skilled people in every field in today's world, Apitu needs accomplished people in one of the fields. Children should not weigh just by numerals. Education also means inculcating understanding and sensation in them. Children should be motivated not to compare themselves, but to improve them. They should try to give direction. No of numbers, the value of smile should be understood. Children are our future, and always remember that we need machines not, sensitive and understanding human beings.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal  
Educational columnist Eminent  
Educationist street kour Chand  
MHR Malout Punjab



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# JKRERA inspects unauthorised plotted colonies in Udhampur & Katra

## HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 21: The Jammu and Kashmir Real Estate Authority (JKRERA) conducted a comprehensive inspection of unauthorized plotted colonies in Udhampur & Reasi Districts and sought a detailed factual report along with the revenue record from the concerned Tehsildars. During the inspection, the officers from JKRERA along with the Revenue Department visited illegal colonies at Rakh Kotli, Udhampur By-pass Road, Rathian, Khrooni and Fangyal Road, in district Udhampur. Similarly, in Reasi District, illegal colony namely Trikuta Enclave and Project Devika, Katra were also inspected by the team. The Authority has also issued notices to two promoters of

Udhampur District namely, Shivani Sharma and Aryan Sharma both residents of Karlai Khalki, Udhampur directing them to register their projects with JKRERA within 15 days. The inspection was aimed to verify whether the promoters/developers of the plotted colonies had registered their projects with JKRERA, as mandated by Section 3 of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act. The team also checked for any unauthorized constructions or deviations from approved plans and directed the developers to register their projects with RERA. "Numerous colonies are sprouting up haphazardly without the requisite approvals from the competent authorities. Most of these unauthorized colonies lack basic amenities like roads,



electricity and water supply posing a significant threat to planned development. Mushroom growth of such colonies will inevitably lead to the creation of slums. In order to pre-

vent this and for development of colonies in a planned manner, registration with JKRERA is mandatory", said Chairperson JKRERA. "We urge developers and pro-

motors to adhere to the regulatory framework and obtain necessary approvals before commencing projects. JKRERA is committed to ensure planned development and protect the

interests of homebuyers", he added. Pertinent to mention that non-registration of the project with JKRERA would invite penalty which may extend up to ten percent of the estimated cost of the real estate project and if the promoter or builder continues to violate the provisions of the Act and does not register the project with RERA, he would be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend up to three years or with fine which may extend up to a further ten percent of the estimated cost of the real estate project, or with both. Esha Chib, Deputy Secretary JKRERA, Tehsildar Udhampur Jai Singh, Tehsildar Katra Jatinder Singh, Naib Tehsildar, JKRERA Gias-ud-Din conducted the inspection. "We urge develop-

ers and promoters to adhere to the regulatory framework and obtain necessary approvals before commencing projects. JKRERA is committed to ensure planned development and protect the interests of homebuyers", he added. Pertinent to mention that non-registration of the project with JKRERA would invite penalty which may extend up to ten percent of the estimated cost of the real estate project and if the promoter or builder continues to violate the provisions of the Act and does not register the project with RERA, he would be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend up to three years or with fine which may extend up to a further ten percent of the estimated cost of the real estate project, or with both.

## Nasha Mukht Bharat DIPR artists, students present theme based Cultural program at GHSS Gharota

### HT News Network



JAMMU, MAY 21: The Cultural Unit of the Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR), Jammu conducted a Cultural Awareness Programme titled 'Nasha Mukht Bharat' (Say No to Drugs) at Shaheed RFN. Sham Singh Langeh Government Higher Secondary School Gharota Jammu. The aim of this initiative was to enhance awareness regarding the detrimental effects of drug abuse and to promote a drug-free community. Artists from the Cultural Unit, Jammu captivated the audience with thematic songs, effectively demonstrating the repercussions of drug addiction on individuals, families, and society at large. The programme was attended by staff of school and students. The students presented Nukkad Nataks centered around the theme. Principal, Harpreet Kour, expressed her insights on the subject, highlighting its significance to the audience. She commended the Department of Information and Public Relations for organizing such a meaningful programme designed to enhance 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.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to be informed that the dob of my daughter jasmeen ashraf have been wrongly in her school records as 25/09/2021 but her correct dob is 30/09/2011 now I want update it her school record if anyone has queries plz inform to office of government middle school mamal pahalgam.  
Mohd ashraf lawe  
R/o mamal pahalgam

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Its being notified that my name in my bank account having ac no 012204010007601 branch pahalgam is wrongly mentioned as shameema raina d/o sona ula raina but my actual name as par aadhat is shmaeema bano W/O ghulam Rasool khanday R/O mamal pahalgam If anyone have queries they may contact to jk bank branch pahalgam Within 7 days

## GDC Ramkote observes Anti Terrorism Day

### HT News Network

KATHUA, MAY 21: The NSS Unit of Government Degree College Ramkote observed Anti Terrorism Day by organising a Poster Making Competition today on the theme "Say No to Terrorism".

The event was organised under the guidance of the College Principal Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul to raise awareness among students about the devastating impact of terrorism, honour the lives lost due to terrorist acts, and promote peace, harmony and national unity.

National Anti-Terrorism Day is observed across India every year on 21st May to mark the assassination anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was killed by a suicide bomber in 1991 in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.

A total of 15 students of BA Semester-2 namely Nita-kshi Devi, Kriti Devi, Sonali Sharma, Tania Sharma, Richu Devi, Raghuir Singh, Yashpaul Singh, Nenshe, Priyanka Devi, Neha Devi, Rita Rani, Kajal Devi, Pooja Devi, Sulactiona Devi, and Minakshi Sharma participated in the competition and showcased their creativity through posters depicting solidarity against terrorism.

Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul highlighted the importance of maintaining a vigilant and prepared society. He mentioned that National Anti-Terrorism Day is not just a day of remembrance but also a call to action. It encourages citizens to reject hate, avoid radicalisation and embrace peace as the cornerstone of a progressive after the competition all faculty members and students took Anti Terrorism Pledge with an objective to wean away the youth from terrorism and the cult of violence.

The students who secured first, second and third position in the competition were Kajal Devi, Nenshe and Neha Devi. Prof. Suresh Chander, Convener NSS Advisory Committee also addressed the students and encouraged them to participate in college activities.

The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Prof. Anu Sharma, NSS PO emphasizing the need to protect India from threats like terrorism and building strong citizens that can serve the nation well. The students and the organising committee were appreciated by the Principal of the college for fostering a sense of patriotism and national pride. The students who secured first, second and third position in the competition were Kajal Devi, Nenshe and Neha Devi. Prof. Suresh Chander, Convener NSS Advisory Committee also addressed the students and encouraged them to participate in college activities. The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Prof. Anu Sharma, NSS PO emphasizing the need to protect India from threats like terrorism and building strong citizens that can serve the nation well.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that my DAUGHTER'S NAME has been incorrectly mentioned on his Adhar card, 663450914653as MERHAT LA-TEEF while his correct, NAME is UROOJ LATEEF 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: UROOJ LATEEF DOB, 07/09/2024  
D/O LATEEF AHMAD MIR  
R/O: BAGHATPORA TEHSIL HANDWARA DIST KUPWARA

## Director Horticulture Jammu reviews developmental activities in District Poonch

### HT News Network

POONCH, MAY 21: Director Horticulture Jammu Chaman Lal Sharma today undertook a comprehensive tour of District Poonch to assess the implementation of the departmental schemes and review on-ground developmental activities aimed at strengthening the horticulture sector in the region. He visited multiple farmers' orchards across Poonch, Lassana, Harni and other blocks and interacted with orchardists and took firsthand appraisal of the conditions of orchards of apple and other fruit crops. He encouraged farmers to adopt advanced horticultural practices to improve productivity and enhance income. The Director also visited the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Poonch, where he reviewed



ongoing research and extension services being provided to farmers. He closely monitored the functioning of apple rootstock banks and inspected the layout and management of Revised Modified Orchards and geo tanks, which are instrumental in ensuring water conservation and improved orchard management especially in hilly terrains. Chief Horticulture Sanjeev Kumar, MCC's Anil Chibber, Niaz Ahmed and other officers of the department accompanied

the Director.

Later, the Director convened a meeting of the Horticulture Development Officers, officials & field functionaries of district Poonch. He asked the staff to reach out to farmers to educate them about various departmental schemes, particularly focusing on the promotion of Pecannut, a high-value and native crop to the Poonch region with significant commercial potential. Earlier, Chief Horticulture Officer apprised the chair about the ongoing works and achievements made so far under different schemes being implemented in the district. Later, the Director inspected various Govt. fruit plant nurseries across the district and appreciated the functionaries for closely monitoring & implementing the schemes and developmental works in the District.

## IUST's Science Outreach Initiatives in Pulwama and Anantnag

### HT News Network

Awantipora, May 21: As part of its ongoing mission to promote scientific awareness and academic engagement, the School of Sciences at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) successfully conducted its Outreach Programmes across various Government Higher Secondary Schools in twin districts of Pulwama and Anantnag.

The initiative aimed to inspire students by fostering a scientific temper, introducing them to emerging technologies, and informing them about educational opportunities at IUST. Faculty members from the School of Sciences led interactive sessions featuring lectures, demonstrations, and open discussions. These engagements highlighted the significance of science and technology in contemporary society and encouraged students to envision themselves as future innovators and problem-solvers. Students received detailed insights into undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by the School in Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Environmental Science. The outreach team also addressed queries related to science curricula, career paths, research prospects, and national-level competitive exams.

The sessions witnessed participation from students as well as faculty of the host institutions, who welcomed the initiative and expressed a strong interest in continued collaboration. Peace as the cornerstone of a progressive after the competition all faculty members and students took Anti Terrorism Pledge with an objective to wean away the youth from terrorism and the cult of violence. The students who secured first, second and third position in the competition were Kajal Devi, Nenshe and Neha Devi. Prof. Suresh Chander, Convener NSS Advisory Committee also addressed the students and encouraged them to participate in college activities.

## Panchayat-Level awareness program on Mission YUVA held at Kotedhara

### HT News Network

RAJOURI, MAY 21: To empower youth and promote self-employment, a Panchayat-level awareness program on Mission YUVA initiative was today organized at Panchayat Ghar Kotedhara by the District Employment & Counselling Centre (DE&CC) here under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma.

