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P|08



Gunfight in Kathua Enters Second Day, Death Toll Rises to Seven

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAR 28: Heavy gunfire and powerful explosions echoed for the second straight day in the Safiyan area of Kathua district, as police, assisted by the Army and CRPF, resumed their operation on Friday morning following a night-long pause to secure the region.

Security officials said a fourth policeman's body was spotted using drones near the encounter site, raising the total police death toll to four. The ongoing operation has also resulted in the killing of three militants, while a police officer remains missing.

The deadly standoff began on Thursday morning when security forces engaged three suspected Pakistani militants of the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) outfit in an intense day-long gunfight near Jakhole village in



J-K LG, CM Pay Tributes To Policemen Martyred In Kathua Encounter

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAR 28: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday paid rich tributes to the police personnel who lost their lives in an ongoing encounter in Kathua



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the Ghati Juthana area of Rajbagh. By the end of the day, three policemen had lost their lives, while a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) and six others sustained injuries.

At dawn, security forces resumed their search operation, focusing on retrieving bodies, locating the missing policeman, and eliminating any remaining threats. Officials suspect that the militants may have infiltrated recently from Pakistan via the International Border in Hiranagar. However, it is still unclear whether this group managed to evade an earlier cordon in Sanyal forest or if they are part of a separate infiltration attempt.

The Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, along with Army and CRPF personnel, led the offensive, successfully neutralizing three militants.

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Thousands of devotees throng Dargah Hazratbal shrine on Jumat-ul-Vida

Valley observes last Friday of Ramadan with religious fervor



■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: Worshippers across Kashmir thronged mosques and shrines to observe Jumat-ul-Vida, the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan, with the largest gathering witnessed at Dargah Hazratbal, where thousands of devotees offered prayers.

Faithful people from different parts of the Valley gathered at the historic Hazratbal shrine,

where men, women, and children prayed for peace and prosperity.

As per the details available with the news agency— the major Masjids and shrines saw significant gatherings as people marked the sacred day with devotion.

Meanwhile, the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar remained closed, preventing devotees from offering congregational prayers. The

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Over 5,200 contempt cases pending in High Court of J&K & Ladakh

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: A total of 5,244 contempt cases are pending before the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir & Ladakh as of March 24, 2025, according to data presented in the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of Law and Justice.

The figures, as reported by the news agency—were revealed in response to a question on the total number of contempt cases across the Supreme Court and various High Courts in India.

The data, sourced from the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), highlights the backlog of contempt petitions, which involve non-compliance with judicial orders.

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Over 800 vacant positions at AIIMS Jammu, Awantipora

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: AIIMS Jammu and AIIMS Awantipora are facing staff shortages, with a combined total of 820 vacant positions, as per data presented in the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

According to the figures, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), AIIMS Jammu has 81 vacant faculty positions out of 183 sanctioned posts, while 495 non-faculty positions, including nursing staff, junior residents, and senior residents, remain unfilled out of 1,267 sanctioned posts.

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J&K, Ladakh report 417 TB deaths in 2024

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh recorded a total of 417 Tuberculosis (TB) deaths in 2024, according to data presented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the Lok Sabha.

The figures include 408 TB-related deaths in J&K and 9 in Ladakh. India has seen a 17.7% decline in TB incidence from 237 per 100,000 population in 2015 to 195 per 100,000 in 2023.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the government has set a target to eliminate TB by 2025, but challenges remain in several states, including J&K and Ladakh, where geographical barriers, limited healthcare access, and winter disruptions affect treatment. The central and UT governments continue to strengthen

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Strong winds cause widespread damage in Kashmir

19 flights cancelled, many areas witness power outages; MeT predicts dry weather till April 6



■ HT News Network

gusty winds caused widespread damage across Kashmir on Friday and led

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: Strong and

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Gusty winds aftermath: PDD restores over 90% electricity

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: Following the gusty winds in many places of Kashmir, the Power Development Department (PDD) has restored over 90 percent electricity in the affected areas.

An official informed the news agency—, that the electricity lines were badly damaged because of the gusty winds. The official said that the huge damage was caused in many areas of south

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Survey Of Jammu-Poonch Rail Link Via Akhnoor, Rajouri Shows Low Traffic Projections: Railway Minister

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, MAR 28: A survey for a new 223-km rail line between Jammu and Poonch via Akhnoor and Rajouri was carried out and the project cost was assessed as Rs 22,771 crore but it has low traffic projections, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha on Friday.

BJP MP Ghulam Ali asked if it has been proposed to the government to establish Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch railway connectivity.

"The work on the new railway line connecting Jammu



with Srinagar i.e. Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project (272 km) has been completed. This project covers the districts of Udhampur, Reasi, Ramban, Srinagar, Anantnag, Pulwama, Budgam and Baramulla in Jammu & Kashmir," Vaishnaw said.

He added, "Survey for new line between Jammu and

Poonch via Akhnoor and Rajouri (223km) was carried out. The cost of the project was assessed as Rs 22,771 crore. The project has low traffic projections." According to the minister, sanctioning of railway projects is a continuous and dynamic process. These projects are taken up on the basis of remunerativeness, last mile connectivity, missing links and alternate routes including connectivity to hilly and border areas, augmentation of congested/saturated lines, socio-economic considerations and the likes. And these depend upon liabilities of ongoing projects, overall

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CAT Jammu temporarily lifts ban on doctors' private practice

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) in Jammu has stayed the ban on the private practice of doctors after finding that the ban order was passed without following the proper procedure.

According to details obtained by the news agency—CAT also determined that the impugned orders were issued based on incorrect facts.

Notably, in the first week of the ongoing month, the Health and Medical Education Department banned the private practice of Dr Pawan Kumar, Consultant Anesthesia at CHC Ramgarh, and Dr Mohan Lal Attri, Consultant Surgeon at CHC R S Pura, for a period of five years to prevent potential risks associated with

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Kashmir witnesses dip in Eid shopping this year

Garment sales plunge by 95%, traders struggle

■ HT NEWS NETWORK



Srinagar, Mar 28: With Eid-ul-Fitr just days away, Kashmir's markets are witnessing a concerning slowdown in sales, reflecting broader economic distress, particularly in the garment sector, where sales have plummeted by 95 per cent.

Trade leader Mohammad Yaseen Khan, Chairman of Kashmir Economic Alliance (KEA), while speaking to the news agency—, highlighted the struggles faced by businesses across sectors, citing high taxation, declining purchasing power, and financial burdens on shopkeepers.

Speaking on the current market scenario, Khan pointed out that while the festive season usually boosts retail activity, this year's sales are down by nearly 95% in the garment industry.

"The business community is facing

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Chaos! No exam centre in Kashmir, strong winds put question mark on fate of NEET-SS candidates

Flights canceled, aspirants book cabs to reach Jammu, Delhi other states

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 28: Fate of hundreds of NEET-SS candidates from Kashmir hangs in balance as many of them couldn't travel to Jammu, Delhi and other places on Friday as many flights were cancelled at the Srinagar airport due to strong and gusty winds.

According to the details available with the news agency—many candidates had booked air tickets to reach their examination centres



to appear in the examination scheduled to be held on Saturday morning. However, there was complete chaos at the Srinagar Airport today due to cancellation of flights.

Several candidates told agency that aspirants from Kashmir are forced to spend more than Rs 20,000 per head and at least two to three days of travel to other states to appear in the examination.

"We often face such issues as

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Rajpora's Sheermal: A cherished delicacy of Kashmir's festive celebrations

HT News Network

Pulwama, Mar 28: The Rajpora area, situated about five kilometres from Pulwama's district headquarters, is renowned for its traditional flatbread, Sheermal. This delicacy, enjoyed with salt tea (Sheer Chai), is an essential part of festive occasions and ceremonies in Kashmir. Sheermal is a circular, flatbread with a furrowed surface, adorned with sesame seeds that enhance its taste and appearance. Mohammad Sultan Sofi, a seasoned baker in Rajpora, has been working tirelessly at his local bakery, known as Kander Wan, to meet the soaring demand for Sheermal ahead of Eid and other celebrations. Like him, around 30 bakers in this historic village prepare the brownish, sesame-coated bread, upholding a long-standing culinary tradition. Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Sultan recalls that Sheermal was once a luxury item, affordable only to the wealthy. However, with improved socio-economic conditions, it has become a staple on festive occasions



and social gatherings across Kashmir. Rajpora's Sheermal is so well-regarded that orders pour in from Kashmiris residing outside the valley and even abroad. Pamposh Ahmad, another baker, said this Sheermal is famous due to the unwavering commitment of local bakers to quality. "Kashmiris visiting home buy Sheermal

in bulk to take back and gift to non-locals," he said. During Eid and similar occasions, hundreds of customers from distant areas flock to Rajpora to purchase Sheermal. Each baker sells around a thousand kilogram of Sheermal during Eid, making it a profitable livelihood for those in the

trade. Longtime customers, like Manzoor Ahmad from Anantnag, express a deep preference for Rajpora's Sheermal over those made elsewhere. "Sheermal from other places lacks the same delicate taste," he said, adding that it has been a tradition in his family to buy Rajpora Sheermal and distribute it among relatives. This beloved bread holds cultural significance, being served at engagement and wedding ceremonies, circumcisions, and religious events like Eid. Sheermal comes in two distinct varieties—sweet and salty. The sweet version pairs perfectly with Kehwa, a traditional spiced green tea, while the salty one is best enjoyed with Noon Chai or Sheer Chai. For Kashmiris, Sheermal is a symbol of tradition, festivity and cherished gatherings—Sheermal comes in two distinct varieties—sweet and salty. The sweet version pairs perfectly with Kehwa, a traditional spiced green tea, while the salty one is best enjoyed with Noon Chai or Sheer Chai. For Kashmiris, Sheermal is a symbol of tradition, festivity and cherished gatherings—

CCIK Expresses Concern Over Traffic Management in Srinagar Ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr

HT News Network

Srinagar, March 28 (The Chamber of Commerce and Industries Kashmir (CCIK) has expressed deep concern over the lack of proper traffic management in Srinagar City on the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr, causing inconvenience to the public and losses to the business community. According to CCIK, severe traffic congestion was witnessed in both downtown and other commercial areas, with the Srinagar Traffic Police failing to regulate the flow effectively. In many areas, personnel from the Jammu and Kashmir Police had to step in to manage traffic, despite this being the primary responsibility of the Traffic Police. CCIK President Tariq Ghani has urged the administration to take immediate measures to streamline traffic management in the city, especially during festive occasions, to ensure smooth movement for shoppers and traders. The business community has also appealed to the authorities to deploy additional traffic personnel and implement better traffic plans to prevent such disruptions in the future.

Aga Syed Hassan expressed solidarity with People of Palestine

HT News Network

Srinagar March 28 (KNS): J&K Anjuman Sharie Shian's president Aga Syed Hassan Mosavi called on Muslims all over the world to unite in solidarity with the Palestinians against the Zionist, colonial entity of Israel. In a statement issued, Aga Hassan said, "the Zionist script, is an extension of colonialism and Apartheid, never see in the history of human kind. It set out to viciously and violently occupy all of Palestine, by changing its demographics through ethnic cleansing, terrorism and genocide. The first wave of expulsion in 1948 was followed by many more; all intended for the establishment and implementation of this evil system. The definitive target is to Judaize the city of Al Quds by removing the Islamic, Arabic and Christian characters of the city. Its policy remains inflammatory." While leading solidarity rally He said, "Israel's strategy in Al-Quds is a clear violation of international law, numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the UN General Assembly, concerning the rights of the Palestinian people and for the past half a century or more, the Arab world has been in a vicious cycle and its people have been suffering from a state of imbalance and an uncertain future." Aga Hassan further said, "this is the doing of their leaders, who have bargained with the Palestinian cause. Their leadership positions took precedence over the Palestinian resistance to the illegal occupation. They believed that the cause is the price to be paid in exchange for maintaining their oppressive, political leadership positions. Hence, these Arab leaders have become the guards for Israel's "borders" and its agents in the region, governing in accordance with what is dictated to them. They seek to normalise political and economic relations with the Zionist state and foster military partnerships with it. They are also moving towards forming an Arab axis consisting of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, along with Israel, in order to confront Iran, their "perceived" common enemy." (KNS)

Hakeem Yaseen Decries Windstorm Devastation in Kashmir, Demands Urgent Relief for Affected Families

HT News Network

Srinagar, March 27: Hakeem Muhammad Yaseen, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) and former minister, has voiced deep anguish over the large-scale destruction caused by strong winds across Kashmir, particularly in Budgam district. He expressed concern over the suffering of people whose homes and properties have been severely damaged. "The strong winds have inflicted serious damage in several areas, including Khansahib, Beerwah, and Chadoora. Many families have been left in distress as their houses, shops, and essential infrastructure have been affected," Hakeem Yaseen said. "I urge the administration to immediately assess the extent of the damage and provide adequate compensation to the victims." He stressed that the affected families should not be left to struggle on their own and called for a comprehensive relief package to address their hardships. "The authorities must act swiftly to ensure that those who have lost their roofs and properties receive prompt assistance. Emergency arrangements should be made to provide shelter and basic necessities to the worst-affected families," he added. Highlighting the extensive impact on public infrastructure, Hakeem Yaseen called for urgent measures to restore essential services.

