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Dated: 10-04-2026
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Dy CM Shocked, Orders Mining Probe

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, APR 10: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Friday expressed shock over the continued presence of previously suspended or transferred officers at the Directorate of Mining office in Jammu, raising serious concerns about alleged irregularities and illegal mining activities. Speaking to reporters, Choudhary said he was "shocked" to find that officials who had been suspended or shifted on serious allegations were still functioning



in the office. "These employees were either suspended or transferred to Kashmir, but I found them working here," he said, indicating possible violations of administrative orders. The Deputy Chief Minister further

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J&K at 'Critical Juncture': LG Calls for Mass Movement Against Drug Menace

100-day 'Nasha Mukt J&K Abhiyaan' to begin April 11 with UT-wide outreach and enforcement push

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, APR 10: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said that Jammu and Kashmir stands at a "very critical juncture" and called for a united mass movement to counter the growing drug menace among the youth, warning of a larger conspiracy to push an entire generation into addiction. Addressing people through a video message, Sinha announced the launch of a 100-day intensive campaign—



'Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan'—from April 11, aimed at dismantling the drug ecosystem through coordinated legal, enforcement and rehabilitation measures. The Lieutenant Governor reviewed the preparedness for the campaign on Thursday. He said the initiative will be implemented from the Panchayat level to the Union Territory level, with active participation from all sections of society and direct involvement of the

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Chauhan Calls for Integrated, Tech-Driven Armed Forces Amid Evolving Warfare Landscape

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

BENGALURU, APR 10: Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan on Friday called for a transformative shift in India's military posture, urging the armed forces to evolve into an integrated, agile and technology-driven warfighting instrument capable of operating seamlessly across multiple domains.

Addressing the concluding session of the 'Ran Samvad' seminar, General Chauhan said modern warfare is rapidly transcending traditional boundaries, with Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) emerging as an operational necessity

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CAG Flags Over 10% Shrinkage In Dal Lake's Open Water Between 2007 And 2020

HT NEWS NETWORK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, APR 10: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has flagged significant spatio-temporal changes in land use and water cover of the iconic Dal Lake, pointing to a shrinkage of the water body from 15.40 square kilometres in 2007 to 12.91 square kilometres in 2020, registering a decline of 10.15 per cent in 13 years. The CAG recommended a robust lake management policy to ensure effective

functioning and upgrade of sewage treatment plants (STPs) to ensure proper treatment of sewage and solid waste entering the lake.

"It may be seen from data that during 2007-2020, there was a decrease from 15.40 to 12.91 square kilometres (10.15 per cent) in the water body with (respect to) submerged vegetation and open water of the lake, while there was increase in other land uses such as floating

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Census 2027: Digital Mission for Viksit Bharat



HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, APRIL 10: Highlighting that India is at a crucial "data inflection point," Chief

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Govt to Use Aadhaar Data Vault for Timely Welfare Delivery

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, APRIL 10: In a significant move towards strengthening digital governance and ensuring fiscal prudence, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has launched a Centralized Aadhaar Data Vault (ADV) to streamline

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Him Sarovar Project Launched to Tackle Ladakh's Water Crisis

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

LEH, APR 10: In a major push towards sustainable water management, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Thursday launched "Project Him Sarovar" in Ladakh, aimed at strengthening water security in the cold desert region through scientific snow harvesting and conservation of snowmelt.

The initiative seeks to address Ladakh's persistent water scarcity by creating 50 small water bodies

across Leh and Kargil, with excavation work commencing simultaneously at multiple sites. Each structure, measuring 40x30 metres and two metres deep, is designed to store glacial and snowmelt that otherwise goes unutilised, ensuring a reliable water source for irrigation.

Describing the project as a historic intervention, Saxena said it represents a decisive step towards tackling water challenges in a region where water remains a lifeline.

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8% Power Deficit Likely in J&K, Ladakh During April Peak Hours

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are likely to face a power deficit of nearly eight percent during peak hours in April, as electricity demand is expected to outstrip supply, official projections reveal.

According to documents accessed by news agency KNO, the Northern Regional Power Committee (NRPC) has estimated a deficit of around 7.7 percent during peak hours this month.