The program witnessed enthusiastic participation from unemployed youth and aspiring entrepreneurs of Kotedhara and adjoining Panchayats. The initiative is part of Mission YUVA, a flagship program of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir focused on fostering entrepreneurial culture, skill development, and providing financial support to the youth for gaining livelihood.

Deputy Director DE&CC Mohammad Nawaz delivered a comprehensive briefing on the salient features of Mission YUVA, including eligibility criteria and the application process. A live demonstration of the Mission YUVA mobile app and online portal was also conducted to facilitate easier understanding of the application function.

The event saw active involvement of local stakeholders including youth, PRI members, and community leaders, reaffirming the community's commitment to youth empowerment. The program also served as a platform to promote inter-departmental coordination for supporting youth-centric schemes.

Representatives from SBDU/BHD, along with officers from Agriculture, RDD, NRLM, and banking institutions, were also present and shared insights on available resources and schemes to support entrepreneurial ventures. The awareness drive is part of the larger mission to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for the youth and contribute to the district's socio-economic development.

## Government of Jammu and Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION SRINAGAR, NEAR J&K BANK (ZALDAGAR)

Sub: - Extension in bidding time for Short Term e-NIT No. 01 OF 2025-26, Dated: 14-05-2025 for below mentioned works:-  
Part 1: Design, casting, machining, finishing, installation and testing of diffuser part of bowl assembly of VT Pump Unit-1 of LI/DWS Takanwari old.  
Part 2: Mechanical repair works to 10 cusec VT Pump (Unit 1st) at LI/DWS Rabitar of MISD Ganderbal.  
Part 3: Electric repair works to 250 KVA HT Transformer Aluminium wound at LIS Narayanbagh of MISD Ganderbal.  
Ref: - JK Government official e-Procurement portal Tender ID No.: - 2025\_IFC\_277097\_1, 2025\_IFC\_277097\_2, 2025\_IFC\_277097\_3

## EXTENSION NOTICE 1

Due to poor response to above mentioned e-NIT for the subject works, the critical dates are extended as under: -

Bid submission/ Document download / sale end Date	27/05/2025 at 1400 hrs
Date and time of Bid opening	28/05/2025 at 1230 hrs

Rest of the terms and conditions shall remain un-altered as laid down in the original e-NIT.

DIPK-1697/25  
Send Date:-21/05/2025  
PUB Date:-22/05/2025

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
Mechanical Irrigation Division Srinagar

## Government of Jammu and Kashmir Science and Technology Department Civil Secretariat, J&K

Subject: Final Selection list for the post of Research Assistant, Science & Technology Department, advertised vide Notification No. 05 of 2020 dated 24-12-2020- submitting of particulars thereof

## NOTIFICATION

The following candidates who have been recommended by the J&K Services Selection Board for the post of "Research Assistant" in the Science and Technology Department, pursuant to letter No. JKSSB-Scry/13/2023-03 (E-7279610) dated 21-04-2025 are hereby directed to submit their e-mail id and contact number details in the Establishment Section of the Science and Technology Department, Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar in person or on email id estbsandtik@gmail.com within a period of Twenty One days positively for uploading the same on the Central Verification System (EVS), failing which it shall be presumed that they are not willing to take up their appointment as Research Assistant in the Science and Technology Department, and shall forfeit the right of appointment without any further notice:

S.No	Candidate's Name	Parentage	Address	Selection Category
1	Peerzada Shoaib Hamid	Peerzada Abdul Hamid	Poshwani, Pattan Baramulla-193121	OM
2	Mohsin Suharwerdi	Manzoor Ahmed Suharwardi	H.No.37, Govt Housing Colony, Sanat Nagar, Chanapora, Srinagar-190005	OM
3	Suhail Aneess	Pervez Iqbal	H.No.66, Amrohi, Karnah, Kupwara 193225	ST
4	Mohd Shakir Malla	Ghulam Nabi Malla	H.No.35, Hushangpora, Nagbal, Chitragam, Shopian-192124	RBA

DIPK-1675/25  
Send Date:-21/05/2025  
PUB Date:-22/05/2025

Sd/-  
(Feroz Ahmad)  
Under Secretary to the Government







# Rich tributes paid to Rajiv Gandhi

## Karra, Mir, Peerzada, Bhalla, lead massive congress rally, Jai hind yatra in Anantnag

### HT News Network

Khanabal (Anantnag), May 21 (KNS): A massive Jai Hind rally followed by an impressive Jai Hind Yatra was taken out by the congress party here today on the martyrdom day (Balidaan Divas) of former Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi. As part of nationwide call of AICC, a massive Jai Hind Sabha was held at Khanabal Anantnag today, followed by an impressive Jai Hind Yatra in the area, carrying national flag and raising slogans in favour of armed forces and the nation.

Led by J&K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President Tariq

Hameed Karra along with AICC General Secretary & CLP Leader G A Mir, Former PCC President Peerzada Mohammed Sayeed, Working President Raman Bhalla, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma, Th Balbir Singh, Sdr S S Channi Ex MLA Amin Bhat, Satish Sharma, DCC President Anantnag, DCC President Kulgam, Abdul Rashid Lone and other senior Congress, Mahila congress, youth Congress leaders, the Yatra passed through surrounding areas displaying support and solidarity with the armed forces & message of unity and brotherhood. Earlier floral tributes were paid to



the former Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi recalling his revolutionary achievements in information & computer technology, youth and women empowerment by 73rd & 74th amendments. Saluting the armed forces for their bravery valour and discipline, JKPCC Chief Tariq Hameed Karra raised series of questions on the issue of failures of internal security, foreign policy besides Foreign minister Jaishankar's admission of giving advance information to Pakistan before start of operation Sindhoor and the third-party announcement by US of cease fire between two countries. Seeking resignation

of Home Minister Amit Shah as well as foreign minister S Jaishankar, Karra said that the nation wants to know certain things after fully standing behind the nation and government and armed forces for stern action against terrorism and perpetrators of Pahalgam carnage as well as Pakistan. He said total lack of any security at Bisanar amidst large inflow of tourists, despite advance intelligence inputs is serious security lapse and Home Minister Amit Shah should resign. He sought resignation of Jaishankar for treason, as per his own admission of providing advance information to Pakistan.

## DC Kulgam visits GHSS Qaimoh

### Inaugurates e-Library, e-magzine, Noordin Drug de-addiction trophy

#### HT News Network

KULGAM, MAY 21: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Wednesday visited Government Higher Secondary School Qaimoh as part of an outreach programme to engage with students, teachers and take appraisal of new initiatives started by the institution. During the visit, DC interacted with students, inquired about their academic progress, and discussed various initiatives aimed at improving digital education in the institution. DC also reviewed the infrastructure and facilities available in the school, inaugurated e-library, e-magzine and Noordin Drug de-addiction trophy. The visit also aimed to foster collaboration between the district administration and educational institutions, improve



education quality, identify areas for improvement and implement initiatives to enhance digital education to keep pace with latest interventions in education sector. Speaking on the occasion, DC said that Qaimoh HSS will be pioneering institution in future

owing to its new digital initiatives introduced. Earlier the Principal HSS, Dr Sajad Mir extended gratitude to district administration for the cooperation and support they got in implementing the new initiatives. It is worth mentioning that HSS

Qaimoh has become the first school in district to excel in online learning. DC was accompanied by ADC Viqar Ahmed Giri, ACR, Tehsildar Qaimoh, ZEO and other Officers. The visit also aimed to foster collaboration between the district administration and educational institutions, improve education quality, identify areas for improvement and implement initiatives to enhance digital education to keep pace with latest interventions in education sector. Speaking on the occasion, DC said that Qaimoh HSS will be pioneering institution in future owing to its new digital initiatives introduced. Earlier the Principal HSS, Dr Sajad Mir extended gratitude to district administration for the cooperation and support they got in implementing the new initiatives.

## Distt Admin B'la issues Heat Wave Advisory; urges public and departments to take precautions

### HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MAY 21: In view of the rising temperatures and ongoing heat wave conditions, the office of the Chairman DDMA/Deputy Commissioner Baramulla has issued a detailed advisory aimed at safeguarding public health and ensuring a coordinated response from government departments. The advisory outlines preventive measures to reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses such as heat stroke, dehydration, and the worsening of pre-existing health conditions. For the general public, the advisory stresses the importance of staying hydrated by drinking sufficient water, wearing light-colored cotton clothing, and using hats, umbrellas, or sunscreen when going outdoors. "Citizens are advised to remain indoors during peak heat hours (11 AM to 4 PM), keep indoor spaces cool using curtains, fans, or coolers, and check regularly on vulnerable individuals such as the elderly, children, and those with chronic health issues," read the advisory. The public was also cautioned against direct exposure to sunlight during midday, leaving children or pets in parked vehicles, engaging in strenuous physical

activity during hot hours, and consuming alcohol, caffeine, or heavy meals. Government departments have been instructed to ensure uninterrupted water supply in vulnerable areas, maintain a regulated power supply to prevent outages, and keep healthcare facilities prepared for any spike in heat-related illnesses. Departments are also advised to conduct public awareness campaigns, provide hydration facilities in public places, and restrict outdoor labor during high-heat periods. Furthermore, departments are urged not to delay emergency responses to heat stroke cases, to avoid scheduling outdoor public events during extreme heat, and to ensure swift resolution of public complaints related to water or electricity supply. Timely dissemination of weather alerts has also been emphasized. Health Department was instructed to establish heat stroke clinics across the district and to ensure the availability of Oral Rehydration Solutions (ORS), essential medicines, and other emergency healthcare resources. District Administration has appealed to the public to follow the recommended guidelines and cooperate fully with the authorities.