JKPICCA President Bashir Ahmad Naik Extends Eid-ul-Fitr Greetings to Muslims

HT News Network

Srinagar, March 28: Bashir Ahmad Naik, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Fruits and Vegetables Processing and Integrated Cold Chain Association (JKPICCA), has extended warm greetings to the Muslim community on the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. In his message, Naik expressed his heartfelt wishes for peace, prosperity, and happiness for all. He emphasized the significance of Eid as a time of compassion, unity, and gratitude, encouraging people to share the festive spirit with those in need. "Eid-ul-Fitr is a celebration of faith, kindness, and togetherness. May this auspicious occasion bring joy to every home and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood among us," he said. Naik also acknowledged the hardworking farmers and traders in the fruit and vegetable industry, appreciating their contributions to the region's economy. He reiterated JKPICCA's commitment to supporting agricultural growth and enhancing cold chain infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir. He concluded by urging people to celebrate responsibly and continue working towards a harmonious and prosperous society.



Altaf Bukhari urges administration to ensure adequate arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr Jama Masjid Closure on Shab-e-Qadr Unjustified

HT News Network

Srinagar, March 28 (KNS): Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari has urged the administration to ensure all necessary arrangements for the upcoming auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. In a statement issued here, Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari urged the administration to take necessary measures to ensure the smooth observance of Eid-ul-Fitr. He said, "As the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr approaches, I urge the administration to make all necessary arrangements to ensure its smooth observance. Authorities must ensure the adequate availability of essential commodities in markets and an uninterrupted supply of water and electricity for consumers during the festivities." He added, "Essential commodities such as ration, mutton, poultry, vegetables, fruits, bakery products, and LPG must be readily available in sufficient quantities across markets." Apni Party President also emphasized the need for proper sanitation at



places of worship. He said, "The concerned departments must ensure adequate sanitation facilities, particularly at venues where congregational prayers will be held." He added, "Additionally, hassle-free transportation services should be arranged to help devotees reach the holy sites where congregational prayers will take place. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party President Altaf Bukhari has expressed distress over the closure of Srinagar's historic Jama Masjid on the sacred night of Shab-e-Qadr. He criticized the decision to bar worshippers from offering prayers and night-long supplications, calling it unjustified.

Bukhari emphasized that restricting access to such a significant place of worship on an occasion of profound spiritual importance is deeply concerning. He said, "As the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr approaches, I urge the administration to make all necessary arrangements to ensure its smooth observance. Authorities must ensure the adequate availability of essential commodities in markets and an uninterrupted supply of water and electricity for consumers during the festivities." He added, "Essential commodities such as ration, mutton, poultry, vegetables, fruits, bakery products, and LPG must be readily available in sufficient quantities across markets." Apni Party President also emphasized the need for proper sanitation at places of worship. He said, "The concerned departments must ensure adequate sanitation facilities, particularly at venues where congregational prayers will be held." He added, "Additionally, hassle-free transportation services should be arranged to help devotees reach the holy sites where congregational prayers will take place. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party President Altaf Bukhari.

Two-week upskilling program for women trainees concludes at KU

HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 28: ANB: To empower women trainees with entrepreneurial skills and facilitate their journey towards self-reliance, the Centre for Capacity Building and Skill Development (CCBSD), University of Kashmir (KU), successfully conducted a two-week upskilling program. As per statement issued to news service associated News Bureau ANB that The program, which commenced on March 13, 2025, was designed as a follow-up to previous training in creative apparel design under RUSA, equipping participants with practical knowledge and business insights. Women trainees from various districts of Kashmir participated in the program, which combined hands-on training with expert-led sessions on self-help group (SHG) formation, financial literacy and entrepreneurship. Speaking at the valedictory session, Controller of Examinations KU, Dr. Majid Zaman Baba emphasized the significance



of contemporary skills, including AI and entrepreneurial competencies. "Bridging the gap between aspiring entrepreneurs and government schemes is crucial for sustainable business growth," he said. Dean Students' Welfare KU, Prof.

Parvez Ahmed, highlighted the evolving nature of education, stressing that skill development is no longer confined to technical institutes. "With the NEP 2020 framework, skill training must be aligned with market

demands to create meaningful employment opportunities," he remarked. Earlier, Director CCBSD KU, Dr. Aadil Bashir, shared the objectives of the program and discussed the key skills imparted during the training. The event proceedings were conducted by Mr. Mohammad Yousuf, Project Officer CCBSD KU, while Mr. Manzoor Ahmad Mir, Project Officer CCBSD KU, delivered the vote of thanks on the occasion. ANB Women trainees from various districts of Kashmir participated in the program, which combined hands-on training with expert-led sessions on self-help group (SHG) formation, financial literacy and entrepreneurship. Speaking at the valedictory session, Controller of Examinations KU, Dr. Majid Zaman Baba emphasized the significance of contemporary skills, including AI and entrepreneurial competencies. "Bridging the gap between aspiring entrepreneurs and government schemes is crucial for sustainable business growth," he said.

EDITORIAL

Regulation of mutton price not a govt's baby now

Over the past few days reports about exorbitant charging by the meat sellers have come in from the different areas of Kashmir valley. The people as a whole have been demanding that there should be regulation of the mutton prices and these should be fixed so that there is no confusion about the same. Ever since Jammu & Kashmir has become a union territory the government has got no jurisdiction over the price of mutton.

In the past the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs would fix the rate of the mutton and the people were expected to pay the same. At that time if some complaint would be lodged against a particular meat seller action under rules was taken against him. That is a thing of the past and as on date the meat prices have been decontrolled and the same can be decided by the meat sellers themselves.

The association of the meat sellers have fixed the rate of the mutton according to the quality of the product. The million dollar question in this regard is that how come a customer knows about the quality of the meat being given to him. Barring a negligible portion of the population the majority are unaware about the grade of the meat being sold in the market. In such a manner the meat sellers sell low grade to the customers at the rate of the higher grade of the meat.

Many meat sellers are taking advantage of the present situation and people are forced to feel the heat. At the same time there are exceptions as well with some of the mutton sellers resorting to fair practices in their day to day public dealing. These traders sell the best grade meat to the people at the rate fixed for the same grade of meat. It is important that the other meat sellers follow suit and stop resorting to unfair practices while dealing with the customers.

The mutton dealers and sellers association should also act responsibly and it is their duty to ensure that the meat sellers don't deceive the people. If the association acts in a transparent manner and takes punitive action against the errant meat sellers then the people would think that the association believes in providing quality meat to the masses. In such a manner the government has a limited role with all the shots being called by the mutton dealers.

Eid-ul-Fitr: A Celebration of Gratitude, Compassion, and Islamic Values



BY AUBAID AHMAD AKHOO
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Eid-ul-Fitr, the festival of joy and thanksgiving, marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. It is not merely a celebration of feasting and festivity but a profound acknowledgment of spiritual growth, self-discipline, and gratitude. As the crescent moon signals the arrival of Shawwal, hearts are filled with joy – not only for the festivities but for the inner transformation that Ramadan has brought.

Fasting during Ramadan is an act of devotion and self-restraint, a reminder of the countless blessings we often take for granted. Abstaining from food, drink, and worldly desires from dawn till dusk fosters a deep sense of patience and empathy. It humbles the soul, allowing one to experience, even momentarily, the hunger and deprivation that many endure daily. Through this spiritual practice, believers grow closer to Allah and develop a heightened sense of gratitude.

Gratitude Beyond Words: Embracing the Spirit of Giving

The spirit of Ramadan does not end with the sighting of the crescent moon. Eid-ul-Fitr serves as a reminder that the lessons learned during the month of fasting should continue to shape our lives. Gratitude is not simply expressed through words but also through actions – by caring for the less fortunate, uplifting the oppressed, and contributing to the welfare of society.

Islam mandates the giving of

Sadaqat-ul-Fitr before the Eid prayer, ensuring that even the most vulnerable can partake in the joy of Eid. This charitable offering purifies the fasts of believers and guarantees that no one is left behind during the festivities. It's not just a formality but a symbolic act of compassion, reflecting the essence of Islamic values.

Remembering the Oppressed: A Call for Solidarity

While we celebrate Eid with joy and abundance, it's essential to remember those who face injustice, conflict, and suffering. Across the world, including in Palestine, countless individuals endure the harsh realities of war, occupation, and displacement. Eid, in its essence, calls upon Muslims to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized.

Just as Ramadan cultivates empathy, Eid reinforces our responsibility to advocate for justice and extend our hands in support. As Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion, and sympathy are like one body: when any part of it suffers, the whole body responds with wakefulness and fever."

This spirit of unity is vividly reflected on Eid as communities come together, embracing one another in brotherhood and extending charitable hands to those in need.

Eid as a Reflection of Islamic Principles

Eid-ul-Fitr is a celebration that goes beyond material pleasures. It is a reaffirmation of faith and a commitment to living by the principles of Islam. The values of kindness, forgiveness, and compassion that are nurtured during Ramadan are meant to extend throughout the year. True gratitude is reflected not only in prayer and praise but also in how we treat others – with dignity, respect, and love.

The day of Eid encourages reconciliation and the mending of broken relationships. On this day, grudges are set aside, and hearts are opened.

Muslims are reminded to seek forgiveness from Allah and extend it to others, fostering unity within families and communities. This act of forgiveness is a powerful testament to the transformative impact of Ramadan.

Mindful Celebration: Practicing Moderation and Gratitude

Eid-ul-Fitr is a time of joy, but it is also a reminder of the importance of moderation. The Quran warns against extravagance and wastefulness, urging believers to remain conscious of their consumption. Celebrating mindfully, ensuring that resources are not wasted, and sharing with those in need exemplify the true spirit of Eid.

Furthermore, as we enjoy the blessings of this holiday, it is essential to remember those who are less fortunate. Donating to charities, volunteering at local shelters, and supporting community initiatives are ways to make a positive impact. These acts of service are a reflection of genuine gratitude.

Consumer Responsibility: Ensuring Fair Trade and Ethical Practices

While celebrating, it is crucial to ensure that essential commodities are purchased at fair prices and meet quality standards. Government departments like Food Control and Standards (FCS) and Consumer Affairs (CA) play a vital role in regulating market prices. Their vigilance ensures that traders do not exploit consumers during festive occasions.

Citizens must also exercise ethical consumerism by supporting businesses that uphold fair trade practices. This collective responsibility fosters an equitable marketplace and protects the rights of all.

Living the Lessons of Ramadan Beyond Eid

As the echoes of Eid prayers fade and the festivities conclude, the challenge remains: to carry the lessons of Ramadan into our daily lives. The dis-

cipline, patience, and empathy cultivated through fasting should inspire continuous self-improvement. Muslims are encouraged to be conscious of their words and actions, maintain their connection with Allah through prayer, and remain steadfast in their commitment to justice and compassion.

Reflecting on the plight of the oppressed serves as a constant reminder of our moral responsibilities. Advocating for peace, supporting humanitarian efforts, and standing against injustice are ways to embody the values instilled during Ramadan.

Tailpiece: A Celebration of Faith and Humanity

Eid-ul-Fitr is a day of joy, but its true beauty lies in its deeper meaning. It is a celebration of faith, gratitude, and the triumph of the soul over desires. It calls upon Muslims to rejoice in the mercy of Allah, share their blessings with others, and continue striving for righteousness.

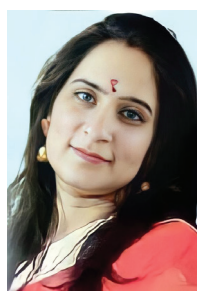
May the spirit of Eid illuminate our hearts with compassion, strengthen our bonds of unity, and inspire us to live lives of service and devotion. And as we exchange greetings of "Eid Mubarak," let us remember that the true essence of Eid lies in uplifting others and spreading joy – for that is the truest expression of gratitude and faith.