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Dry Spell Ahead as Temperatures Rise Across J&K

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, APR 10: The Meteorological Department on Friday forecast a predominantly dry weather pattern across Jammu and Kashmir over the coming days, accompanied by a gradual rise in daytime temperatures.

Officials at the Meteorological Centre Srinagar said that while brief spells of light rain or thundershowers may occur at isolated places on April

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Dy CM Shocked.....

noted the absence of senior अधिकारियों during his visit, stating that both the Director and Joint Director were not present. "I was informed that the Chief Secretary had convened a meeting. I will go to the Secretariat and take up the matter," he added. Admitting to ongoing illegal mining, Choudhary acknowledged internal weaknesses within the department. He alleged that such activities appeared to be receiving support from within the system. "It seems illegal mining is being encouraged and patronised from the Directorate of Mining office Jammu," he said.

Announcing corrective measures, he said an inquiry would be initiated to examine the functioning of the department and the role of officials involved. He also highlighted administrative challenges arising from the Union Territory status, stating that some officers exploit the system to indulge in wrongdoing, bringing disrepute to the government.

Describing the prevailing situation at the office, Choudhary remarked that it had "become a fish market and a source of illegal mining," underscoring the urgency for accountability and reform.

J&K at 'Critical.....

administration, police and security forces. "There is an ongoing attempt to destroy our youth through drug addiction. We must respond collectively and decisively," he said.

Referring to previous efforts, Sinha noted that the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, launched under the leadership of Narendra Modi, had strengthened anti-drug initiatives in the Union Territory. He added that enforcement actions by police and security agencies in recent years, including 2025, had yielded results but stressed that a broader societal response was now essential.

A major launch event is scheduled at MA Stadium on April 11, where civil society members, political leaders, academicians and sportspersons will gather to take a pledge against drug abuse and participate in a padayatra. The march will subsequently extend across Jammu and Kashmir.

"This campaign is not about any individual. It is about safeguarding the future of our youth," Sinha said, highlighting frequent distressing incidents linked to drug abuse. He urged people to actively join the initiative, calling it "a journey with a purpose" to make Jammu and Kashmir drug-free and to ensure strict action against traffickers.

The Lieutenant Governor said he would personally visit districts across the Union Territory to mobilise public support and energise the campaign through direct outreach and padayatras.

Chauhan Calls.....

rather than a theoretical construct. He underscored that advancements in artificial intelligence and data analytics are fundamentally reshaping the nature of conflict.

"MDOs were chosen for this year's theme not because it's a buzzword, but because it reflects a new operational reality," he said, adding that the character of warfare is being redefined by the speed and complexity of technological change.

The CDS noted that the seminar marked a departure from convention by placing serving officers, particularly those at mid and junior levels, at the centre of strategic discussions. He said this approach allowed perspectives from personnel directly engaged in service, who are better attuned to evolving battlefield dynamics.

General Chauhan said deliberations focused on critical aspects such as force design, organisational structures and the adequacy of existing hierarchies in a battlespace that no longer adheres to traditional domain boundaries. He highlighted intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance as a key area, noting that the challenge now lies not in the availability of information but in the speed and quality of its interpretation.

Emphasising the impact of emerging technologies, he said artificial intelligence is poised to transform decision-making cycles. Referring to the OODA loop concept, he observed that future conflicts may be determined by the ability to anticipate and orient faster than the adversary, even before observation.

On the changing nature of warfare, the CDS said conflict is increasingly extending beyond the physical domain into cognitive and synthetic realms. He stressed that achieving political objectives without direct combat is becoming a defining feature of modern conflict, driven by information manipulation and influence operations.

General Chauhan introduced the idea of multi-dimensional warfare, expanding beyond land, sea and air to include cyber, electromagnetic spectrum, time and cognition. He said the convergence of kinetic and non-kinetic means, along with manned and unmanned systems, is enabling strategies aimed at paralysing adversaries rather than merely destroying them.

He also underscored the importance of robust institutional frameworks, including networks, standard operating procedures and shared operational understanding, to enable effective multi-domain integration. The

seminar, he said, helped assess the current level of jointness among the three services and identify gaps requiring attention.

Highlighting broader security challenges, the CDS noted that threats today transcend national borders, necessitating collaboration among like-minded nations.