## Disproportionate Assets: ACB registers case against FCS&CA Storekeeper in Sopore

### HT News Network



Srinagar, May 21: Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday said to have registered a Disproportionate Assets case against a Storekeeper of Govt. Ration Sale Centre Seer Jagir, Sopore in Baramulla district. A statement reads that a verification conducted by Anti-Corruption Bureau into the allegations of raising of assets disproportionate to known sources of income by Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, In-charge Storekeeper in FCS & CA department S/o Abdul Rashid Bhat R/o Tarzoo Sopore, at present Sidiq Colony Noorabad By-pass Sopore, District Baramulla revealed that accused was appointed as Depot Assistant in CAPD Department in the year 1998 & while being posted as In-Charge Store Keeper in various places in district Baramulla during the period 01.01.2008 to 31.12.2016 has accumulated various assets in the shape of immovable or moveable properties in his own name as well as in the name of his family members. "The assets or expenditures include, Purchased 01 kanal of land falling under survey No. 204 situated at Estate Ranbir Garh Pratap Garh, Mirgund in the year 2008. Purchased 01 Kanal of Land falling under survey No. 3099/1264 min and 3097/1265 situated at Noorabad By-pass, Estate Nowpora Kalan Sopore in the year 2010. Purchased 07 marlas of land (Plot No. 240 A in Bay 04, size 38' x 50') situated at Rakh Arath Housing Colony, Bemina Srinagar in the year 2014. Constructed double storey residential house at Rakhi Arth Housing Colony Bemina Srinagar on the above purchased land during 2014 to 2016. Purchased Maruti-800 bearing registration No. JK05B-6670 from Jamkash Vehicle Leases Chinnad, Sangrama Baramulla in the year 2013. Purchased Scooty (Aviator) bearing Registration No. JK05D-4662 from JK Stationers, M.A Road Srinagar in the year 2013," the statement reads. Besides this, the verification conducted also revealed that said storekeeper during check period there were huge cash deposits in his Bank accounts as well as in the bank accounts of his family members, which is subject matter of further investigations. "The verification conducted further revealed that the value of assets acquired and the expenditure incurred by suspect public servant during the check period were disproportionate to his known legal sources of income for which he could not satisfactorily account for, accordingly after culmination of probe in verification instant case was registered and investigations were set into motion," it reads.

## DC Bandipora inaugurates Youth Club at Kudara Channelizing energy of youth is our priority: Qadri

### HT News Network

BANDIPORA, MAY 21: In a move to empower the youth of rural areas, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri on Wednesday inaugurated Youth Club at Kudara Bandipora. The club has been established under the Nasha Mukth Bharat Abhiyan, a nationwide initiative to create a drug-free India. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Padma Shri awardee Faisal Ali Dar, President of the Bandipora Youth Federation, and other concerned. Addressing the gathering, DC emphasized the importance of providing opportunities to the youth in the field of sports. He said, this club will serve as a platform for the youth of this area to showcase their talent and divert their energy towards positive pursuits. Qadri appreciated the efforts of the Bandipora Youth Federation and Ali's Sports Academy for pro-



viding equipment and instructors to the trainees. He also urged the people of the area to take ownership of the club and ensure its success. DC highlighted the importance of youth engagement in positive activities, stating, "Channelizing youth energy is our priority." Padma Shri awardee, Faisal Ali Dar, who is also the brand ambassador of Nasha Mukth Bharat Abhiyan, hailed the initiative as a significant step towards

empowering the youth. "We hope that more such youth clubs will be established in the district in the future, providing opportunities to the youth to excel in the field of sports," he added. He said Youth clubs are expected to provide a platform for the youth to engage in sports and other activities, helping to divert them from negative influences and empowering them to become positive contributors to society.

## DC Kupwara's Directions Lead to Major Seizure of Illegally Dumped Minerals

### DR. AB QAYOOM

Handwara, May 20: In a significant move against illegal mineral extraction, the Handwara administration carried out a successful operation in village Bakhia Kher, seizing a large quantity of illegally dumped sand and other minerals. The action was taken under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara and based on credible inputs received by the local authorities. The raid was conducted by Tehsildar Handwara, Zeeshan Khan, under the supervision of Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara. The illegally extracted material was seized on the spot and subsequently handed over to the District Mineral Officer (DMO) Kupwara. Legal proceedings have been initiated against those found involved in the unlawful activity. Tehsildar Zeeshan Khan has consistently led efforts against unauthorized mining in Handwara. Over the past few years, he has conducted several coordinated operations alongside the Handwara Police to curb the menace of illegal mineral extraction, which poses serious threats to the environment and local livelihoods. The swift and effective action in Bakhia Kher has drawn widespread appreciation from local residents, who commended the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara and his team for their timely intervention. Locals expressed hope that such stringent measures would continue to deter miscreants and help protect the ecological balance of the region. The district administration reaffirmed its commitment to upholding environmental regulations and taking strict action against violators. Authorities have also urged citizens to remain vigilant and report any illegal mining activities to ensure the preservation of the area's natural resources.

## Long-Pending Road Connectivity Restored in Kupwara, But Locals Allege Poor Workmanship

### DR. AB QAYOOM

Handwara, May 21: A long-pending demand of residents from the Ramhal to Rajwar areas has finally been addressed by the District Administration Kupwara through the PMGSY Division Handwara, with the restoration of the crucial Dogripora-Waisa road link. The road, which had remained inaccessible for decades, was in such poor condition that even foot traffic was a challenge. The long-awaited work commenced at the beginning of this summer, following sustained efforts and repeated representations by local DDC, BDC members, and Panchayat representatives to the district administration and PMGSY authorities. However, the local population has expressed serious dissatisfaction over

the work process and the quality of materials being used. According to residents, the macadamization on this stretch of road appears fragile, with visible cracks forming even before completion. Locals alleged that crucial equipment like air compressors was not used, and rollers were not properly operated — leaving the road edges without proper compaction. "The machinery was brought to the site just for show," alleged one local resident, adding that "the road is already showing cracks, and we fear it won't last more than a few months." In addition, heavy machinery reportedly damaged multiple drinking water pipelines and existing drainage systems in the area. Locals say that many water connections remain disrupted, with pipes still exposed and unattended, leaving residents to struggle for basic amenities. Residents



have also raised concerns over the absence of concrete retaining walls at critical turns and the lack of a proper drainage system, both of which are essential for the safety and durability of this mountainous road. The aggrieved locals have appealed to the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Chief Engineer PMGSY, the LG administration, and even former Chief

Minister Omar Abdullah to personally visit the area and address these long-standing public concerns. When contacted for comment, the Executive Engineer PMGSY stated he was engaged in a meeting at the Chief Engineer's office and advised approaching the concerned Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE). The AEE, while unwilling to appear on camera, assured that a team would inspect the site tomorrow. He further pledged that public funds would not be allowed to go to waste and called for public cooperation to ensure work transparency. Our ground team from Headlines Today and correspondent Tameel Irshad is actively monitoring the developments in the area. We commit to revisiting this issue six months from now with a detailed follow-up report on the present macadamization work executed by PMGSY Division Handwara.





## Preparations to elect management committees of Cooperative Societies start in Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MAY 21: A meeting regarding to review preparedness for elections to elect the Managing Committees of Cooperative Societies in District Kishtwar was held today in the office of the Assistant Commissioner (Rev) Mohammad Idrees Lone, who is also the Election Authority for Cooperative Elections 2025.

The meeting was attended by the Dy. Registrar Cooperative Societies Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal, all Returning Officers (BDOs) of Kishtwar, Paddar, Inderwal, Marwah, and Dachhan, Assistant Registrars Cooperative Societies of all blocks, Election Naib Tehsildar and other officials.

After detailed discussion on arrangements for the smooth conduct of the elections, the Officers were briefed about their role and responsibilities in the election process. Necessary directions were issued to the concerned officers to ensure free, fair, and transparent elections. The ACR emphasized strict adherence to election guidelines and timelines.

## Many Ex-Servicemen Ready To Serve Nation: Secy Jammu Zila Sainik Board

■ HT News Network

Jammu, May 21: Given the deployment of ex-servicemen to protect vital installations after 'Operation Sindoor', secretary, Jammu Zila Sainik Board, Col (retd) Bhupinder Singh Sambyal on Wednesday said that not just 4,000 volunteers but many others were ready to serve the country. The Sainik Welfare Board of Jammu and Kashmir had moved a proposal for mobilising Ex-Servicemen (ESM) to safeguard vital infrastructure across the Union Territory. This proposal has been formally approved by the Jammu and Kashmir government, setting the stage for a unique collaboration between veterans and civil authorities towards strengthening community-based security and harnessing the capabilities of former military personnel.

"As per the approved plan, 4,000 ex-servicemen volunteers have been identified, and among them, 435 individuals possess licensed personal weapons, significantly enhancing the capacity to respond effectively to localised security situations," the Secretary told UNI.

He stated that these volunteers will be employed to protect critical infrastructure in all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, including power stations, bridges, government installations, and other vulnerable points.

## Dog stuck inside a shop amid Indo-Pak hostilities rescued after 12 days in Mendhar

■ M S Nazki

Jammu, May 22 A dog which spent nearly 12 days trapped inside a shop following now-paused hostilities between India and Pakistan along the Line of Control in Poonch district has been freed by police, officials said on Wednesday.

They told HT that the dog was stuck inside a shop near Dak Banglow Mendhar Poonch. As people head their homes, they found the dog stuck in the shop and subsequently informed police. Later a police team reached the spot and freed the dog. Locals hailed the swift action of the police in rescuing the dog.

## Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan IEC campaign held at GHSS Surinsar

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 21: In continuation to the 'Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan', an Information, Education and Communication Campaign was held today at Government Higher Secondary Surinsar.

The School Principal Sarita Sharma was the chief guest at the event attended by Ex. Sarpanch, Heads of High Schools Aithem, Sagoon, staff members, students and prominent citizens of the area.

The aim of this programme was to enhance awareness regarding the detrimental effects of drug abuse and to promote a drug-free community. The programme concluded with a pledge to protect students and society from the harmful impact of drugs.



## DC Jammu reviews FCS&CA Department operations Mandates surprise inspections, end to end supply chain review

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 21: Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, convened a review meeting today to assess the operations of the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department.

The meeting was attended by Sub Divisional Magistrates, Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh and Assistant Directors Santosh Kumar and Haroon Rashid Naik.

The meeting focussed on enhancing efficiency and transparency of the food distribution system.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasised the importance of adhering to standard operating procedures throughout the supply chain, from godowns to end beneficiaries, and mandated inspections of annual records to ensure compliance.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted the necessity for surprise inspections of dealerships by Sub Divisional Magistrates and FCS&CA teams to verify the display of rate lists and to prevent the misuse of domestic LPG cylinders in commercial



activities. Other operational areas under review included the status of Direct Benefit Transfers, Aadhaar seeding, eKYC status and other standard activities.