"Eid means happiness, and true happiness is when our sincere fasts are accepted in the court of Allah. It is when we live a life of 'Rabb Chaahi Zindagi' (a life aligned with Allah's will) instead of 'Mann Chaahi Zindagi' (a life driven by desires). For the one whose good deeds are accepted and who refrains from wrongdoing, Eid becomes a divine gift, a celebration of the soul's triumph."

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Impact on livestock farmers and rural economy, one of the longest employee movements in the history of Haryana

Diploma Veterinary Association Haryana: Struggle continues for 1016 days; when will we get justice?



PRIYANKA SAURABHI

Veterinary Livestock Development Assistants (VLDA), who play an important role in animal husbandry and veterinary services in Haryana, have been struggling for their legitimate demands for the last 1,016 days. These employees, sitting on a dharna in Sector-5 of Panchkula, are demanding an amendment in their service conditions, a change in designation, and a better pay scale. However, no concrete solution has been found by the government so far, due to which the resentment among the employees is increasing.

The main demands of the struggle

The major demands raised by the Diploma Veterinary Association Haryana are as follows:

- 1 The VLD Diploma should be renamed as DVSC (Diploma in Veterinary Science) so that it gets more recognition at the national level.
- 2 VLDA service rules should be amended so that the promotion and future of the employees can be secured.
- 3 Change the designation of VLDA to VLEO (Veterinary Livestock Extension Officer) to give more official status to their role.

4 Formation of Diploma Veterinary Council–To create a regulatory body for employees working in this field.

5 Grade pay in the pay scale should be upgraded so that employees get proper financial benefits.

6 Improvement of basic facilities in animal hospitals of Haryana–so that the animal keepers of the state can get better services.

7. Amendment in service rules: Assured Career Progression (ACP) should be implemented to ensure promotion and career growth of employees.

8. Participation in online transfer drive: All VLDA should be included in the upcoming online transfer drive to maintain transparency and equity in the transfer process.

Political support and government silence

Various political parties in Haryana have started supporting this movement. Recently, many opposition leaders reached the protest site and called the demands of the association justified. They appealed to the government to find a solution soon.

At the same time, the silence and inaction of the government are increasing the resentment among the protesters. Despite the important role of VLDA in the Animal Husbandry Department, they are being ignored. Questions are being raised about whether the government is taking this sector seriously.

What has been the government's response?

So far there has been no concrete statement or concrete action from the Haryana government. Some high officials have hinted at talks, but no



concrete decision has been taken. Repeated talks between the government and the employees have failed.

Impact on livestock farmers and rural economy

Haryana is an agriculture- and animal husbandry-based state, where lakhs of animal keepers are dependent on government veterinary hospitals. The shortage of VLDA employees and non-resolution of their problems is directly affecting the animal keepers.

If the condition of VLDA employees is improved, it will also improve the quality of animal health services. This will directly strengthen the rural economy and the dairy industry.

Haryana has a large number of

cows, buffaloes, goats, sheep, and other livestock.

VLDA employees go from village to village and treat animal diseases and vaccinate them.

Due to government neglect, livestock farmers are not getting quality services.

The protesters' next strategy

The protest has been ongoing for over 1,000 days, but now the employees are preparing to take a more aggressive stance regarding their demands.

1 Protests will be intensified by VLDA employees across the state.

2 Work Stoppage Strike–If the government does not show seriousness, there can be a threat of stop-

page of services by the VLDA employees, which can lead to a huge crisis in the animal husbandry department.

Experts' opinion: Can a solution be found?

Experts believe that the demands of VLDA employees are completely legitimate and the government should take them seriously.

"If the animal husbandry sector is to be strengthened, then VLDA employees have to be encouraged. Improving their designation and pay scale will also provide better services to animal keepers."

"Schemes are being made to promote animal husbandry across the country, but unless the employees working at the field level get respect-

able salaries and positions, the true benefits of the schemes will not be achieved."

What will happen next?

This struggle has now become one of the longest employee movements in the history of Haryana. The question is whether the government will pay attention to it or if this movement will drag on for longer.

The Haryana government should listen to these demands with sensitivity and find a solution as soon as possible.

1 The government should hold talks with the representatives of VLDA employees.

2 The process of forming the Diploma Veterinary Council should be initiated.

3 A survey and review report should be prepared to improve designation and pay scale.

If the government finds a solution in time, it will not only be in the interest of the employees but will also prove to be an important step for the betterment of the entire animal husbandry sector.

Conclusion

The Haryana government should now seriously consider this issue. Finding a quick solution to this 1016-day-long conflict is not only in the interest of VLDA employees, but it is also necessary for the development of livestock farmers, the rural economy, and the state.

If the government does not take immediate action, this agitation could take a bigger form, which could affect animal husbandry services, and animal herders could suffer huge losses.

Civilizations at War: The Israel-Palestine struggle through the ages

MALIK FIRDOUS

This in-depth article unveils the multifaceted history of the Israel-Palestine conflict, tracing its roots from ancient Canaan to contemporary challenges, highlighting key events, shifting power dynamics and the enduring quest for identity and justice amid centuries of turmoil and strife

The region known today as Israel and Palestine has a long and complex history that begins with the ancient land of Canaan. Situated at the crossroads of major civilizations, Canaan was home to various peoples, including the Canaanites, Philistines, and early Hebrews. By the 12th century BCE, the Israelites emerged as a distinct group, establishing a loose confederation of tribes that eventually united under a monarchy. The reigns of King David and King Solomon marked the peak of ancient Israel's power, with Jerusalem becoming the political and religious center. Solomon's construction of the First Temple in Jerusalem solidified the city's role as a sacred site, but internal divisions and external pressures weakened the kingdom. After Solomon's death, the kingdom split into Israel in the north and Judah in the south, leaving both vulnerable to invasion.

In 722 BCE, the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, while Judah managed to survive for another century. However, in 586 BCE, the Babylonian Empire, under King Nebuchadnezzar, captured Jerusalem, destroyed the First Temple, and exiled much of the Jewish population to Babylon. This period of exile, known as the Babylonian Captivity, profoundly shaped Jewish identity and religious practices. When the Persian Empire, led by Cyrus the Great, conquered Babylon in 539

BCE, he allowed the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild the Temple, ushering in the Second Temple period.

The region eventually fell under Roman control in 63 BCE, with increasing unrest culminating in a series of Jewish revolts. The most significant, the Great Jewish Revolt of 66-70 CE, led to the destruction of the Second Temple and the dispersal of Jews across the Roman Empire. This dispersion, known as the Jewish Diaspora, scattered Jewish communities throughout the Mediterranean and beyond, profoundly shaping Jewish life and identity for centuries to come.

The arrival of Islam in the 7th century marked a transformative era for the region. In 638 CE, Muslim armies, led by Caliph Umar, captured Jerusalem from the Byzantine Empire. The city became a significant site in Islam, with the construction of the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque, solidifying its status as the third holiest site in Islam. Under Islamic rule, Jews and Christians were granted protected status as "People of the Book," allowing them to practice their faiths while paying a special tax. This period brought relative stability and flourishing trade, with Jerusalem becoming a vibrant cultural and religious center.

The Crusades, beginning in 1096, brought a violent clash between Christian and Muslim forces over control of the Holy Land. In 1099, Crusaders captured Jerusalem, massacring much of the local population. The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem lasted for nearly a century before Saladin, the Muslim leader, recaptured the city in 1187. The struggle between Crusaders and Muslim forces continued for two centuries, with Jerusalem changing hands multiple times.

Following the Crusades, the Mamluks gained control of the region, followed by the Ottomans in 1517. Ottoman rule lasted for four centuries, during which the region experienced relative stability, with diverse communities coexisting under a system of local governance and religious autonomy.

By the 19th century, European powers had expanded their influence across the Ottoman Empire, which was in a state of decline. The Ottoman Empire, once a dominant force in the region, struggled with internal corruption, economic stagnation, and rising nationalist movements. European powers, particularly Britain and France, began exerting political and economic control, often exploiting the empire's weaknesses for their own strategic interests. As European ideas of nationalism spread, they inspired movements among both Arabs and Jews, laying the groundwork for future conflict in Palestine.

In the late 19th century, Zionism emerged as a political movement advocating for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Founded by Theodor Herzl, Zionism was a response to rising antisemitism in Europe and the desire for Jewish self-determination. Jewish immigration to Palestine increased significantly, particularly after waves of pogroms in Eastern Europe. By the early 20th century, Zionist settlers had begun purchasing land and establishing agricultural communities, often displacing local Arab farmers. At the same time, Arab nationalism was also on the rise, driven by opposition to European colonialism and a growing desire for Arab independence. Palestinian Arabs, who had lived in the region for generations, began to view Jewish immigration as a threat

to their land and way of life.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I left Palestine under British control as part of the League of Nations Mandate system. The British Mandate of Palestine (1920-1948) was marked by conflicting promises and growing tensions. During the war, Britain had made contradictory commitments to both Jews and Arabs. The 1917 Balfour Declaration expressed British support for a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, while the earlier McMahon-Hussein Correspondence had promised Arab independence in exchange for their support against the Ottomans. These conflicting promises sowed distrust and animosity between the two communities.

Under British rule, Jewish immigration increased, leading to further land purchases and displacement of Palestinian peasants. The Arab population, feeling increasingly marginalized, organized revolts and protests, including the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939. British attempts to mediate the conflict failed, and by the end of the mandate period, tensions between Jews and Arabs had reached a breaking point. The British withdrawal in 1948 left the region on the brink of full-scale war, setting the stage for the partition of Palestine and the ensuing conflict.

The Balfour Declaration of 1917 marked a pivotal moment in the history of Palestine, as Britain publicly expressed support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. Issued during World War I, the declaration aimed to secure Jewish support for the Allied war effort, but it neglected to address the rights and aspirations of the Arab population, which made up the majority of the region's inhabitants. As Jewish

immigration increased under British rule during the 1920s and 1930s, tensions between Jews and Arabs escalated. The influx of Jewish settlers, along with land purchases that displaced Palestinian farmers, fueled resentment and led to violent clashes. By the 1930s, the Palestinian Arab population viewed Zionism as a colonial threat to their homeland, leading to widespread unrest, including the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939.

In response to the growing unrest and international pressure, the United Nations proposed a partition plan in 1947, aiming to divide Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem as an international zone. The plan allocated 55% of the land to the Jewish state and 45% to the Arab state, despite the Jewish population comprising only about one-third of the total population. While Jewish leaders reluctantly accepted the plan, Arab leaders rejected it, viewing the partition as an unjust imposition that violated the rights of the indigenous Palestinian population.

Following the UN's approval of the partition plan, violence erupted between Jewish and Arab communities. When the British mandate ended in May 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel. This declaration triggered a full-scale war between the newly established Israeli state and neighboring Arab nations. During the war, over 700,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced or fled from their homes, an event Palestinians refer to as the Nakba, meaning "catastrophe." Many of these refugees were never allowed to return, leading to a lasting legacy of displacement, loss, and unresolved grievances.

The 1948 Arab-Israeli War, also known as the War of Independence

to Israelis and the Nakba ("catastrophe") to Palestinians, erupted after the declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. Arab nations, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon, invaded Palestine to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state and support Palestinian Arabs. Despite being outnumbered, Israeli forces, bolstered by better organization and arms supplies, emerged victorious. By the end of the war, Israel controlled 78% of historic Palestine, far beyond the boundaries allocated in the 1947 UN Partition Plan. Jordan took control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, while Egypt administered the Gaza Strip. For Palestinians, the war resulted in the displacement of over 700,000 people, many of whom fled to refugee camps in neighboring countries, where they and their descendants remain to this day.

In June 1967, tensions between Israel and its Arab neighbors escalated into the Six-Day War, a swift and decisive conflict that reshaped the region. Fearing an imminent attack, Israel launched a preemptive strike, destroying the Egyptian Air Force and swiftly defeating Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. As a result, Israel seized the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. The occupation of these territories dramatically altered the Israeli-Palestinian dynamic, placing millions of Palestinians under Israeli military rule. The capture of East Jerusalem, home to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, further inflamed tensions, as Palestinians saw their holy sites fall under Israeli control. Israel's occupation of these territories, deemed illegal under international law, continues to be a core issue in the ongoing conflict.

Classroom Reflections-A Road To Education



BY MOOL RAJ

In the quiet moments between lessons, standing before my students, I am struck by the profound disconnect between what education could be and what it has become in India. The world is constantly evolving. Today, our survival as a species depends on education systems that prepare minds to tackle the modern world's complex and interconnected challenges.