Announcing the next edition of the seminar, he said the 2027 'Ran Samvad' will be hosted by the Indian Navy and will focus on high-intensity operations in an increasingly transparent and expanded battlespace, with greater participation from younger officers.

CAG Flags.....

vegetation from 5.262 to 6.796 square kilometres (6.23 per cent), crop land and plantation from 2.29 to 2.85 square kilometres (2.27 per cent), and built-up from 0.743 to 1.025 square kilometres (1.15 per cent)," the report said.

The CAG report on conservation and management of lakes in the Union Territory for the year ended March 31, 2024, said there was a decrease in vacant land with or without vegetation from 0.40 to 0.36 square kilometres (0.17 per cent) due to dredging of some acquired land. The decrease in open water area was at the cost of other land use changes.

The CAG said the shifting land use pattern reflects growing pressure on the lake ecosystem, with shrinking open water and expanding human-induced activities altering its ecological balance.

The CAG observed that no concrete measures were taken by the Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LC&MA) to regulate land use, nor were reasons for such changes adequately analysed.

Audit findings attributed the deterioration to non-acquisition of land from Dal lake dwellers, malfunctioning STPs, failure to arrest pollution inflows, improper de-weeding, and weak monitoring.

As a result, the inflow of nutrients increased, leading to excessive weed growth and further shrinkage of the lake's open water area, the report said, adding that encroachments in areas such as Mir Behri, Lati Mohalla and Nandapora contributed to expansion of floating gardens and habitation.

The audit also flagged serious deficiencies in the implementation of conservation programmes under the National Lake Conservation Programme (NLCP) and the Prime Minister's Reconstruction Programme (PMRP).

"Key activities such as installation and upgradation of STPs, solid waste management, sewer networking, relocation of houseboats and hotels, catchment management, and rehabilitation of Dal dwellers were either delayed or inadequately executed," the report stated.

Despite an expenditure of more than Rs 45 crore on STPs, the audit found that sewage was not treated as per prescribed standards, resulting in continued deterioration of water quality. "Untreated waste from households, houseboats and hotels continued to flow into the lake due to incomplete sewer networks and delays in connecting households and houseboats to treatment systems."

The report further highlighted underutilisation of funds, ranging between Rs 48.63 crore and Rs 280.68 crore during 2017-22, and pointed to delays caused by stalled board meetings, lack of project management consultants, and failure to prepare detailed project reports for pending works.

Efforts to relocate Dal dwellers and houseboats also fell short, with only a fraction of targeted land and structures acquired and no significant dredging carried out on acquired land. Similarly, shifting of hotels and establishment of effective surveillance mechanisms remained incomplete, it added.

The CAG noted that catchment management works were inadequate, with only four out of 15 identified micro-watersheds taken up, also flagging shortcomings in structural and vegetative measures, training programmes and monitoring systems. Describing the lake as the "liquid heart" of Srinagar, located at an altitude of 1,583 metres, the audit warned that continued delays and inadequate conservation efforts have hindered restoration of its water expanse and ecological health.

The CAG recommended periodic monitoring of water spread, a robust lake management policy, effective functioning of STPs, improved sewage and solid waste treatment, and expedited implementation of key conservation measures. It also called for public awareness campaigns to curb unauthorised construction and better monitoring of nutrient inflows into the lake. The audit said unless systemic gaps in planning, execution and monitoring are addressed, restoration of Dal lake's shrinking water body would remain a challenge. (Agencies)

Census 2027.....

Secretary Atal Dulloo today stated that the upcoming Census 2027 is not merely an enumeration exercise but a National Digital Transformation Mission that will set the bedrock for a 'Viksit Bharat' and evidence-based policy planning.

The Chief Secretary made these remarks while speaking at the Census 2027 Summit held today at Abhinav Theatre, Jammu.

The summit was participated by the senior

administrators, development partners and policy experts to deliberate upon the road-map, preparedness and significance of Census of India 2027, the country's first-ever fully digital and paperless census exercise.

The Summit was also attended by Amit Sharma, Chief Principal Census Officer and Director Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh; Andrea M. Wojnar, Resident Representative, UNFPA India; Praful Kumar Sigtia, Deputy Director General (Information Security), UIDAI and Rohit Kumar, Co-Chair (Policy Making) G20, as special dignitaries.