Further, the Deputy Commissioner direct-

ed that the quality and delivery of Mid-Day Meals and food supplies to Anganwadis be closely monitored. SDMs were assigned specific targets to conduct surprise checks and take immediate action against any

irregularities. Strict enforcement measures were also outlined concerning weights and measurements, with a clear directive to identify and prosecute violators.

Additionally, the Deputy Commissioner mandated mill-level scrutiny and thorough cross-checking of records related to ration pickup and delivery. Emphasising accountability, the Deputy Commissioner reiterated that all food and ration distribution must be carried out by licensed individuals only. The Deputy Commissioner emphasised the importance of adhering to standard operating procedures throughout the supply chain, from godowns to end beneficiaries, and mandated inspections of annual records to ensure compliance.

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## DC reviews maintenance work on Kishtwar-Paddar Road ahead of Machail Yatra-2025

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MAY 21: Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan today conducted a comprehensive review of the ongoing maintenance works on the Kishtwar-Paddar Road in preparation for the upcoming Shri Machail Mata Ji Yatra 2025.

During the meeting, the DC was apprised that huge building construction material has been dumped on the Kishtwar-Paddar Road by the public, causing nuisance and blocking smooth vehicular movement. The DC directed the Tehsildar Nagseni and Tehsildar Kishtwar, along with the OC GREF, to ensure clearance of the same at the earliest.



The DC directed CVPPL to undertake immediate repair and corrective measures at the landslide-prone Sinhad Nallah (Pathar Naki) stretch to ensure the safety and uninterrupted movement of pilgrims. He also instructed the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) to closely

monitor the work being executed by CVPPL to maintain quality standards. The General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF) was directed to ensure effective and high-quality maintenance of the entire road stretch to facilitate smooth transit during the Yatra

period.

The Deputy Commissioner directed JPDCL Kishtwar to install a 50 KVA DG Set at Machail Yatri Bhawan, Gulabgarh, and to complete the internal electrification on the top floor of the Yatri Bhawan, Gulabgarh, besides installing illumination along the Machail Yatra track and at the base camps at Gulabgarh and Chishoti.

The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal, ACR Idrees Lone, BDO, AEE JPDCL, representatives from GREF, BRO, Power Projects and CVPPL, Incharge Machail Yatra Cell Kishtwar besides other Concerned. The General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF) was directed to ensure effective and high-quality maintenance of the entire road stretch to facilitate smooth

## DDC Chairperson reviews performance of RDD in Kishtwar District

■ HT News Network



KISHTWAR, MAY 21: District Development Council (DDC) Chairperson Kishtwar Pooja Thakur today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to evaluate the progress of developmental activities being undertaken by the Rural Development Department (RDD) across the district. The meeting was attended by DDC Members, ADC Pawan Kotwal, ACD Kaiser Bhawani, all Block Development Officers (BDOs) and other concerned officials.

The meeting reviewed the implementation status of the ongoing works and flagship schemes, while also identifying strategies to ensure the timely execution of projects. The Chairperson raised concern over the non-disbursement of funds under the SOS Plan of the District Development Council in March due to insufficient allocations. The DDC Councillors from Marwah and Warwan gave feedback regarding implementation of works under MGNREGA and other schemes during the financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25 and suggested further improvisation. The Chairperson instructed the concerned officials to initiate immediate verification and take corrective action where necessary. Addressing concerns regarding the PMAY scheme, the Chairperson emphasized that only eligible and deserving beneficiaries should be selected, and the process must be free from favoritism. She stressed the importance of transparency, accountability, and community participation in the execution of rural development programs. She urged the officials to focus on people-centric projects, resolve ground-level issues promptly, and ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach every deserving citizen.

## Char Bin Apnao, Prakriti Bachao JMC encourages students for plastic-free, green campus at GCW Parade

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 21: Jammu Municipal Corporation, under the guidance of the Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav and in collaboration with Government College for Women, Parade Jammu, organized an awareness campaign on Solid Waste Management themed "Char Bin Apnao, Prakriti Bachao" here on the College Campus. The drive focused on source segregation and the ban on single-use plastics. The move aimed to promote

a plastic-free, green campus by encouraging students and faculty to adopt sustainable waste management practices and help reduce plastic pollution.

The campaign saw active participation from the College Principal, Dr. Ravender Kumar Tickoo, reflecting strong institutional commitment. Dr. Gurpreet Kour, NSS Programme Officer, and Kapleshwar Sharma, IEC Executive at JMC, efficiently coordinated the activities, leading NSS volunteers and staff in executing the aware-

ness drive.

Representatives from Jammu Municipal Corporation Sikander and Ankush Sharma, interacted with professors and students, emphasizing the importance of creating a single-use plastic-free campus. Faculty members and officials contributed by raising questions and sharing insightful suggestions on the issue. This collaborative initiative, guided by Dr. Devansh Yadav, marked a significant step toward fostering an environmentally conscious and

responsible academic environment on campus. Dr. Gurpreet Kour, NSS Programme Officer, and Kapleshwar Sharma, IEC Executive at JMC, efficiently coordinated the activities, leading NSS volunteers and staff in executing the awareness drive.

Representatives from Jammu Municipal Corporation Sikander and Ankush Sharma, interacted with professors and students, emphasizing the importance of creating a single-use plastic-free campus.

## ACD reviews development activities in Block Gundana Inspects functioning of Govt schools as Prabhari Officer

■ HT News Network

DODA, MAY 21: Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Manoj Kumar today reviewed progress of developmental works and implementation of the rural development schemes in Block Gundana.

Chairing a meeting with the local officials, he assessed the implementation MGNREGA, Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), and other Panchayati Raj schemes. The ACD sought detailed reports from concerned officials and directed them to ensure the timely completion of all ongoing projects while adhering to the prescribed guidelines.

The meeting was attended by field-level workers and Panchayat representatives, who shared ground-level updates and implementation challenges. The ACD issued showcase notices to several officials who were found absent from duty without prior intimation. He warned



that such negligence would not be tolerated and that repeated instances of indiscipline would attract strict action. He reiterated the importance of field presence and proactive engagement by all functionaries to drive rural development effectively.

Later, he conducted on the spot inspection of developmental works and expressed satisfaction over the progress and encouraged the team to continue their efforts with the same dedication. Later, the ACD visited Government Higher Secondary School Jatheli and Government High School Dha-

ra as the Prabhari Officer under the government's school monitoring initiative.

He interacted with the students and staff of the twin institutions, emphasizing the importance of discipline, punctuality and the need to focus on both academics and co-curricular activities for overall personality development of children.

The ACD also reviewed the functioning of the schools, checked infrastructure, and took note of various needs and concerns raised by the staff. He assured the teaching faculty that genuine issues will be addressed on priority to ensure a better learning environment for the students. The ACD also reviewed the functioning of the schools, checked infrastructure, and took note of various needs and concerns raised by the staff. He assured the teaching faculty that genuine issues will be addressed on priority to ensure a better learning environment for the students.



# JKEDI organises 4 week Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Program at Jammu under RAMP schemes

**HT News Network**

JAMMU, MAY 21: The Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Wednesday inaugurated a four-week Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Program (ESDP) at Jammu, under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme. The initiative is funded by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, and implemented by the Industries and Commerce Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

The training program is being conducted at the Government Polytechnic for Women, Jammu, and was formally inaugurated by Om Prakash Bhagat, Director, Skill Development Department, in the presence of Er. Neelanjana Manwati, Principal, Government Polytechnic for Women, Jammu.

A total of 32 aspiring entrepreneurs are participating in this 104-hour intensive training program, which spans four weeks. The ESDP is part of a larger initiative being implemented across all districts



of Jammu and Kashmir, aimed at fostering entrepreneurship among youth and equipping them with the necessary tools to launch and manage sustainable business ventures.

The curriculum includes comprehensive modules on enterprise management, marketing strategies, business simulations, market surveys, and field visits. This practical, hands-on approach is

designed to build core entrepreneurial competencies, helping participants become self-reliant job creators in the Union Territory.

The inaugural session witnessed participation from faculty members of the Government Polytechnic for Women and officials from JKEDI, who engaged with the trainees and shared insights on entrepreneurship and innovation.

A Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) under Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) initiative was prepared by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir under the guidance and supervision of the Chief Secretary, J&K Atal Dulloo and the Industries & Commerce Department, led by its Commissioner/Secretary, Vikramjit Singh to help enhance the productivity and competitiveness of MSME sector in Jammu & Kashmir.

The proposal was approved by the Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), GoI. Accordingly, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has started the implementation of the RAMP initiative with the commencement of the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programs (ESDPs) across the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) program is a Central Sector Scheme funded by the Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), GoI and supported by the World Bank.

## PDP Holds Youth Engagement and Social Media Meet in Pulwama

**HT News Network**

Pulwama, May 21, (KNS): The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) organized a youth engagement and social media meet in Pulwama district, focusing on strengthening grassroots connections and addressing key issues. The meeting was hosted by District President G.M. Shahoora, who emphasized the importance of connecting with the masses.

PDP leader Zuhaib Yousf Mir sharply criticized the National Conference for failing to fulfill promises outlined in their manifesto. Accusing them of being war-mongers and tacitly aligning with the BJP, Mir called out the Chief Minister for inaction on the pressing issue of unemployment. He stressed the need for direct engagement with the youth at the ground level to address their concerns effectively.

Bashir Beigh, another prominent PDP leader, spoke about the importance of fortifying the party's presence at the grassroots level and building stronger connections with young people to drive meaningful change. (KNS)

The meeting underscored PDP's commitment to empowering youth, addressing unemployment, and fostering direct dialogue with the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

## GDC Vijaypur organises screening of documentary on hazards of Drug Addiction

**HT News Network**

SAMBA, MAY 21: Government Degree College Vijaypur organised screening of documentary on drug addiction under the flagship banner of Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

The event was conducted under the supervision of the College Principal Dr. Ashu Vashisht.

The event commenced with the welcome address by Nodal Officer Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhagat. He noted that drug abuse has led to a detrimental impact on the society including increase in the crime rate in the country. The documentary aimed at creating awareness among the students and local people about the impact of drugs on emotional, mental and social health.