However, in these times of global competitiveness, we have lagged far behind. The present global crisis has further heightened the need for applied knowledge that requires courage and willingness to engage and question traditional ideas, to find solutions, and to have the power to ensure results. So, the act of learning itself demands intellectual bravery – an openness to challenge one's own assumptions and explore perspectives beyond what is comfortable. Without courage, knowledge is static; without power, it is irrelevant.

One does not simply gain knowledge; one must have the courage to seek it and the power to use it effectively. And once acquired, knowledge empowers its bearer, who then gains the capacity to change, influence, and build upon existing realities.

However, this dynamic of empowerment through knowledge is absent in Pakistan's educational system. During a decade in the classroom, I have witnessed firsthand how the system fails



to equip students with the tools they need for intellectual empowerment. Instead, the curriculum remains outdated, rooted in content that is not only irrelevant to contemporary realities but also does not align with the development stages of young minds.

Without courage, knowledge is static.

As a teacher, I have often seen students lose curiosity. How can we expect them to thrive when the very system that is supposed to ignite their minds weighs them down with irrelevant material? We teach them about historical figures and outdated concepts but ignore the rapidly evolving technological, social, and economic landscapes they are a part of. We fail to connect their current experiences with the present and future, creating a chasm between education and life.

This disconnect is more than an academic problem; it is a social one. The cycle of stagnation feeds into a herd mentality, perpetuating social chaos. When education fails to empower

individuals with the tools to think critically, innovate, and adapt, it leaves society vulnerable to ignorance, inequality and dysfunction. The absence of intellectual empowerment in classrooms translates to a society too ill-equipped to address the challenges before it; it fosters a culture of compliance over creativity and perpetuates poverty, injustice and disenfranchisement. Instead of producing individuals who can harness knowledge's transformative power, we are producing generations stuck in a loop.

I have also observed a significant gap between students' intellectual maturity and their curriculum. The educational content provided to students in the country, especially in Balochistan, is far below the standards of their age group. This is a fundamental flaw that continues to widen the gap between education and real-world preparedness.

Many units I teach have been literally copied and pasted from the internet, printed without any critical

consideration or adaptation. This approach not only reflects a lack of originality but also underscores the absence of the deep understanding that students need at each stage of intellectual and psychological growth. For example, exercises that require critical thinking or challenge the capacity for problem-solving are absent, replaced by superficial tasks that fail to inspire curiosity. In other words, the curriculum is not aligned with students' intellectual development.

Psychologically and mentally, students have outgrown the elementary exercises they are presented with. They come to class ready for challenges that stretch their reasoning, creativity, and critical faculties. Instead, they are met with content and exercises that are beneath their capabilities, causing them to lose interest.

When students are not given material that corresponds with their evolving intellect, the impact is devastating. Their natural curiosity is stunted, their motivation diminishes and their overall engagement with education suffers.

The road to a better education system in India is one that demands courage from both the educators and policymakers. We need the courage to challenge entrenched norms, the power to implement curricula that foster intellectual empowerment and the vision to break free from the bandwagon cycle that has long kept our educational institutions static. Until we recognise that knowledge is power and that it also requires power, the cycle will continue, to the detriment of our students and society at large.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER

Are Healthcare Trainings Effective Or Just A Formality?

DR FAZAL WANI

A key component of every healthcare system is training, which aims to improve service delivery and the abilities of medical staff. Theoretically, these courses aim to give healthcare professionals the skills and self-assurance they need to deal with obstacles in the real world. But in reality, the manner in which these trainings are delivered frequently calls into doubt their efficacy. Do they actually accomplish their goals, or have they turned into formalities?

A Training Experience Worth Remembering

I've participated in several training sessions over the years, but I recently had an eye-opening encounter with a National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC) team. They took a different strategy than I had ever seen. They made the training lively and interactive in place of boring lectures. Through case studies, chart-making activities, and quizzes, participants were urged to actively participate. The training focused on implementing the knowledge in real-world situations rather than merely memorizing it. It seemed like a training that stuck with me long after it was over—a session that really made an impression.

The Stark Contrast In Our Health System

Sadly, our healthcare system rarely offers such worthwhile training opportunities. Most training in the region appears to be carried out only to satisfy formal requirements. For example, more than 10 different trainings were hurriedly

There is a need for engaging and well-timed training sessions to enhance skills and improve patient care

held in the last two months alone. From Child care to emergency treatment, the subjects were wide-ranging and all needed concentrated attention. However, it becomes stressful when they are packed into such a short amount of time. Even as a medical professional, I found it difficult to absorb and retain so much information in such a short span. If this is the case for me, what about others who may not have the same level of exposure or experience?

This raises a fundamental question: How effective can these trainings be if they are conducted back-to-back without allowing time for proper assimilation? Learning should be a gradual process, not a hurried task to check off a list.

The Reality Behind The Rush

A closer look at the system shows that these consecutive training sessions are frequently driven more by financial deadlines than by a genuine desire to improve skills. Instead of actually training healthcare personnel, the haste to finish all training in the final months of the fiscal year implies that the main goal is to use up all available funds. Participants get disinterested as a result, which also lowers the learning quality. Many people don't really gain from attending; they just do it because

they have to.

A Better Approach To Healthcare Training

It could be more effective to distribute all training evenly throughout the year rather than clubbing them near the end. This would enable learners to concentrate on a single subject at a time, put what they have learned into practice, and come back to the subsequent training with better knowledge. Furthermore, training quality is just as important as timing. As demonstrated by the NHSRC-led sessions, training ought to be created with active participant engagement in mind. The traditional lecture-style approach should be replaced with interactive techniques, practical experience, and real-case discussions. Only then can we make sure that training sessions are more than just a formality and actually result in better healthcare services.

Conclusion

In the sector of healthcare, training ought to focus on actual learning and skill development rather than only meeting formalities. The present rushed approach just increases the workload for professionals and does little to improve healthcare service. We need to reconsider our strategy if we truly want a workforce better trained: prioritizing engagement over formality, quality over quantity, and appropriate timing over financial urgency. Only then will training sessions serve their true purpose in strengthening our healthcare system.

The writer is a medical officer at the PHC Shargole wanifazal@gmail.com



Dy CM inaugurates 2 day PHDCCI workshop on Intellectual Property Rights, trade, business promotion

Reiterates Govt's commitment to catalyse industrial ecosystem, growth

HT News Network

JAMMU, MARCH 28: Emphasising government's commitment to catalyse the industrial ecosystem, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, said that numerous interventions and policies are being implemented towards industrial growth of Jammu and Kashmir as one of the priorities of the present administration.

He was speaking after inaugurating a two day workshop on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Trade and Business Promotion in Jammu organised by the PHD Chamber of

Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI), in collaboration with the Office of Development Commissioner MSME, Union Ministry for MSME here today.

The event, moderated by Kanchan Zutshi, Director, PHDCCI, aimed to enhance awareness and foster strategies for IPR, trade, and business promotion in Jammu & Kashmir.

The event was attended by MLA Khansahib, Saifuddin Bhat, Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Vikramjit Singh, Director Industries and Commerce, Jammu, Dr Arun Manhas, Prominent Industrialists, office bearers of PHDCCI and senior officers.

While highlighting the global sig-



nificance of intellectual property rights with examples such as Apple, KFC and McDonald's, the Deputy Chief Minister said that robust IP

strategies drive worldwide success. He commended the local entrepreneurs, including lavender farmers and Basmati rice producers, for their

efforts in brand registration.

Regarding the industrial growth and employment, the Deputy CM said that the government is well aware of the potential of industrial sector in boosting the local economy industrial creating job avenues for the youth. He assured that his administration would enforce policies to prioritise local hiring and bolster support for indigenous businesses.

MLA Khansahib highlighted the need for promoting local entrepreneurs. He said that the same would go a long way in ensuring the youth get attracted to setting up their own units and ensuring the creation of jobs locally.

Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, outlined the government policies designed to spur industrial development, describing IPR as a vital tool for economic progress. He encouraged the businesses to invest in innovation and brand protection to unlock sustainable value.

Director, Industries & Commerce, while speaking on the occasion, underscored the need for IPR awareness among the local enterprises, noting its potential to drive sustainable industrial growth. He urged the entrepreneurs to take advantage of the government schemes for patenting and trademark registration.

Shrine Board and Narayana Health Care extend collaboration for enhanced Healthcare Services

HT News Network

Katra, March 28: The SMVD Charitable Society under the aegis of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) and Narayana Vaishno Devi Specialty Hospitals Private Limited (NVD), a subsidiary of Narayana Health Care, Bangalore today signed an extension of their Concession Agreement for an additional eight years upto 2033, for the operation of the Super Specialty Hospital at Kakryal-Katra. The concession agreement was signed by Alok Kumar Maurya, Addl. Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB and Sunil Kumar, CN; Sr. VP and

Head Business Transformations and Key Initiatives, Narayana Health Care in the presence of Dr. Ashok Bhan and Suresh Kumar Sharma, Members of Shrine Board; Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Mahesh Sharma, FA/ Chief Accounts Officer, SMVDSB; Dr. Yash Pal Sharma, Executive Director, SMVDIME; Sandhya J, Group Chief Financial Officer; Dr. M.M. Mathavan, Facility Director and Rohit Sethi, Sr. Manager - Finance of NVD and other officers of Board and NVD.

The decision to extend the collaboration was taken after a thorough review of the hospital's performance and the quality of healthcare services being provided to the patients by the Board at its 73rd meeting held on 18.12.2024 under the Chairmanship of Shri Manoj Sinha, Hon'ble Lt. Governor, JK-UT. The Shrine Board and NH Care have been working together since 2016 to provide world-class healthcare services to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the pilgrims visiting the Holy Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji.

The Super Specialty Hospital inau-



gurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and operational since April 2016 has been offering specialized medical services across over 20 specialties. Key focus areas include Cardiology, Cardio-Vascular Surgery, Medical and Surgical Gastroenterology, Orthopaedics and Joint Replacement, Renal Sciences, Medical, Radiation and Surgical Oncology (Cancer) besides Critical Care Medicine. Equipped with state-of-the-art medical equipment, the hospital boasts a team of highly qualified and experienced doctors and paramedical staff ensuring top-notch patient care. Annually, the hospital provides in-patient treatment to around 50,000 patients and out-patient consultations to nearly 60,000. Since its inception, the hospital has also provided free treatment worth over Rs.50 crore to more than one lakh needy patients, as part of the Shrine Board's medical support policy. The hospital has also been providing training and capacity-building programs for the medical and paramedical staff in the region.

Noteworthy that SMVDIME - Medical College, established at a cost of Rs. 350 crore, commenced its opera-

tions in November 2024, expanding the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspecialty Hospital's operational base. The college will be offering an MBBS program, starting with its first batch of 50 students in the 2025-26 academic session (upgradable to 100 seats). Notably, the hospital has 120 senior consultants and doctors serving in various superspecialty disciplines and additionally, the Board's Medical College has appointed 49 faculty members and 18 Sr. Residents, thus augmenting the numbers significantly.

With the signing of the renewed Agreement, Narayana Health (NH) will continue to provide comprehensive support in critical aspects including procurements, ensuring adherence to quality control standards as mandated by the National Medical Commission (NMC), facilitation in accreditation processes, implement and manage advanced IT systems, staffing and recruitment, besides providing expertise in budgeting and audits, thereby ensuring the hospital's operations remain streamlined, efficient and compliant with regulatory requirements.

Rattan Lal Gupta urges PM Modi to convene All-Party Meet over the escalating terrorism in J&K

Expresses grief over martyrdom of 4 brave-hearts in Rajbagh area of District Kathua.

HT News Network

Jammu, March 28: Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), raised serious concerns over the deteriorating security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, urging the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to convene an all-party meeting of J&K to discuss the alarming rise in terrorism across the Jammu region. He pointed out that terrorism, which was once largely contained to the Valley, has now started spreading across Jammu, putting civilians and security forces at heightened risk.

Paying heartfelt homage, the senior NC leader has expressed profound grief over the martyrdom of four brave soldiers in the Rajbagh area gunfight in district Kathua. He extended condolences to the bereaved families of the fallen heroes, emphasizing that their supreme sacrifice should not go in vain.

Rattan Lal Gupta reminded the Prime Minister of his earlier all-party meeting of J&K political leaders called in 2021, where he had assured the restoration of Jammu and Kash-



mir's statehood. He also recalled PM Modi's commitment to bridging the Dilli ki Doori (distance from Delhi) and Dil ki Doori (distance from the heart).