Delivering keynote address as the chief guest, the Chief Secretary observed that India is entering a new era of governance driven by technology and real-time insights. Contrasting the upcoming exercise with the manual, time-consuming 2011 census, he emphasised the paradigm shift towards a technology-first, citizen-centric framework utilising mobile-based enumeration, artificial intelligence and cloud technology to ensure accuracy, transparency and speed.

Speaking on the rapid global advancements in technology, the Chief Secretary stressed that data is going to be the key driver, oil and fuel of any nation's economy in the AI-driven future. He noted that India's vast demographic diversity provides a far richer dataset compared to Western nations, giving the country a strategic advantage in training AI systems and stepping up as a globally benchmarked data-driven nation.

Atal Dulloo also highlighted how the integration of trusted national datasets with the JAM Trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile) has enabled the Government to target the beneficiaries directly, reducing leakages from astronomical to negligible levels. He observed that moving away from older "one-size-fits-all" centralised planning, this dynamic data ecosystem will allow for micro-level scientific urban and rural planning, supporting health, education and employment infrastructures tailored to the unique strengths of individual villages and districts.

Underlining the immediate administrative tasks at hand, the Chief Secretary directed the Deputy Commissioners and district administrations to ensure seamless grassroots execution. He issued clear directives for immediate completion of training for all the Census officers and Enumerators, ensuring full readiness for the self-enumeration process beginning from May 17 and the subsequent house to house field work starting June 1, 2026. He further highlighted that census data plays a pivotal role in determining the financial share of States and Union Territories and guiding development initiatives for the next decade.

Earlier, delivering the welcome address, Chief Principal Census Officer Amit Sharma shed light on the two-phased structure of Census 2027. The first phase will cover House Listing and Housing Census (HLO), consisting of Self Enumeration Period from May 17 to May 31 and House to House Field Work from June 1 to June 30, 2026. The second phase shall focus on Population Enumeration (PE), which will commence in September 2026 for snow-bound areas and in February 2027 for the non-snowbound regions.

He emphasised that Census 2027 will be a fully paperless, technology-driven initiative. Enumerators will collect and submit data directly via a dedicated mobile app. However, self-enumeration will be the preferred method. A secure web portal, available in 16 languages, will allow citizens to submit their details online before the door-to-door surveys begin. Additionally, a new Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS) will enable near real-time tracking of all field operations.

To ensure smooth execution, Amit Sharma noted that a structured training hierarchy is already in place, with comprehensive training for Enumerators and Supervisors currently underway across the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Andrea M. Wojnar, Resident Representative of UNFPA India, said that similar census practices anchored in digital technology and self-enumeration are being adopted across the world. She expressed confidence that Census 2027 will be a robust and comprehensive exercise in India as well.

Wojnar underscored the fundamental purpose of any census, emphasising that it is left unaccounted for in welfare programmes and policy decisions. Accurate and inclusive enumeration, she stated, is foundational to evidence-based governance and equitable development.

Praful Kumar Sigtia, Deputy Director General (Information Security), UIDAI, drew parallels between Census 2027 and the colossal exercise of Aadhaar enrolment, highlighting the scale, complexity and technological sophistication common to both national exercises. He laid emphasis on the meaningful processing of data for practical purposes, acknowledging the critical importance of translating vast volumes of collected information into actionable insights.

Sigtia also touched upon the efficacy and security of data, stressing that robust compliance frameworks are in place to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of citizen data – frameworks that impart confidence to the

data owners, namely the citizens of India.

Rohit Kumar, Co-Chair (Policy Making) G20, shed light on the monumental scale of the census exercise and its technical aspects. He elaborated on the global implications of the exercise for informed policy-making at both national and international level, underlining the significance of Census 2027 in the context of India's evolving data governance landscape.

Govt to Use.....

public service delivery and enhance oversight of social security schemes across departments and financial institutions.

The decision was taken in a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, who underscored the transformative potential of the initiative and directed the concerned departments to identify and onboard additional government services that can be brought under the ambit of the Aadhaar Data Vault to maximize its impact and utility.

The meeting was also attended by ACS, Finance, Shailendra Kumar; MD, J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee; Commissioner Secretary, Information and Planning Departments, R Alice Vaz; DG, E&S, Ather Hussain Qadri; Scientists from NIC (J&K Chapter); Representatives from SBI and other Banks along with senior officers from the PD&MD.