The documentary screened helped the students to understand that drug addiction can have serious consequences for the individual and society as a whole, while on individual level drugs can damage physical health, including organ damage, infectious diseases, and overdose fatalities. Only a collective approach from lawmakers, educators, community leaders, and individuals themselves can combat drug addiction. The Principal of the college Dr. Ashu Vashisht briefed the students that the aim of organising such events is to aware them about the consequences of drug use. The formal vote of thanks was presented by Dr. Anjana Raina (Lecturer, Political Science). The whole programme was coordinated by Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhagat, Nodal Officer, Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and co-coordinated by Prof. Mamta Gupta, Prof. Anita Jamwal, Dr. Arti Sharma, Dr. Naseem Chowdhary, Prof. Meetu Sharma, Dr. Gunjeet Mahiwal, Dr. Anjana Raina and Prof. Madhu Bala.

## IEC Campaign on Drug Abuse: Awareness sessions & cultural events held at Devsar Kulgam

**HT News Network**

KULGAM, MAY 21: As part of the ongoing Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign under the UT-wide flagship initiative 'Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan', Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Kulgam, and Cultural Unit Kashmir, in collaboration with District Administration Kulgam, today organized a mega awareness programme at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Devsar. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, faculty, and officials from various departments. During the programme, resource persons conducted interactive awareness sessions, sensitizing participants about the serious social, psychological, and physical consequences of drug abuse. The sessions aimed to equip students and attendees with the knowledge to resist peer pressure and make informed choices.

## Punjab Technical University permits Aryans to start B. Sc. in Optometry

**HT News Network**

Srinagar, May 21st IK Gujral Punjab technical University, Jalandhar has granted approval to Aryans Institute of Management and Technology, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh to start UGC approved Paramedical Courses, B. Sc in Optometry with 30 seats from this session (Reference number IKGPTU/CD/7083) from the session 2025-26. Dr Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group mentioned that this program is envisaged to develop multipurpose ophthalmic manpower at allied health level. The training will enable a student to become competent in providing service as an Optician, Optometrist. In the past decade, there is a huge dearth of trained ophthalmic manpower using advance technology.

## PMEGP beneficiary establishes Flour Mill at village Batara- Gandoh MLA, DC inaugurate project, encourage local youth to set-up micro-enterprises

**HT News Network**

DODA, MAY 21: Member Legislative Assembly Bhaderwah Daleep Singh Parihar, in presence of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Doda, Harvinder Singh, inaugurated a Flour Mill at Batara village in the Gandoh subdivision established by a local entrepreneur by availing the financial support under flagship Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP).

The project sponsored by the District Industries Centre (DIC) Doda was established by incurring Rs. 30 lakh provided as loan by J&K Bank Gandoh. Alongside the inauguration of the Plant, the MLA and DC asked local youth to set up micro-enterprise to



strengthen the local economy through self-employment.

MLA Bhaderwah Daleep Singh Parihar praised the efforts of the District

Administration Doda for effectively implementing employment generation schemes and urged more youth to come forward and benefit from such

## AMO Udhampur organises PMFME workshop at Lahnu in Tikri Udhampur

**HT News Network**

UDHAMPUR, MAY 21: Area Marketing Office Udhampur, Department of Horticulture Planning and Marketing, District Nodal Officer for PMFME scheme of Ministry of Food Processing Government of India organised one day workshop on PMFME scheme for farmers, SHG members and FPOs at Lahnu of block Tikri in Udhampur district.

Assistant Adviser J&K Directorate of Marketing & Inspections Government of India S K Koul was the chief guest.

Apart from a large number of farmers and SHG members, Anuj Verma Area Marketing Officer Udhampur, Dr Munish Sharma Senior Scientist SKUAST-J, Gopal Krishan Chief Manager PNB Udhampur, Manager J&K Bank Tikri, Shiny Sharma DRP PMFME, Anita Sharma Ex Sarpanch Lahnu Panchayat, Adarsh Kumar HDO Tikri, PMFME



beneficiaries from Udhampur Rohit Salaria and Kewal Krishan, Kamal Kishor AGMO Udhampur, Abdul Kabir Wani MI were present.

S K Koul informed the gathering that the Central and the UT governments have launched a number of schemes for farmers, unemployed youth and women SHG members with the subsidy up to ninety percent. He asked farmers and SHG members to take benefits of Government schemes in full and embark on the path of Prime Minister Sankalp of Viksit Bharat. Farmers were asked to adopt the latest technologies as well as techniques like

## DLSA Bandipora organizes Legal awareness programme on POSH Act 2013

**HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, MAY 21: In a significant initiative to promote legal awareness, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Bandipora, in coordination with Tehsil Legal Services Committee, Sumbal and in collaboration with JK Educational Society and Social Welfare Trust Sumbal, organized a Legal awareness programme on the 'Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (POSH) Act 2013.'

The programme, held at JK Educational Society and Social Welfare Trust Sumbal, was conducted under the supervision of Khalil Ahmad Choudhary, Chairman DLSA Bandipora, and the guidance of Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary DLSA Bandipora and Rahila Rashid, Munsiff/JMIC (Chairman TLSC) Sumbal.

The programme aimed to educate participants about their rights and respon-

sibilities under the POSH Act, promoting a safe and respectful work environment. Afroza Bano, Chairperson of JK Educational Society and Social Welfare Trust Sumbal addressed the participants and spoke extensively on the POSH Act, highlighting the role and responsibilities of employers in creating a safe and respectful educational environment. She emphasized the importance of employers' role in implementing the POSH Act in educational institutions.

Sheikh Aijaz (Panel Lawyer), TLSC Sumbal, imparted awareness on understanding the POSH Act 2013. He said the POSH Act is landmark legislation in India aimed at preventing and addressing sexual harassment at the workplace. He added that the Act defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome act or behavior, such as verbal, non-verbal, or physical, that affects a woman's dignity or creates a hostile work environment.

## RAMP Awareness programme held at GDC D.H Pora

**HT News Network**

KULGAM, MAY 21: District Industries Centre (DIC) Kulgam today conducted an awareness creation cum outreach programme under RAMP (Raising and Accelerating of MSME Per-

formance) at Govt Degree College D.H. Pora. Officers from line departments viz. Lead District Manager Kulgam, besides representatives from KVIB, SICIOP, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Handicrafts/ Handloom, CSC centres and Cooperatives

Department, Industrial Promotion Officers and other officials of DIC Kulgam were present in the programme. More than 100 beneficiaries from various departments, viz. Handicrafts/ Handloom, Cooperatives, Agriculture, and industrial unit hold-

ers of DIC Kulgam attended the programme. In the inaugural address, participants and other stakeholders were sensitized about the importance and vibrancy of Udyam Registration for taking their business and industrial establishments to new

heights in collaboration with the Government and the flagship schemes run by it. The process flow and benefits under Udyam Registration was explained to the participants through a detailed powerpoint presentation by the IPOs of DIC, Kulgam.

## Multiple IEC campaigns organised across Jammu under 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan'

**HT News Network**

JAMMU, MAY 21: In continuation to the Union Territory's concerted efforts under the 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan', a series of Information, Education and Communication campaigns were held across several Government Higher Secondary Schools in Jammu district to combat the menace of drug abuse and encourage the youth to lead a healthy, drug-free life.

Awareness programmes were held at GHSS Bhalwal, GHSS Muthi, GHSS Satwari, GHSS Bhour Camp, GHSS Bahu Fort and GGHSS Miran Sahib, under the able guidance of school

principals and with the active participation of students, teachers, local administration and officials from the Health, Police, Social Welfare and Information Departments.

The events commenced with traditional lamp-lighting ceremonies, followed by welcome addresses by school heads, setting the tone for the awareness drives. Experts from the Health Department elaborated on the devastating physical and mental effects of substance abuse, while officers from the Jammu and Kashmir Police and Excise Department highlighted legal consequences and enforcement measures being taken to curb drug trafficking and use. Officials from the Social Welfare



Department shared information on government-run helplines and rehabilitation initiatives for affected individuals and families.

Students across schools engaged the audience with thought-provoking skits, poems, folk songs, speeches and audio-visual presentations that depicted the harsh realities of addiction and urged youth to embrace a drug-free lifestyle. Cultural segments, pledge-taking ceremonies and interactive sessions formed a key part of these events, reinforcing the message of collective action and social responsibility.

At GHSS Muthi and GGHSS Miran Sahib, powerful student-led performances and speeches emphasized

the importance of education and family involvement in shielding youth from drug-related influences. At GHSS Bhour Camp, a signature campaign and detailed awareness sessions discussed the root causes of addiction, symptoms and solutions.

All programmes concluded with pledges of commitment to the cause, highlighting the resolve of educational institutions and stakeholders to protect students and society from the harmful impact of drugs. All programmes concluded with pledges of commitment to the cause, highlighting the resolve of educational institutions and stakeholders to protect students and society.



5 killed, several injured in school bus attack in Pak

UNI  
ISLAMABAD, MAY 21

Five people, including three students, were killed and several others injured when terrorists attacked a school bus in Pakistan's Khuzdar district of south-western Balochistan province on Wednesday, an official said.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistani military, condemned the terrorist attack on "the innocent school-going children's bus," vowing to hunt down the "planners, abettors and executors" of the attack and bring them to justice.

Khuzdar Deputy Commissioner Yasir Iqbal Dashti said that at least five people were killed and 40 others injured, including students and staff members, after a suicide bomber detonated his explosive-laden vehicle near the school bus in zero point area of the district, media reported.

Eyewitnesses in the area told local media that the bus was completely destroyed after the powerful explosion.

Following the explosion, rescue teams and law enforcement agencies reached the scene and shifted the injured to nearby hospitals, local media reported.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the bombing targeting the school bus.

China launches commercial Lijian-1 Y7 carrier rocket

UNI  
JIUQUAN, MAY 21 (UNI)

China on Wednesday launched the Lijian-1 Y7 carrier rocket with six satellites onboard.

The rocket blasted off at 12:05 p.m. (Beijing Time) from a commercial aerospace innovation pilot zone in northwest China, and sent a group of satellites into the planned orbits.

This launch marks the seventh flight mission of the Lijian-1 carrier rocket series.

Putin says Ukraine still trying to move towards Russian border

UNI  
MOSCOW, MAY 21 (UNI)

Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Ukraine does not give up attempts to move towards the Russian border.