Taking a dig at the BJP-led central government, Rattan Lal Gupta stated that Home Minister Amit Shah had assured the nation on the floor of the Parliament that the abrogation of Article 370 would put an end to terrorism in the region. "However, since the Dhangri killings in 2023, terrorism has escalated in the Jammu region, shattering the claims made by the Centre. The sacrifices of our

security personnel and innocent civilians highlight the failure of this policy," he asserted.

Further, the senior NC leader resented against the Centre for holding multiple high-level law and order meetings concerning Jammu and Kashmir while ignoring the Chief Minister who is heading the J&K Govt. "How can officials discuss security matters without involving the elected leadership? Such an approach only deepens the governance crisis in J&K," he questioned. Taking a dig at the BJP-led central government, Rattan Lal Gupta stated that Home Minister Amit Shah had assured the nation on the floor of the Parliament that the abrogation of Article 370 would put an end to terrorism in the region. "However, since the Dhangri killings in 2023, terrorism has escalated in the Jammu region, shattering the claims made by the Centre. The sacrifices of our security personnel and innocent civilians highlight the failure of this policy," he asserted.

Further, the senior NC leader resented against the Centre for holding multiple high-level law and order meetings concerning Jammu.

ACT' ORGANISED A SEMINAR ON WORLD THEATRE DAY IN TAGORE HALL SRINAGAR

HT News Network

Srinagar/ March 28th A thought-provoking seminar, "Importance of Theatre in the present times," was held today in Srinagar, bringing together renowned theatre artists, activists, and enthusiasts. The brain-storming session aimed to discuss the dwindling interest of youth in theatre and the vital role of theatre activists, government, and non-government organizations in revitalizing the art form. The seminar featured esteemed speakers, including Mushtaq Ali Ahmad Khan, M. Ameen Bhat, Manzoor A. Mir, Prof Sowkat Shafi, and Shabbeer Mujahid. The event was graced by Chief Guest, Sayed Humayun Qaisar. Zahoor Sultan and Nusrat Ara from JKAACL. Also present in the seminar. The speakers emphasized the significance of theatre in promoting cultural heritage, social awareness, and emotional intelligence. They also stressed the need for collective efforts to revive interest in theatre among the younger generation.

The seminar was attended by a good number of theatre lovers and artists, who actively participated in the discussions and shared their insights.

This event marked a crucial step towards reinvigorating the theatre scene and fostering a deeper appreciation for this art form.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have Changed my name from Jawahira to JALLA BANO and in future & will be known as JALLA BANO. As I have to change the Same in my Passport also.

JALLA BANO
W/o Mohammad Sultan Patloo
R/o Bagdaji Mohalla Ranawari Srinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to correct the name of my son as Muzamil Muneer Mir S/o Muneer Ahmad Mir which is wrongly mentioned as Muzamil Manzoor Mir S/o Manzoor Ahmad Mir Now I want to change the name of my son. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file the same before the concerned authority within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Muneer Ahmad Mir
Father of Muzamil Muneer Mir
R/o Najibhat Baramulla

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to correct the name of my son as Mudasir Muneer Mir S/o Muneer Ahmad Mir which is wrongly mentioned as Mudasir Manzoor Mir S/o Manzoor Ahmad Mir Now I want to change the name of my son. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file the same before the concerned authority within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Muneer Ahmad Mir
Father of Mudasir Muneer Mir
R/o Najibhat Baramulla

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is being notified that my name in my Aadhar Card having Aadhar card number this 987574105762 has been wrongly mentioned as Hamna Jan my real name is Hamna Jahangeer DOB 21/03/2024 C/o Jahangeer Ahmad Rather Address: KAWARIGAM HARDUTOORU, achabal anantanag, j&k 192201

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as JAWAHIRA in my passport while my correct name is JALLA BANA which needs to be changed if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact with concerned authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name...JALLA BANO
W/O MOHAMMAD SULTAN PATHROO
R/O BAGDAJI MOHALLA
RAINAWARI SRINAGAR

PUBLIC NOTICE

I HAVE CHANGED THE NAME OF MY SON NAMELY SYED MUBEEN TO SYED MUBEEN KAMILI S/O BASHARAT SYED KAMILI R/O H. NO 2, LANE F, HABIB COLONY, BAGHAT BARZULLA SRINAGAR AS THE SAME NEEDS TO BE INCORPORATED IN THE SCHOOL RECORDS. ANY OBJECTION TO THE SAME MAY BE CONVEYED TO THE PRINCIPAL DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL, BUDGAM WITHIN SEVEN DAYS FROM PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

Name:-BASHARAT SYED KAMILI
F/O SYED MUBEEN KAMILI
R/O H. NO 2, LANE F, HABIB COLONY,
BAGHAT BARZULLA SRINAGAR

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public notice that i ashik Hussain bhat s/o mohammad ramzan R/O Kripal pora bala that my son Rouf ali bhat is born on 09-06-2014 if any body have any objection regarding issuance of date of birth certificate he she the contect of bdo singpora with in period of seven days

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public through the meduim Of notice that i sywd showkat s/o Aesa shah R/o Harinara that my son namely syed Aamir shah s/o syed showkat shah r/o Harinara is born 05-12-2010 if any body have any objection regarding issuance of date of birth certificate he she the contect of Bdo singpora with in period of seven days

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public notice that i afshana Bano w/o ashik Hussain shugnoo R/o diver yakman pora that my both sons namely Isania zehra D-O-8 is 11-07-2018 2 Danish ali 24-02-2019 3 irfan ali 02-03 -2022 s/o ashik Hussain shugnoo if any body have any objection regarding issuance of D-o-b certicate he she the contect of BDO singpora with in period of seven days

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public through the medium of notice that imohammad ibrahim bhat s/o asgar bhat R/o Harinara that my father asgar bhat is passed away on17-07-2002 if any body have any objection regarding issuance of death certicate he she the contect of BDO singpor with in period of seven days

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public notice that i Hamid ali Bhat s/o ghulam Hassan bhat R/o Harinara that my father Gh HassN bhat is passed away on 05-03-2003 if any body have any objection regarding issuance of death certicate He she the contect of BDO sinpora with in period of seven days

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public through medium of notice that i mohammad ibrahim bhat and Hamid bhat resident of Harinara that my aunt khatooni D/o assad bhat is passed on05-12-1983 if any body have any objection regarding issuance of death certificate he she the contect the BDO singpora with in period of seven days

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of FURQAN FAROOQ S/O FAROOQ AHMAD DAR R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/03/2006 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained
Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI





Dr Jitendra Announces Regional Biotech Centres Across India To Accelerate StartUps, Biomanufacturing

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, Mar 28 : At a high-level meeting of the Department of Biotechnology, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh announced the creation of Regional BIRAC (Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council) Centres across India, in collaboration with States, to accelerate StartUps and biomanufacturing, and thus harness the biotech potential in different parts of the country. Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public

Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space emphasized the need for comprehensive mapping of states based on their biotech potential and directed the department to collaborate with them in establishing Bio E3 (Economy, Environment and Employment) Cells highlighting that Assam is the first state to establish a dedicated BIO E3 cell. These specialized cells will provide necessary support for fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and scaling up biotech ventures.

Recognizing the critical role of Start-Ups in advancing biomanufacturing, Dr. Jitendra Singh called for enhanced



handholding and incubator support to encourage new-age biotech entrepreneurs. He highlighted the impor-

tantance of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in biomanufacturing and bio foundries, ensuring global invest-

ment to drive India's biotech revolution.

Dr. Jitendra Singh stressed that the Tripartite arrangement—a synergy between Research Infrastructure, Startups, and Industrial R&D—is the way forward for India's biotech sector. He directed the department to prioritize setting up Core R&D Facilities equipped with state-of-the-art biomanufacturing capabilities to facilitate pilot validation, upscaling, and commercialization of promising biotech innovations.

Recalling the Centre-State Partnership Summit held in Delhi, Dr. Jitendra Singh reiterated the Govern-

ment's commitment to fostering a biotech revolution across states through collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and technical assistance. He noted that several states have expressed interest in setting up Biotechnology Parks, further strengthening India's bio-economy.

The Science & Technology Minister underscored the significance of regenerative technologies, directing the department to prioritize their promotion within India's biomanufacturing landscape. He urged officials to partner with industry leaders to replicate the success of India's Space Sector in biotech.

With 18K MW potential, J&K harnesses only 3.5K MW HP

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, Mar 28: Bizarre it may sound but is a truth that the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory (UT) has badly failed to harness maximum of its 18000 MW of the estimated Hydel Power (HP) potential and has only successfully harnessed a meagre of 3540.15 MW of it till date due to which power crisis has badly hit the UT. Of the 18000 MW of estimated Hydel Power (HP) potential in J&K, only 14867 MW has been identified so far which included 11283 MW from Chenab basin, 3084 MW from Jhelum basin and 500 MW from Ravi basin. More surprising is that full harnessing from these three sources—Chenab basin, Jhelum basin and



Ravi basin has also not been made possible so far as from Chenab basin only 2033.05 MW hydel power is being harnessed while from Jhelum basin it is 1378.1 MW and 129 MW of the HP is being harnessed from Ravi basin. This information was revealed in reply to a Starred Question from an MLA in the ongoing budget session of the J&K Legislative Assembly. The reply further stated

that the authorities concerned in J&K have taken effective steps to fast-track the harnessing of balance hydro-power potential by allocating the execution of Hydroelectric Projects (HEPs) to a number of agencies like National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC), joint venture companies namely Chenab Valley Power Projects Private Limited (CVPPPL) and Ratle Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (RHP-

CL) and Independent Power Producers apart from UT Government's fully owned generation company Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Limited (JKSPDC)."

Also 15 projects aggregating 7768 MW of HP are at various stages of implementation of which 6 projects aggregating 3063.5 MW are in construction stage, 2 projects aggregating 141 MW are at award stage and 7 projects aggregating 4563.5 MW are at DPR/clearance stage. In order to harness hydro-power in the Chenab basin which accounts for 76 per cent of the identified Hydel-potential of the UT, JKSPDC has constituted Joint Venture (JV) companies with NHPC viz., CVP-PL and RHPCL.

Karra terms terror situation grim in Jammu region , lauds bravery of security forces

Centre's normalcy claims misleading ,needs more effective strategy: JKPCC Chief

■ HT News Network

Srinagar March 28: Paying rich tributes to the martyred policemen who laid down their lives while bravely fighting the militants in Kathua area, since last night , JKPCC Chief Tariq Hameed Karra has termed the terror situation in parts of Jammu as grim and demanded more effective strategy to deal with the deteriorated situation in the region. Strongly condemning the terror incident in Kathua district, JKPCC Chief expressed great shock over loss of precious lives of security forces in the gun battle , while lauding the bravery of the forces who eliminated three terrorists in the encounter. Karra expressed great concern over the grim situation , in



various parts of Jammu region, he said that the baloon of false & misleading claims of normalcy by the centre government, stands burst due to series of terror incidents in Jammu region in the recent past but the centre remains in denial mode to divert attention of the nation. The centre gov-

ernment ignored the warning signals and ignored the voice of people from ground, leading to deterioration of the situation, he alleged.

Joined by several senior leaders from the district including Ch Lal Singh, Dr Manohar Lal Sharma, DCC President Pankaj Dogra, Ex MLA Durga Dass, Naresh

Sharma, Kajal Rajput, Rakesh Chaudhary, Nirdosh Sharma & ors, Karra demanded more effective strategy to control the situation by taking active cooperation of people and the elected

representatives. JKPCC Chief asked the centre government to accept the ground reality and the challenge, in order to control the situation.

They said that the situation is worst in the district and there is fear amongst the common people due to series of incidents including mysterious disappearance & killings , while the police is clueless, which makes things more serious.

They conveyed deep sympathies with the families of those martyred and injured and prayed for early recovery.

Thousands Rally in Magam on Al-Quds Day, Calling for Palestinian Liberation

■ HT News Network

Budgam, Mar 28, KNT: Magam Town in Central Kashmir's Budgam witnessed a massive gathering on the last Friday of Ramazan, observed as Al-Quds Day, as thousands of fasting Muslims took to the streets in a show of solidarity with Palestine. The demonstration, which saw significant participation from women and members of the Shia community, was marked by fervent calls for the liberation of Masjid-al-Aqsa and an end to Israeli control over Palestinian territories.

Protesters moved through the bustling Magam bazar, raising pro-Palestine slogans and condemning what they described as Zionist occupation. Public addresses during the march strongly criticized the international community's perceived silence on the situation in Gaza, where demonstrators alleged ongoing atrocities against Palestinians. The annual observance of Al-Quds Day, originally initiated to express support for Palestinian resistance, has gained traction in various parts of the world, including Kashmir. For many participants, the event carried both religious and political significance, intertwining their faith with advocacy for global justice. Given the region's own socio-political history, the rally in Magam also reflected broader sentiments regarding identity, human rights, and international policies on conflict zones.

Govt exempts stamp duty on property transfers within blood relations

■ HT News Network

Srinaga, Mar 28 (KNO): The Jammu and Kashmir government has waived stamp duty on property transfers through Gift Deeds within blood relations. Notably, the stamp duty on property transfers within blood relations is a tax levied on gifting property between close family members.

The exemption, notified under S.O. 75 by the Finance Department, will come into effect from April 1, 2025. According to the notification, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the stamp duty waiver applies to transfers between father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, and granddaughter. The order, issued under clause (a) of Section 9 of the Stamp Act, 1977 (XL of 1977), states that the government took this decision in the public interest. The exemption, notified under S.O. 75 by the Finance Department, will come into effect from April 1, 2025. According to the notification, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

MLA Nizamuddin Bhat Reviews Developmental Progress at HKM Degree College

■ HT News Network

Bandipora, March 28: MLA Nizamuddin Bhat visited HKM Degree College Bandipora yesterday, where he was warmly received by the college administration. The visit focused on assessing the institution's academic and infrastructural progress, addressing key concerns raised by the staff.

During the discussions, a detailed presentation was given on the ongoing developmental projects of the college. Challenges such as the shortage of permanent teaching staff, which has affected academic



continuity and the need for introducing new subjects in line with modern educational demands were highlighted.

The improvement of student facilities, particularly transportation, was another major issue discussed. The staff also apprised Nizamuddin Bhat of various difficulties they face in daily operations. Responding

promptly, Bhat immediately took up the issues with the concerned authorities, assuring that necessary steps would be taken for resolution.

Bhat, highlighted the importance of faculty recruitment, infrastructure enhancement and stronger collaboration between the college, government and community to ensure sustainable academic growth. His visit not only provided an in-depth review of the institution's progress but also laid the groundwork for future improvements, reinforcing HKM Degree College's role as a center of educational excellence in Bandipora.

Srinagar Police observes Thana Diwas

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 28: March 28: As a part of public outreach programme of J&K Government, police in Srinagar observed 'Thana Diwas' across various Police Stations and Police Posts of the city.

In the 2nd phase for the month of March 2025, the event was organized in (15) Police Stations of the district which include PS Harwan, PS Parimpora, PS M.R. Gunj, PS Rainawari, PS Nishat, PS Rajbagh, PS Zadihal, PS Saddar, PS Shaheed Gunj, PS Soura, PS Nigeen, PS Batmaloo, PS Masiuma, PS Kothibagh and PS R.M. Bagh.

The meetings were chaired by

supervisory officers & jurisdictional police officers and were attended by civil society members including members of Auqaf Committees, members of Traders Federation and Transporters, Pan-chayti Raj members, Religious Preachers, Mohallah elders etc.

Pertinently, SSP Srinagar Shei Imtiyaz Mir JKPS presided a meeting in City East Zone attended by SPEast and other officers of Police. The participants highlighted various issues of public importance and put forth their grievances which were within the domain of district police like illegal narcotics trafficking, sand mafia, traffic issues, floating population etc.

Renewal & new arm licence process should not be delayed at any cost: Dr Abhijeet Jasrotia

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 28: Expressing deep concern over the heinous terrorists' act by the stooges of Pakistan which claimed the precious lives of our brave police personnel, Dr. Abhijeet Singh Jasrotia batted for the renewal and the issuing of new arm licenses to the appropriate people who fulfil all the norms and regulations.

Dr. Abhijeet Jasrotia, Spokesperson, J&K BJP accompanied by Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Media Incharge, J&K BJP and Parduman Singh, senior leader, asked for the strengthening of second line of defense in the region in a press conference held at BJP headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Dr. Abhijeet Singh Jasrotia, said that the brave police personnel made the supreme sacrifice in the encounter at Jathana, Kathua. He said that our forces also neutralized many terrorists in the encounter and praised them for the valiance and the effort.



He said that the irreparable loss to the martyrs' families cannot be filled, but the activists of BJP will always be present beside them. He praised the security personnel for their spirit of sacrifice and said that this essence keeps saving us from the nefarious designs of Pakistan. "Due to the extreme pressure by the Indian security forces, Pakistan is trying to modify its terrorism strategy and shift focus from Kashmir to the other parts,

our forces are fully capable to respond effectively to this evil design by the stringent measures like Balakot", said Dr. Abhijeet Jasrotia.

He requested the people of Kathua to show their unity to fail the nefarious designs of Pakistan and its sponsored terrorists. He said that the history reminds us that the people of Kathua successfully thwarted the attempts of Turks, and Mongols and other invaders with their

unity and valiance. He further requested the people to be alert to notice any unscrupulous element/movement and report them to the security agencies, while terming this as a battle of everyone. He made a fervent appeal to the administration for the renewal and the issuing of new arm licenses to the eligible persons, who have fulfilled all the regulations and the necessary formalities have been checked. He said that the whole essential process of renewal and the issuance of new licences should not be disturbed due to the fault of certain tainted persons which is endangering the lives of common people as a result.

Dr. Abhijeet Jasrotia was also very vocal to attack the regional political parties of Jammu & Kashmir for their insensitivity on the issue, not condemning Pakistan for the heinous acts resulting in the martyrdom, and instead favouring dialogue with the terrorist nation. He added that India follows the policy of 'terrorism and talks cannot go together' and no such act will go unavenged.





Cabinet clears Electronics Component Mfg Scheme with a funding of Rs 22,919 cr

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (UNI)

In view of rising demand for electronic components and to boost its exports, the Government on Friday approved the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme with a funding of Rs 22,919 crore to make India Atmanirbhar in electronics supply chain.

This scheme aims to develop a robust component ecosystem by attracting large investments (global/domestic) in electronics component manufacturing ecosystem, increasing Domestic Value Addition (DVA) by developing capacity and capabilities, and integrating Indian companies with Global Value Chains (GVCs), an official statement said post Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Naren-



dra Modi.

The scheme envisages to attract investment of Rs 59,350 crore, result in production of Rs 4,56,500 crore worth of components and generate additional direct employment of 91,600 persons and many indirect jobs as well during its tenure.

The scheme provides differentiated incentives to Indian manufacturers tailored to overcome specific disabilities for vari-

ous categories of components and sub-assemblies so that they can acquire technological capabilities and achieve economies of scale.

The tenure of the scheme is six (6) years with one (1) year of gestation period, it said adding the payout of a part of the incentive is linked with employment targets achievement.

Electronics is one of the highest-traded and fastest-

growing industries globally and is expected to play a pivotal role in shaping the global economy and advancing a country's economic and technological development.

Since electronics permeates all sectors of economy it has economic and strategic importance. With various initiatives of GoI, the electronics manufacturing sector has witnessed remarkable growth in the last decade. The domestic production of electronic goods has increased from Rs 1.90 lakh crore in FY 2014-15 to Rs 9.52 lakh crore in FY 2023-24 at a CAGR of more than 17 per cent. The exports of electronic goods have also increased from Rs 0.38 lakh crore in FY 2014-15 to Rs 2.41 lakh crore in FY 2023-24 at a CAGR of more than 20 per cent.

Madras HC grants interim anticipatory bail to Kunal Kamra, restrains Mumbai police from arresting him

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, MAR 28 (UNI)

The Madras High Court on Friday granted an interim anticipatory bail, while restraining the Mumbai police not to arrest popular stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra in a case relating to his controversial remarks against Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

The 36-year-old comedian had made some slanderous comments against Mr Eknath in his latest comedy show titled 'Naya Bharat', following cases were booked against him by the Khar Police in Mumbai.



by April 7.

The judge also granted interim anticipatory bail preventing his arrest and to enable him to move the Bombay HC, with a condition that he should execute a bond, along with two sureties, to the satisfaction of the judicial magistrate at Vanur in Villupuram district.

He said in his latest show 'Naya Bharat' performed in Mumbai in February he had not named anyone leave alone Mr Shinde. Despite this, a group of people had attacked and vandalised the venue where he held the show and the Khar police also registered a FIR against

him.

Fearing threats to his life and his family, Kunal said he approached the Madras High Court apprehending that the Mumbai police would arrest him and subject him to physical torture if he had to wait until the Bombay High Court grants him anticipatory bail.

Further, pointing out that the Bombay High Court would be on leave for a considerable number of days in the first three weeks of April, he prayed the Madras High Court to grant him inter-State anticipatory bail till he could move the Bombay Court and obtain regular anticipatory bail.

Shah approves projects for disaster recovery for Sikkim & strengthening of fire services in 5 states

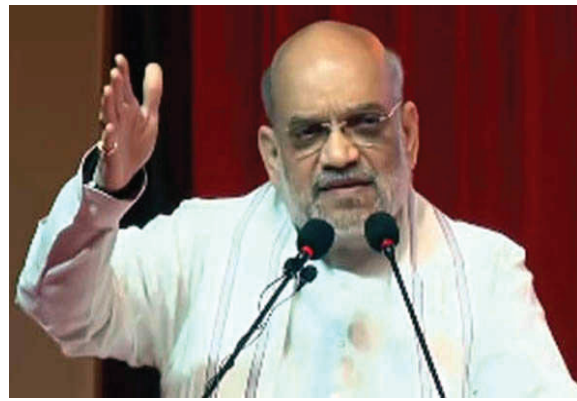
AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (UNI)

A high-level Committee Chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday approved projects for disaster recovery and reconstruction activities for Sikkim and for strengthening of fire services in five states.

The committee, comprising of Finance Minister, Agriculture Minister and Vice Chairman NITI Aayog as members considered these proposals for financial assistance to the states from Recovery and Reconstruction funding window and Preparedness and Capacity Building Funding Window under National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF), a Home Ministry statement said.

The committee approved projects of Rs1,604.39 crore for five



states -- Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Kerala -- under the scheme "Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in the states".

The panel approved Rs 340.90 crore for Bihar, Rs 339.18 crore for Gujarat, Rs 147.97 crore for Jharkhand, Rs162.25 crore for Kerala and Rs 614.09 crore for Maharashtra for funding from earmarked allocation of preparedness and

capacity building funding window under NDRF.

The Central Government has allocated a total amount of Rs 5,000 crore under NDRF for "Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in the states", and had already approved the proposals of 20 states for a total of Rs 3,373.12 crore.

Moreover, the committee has also approved financial assistance of Rs

555.70 crore to Sikkim from recovery and reconstruction funding window under NDRF for disaster recovery and reconstruction needs of various sectors affected due to devastating Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) occurred in the downstream along the Teesta river basin in October, 2023.

During the current financial year, the Union Government has released Rs 19,074.80 crore to 28 states under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and Rs 3,229.35 crores to 16 states under State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF).

Besides, an amount of Rs 5,160.76 crore has been released to 19 states under the NDRF and Rs 719.71 crore to eight states under the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF).

Removed protesting farmers from Shambhu & Khanauri borders, Punjab govt informs SC

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (UNI)

The Punjab Government on Friday informed the Supreme Court that it has removed protesting farmers from the Shambhu and Khanauri borders near Haryana, ensuring free movement on the National Highway.

Advocate General of Punjab, Gurminder Singh, apprised a Bench comprising Justice Surya Kant and Justice N Kotiswar Singh that veteran farmers' leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal ended his hunger strike, which began in November last year.

"Mr. Dallewal accepted water today and broke his fast," AG Singh told the Court.

The Bench refused to entertain a contempt petition filed against Punjab authorities for allegedly violating a Supreme Court status quo order by clearing the protesters. The Court clarified that it had



consistently urged the government to reopen the highway.

"We have been telling them to open the highway. The contempt petition is misconceived," Justice Kant remarked while addressing Advocate Angrej Singh, who represented the contempt petitioner. Consequently, the petitioner chose to withdraw the contempt plea.

Additionally, the Court dropped the contempt proceedings initiated earlier against the Punjab Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police (DGP) for not hospitalis-

ing Dallewal during his hunger strike.

The Supreme Court directed the High-Powered Committee, formed to mediate between the government and protesting farmers, to submit its supplementary report on the matter.

Earlier, the Court had adjourned proceedings after being informed that discussions between the protesting farmers and the Union Government were ongoing.