On Tuesday, the head of state visited the Kursk Region and met with volunteers who came to help residents after the invasion of the Ukrainian armed forces. One of them said that the enemy was recently spotted in the area of the settlement of Shostka in the Sumy region.

"They are trying to move towards our border," Putin told the volunteer.

4 killed, 40 injured as blast hits school bus in Pak's Balochistan

UNI  
ISLAMABAD, MAY 21 (UNI)

At least four students were killed and over 40 others injured when a bomb went off near a school bus in Pakistan's southwest Balochistan province on Wednesday, an official said.

The explosion happened when a school bus carrying children and staff members passed by a vehicle loaded with explosives and parked along the roadside near the zero point area of Khuzdar district of the province, the police and government officials said. He said that the condition of several blast victims is critical, adding that a state of emergency has been imposed and all medical staff of hospitals in the district have been called in.

Eyewitnesses in the area told Pakistani media that the bus was completely destroyed after the powerful explosion.

Following the blast, the police cordoned off the area and launched a search operation in the surroundings to arrest the culprits, Dawn reported.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack yet.

UN chief welcomes global pandemic agreement

UNI  
UNITED NATIONS, MAY 21 (UNI)

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday welcomed the adoption of the global pandemic agreement at the World Health Organization (WHO).

Guterres believes that the historic pandemic agreement strengthens global preparedness against pandemics, ensures equity and solidarity in response to health threats and upholds health as a fundamental human right, said his spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

The landmark decision by the 78th World Health Assembly (WHA) culminates more than three years of intensive intergovernmental negotiations in response to the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, said the spokesman. "The secretary-general pointed out that COVID-19 was a reminder that no one is safe until everyone is safe."

There is no other way but through multilateral cooperation to deal with the global health threats that humanity is facing today, said the spokesman.

The WHA, the WHO's highest decision-making body, adopted the global pandemic agreement in Geneva on Tuesday.

Our aim is to be a ‘Viksit Bharat’ at 2047, this calls for peace on our frontiers: VP

PIB  
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

Vice-President, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar today said that, ".....Our aim is to be a Viksit Nation, Viksit Bharat @ 2047. This requires an eight-fold increase in per capita income. This calls for peace on our frontiers. Economic development cannot take place if we have war-like situations. Peace is fundamental to growth and development. Peace comes from strength – strength in security, strength in economy, strength in development, and deep commitment, unflinching commitment to nationalism. I have reiterated on a number of occasions, reiterate here, national security demands unshakable, unflinching commitment to nationalism and relentless preparedness."

Praising the execution of 'Operation Sindoor' Shri Dhankhar stated, "...When India responded remarkably effectively to Pakistan's terrorist misadventure at Pahalgam on April 22.....what a precise targeting of Jaish e Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba bases in Muridke and Bahawalpur, sent a global message, a message that Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave to the entire world from the heartland of Bihar. Message, terrorism

will no longer go unpunished. The punishment was exemplary. Strike was deep in the territory, beyond international border, keeping in mind our ethos to target only terrorists..... No one is asking for proof because the terrorist targeted revealed the proof to the entire global fraternity because coffins were escorted by military force of that country, by political force of that country and by terrorists. A great achievement, perhaps unrivaled in the annals of democratic functioning."

"In rapidly shifting geopolitical realities where global trade, strategic choke points, cyber threats and transnational crimes intersect, enforcing rules-based order at sea is increasingly challenging. It is becoming very important that rules-based order on sea prevails, but securing it is no less a challenge. India's maritime security must be resilient, proactive and future-ready..... Let us catch up with shipbuilding. Let us be leaders in shipbuilding. That is essential. The demands will rise. I think if I'm not mistaken, we carry 70% of our cargo in value by ship, the demand will increase because our economy is not taking leap, it is taking quantum jump, we have to be prepared for it", he



added.

Addressing the distinguished gathering after inaugurating and dedicating 3 MW solar power plant, commercial operation of two harbour mobile cranes and covered dome for coal handling at the Mormugao port in Goa today, Shri Dhankhar underlined the significance of oceans for the nation and said, "Our Bharat today rises as both global economic force and maritime power committed to peace, sustainability and development. We are already the world's fourth largest economy and emerging in the Indo-Pacific sector, a leader in our own right. Our oceans matter to us now more than ever before. They really matter to us for economy, for security, for sustaining our trade."

Lauding the Union government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Shri Dhankhar stated, "It was a delightful occasion for

me, when three projects with financial outlay of about 300 crores came to be dedicated today. One facet of Narendra Modi government is, they dedicate – which means they complete fast. The Prime Minister's passion is for development; development is his mission, and he believes in fast execution – and execution of a scale. Ladies and gentlemen, these three projects dedicated today are defining the changing profile of Bharat.

Reflecting on the recently inaugurated Vizhinjam Port, he said, "What I have seen with Kerala, secretary [Ports, Shipping & Waterways] knows and a remarkable instance of federalism, the Prime Minister being present there, the Chief Ministers of different political parties being present there, and an important private sector group, fructifying it."

Praising the dedication

and service of the Indian Coast Guard the Vice-President said, "Today is a special occasion for me. For three years as Governor state of West Bengal... ..A state that is prone to cyclones, super cyclones. I saw the dedication, performance, and commitment of the coast guards. I have come here to salute your courage and conviction. I was witness to your unwavering resolve as maritime sentinels, you are doing a wonderful job. Dear Coast Guards, I know your life is not easy. You face daunting challenges in difficult situations. The risks are many, but your commitment and dedication to duty ensures in times of crisis, there is no mortality on the high seas. In West Bengal, we had zero mortality on high seas, and cyclones were very severe – thanks to your tribe, your uniform. And then, recognition sometimes comes late. Sometimes it doesn't

come. But the love the communities have along the seashore for you is remarkable. I have seen myself. You have made a big difference in the lives of people who live alongside our seashores. The nation salutes you.....The Indian Coast Guard is both a force of steel and strategy and also conscience. Our oceans are lungs of mother earth-- regulating climate, supporting housing, life and supporting biodiversity. You [Coast Guards] silently watch over Lakshadweep's coral reefs. You watch ... Sundarban's mangroves. Olive Ridley turtles, their site where they nestle, and more important also marine mammal migration paths. You balance marine ecology by enforcing laws against illegal fishing, curbing pollution, and keeping away maritime degradation by patrolling against oil spills and toxic discharges."

Shri P.S. Sreedharan Pillai, Hon'ble Governor of Goa, Shri Pramod Sawant, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa, Shri Shantanu Thakur, MoS Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri T.K. Ramachandran IAS, Secretary (Ports, Shipping & Waterways), officers of the Indian coast guard, port authority and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

India successfully hosts the 2nd Blue Talks ahead of the 3rd UN Ocean Conference

PIB  
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Government of India, in collaboration with the Embassy of France and the Embassy of Costa Rica in India, hosted the "Second Blue Talks" on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at Prithvi Bhawan, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. This event aimed to serve as a milestone in the lead-up to the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3), which will be held in Nice, France, from June 09-13, 2025.

Building upon the success of the first Blue Talks held in February 2024, the second meeting convened leading scientists, policy-makers, global stakeholders, and representatives from government, academia, industry, and civil society. The forum aimed to accelerate action and galvanize concrete commitments towards the conservation and sustainable use of our oceans, directly aligning with the UNOC3 theme.

The event was chaired by Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, MoES, and co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Néstor Baltodano Vargas, Ambassador of Costa Rica to India and Mr. Damien Syed, Deputy Head of Mission, French Embassy.

Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, MoES, emphasized that, "To truly achieve SDG 14 and the goals of the UN Ocean Decade, we must prioritise comprehensive ocean resource mapping, develop cutting-edge technologies, implement policy interventions, and invest in building robust human capital for our marine future." Adding to this, H.E. Mr. Nestor Balto-



dano Vargas, Ambassador of Costa Rica, mentioned, "this event will significantly strengthen collaboration between our nations, driving concrete action towards SDG 14"

At the event, MoES launched a white paper titled "Transforming India's Blue Economy: Investment, Innovation and Sustainable Growth" in collaboration with its strategic knowledge partner. As the nodal agency for the implementation of the Blue Economy in India, MoES, has been actively working towards enhancing the visibility and effective implementation of blue economy initiatives across the nation.

This white paper builds upon these efforts by providing a consolidated framework that aligns government actions, fosters cross-sectoral synergies, and promotes greater investment to unlock the vast potential of India's ocean resources for sustainable and economic development.

The report released at the event underscores the critical role of India's vast marine resources, including its extensive coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone, as a vital engine for

national progress. It highlights the collaborative efforts of 25 ministries, alongside coastal state and union territory initiatives, in driving sustainable growth across various ocean-related sectors. The report builds upon India's G20 Presidency commitments and the Chennai High-Level Principles for a Sustainable and Resilient Blue Economy, further solidifying its importance within the Viksit Bharat vision for 2047.

While acknowledging significant sectoral progress, the white paper emphasises the need for a unified and coordinated approach to overcome existing challenges. It identifies key impediments to growth, limited data sharing, low private investment, and technology gaps, particularly in emerging areas like offshore wind and deep-sea exploration. It highlights pragmatic interventions and highlights scalable and replicable models from across India, including women-led seaweed farming, smart port development, and green ship recycling, demonstrating the potential for achieving both economic growth and environmental

sustainability.

The core objective of the second Blue Talks was a dynamic stakeholder consultation session centred around four themes:

Conserving, Sustainably Managing, and Restoring Marine and Coastal Ecosystems

Increasing Ocean-Related Scientific Cooperation, Knowledge Building, Marine Technology, and Education for Enhanced Ocean Health

Preventing and Significantly Reducing Marine Pollution from Land-Based Activities and Beyond

Leveraging the Interconnectedness of Ocean, Climate, and Biodiversity

Mr. Damien Syed, Deputy Head of Mission, French Embassy, further stated, "As India progresses with the ratification of the BBNJ Agreement, and with UNOC3 on the horizon this June, this is a crucial moment to gather profound perspectives from India's leading ocean experts."

This event fostered detailed discussions, encouraging collaborative problem-solving and the generation of innovative solutions essential for long-term ocean sustainability.