In January, a breakthrough was achieved when the farmers agreed to meet Justice (Retired)

Nawab Singh, Chairperson of the High-Powered Committee, to negotiate their demands.

On January 22, the Court was informed that Dallewal had accepted medical intervention after talks were initiated regarding the farmers' demands, including statutory protection for the Minimum Support Price (MSP). As his health deteriorated, he was ordered to be shifted to a medical facility.

The farmers began their protest in February last year, demanding legal assurances for MSP. The Haryana Government had blocked National Highway borders to prevent the march of farmers toward Delhi, prompting them to camp at the borders.

Last year, the Punjab and Haryana High Court directed the Haryana Government to unblock the Shambhu border, a decision that led the state to approach the Supreme Court for relief.

India ready to offer all assistance to quake-hit Myanmar, Thailand: PM

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (UNI)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today voiced concern over the situation in the aftermath of a 7.7 magnitude earthquake hitting Myanmar and the strong tremors being felt in Thailand. The PM said India stands ready to offer all assistance.

In a post on X, the PM said he has asked the Indian authorities to be on standby to offer all assistance, and the Ministry of External Affairs to remain in touch with the governments of Thailand and Myanmar.

"Concerned by the situation in the wake of the Earthquake in Myanmar and Thailand. Praying for the safety and wellbeing of everyone.

"India stands ready to offer all possible assistance. In this regard, asked our authorities to be on standby.

"Also asked the MEA to remain in touch with the



Governments of Myanmar and Thailand."

According to the BBC, a powerful 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck central Myanmar, the US Geological Survey said.

The epicentre was 16km (10 miles) north-west of the city of Sagaing, at a depth of 10km.

Strong tremors were felt hundreds of miles away in Thailand and south-west China.

Buildings have been

damaged in Bangkok, and roads have buckled in Myanmar's capital, Naypyidaw.

The Thai government is holding an emergency meeting.

The earthquake and damage come ahead of next week's BIMSTEC summit in the Thai capital on April 4, which will see the heads of government of the BIMSTEC nations in attendance, including PM Modi.

Two youths die in road accident in Mahoba

AGENCIES

MAHOBHA (UP), MAR 28 (UNI)

Two youths were killed when a motorcycle was hit by an unidentified vehicle in Kharela area of Mahoba district in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, a police officer said here.

Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Vandana Singh said that Brajendra (23) and his cousin Kamta Kushwaha (28), both residents of Tikri village, had come to Mahoba to buy agricultural equipment. "When they were returning home with the goods in the afternoon, an unidentified vehicle hit them near Rivai and fled," she said.

She said that the youth were badly injured after being hit by the vehicle and fell on the road. "The police took them to the Community Health Centre of Charkhari from where the doctors referred them to the Medical College in a serious condition," she said.

PM Jan Arogya Yojana world's largest health assurance scheme: Nadda

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (UNI)

Union Health Minister JP Nadda on Friday said Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) is the world's largest health assurance scheme, covering over 50 crore people in the country.

Responding to a question during 'Question Hour' in Lok Sabha, Nadda said, "Initially, it covered 50 crore people, but with the inclusion of a decade's



population growth based on Socioeconomic Caste Census (SECC) data and the National Food Security Act (NFSA), the cover-

age expanded to 55 crore people."

He added, "Additionally, 37.19 lakh families of Anganwadi workers,

ASHA workers, and health helpers were included in Ayushman Arogya Yojana."

Over the conditions of AIIMS in the country, the Union Health Minister said, "PM Modi has opened 22 AIIMS in the country in his tenure and We are not going to compromise with the quality of AIIMS."

Under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY), the government is setting up of 22 new All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) across the country.

Actress Preity Zinta received loan remission by New India Cooperative Bank

AGENCIES

MUMBAI, MAR 28 (UNI)

Bollywood actress Preity Zinta received a loan remission by New India Cooperative Bank, sources in the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai police said on Friday.

The EOW is probing into Hiren Bhanu, former chairman of the bank, for allegedly approving loans in return for bribes, as per reports.

The New India Cooperative Bank (NICB) fraud case involved alleged misappropriation of funds from the bank.



The city police have arrested multiple people in

connection with the case.

During investigation, it was revealed that the actress benefitted from a remission on her loan.

Police said that on January seven, 2011, a loan of Rs 18 crore was sanctioned to Preity Zinta. The loan was declared a non-performing asset (NPA) on March 31, 2013.

The amount was later settled at Rs 10.74 crore, and a remission of Rs 1.55 crore was granted to her.

The amount was paid on April five, 2014, according to sources in police.

Global HIV funding cuts can cause over 10 mn infections, 3 mn deaths by 2030: Lancet

AGENCIES
SYDNEY

The significant reductions in international funding for HIV prevention and treatment programmes may result in more than 10 million infections, and about 3 million deaths by 2030, according to a study published in The Lancet HIV journal on Thursday.

The study, conducted by a team at the Burnet Institute in Australia's Melbourne models the impact of a projected 24 per cent reduction in global HIV funding by 2026. This follows announced aid cuts of 8 per cent to 70 per cent by key donors, including the US, Britain, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. These five countries collectively fund over 90 per cent of global HIV assistance.

This could lead to an estimated "4.4 to 10.8 million additional new HIV infections and 770,000 to 2.9 million HIV-related



deaths in children and adults between 2025 and 2030 if funding cuts proposed by the top five donor countries, including the US and the UK, are not mitigated," said the researchers.

The US, the largest contributor to global HIV funding, halted all assistance on January 20, following the swearing-in of the new US President Donald Trump.

The loss of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), combined with other funding cuts, now threatens to reverse progress toward ending HIV/AIDS

as a global health crisis by 2030, revealed the study.

"The US has historically been the largest contributor to global efforts to treat and prevent HIV, but the current cuts to PEPFAR and USAID-supported programmes have already disrupted access to essential HIV services including antiretroviral therapy and HIV prevention and testing. Looking ahead, if other donor countries reduce funding, decades of progress to treat and prevent HIV could be unravelled," said co-lead study author Dr. Debra ten Brink of the Burnet Institute.

The findings showed that sub-Saharan Africa, and marginalised groups who are already at a higher risk of acquiring HIV, such as people who inject drugs, sex workers, and men who have sex with men, as well as children would be the most affected.

Co-author Dr. Rowan Martin-Hughes from the Institute showed that besides limiting testing and treatment programmes, sub-Saharan Africa would see a cut in broader prevention efforts, such as distributing condoms and offering pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP - a medication that reduces the risk of getting HIV).

"It is imperative to secure sustainable financing and avoid a resurgence of the HIV epidemic which could have devastating consequences, not just in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, but globally," Brink said.

HT-HEALTH

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

With better health system investment, including Ayushman Bharat programme, India has been ranked among the five 'exemplar countries' in child mortality reduction, according to a report by the United Nations.

The recent report on Child Mortality Estimation showed that despite facing financial and geographical challenges to service delivery countries like Burundi, Ghana, India, Nepal, and Senegal have accelerated progress in reducing preventable child deaths.

"These countries illustrate that with political will, evidence-based strategies, and sustained investments, even resource-constrained settings facing unique challenges can achieve substantial reductions in mortality, bringing the world closer to an end to preventable child deaths,"



the report said.

As per data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Infant Mortality Rate reduced from 32 per 1,000 live births in 2018 to 28 per 1000 live births in 2020 (against a target of 28 by the year 2019).

India's under-5 mortality rate (U5MR) has significantly declined, from 45 to 32 per 1,000 live births between 2014 and 2020.

The report stated that India made these gains through health system investment.

"Since 2000, India achieved an under-five mortality reduction of 70 per cent and a neona-

tal mortality reduction of 61 per cent, driven by overlapping measures to increase health coverage, enhance available interventions and develop health infrastructure and human resources," the UN report said.

It cited the government's flagship scheme Ayushman Bharat -- the world's largest health insurance scheme -- for providing pregnant women with delivery, and nutritional benefits as well as infant care.

"Every pregnant woman (in India) is entitled to free delivery (including caesarean section), and infant care provides free transport, medications, diagnostics, and dietary support in public health institutions," the report said.

Further, it noted how India has strengthened health infrastructure with the establishment of "maternity waiting homes, maternal and child health

wings, newborn stabilisation units, sick newborn care units, mother newborn care units and a dedicated programme for birth defect screening".

Other interventions include antenatal corticosteroids for preterm labour, the use of continuous positive airway pressure, and follow-up for vision and hearing to help support newborn survival.

"This ensures millions of healthy pregnancies and thriving live births each year," the report said.

The country has also prioritised the training and deployment of skilled birth attendants, such as midwives and community health workers, to provide appropriate maternal and child health services. In addition, data systems and digital surveillance of maternal, newborn, and child health indicators are continuously improved to support evidence-based decision-making.

Centre releases national guidelines on medical oxygen management

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Thursday released the national guidelines on medical oxygen management.

The guidelines, released at a workshop held at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, aim to boost the infrastructure for medical oxygen, as well as to meet any surge in demands.

Medical oxygen is an essential clinical need for children and adults with a range of acute and chronic conditions, as well as for those undergoing surgery.

The release of the guidelines marks a significant step toward strengthening the country's medical oxygen infrastructure and ensuring uniform best practices in oxygen management across healthcare facilities.

"It is critical to properly



maintaining and utilising medical oxygen infrastructure so that demands for any surge capacities may be met promptly at the time of any exigencies," said Punya Salila Srivastava, Union Health Secretary at the event.

She also stressed the need for inculcating learnings from India's management of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The oxygen demand can rise substantially during emergencies, such as epidemics, pandemics like during Covid, and natural disasters.

The comprehensive guidelines provide a framework for the efficient procurement, storage, and administration of medical oxygen. It focuses on patient safety, capacity building, and emergency

preparedness.

Meanwhile, the workshop also marked the launch of the National Capacity Building Programme on Oxygen Management. It will be led by AIIMS' Department of Hospital Administration in collaboration with the Disaster Management Cell of the Health Ministry.

It aims to train around 200 master trainers across the country which in turn shall undertake capacity building of hospital administrators and medical officers across the country in proper handling and utilization of medical oxygen, reducing wastage and improving clinical outcomes.

"AIIMS will play a key role in spearheading the capacity-building programme," said Prof. M Srinivas, Director, AIIMS, while stressing the importance of training and awareness at all levels of healthcare.

Surveillance, vigilance necessary to ensure SE Asia remains polio-free: WHO

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Surveillance and vigilance are necessary to ensure South-East Asia region remains polio-free, said the World Health Organization on the 11th anniversary of being certified polio-free on Thursday.

Poliomyelitis (polio) is a highly infectious viral disease that largely affects children under 5 years of age. The highly transmissible virus invades the nervous system to cause paralysis.

In a historic milestone, 11 years ago on March 27, 2014, the WHO South-East Asia Region was certified as free of all types of wild polioviruses.

Saima Wazed, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia stated that eradication of polio in the SE Asia region was a "daunting and uphill task" and "required relentless effort and innovative strat-



egies".

Lauding the efforts of health workers, Wazed said they "worked tirelessly to ensure that every child received vaccinations to protect against this debilitating disease".

"We honour their contributions and celebrate the results of their hard work".

Notably, India also eradicated polio, and the country was declared free of polio by the World Health Organization in 2014.

However, Wazed noted that the "work is not over" as the threat of poliovirus importation exists until

polio is eradicated globally. She stressed the need to boost surveillance.

"A key role in sustaining our 'polio-free' status is played by surveillance and activities, which are indispensable for the detection and prompt interruption of poliovirus circulation. We must remain vigilant in surveillance and immunisation and ensure adequate capacities and capabilities at the country level are maintained," the Regional Director said.

She urged all our countries and communities to continue supporting immunisation programme which can help strengthen

our health systems. She also warned against misinformation about vaccines that can harm future generations.

"I am mindful that there is much misinformation and disinformation currently circulating about vaccines and immunisation. I urge you all to help combat this by joining us in spreading the indisputable message that vaccines are safe, and immunisation saves lives.

"We have to build on our successes together and ensure that future generations are free from the threat of polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

"On the anniversary of this milestone achievement, we renew our pledge to combat all vaccine-preventable diseases and reaffirm our commitment to surveillance and vigilance to ensure we remain polio-free," Wazed said.

High sodium key risk factor for rising obesity levels: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

While sugary foods and beverages are more blamed for the global rise in obesity rates, a new study suggests that sodium -- found in processed meat products, bread, and dairy products, especially cheese -- may also be a significant risk factor.

The research presented at the European Congress on Obesity (ECO 2025) highlighted an alarming correlation between sodium intake and obesity, both in terms of overall body fat and abdominal fat.