India Reaffirms Global Health commitment at the 78th World Health Assembly

PIB  
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

India addressed the plenary session of the 78th World Health Assembly today, reaffirming its commitment to global health equity under the theme "One World for Health." Representing the Indian delegation, Union Health Secretary, Smt. Punya Salila Srivastava congratulated the newly elected committee chairs and welcomed the opportunity for meaningful international dialogue and collaboration.

Speaking on India's commitment to inclusive and universal health, Smt. Srivastava emphasized on the transformative strides made under flagship initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, which has dramatically expanded access to comprehensive healthcare. "The program has expanded access to comprehensive healthcare, improved infrastructure, provided financial protection for advanced treatments and accelerated digital health adoption - paving the way toward Universal Health Coverage", she stated. The Union Health Secretary highlighted that India's efforts in Maternal Health, Family Planning, childhood mortality and stillbirths' reduction have been acknowledged by global bodies, including the United Nations Population Fund and the UN Inter-Agency Group. She informed that "India was recently certified as Trachoma-Free by WHO, and the nation is committed to eliminating diseases such as TB, Leprosy, Lymphatic Filariasis, Measles, Rubella, and Kala-azar." She point-



ed out that in a major policy step, India has extended health coverage under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana to all citizens above 70 years of age, regardless of economic status. "We have also doubled the number of medical colleges from 387 to 780 in the past decade to train future healthcare professionals", she stated. The Union Health Secretary also reiterated India's strong support for a legal, binding framework that enhances global cooperation while respecting national sovereignty and capacities. "The Pandemic agreement must ensure equitable access to medical countermeasures, timely and transparent data and pathogen sharing; and promote technology sharing and capacity building, particularly for the Global South", she added. She concluded her address by congratulating the WHO and member states on the historic progress made toward advancing the Pandemic Treaty, while emphasizing the importance of confronting future health challenges with a commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind.



## Summer Hair Masks



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

All that ‘fun in the sun’ during the summer months mean great things for our social life and general happiness levels. Summer is all about sun, beach trips, and vacations, but the intense heat, sweat, and humidity can wreak havoc on your hair. We are in the middle of scorching heat and rising temperature can strip your hair of moisture, making it dry, brittle, and frizzy. Taking proper care of your hair becomes even more crucial on hot, humid days.

These humid days can bring in a lot of hair problems, like itchiness of the scalp, dandruff, hair fall, etc. so we need to put in some extra effort to take

care of these tresses. To maintain healthy and nourished hair during the hot months, using Hair Masks for Summer is essential.

Hair masks are a richer version of hair conditioners. A typical hair mask includes rich ingredients like natural oils, butter, and more nourishing ingredients in heavy concentrations when compared to your usual conditioners. These masks provide deep hydration, repair damage, and shield your hair from environmental stressors.

What makes them different from instant conditioners is that the ingredients are usually more concentrated, and the mask is left on your hair for longer – anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours.

### Olive oil and sugar hair mask

An olive oil and sugar hair mask combines the moisturizing benefits of olive oil with the exfoliating properties of sugar to treat dry hair and dan-



druff.

Take two tablespoons of brown sugar and five tablespoons of olive oil.

Stir the two a little, but do not dissolve the sugar completely. Work it through your hair gently focusing on the scalp and roots to

exfoliate and hydrate and then rinse it out after 15-20 minutes, followed by a shampoo and conditioner.

This mask is a great exfoliant for the scalp and hair shaft. It will clear the product buildup and also treat flakiness.

### Coconut Honey hair mask

Mix 1 tablespoon Coconut Oil and 1 tablespoon Honey well in a glass bowl .Now, transfer this mixture to a pot and heat it till it's melted. Apply this mix to your hair from top to bottom, then

cover your hair using a shower cap . Leave it for 30 mins and finally rinse with lukewarm water. Coconut oil is a natural conditioner for every hair type . It strengthens and moisturizes hair when utilized in a hair mask.

### Honey and Banana hair mask

A banana hair mask offers ample hydration to improve shine and manageability if you have damaged or dry hair.

Mix one banana and 2-3 tablespoons of honey in a blender. Apply the paste to your hair and keep it on for 30 minutes. Use cold water to rinse it thoroughly.

This will provide relief if you are suffering from an itchy scalp. . Bananas contain potassium, which strengthens the roots, while honey draws moisture to the scalp, keeping them from becoming dry and irritable.

### Banana Honey and Olive Oil Hair Masks

Churn a ripe banana in a mixer and strain the puree using a muslin cloth. Now, add 2 tablespoons honey and 1 tablespoon olive oil to the puree and mix well. Apply the hair mask on the scalp, hair strands, and tip of the hair for 60 minutes.. Bananas help to strengthen hair, moisturize dry

scalp, and cure symptoms of dandruff. Honey helps in moisturizing hair and improves its texture .Olive oil softens hair, improves its volume, and strengthens them

### Avocado and banana hair masks

For dry and damaged hair, use this deep-conditioning homemade formula that contains nutrient-rich ingredients, adding the needed protein that would make your hair strands look shiny and healthy. Simply take two tablespoons of banana and two tablespoons of avocado. Mash rather blend both of them together along with other ingredients like honey, yogurt, or olive oil until you get a smooth and whipped texture.

Apply it from root to end thoroughly. Let it sit for 15 minutes and then rinse it out in warm water to open up the hair cuticles..

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

## A simple oral swab test before IVF likely to boost success rate

### AGENCIES

NEW DELHI

Swedish researchers have developed a simple oral swab test, which can help boost the success rate of the in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedure.

IVF treatment involves stimulating the woman's ovaries to mature many eggs, which are then retrieved and fertilised with sperm in the laboratory before being returned to the uterus.

There are two different types of hormone treatments to choose from for egg maturation: biological or synthetic. Besides the risk of serious side effects, the therapies sometimes require women to go into intensive care -- and many attempts at IVF fail. Selecting which therapy is best for the woman has become a major challenge.

While mapping genes is costly and takes time, the new simple oral swab



test within an hour shows which hormone therapy is most suitable.

“Our hope is that this will reduce the risk of suffering for women, increase the number of successful treatments, and cut costs for taxpayers. Our goal is for the test to be available by the start of 2026,” said Yvonne Lundberg Giwer-

cman, professor at Lund University.

A total of 1,466 women undergoing IVF treatment in Sweden were included in the study, and 475 were randomised to two different hormone treatments while the rest were controls.

Using gene sequencing, the team mapped the

action of the gene follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), which is known to play an important role in egg maturation.

The study identified that women with a particular variant of the FSH receptor (FSHR) gene that mediates the action of the hormone responded best to the biological hormone treatment, while others benefited from receiving the synthetic type of hormone.

To decode the genetic profile, the team turned to the oral swab test, which proved to be significantly efficient. Within an hour, it produced results that can be seen with the naked eye as a pink or yellow colour.

By knowing the woman's genetic profile in advance, we can increase the number of successful pregnancies, said Giwer-cman, in the study published in the journal Frontiers in Endocrinology.

## 26 new bacterial species in NASA cleanrooms to hold clues to space survival

### AGENCIES

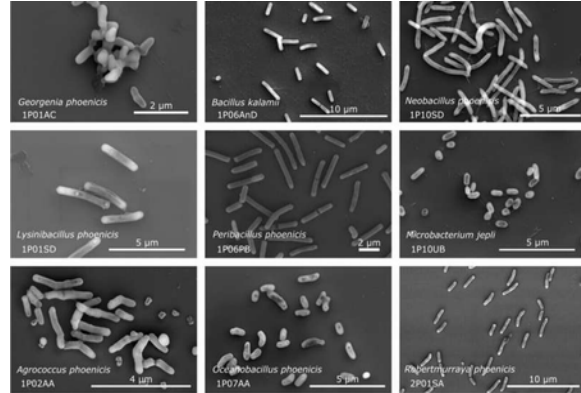
NEW DELHI

An international team of scientists from India, Saudi Arabia, and the US has identified 26 novel bacterial species growing inside cleanrooms associated with NASA space missions.

The study, published in the journal Microbiome, highlights the importance of rigorous contamination control to prevent unintentional microbial transfer during space missions.

Cleanrooms are highly specialised facilities engineered to maintain exceptionally low levels of dust and microorganisms. Spacecraft are assembled in cleanrooms.

These unknown and newly described species carry genetic traits associated with resilience to extreme environments such as those found in space, and may hold clues to space survival and biotech, said the team.



While the controlled environments have tightly regulated airflow, temperature, and humidity that inhibit microbial survival, some microorganisms -- extremophiles -- thrive in such environments.

"Our study aimed to understand the risk of extremophiles being transferred in space missions and to identify which microorganisms might survive the harsh conditions of space," said lead researcher Professor Alexandre Rosado, King Abdullah University of Science

and Technology (KAUST). "This effort is pivotal for monitoring the risk of microbial contamination and safeguarding against unintentional colonisation of exploring planets," Rosado said.

In the study, the scientists did a comprehensive analysis of the microorganisms growing in the NASA cleanrooms during the Phoenix mission -- a NASA-led mission that launched a lander to Mars in 2007.

During the Phoenix spacecraft mission,

genomes of 215 bacterial isolates were sequenced and based on overall genome-related indices, 53 strains belonging to 26 novel species were recognised.

The team found that many of the new species possessed genes that made them resilient to decontamination and radiation.

Some of the discovered genes were associated with DNA repair, the detoxification of harmful molecules, and improved metabolism, all of which increased the species' survivability.

Moreover, these genes could lead to new biotechnologies that benefit food preservation and medicine," said Junia Schultz, a postdoctoral fellow at KAUST.

Schultz noted that the genes identified in these newly discovered bacterial species can be engineered for applications in medicine, food preservation, and other industries.

## New vaccine to protect against swine, human and bird flu; ward off annual shots

### AGENCIES

NEW DELHI

US researchers have developed a novel vaccine that protects against H1N1 swine flu and can also protect against influenza in humans and birds.

The vaccine strategy developed and tested by researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the US can also eliminate the need for annual flu shots.

"This research sets the stage for developing universal influenza vaccines, so people won't have to go to the doctor and get a flu shot every year," said virologist Eric Weaver at the varsity.

"This vaccine will protect you against the different strains that are out there," Weaver said.

In the study, published in Nature Communications, swine vaccinated with the immunogens exhibited no signs of illness after being exposed



to a commonly circulating flu strain. They also developed antibodies against a multitude of viruses from several decades and multiple species; and maintained their immune response throughout the six-month longitudinal study.

Post-experiment regression analysis indicated that the immunity would not dissipate for a decade, Weaver said.

The Epigraph vaccine, named after the computer software, used to design it, significantly outperformed a commercial

vaccine used by the pork industry and a "wild type" vaccine based on naturally occurring strains with similar immunogens.

The study confirms previous research that demonstrated the vaccine design protected against the H3 influenza subtype.

The new results are particularly encouraging because H1 swine flu variants are detected twice as often as H3 variants -- and have nearly three times more genetic diversity, Weaver said.

"This H1 subtype is the largest and most geneti-

cally diverse subtype in pigs," Weaver said. "It's also among the viruses that jumped from swine to humans to cause the 2009 swine flu pandemic. It's a big target and one of the harder targets to hit."

The influenza A virus regularly infects as much as 15 per cent of the human population and causes thousands of deaths each year. Current vaccines often fail to provide long-lasting protection because of the genetic diversity and rapid mutation of proteins that help form the virus.

Another challenge in controlling influenza is that it infects multiple species: birds, swine, horses, and dogs, along with humans.

Swine often act as a mixing vessel because they are susceptible to human and bird flu variants, contributing to the evolution of novel forms of the disease that can be transmitted back to humans.

### AGENCIES

NEW DELHI

While CAR-T cell therapy has shown promise in treating cancer, it may also lead to "brain fog" or forgetfulness and difficulty concentrating, according to a study.

CAR-T cell therapy is immunotherapy where a patient's immune cells - T cells -- are genetically engineered and infused into the bloodstream to recognise and destroy cancer cells more effectively.

The study led by a team from Stanford University showed that CAR-T cell therapy causes mild cognitive impairments, independent of other cancer treatments.

Notably, this happens via the same cellular mechanism as cognitive impairment from two other causes: chemotherapy and respiratory infections such as flu and Covid-19.

"CAR-T cell therapy is



enormously promising: We are seeing long-term survivors after CAR-T cell therapy for aggressive cancers, saving patients who would otherwise have died," said Michelle Monje, Professor in Pediatric Neuro-Oncology at the Stanford Medicine. "We need to understand all its possible long-term effects, including this newly recognised syndrome of immunotherapy-related cognitive impairment, so we can develop therapeutic approaches to fix it," Monje added.

In the paper published

in the journal Cell, the research team studied mice that had tumours induced in the brain, blood, skin, and bone.

They wanted to understand the influence on cognition of CAR-T cell treatment in combination with the tumours' location (originating in, spreading to, or staying outside the brain), as well as the degree to which the engineered cells evoked additional, accompanying immune responses.

Before and after CAR-T cell treatment, the researchers used stan-

dard cognitive tests on the mice, measuring how mice responded to a novel object and navigated a simple maze.

CAR-T therapy caused mild cognitive impairment in mice with cancers originating in, metastasising to, and located completely outside the brain. The only mice tested that did not develop cognitive impairment after CAR-T treatment were those that had bone cancer that causes minimal additional inflammation beyond the cancer-fighting activity of the CAR-T cells.

The researchers demonstrated that the brain's immune cells, called microglia, are key players in the problem.

The study also identified strategies for reversing the problem.

Medications that ameliorate brain fog will enable better recovery from cancer immunotherapies, the researchers said.





### News in Brief

#### Djokovic couldn't get more out of Murray partnership

##### AGENCIES

GENEVA, MAY 21 (UNI)

Novak Djokovic said he "couldn't get more" out of his partnership with Andy Murray but is in no rush to find a new coach.

The Serb, who turns 38 on Thursday, parted company with former rival Murray earlier in May after six months working together.

Djokovic has taken a wildcard into the Geneva Open - one of the final tournaments before the French Open - as he looks to find more rhythm on the court, the BBC reported.

The French Open starts on Sunday, with Djokovic seeking a standalone record 25th Grand Slam title.

On his time working with Murray, Djokovic said, "We felt like we couldn't get more out of that partnership on the court, and that's all there is to it."

"My respect towards Andy remains the same, even more actually, I got to know him as a person."

#### Evans beats Harris to move closer to French Open place

##### AGENCIES

PARIS, MAY 21 (UNI)

Dan Evans beat fellow Briton Billy Harris in the first round of French Open qualifying to move a step closer to the main draw. The 34-year-old Evans fought back from 5-2 down in the first set to beat Harris 7-5 6-3 here on Tuesday.

Fran Jones also progressed in the women's competition, but Heather Watson's hopes of contesting an 11th French Open are over.

Watson lost 7-6 (7-2) 6-2 to Australian Daria Saville, but Jones will face Japan's Mai Hontama in the second qualifying round after defeating Croatia's Lea Boskovic 6-2 6-3.

Jan Choinski exited in the opening round of men's qualifying, losing 6-4 7-6 (7-5) to Italian Giulio Zeppieri, the BBC reported.

Players have to come through three qualifying rounds to reach the main draw.

The French Open - the second Grand Slam of the year - begins on Sunday.

Katie Boulter, Emma Raducanu and Sonay Kartal are already in the women's main draw, while Jack Draper, Jacob Fearnley and Cameron Norrie will contest the men's.

## Champions Trophy 2025 sets new broadcast records

##### AGENCIES

DUBAI, MAY 21 (UNI)

The ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 was the most viewed Champions Trophy ever, recording a growth over the 2017 edition.

The 2025 edition, played in Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates, saw 368 billion global viewing minutes, a remarkable 19 percent increase from the previous tournament held in England and Wales in 2017.

The premium event that saw participation from eight international teams drew 308 million global viewing minutes per over, the most ever for an ICC event.

Under the captaincy of Rohit Sharma, India won the trophy on the back of an unbeaten run throughout the tournament.

They beat the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup champions Australia in the



semi-final before defeating New Zealand in the grand finale.

The final against the Black Caps on March 9 was the most-watched Champions Trophy fixture ever, with 65.3 billion live viewing minutes globally, overtaking the record set during the 2017 final by a whopping 52.1 percent, an ICC report said.

It was also the third-most watched game in any ICC event globally by live watch time. In India too, it was the third-most watched ICC game ever,

sitting behind the 2023 Cricket World Cup semi-final and final, both of which featured India.

ICC Chair Jay Shah regarded the Champions Trophy's success as a marker of the game's global growth.

"We are delighted to share that the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 has achieved record-breaking global viewership," Shah said.

"Making it the most-watched edition of the tournament to date," he said.

## Indian Junior Women's Hockey Team Leaves for Four Nations Tournament in Argentina

##### AGENCIES

BENGALURU, MAY 21 (UNI)

The Indian Junior Women's Hockey Team left from Kempegowda International Airport, here, in the early hours of Wednesday for the Four Nations Tournament in Rosario, Argentina.

The friendly tournament, part of the team's preparation for the FIH Hockey Junior Women's World Cup in December, will feature Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile alongside India, as the teams battle it out for top honours.

Scheduled from May 25 to June 2 (IST), the Four



Nations Tournament will see the Indian team play two matches against each of the participating nations. The tournament aims to help the team evaluate their performance, test combinations, and refine strategies ahead of the World Cup.

The Indian squad, coached by Tushar Khandker, will be led by goalkeeper Nidhi as Captain, while forward Hina Bano will serve as Vice-Captain.

India will open their campaign against Chile on May 25, followed by a match against Uruguay on May 26. On May 28, India will face hosts Argentina, completing the first round of fixtures.

## Sindhu crashes out of Malaysia Masters

##### AGENCIES

BUKIT JALIL (MALAYSIA), MAY 21 (UNI)

India's star shuttler and two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu suffered an early exit from the Malaysia Masters 2025 badminton tournament after a first-round defeat to Vietnam's Nguyen Thùy Linh at the Axiata Arena, KL Sports City, here on Wednesday.

Sindhu, currently ranked world No. 16, went down 11-21, 21-14, 15-21 in a match lasting 63 minutes. Despite a fighting comeback in the second game, the Indian ace failed to maintain momentum in the decider. This was Nguyen Thùy



Linh's second victory over Sindhu in four meetings.

Sindhu's early elimination adds to a string of disappointing performances this season, with her best result being a quarterfinal finish at the India Open in

January.

In contrast, Indian men's singles players enjoyed a successful day.

World No. 35 HS Prannoy came from behind to stun fifth seed Kenta Nishimoto of Japan 19-21, 21-17,

21-16, while former world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth (WR 65) defeated sixth seed Lu Guangzu of China 23-21, 13-21, 21-11 to book his place in the second round.

The biggest upset of the day came courtesy of Sathish Karunakaran, who beat third seed and world championships bronze medallist Chou Tien-chen of Chinese Taipei 21-13, 21-14 in a commanding display.

Youngster Ayush Shetty added to India's success with a 20-22, 21-10, 21-8 win over Canada's Brian Yang. Shetty had recently made headlines by reaching the semi-finals of the Taipei Open earlier this month.

## Match 64: GT eye top spot as LSG play for pride

##### AGENCIES

AHMEDABAD, MAY 21 (UNI)

With their place in the playoffs already secured, Gujarat Titans will aim to tighten their grip at the top of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 standings when they face a demoralised Lucknow Super Giants at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Thursday evening.

In stark contrast, Lucknow, having lost four games on the trot, are out of the qualification race and left playing for pride.

This 64th match of the season presents a clas-



sic mismatch on current form. Shubman Gill's GT have been relentless in their march, registering five wins in their last six matches. Their most recent performance - a crushing 10-wicket demolition of Delhi Capitals - underlined their all-round strength and title

credentials.

In that match, GT's opening pair of Gill and Sai Sudharsan stitched together a record 205-run unbroken stand while chasing a tall target, leaving fans and analysts in awe. Sudharsan's 108 (61 balls) and Gill's 93 (53 balls) showcased not only

technical class but also the psychological edge GT now carry over their opponents.

On the other hand, LSG, led by Rishabh Pant, have endured a disappointing season. Their defeat against Sunrisers Hyderabad by six wickets in their previous outing sealed their exit from playoff contention. Despite a fighting 115-run partnership between Aiden Markram and Mitchell Marsh, the team failed to defend a competitive total due to poor bowling and tactical lapses.

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