The study, led by researchers from the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare in Finland analysed data from over 5,000 men and women aged 18 and older, examining their sodium intake as well as urine sodium concentration about their obesity status.



Notably, all participants were found to exceed the recommended sodium intake of 5 grams or less per day -- set by the World Health Organization.

The analysis revealed strong correlations between high dietary sodium intake and both general and abdominal obesity, particularly for women. Both high sodium and obesity levels are known risk factors for hypertension, cardiovas-

cular diseases, diabetes and cancers.

Participants in the highest sodium intake quartile were 4.3 times more likely to be classified as obese overall and 3.4 times more likely to suffer from abdominal obesity.

In the case of men, those in the highest quartile of urine sodium concentration were six times more likely to experience general obesity and 4.7 times more likely to have

abdominal obesity.

"In general, men consume more food, and also more foods that are the main food sources of sodium in the diet, such as meat products, bread and bakery products, and cheese. Our analyses were adjusted for total energy intake and therefore the stronger associations in men might be due to the higher salt intake relative to total energy intake. However, regardless of the magnitude of the relationship, the associations were in a similar direction in both men and women," said Annika Santalahti, from the Finnish Institute.

"These results strengthen the evidence of an association between sodium intake and obesity, with similar findings observed for both dietary sodium and urine sodium concentration. It is important to gain more understanding about the biological mechanism of the relationship," she added.

IIT Roorkee researchers find natural compound to combat bacterial infections

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

A research team at IIT Roorkee has identified a natural compound that can help weaken persistent superbugs and enhance the effectiveness of antibiotics.

The study suggests that thymol -- a plant-based compound commonly found in thyme -- may help weaken persister cells seen particularly in the bacterium Acinetobacter baumannii. It is known for causing persistent and chronic infections in hospitals.

The findings, published in the Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy Journal, can also make last-resort antibiotics like meropenem more effective.

Preliminary findings indicate that thymol, in combination with meropenem, enhances the antibiotic's activity, offering a potential approach for tackling persistent infec-



tions.

"The ability of thymol to disrupt bacterial persistence and enhance the efficacy of existing antibiotics presents a promising avenue in addressing antimicrobial resistance," said Prof. Ranjana Pathania, the lead researcher.

"By targeting persister cells, we may be able to improve treatment outcomes for chronic and recurrent infections," she added.

The team found that thymol works through multiple mechanisms to

weaken persister cells. It disrupts bacterial energy production, making survival more difficult. Additionally, it damages the protective outer membrane, increasing the bacteria's vulnerability.

Thymol also generates reactive oxygen species (ROS), which stress and weaken the bacteria and inhibit bacterial efflux pumps, potentially enhancing the effectiveness of meropenem.

While these findings provide valuable insights, additional research and

clinical validation are required to assess thymol's potential in real-world therapeutic applications.

"Antimicrobial resistance is a critical global challenge. This study demonstrates how innovative approaches, including natural compounds, could contribute to overcoming persistent infections. It reflects our institute's commitment to research that addresses pressing healthcare challenges," said Prof. K.K. Pant, Director, IIT Roorkee.

The next phase of research will focus on refining the thymol-meropenem combination and evaluating its potential through further studies.

If validated through clinical trials, this approach could contribute to new strategies for combating antibiotic persistence, offering an additional tool in the fight against antimicrobial resistance, said the team.



GT, MI seek first win at Narendra Modi Stadium

AGENCIES

AHMEDABAD, MAR 28 (UNI)

The Narendra Modi Stadium is set for another high-scoring thriller as Gujarat Titans (GT) take on Mumbai Indians (MI) in the ninth match of IPL 2025 here on Saturday.

The previous game at this venue saw a staggering 475 runs scored in 40 overs, underlining the batting-friendly nature of the pitch. With both teams yet to open their account in the tournament, an aggressive approach with the bat will be key.

Gujarat Titans have dominated recent encounters against Mumbai Indians, winning three of their last four meetings. However, both teams enter this match desperate for a turnaround after suffering defeats in their opening fixtures.

Gujarat fell short in a high-scoring contest against Punjab Kings, losing by 11 runs despite valiant efforts from Sai Sudharsan (74 off 41) and Jos Buttler (54 off 33). Chasing 244, Gujarat's lower middle order faltered, exposing a potential weak link in their lineup.

Mumbai, on the other hand, struggled on a slow Chepauk surface against Chennai Super Kings, managing only 155/9. Tilak Varma's 31 was the highest score in an otherwise underwhelming batting



display. However, the batting-friendly conditions in Ahmedabad could work in their favour.

Captain Shubman Gill has been a prolific scorer at the Narendra Modi Stadium, amassing nearly 1,000 runs in 19 matches. His form will be crucial at the top. However, the team's lower middle order, including Shahrukh Khan, Sai Kishore, and Arshad Khan, needs to step up in pressure situations.

Bowling remains a concern for GT, with Mohammed Siraj conceding 54 runs in four overs in the last match. Kagiso Rabada will be expected to lead the pace attack, while Rashid Khan will look to bounce back after an expensive outing. Left-arm spinner Sai Kishore was the standout performer in the previous game, picking up 3/30.

The star-studded batting unit of Rohit Sharma, Ryan Rickelton, Will Jacks, and Suryakumar Yadav will be eager to exploit the favourable conditions. Captain Hardik Pandya,

returning after serving an over-rate penalty, will add depth with both bat and ball. His experience on this surface, having previously played for Gujarat, could be a key factor.

Mumbai's bowling attack, spearheaded by Trent Boult and Deepak Chahar, will aim for early breakthroughs. Left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner and wrist-spinner Vignesh Puthur, who impressed with a 3/32 spell against CSK, will be crucial in controlling the middle overs.

The Narendra Modi Stadium pitch is expected to favour batsmen, with little assistance for pacers. Spinners might extract some grip, but the surface should remain consistent throughout the game. With 475 runs scored in the last match here, another high-scoring contest is on the cards.

Weather conditions will be warm and clear, with no rain forecast. The team batting first won the previous game comfortably, making the toss a crucial factor. Opting to bat first

could be the safer option.

With both teams seeking their first win, the match promises to be an exciting contest. While Gujarat Titans hold an edge with their strong top order, Mumbai Indians have the experience and firepower to mount a strong challenge. Execution with the bat will likely determine the winner.

Teams:

Gujarat Titans: Shubman Gill (captain), Jos Buttler, Kumar Kushagra, Anuj Rawat, Sherfane Rutherford, Glenn Phillips, Nishant Sindhu, Mahipal Lomror, Washington Sundar, Mohammed Arshad Khan, Sai Kishore, Jayant Yadav, Karim Janat, Sai Sudharsan, Shahrukh Khan, Kagiso Rabada, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Manav Suthar, Gerald Coetzee, Gurnoor Singh Brar, Ishant Sharma, Kulwant Khejroliya, Rahul Tewatia, Rashid Khan.

Mumbai Indians: Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Bevon Jacobs, Tilak Varma, Robin Minz, Ryan Rickelton, Shrijith Krishnan, Hardik Pandya (captain), Naman Dhir, Will Jacks, Mitchell Santner, Raj Angad Bawa, Vignesh Puthur, Corbin Bosch, Jasprit Bumrah, Trent Boult, Deepak Chahar, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Reece Topley, Lizaad Williams, Karn Sharma, Satyanarayana Raju, Ashwani Kumar, Arjun Tendulkar.

Nicholas Pooran reveals key behind his six-hitting exploits

AGENCIES

HYDERABAD, MAR 28 (UNI)

Former West Indies white-ball captain Nicholas Pooran has revealed the key behind his six-hitting technique.

Pooran was the West Indies' leading run-scorer at last year's ICC Men's T20 World Cup with 228 runs and finished the tournament having hit more sixes (17) than any other player that featured at the event.

The 29-year-old showcased his batting exploits with another fine performance in the Indian Premier League (IPL) with the Lucknow Super Giants on Thursday as he smashed six maximums during a 26-ball 70 to help his side to an impressive five-wicket victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad.

It was the second consecutive occasion that Pooran has notched a half-century at this year's IPL and it helped the damaging left-hander collect the Purple Cap as the tournament's leading run-scorer.

He also has four more sixes than any other player at the IPL thus far and the former West Indies white-ball skipper believes keeping a clear mind at the crease is helping him maintain the status as one of the biggest hitters in world cricket, an ICC report said.

"I don't plan to hit sixes," Pooran said.

"I just try my best to get in good positions and if it's there, just time the ball nicely," he said.



"In the last nine years I have been working on my craft. Obviously, I have been getting the opportunity to bat higher up in the Powerplay as well," Pooran said.

"It is really important to cash in when the wicket is nice and obviously when the match-up is there you try your best to execute your skills," he said.

Pooran's best effort at last year's T20 World Cup was an innings of 98 - from just 53 deliveries - against

Afghanistan in St Lucia during the group stage of the event that helped the West Indies remain undefeated at the tournament and qualify for the Super Eights.

While the West Indies fell just short of qualifying for the knockout stages of the T20 World Cup, Pooran's efforts with the bat didn't go unnoticed as he won his way into the ICC Men's T20I

Team of the Year for the second consecutive year.

It was just rewards for Pooran, who admitted he is lucky to have been born with such considerable talent.

"I've never worked on my bat speed, I'm just blessed with incredible talent," Pooran said.

"I am really happy that I have put in the work over the years and I am getting the reward on the cricket field and winning games for my team as well," he added.

Djokovic into last four with great win over Korda in Miami Open

AGENCIES

FLORIDA, MAR 28 (UNI)

Novak Djokovic overcame American Sebastian Korda in their rescheduled match to reach the semi-finals of the Miami Open.

The world number five rallied in the second set from a break down to close out a 6-3 7-6 (7-4) victory.

The 37-year-old is the oldest player to reach the last four of an ATP Masters 1,000 event and is going for a seventh title in Miami.

The match was due to be played on Wednesday but was postponed to Thursday at short notice after Emma Raducanu's quarter-final match did not finish until after 23:00, past the ATP's cut-off point, the BBC reported.

"You wait an entire day and if it's for the rain I guess you accept it, but this was scheduled and then the matches and



everything just extended so much," Djokovic told Sky Sports.

"The match was postponed for today and it wasn't too early so it was OK to get some sleep. I didn't go to bed until 2.30am so it disrupts your body rhythm - so I'm just happy to come through."

Djokovic will face Bulgarian 14th seed Grigor Dimitrov in the semi-finals on Friday as he continues

his pursuit of a 100th ATP title.

It is a first semi-final appearance for Djokovic at this tournament since 2016 and, with Carlos Alcaraz, Jack Draper and Daniil Medvedev among a host of top-10 seeds already out, the draw has opened up for the Serb to add another Miami title.

Djokovic efficiently took the opening set on Thursday, breaking his

opponent's serve in the eighth game.

But the 24-time Grand Slam champion had to dig deep in the second, with some impressive serving allowing him to recover from 5-2 down to force a tie-break and clinch the win.

"Best serving performance for me so far," Djokovic said. "I was quite nervous because you never know what comes from Korda - he's so aggressive and talented."

"I was on my back foot, waiting for his error rather than dictating from the back of the court. When

I needed a first serve I got it but a tense match and great performance."

Earlier on Thursday, unseeded Czech Jakub Mensik beat 17th seed Arthur Fils 7-6 (7-5) 6-1 to book a semi-final against American Taylor Fritz, who secured a gruelling 7-5 6-7 (7-9) 7-5 win against Italian 29th seed Matteo Berrettini.

Karthik confident about Kohli's ability against spin

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, MAR 28 (UNI)

Spin is expected to play a key role here, where Virat Kohli's Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) will take on Chennai Super Kings (CSK) on Friday.

While over the last few years, opponents have used spin to keep Kohli

in check, RCB batting coach and mentor Dinesh Karthik believed the player had managed to turn it around in recent times.

"He has batted well in the recent past against spin, especially in white-ball cricket," Karthik said ahead of the CSK encounter.

Karthik reflected on

Kohli's recent successes in big tournaments where spinners played a big role, including his 76 in the T20 World Cup 2024 Final and 218 runs in the Champions Trophy 2025.

While 17 overs of spin were bowled in the T20 World Cup final; India featured in Dubai in the Champions Trophy, where

the wickets were slow and helped the spinners.

"In the T20 World Cup finals, he got runs where it mattered. And apart from that, in the Champions' Trophy, he had a good tournament second-highest run-getter [for India]. And that doesn't come without playing on spin," Karthik said.

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