Importantly, the Chief Secretary urged the banks to leverage this platform to streamline insurance claim settlements under PMJJBY and PMSBY by enabling instant verification of death records, thereby facilitating timely disbursement of benefits to rightful nominees.

Simultaneously, he underscored on the necessity that the system should be utilised in automatically identifying cases where government benefits such as pensions, social security assistance, and rations under Public Distribution System (PDS) continue to be availed even after the death of beneficiaries, thereby plugging leakages and safeguarding public resources.

He enjoined upon the NIC to allow this initiative to be used to ease the onboarding process for departments and institutions by providing a single, secure gateway for verification and eligibility checks, reducing both administrative and technical complexities.

On this occasion it was presented by the NIC that the newly established Aadhaar Data Vault has been integrated with the Civil Registration System, including the Birth and Death Portal here, to function as a secure and specialised Aadhaar Data Vault-as-a-Service (ADVaaS). This unified digital infrastructure is designed to act as a "Single Source of Truth," enabling real-time, secure, and authenticated access to vital records while strictly adhering to UIDAI-prescribed security and privacy protocols.

The initiative focuses on creating a robust and scalable platform for managing civil registration data and Aadhaar-based authentication services. It incorporates seamless API integration with the Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI) to access real-time master and transactional data. Automated schedulers have been deployed to ensure periodic updates of records, keeping the system dynamic and accurate.

Additionally, the platform enables inter-departmental integration through standardized APIs, thereby eliminating the need for multiple Memorandums of Understanding and significantly simplifying data-sharing processes.

The Centralized ADV is expected to play a transformative role in strengthening the delivery and monitoring of welfare schemes. By introducing a "Single Token per Aadhaar" framework, the system facilitates effective de-duplication, preventing multiple or fraudulent claims across schemes and departments.

Describing the initiative as a milestone in governance reforms, the Chief Secretary emphasized that the centralized Aadhaar Data Vault reflects the administration's commitment to leveraging technology for data-driven decision-making. He reiterated that by ensuring accurate, secure, and real-time access to critical data, the government aims to protect public funds while guaranteeing that welfare benefits are delivered efficiently and reach to the intended beneficiaries in a time-bound manner.

Him Sarovar.....

He noted that the initiative was conceptualised soon after he assumed office on March 13, directing officials to identify suitable locations and prepare an action plan.

Emphasising its significance for agriculture, the Lieutenant Governor said the project would directly benefit farmers who depend on limited water resources, while also supporting sustainable livelihoods. He added that

the design incorporates scientific planning suited to Ladakh's fragile ecosystem and extreme climatic conditions.

Saxena further linked the initiative to the broader environmental vision of Narendra Modi, particularly the goal of restoring degraded land across the country by 2030. He said the project would also contribute to land restoration and increased green cover through plantation drives alongside water conservation efforts.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the strong support extended by stakeholders including the Indian Army, ITBP, BRO, and local communities, noting that the project is being implemented in consultation with residents to meet region-specific needs.

Pointing to the growing impact of climate change in Ladakh—manifested through reduced snowfall, receding glaciers, rising temperatures, and declining water tables—Saxena stressed the urgency of adopting sustainable water management practices. He also called for preserving traditional irrigation systems while integrating modern conservation techniques to build long-term ecological resilience.

Project Him Sarovar, he said, will help create vital "green and blue assets" in Ladakh, ensuring water security while enhancing environmental balance in the high-altitude region.

8% Power.....

The combined availability in the two Union Territories is projected at 2,880 MW against an anticipated demand of 3,119 MW, leaving a shortfall of over 200 MW.

However, the situation is expected to ease during non-peak hours, with authorities projecting a surplus of about 4.8 percent outside peak demand periods.

The projections come amid rising long-term electricity needs in Jammu and Kashmir. From the financial year 2026-27, peak demand is expected to reach 3,813 MW, increasing further to 3,964 MW in 2027-28 and 4,117 MW in 2028-29.

In terms of overall energy consumption, the Union Territory is projected to require 23,372 million units (MU) in 2026-27, rising to 24,559 MU in 2027-28 and 25,780 MU by 2028-29.

Officials have also flagged a steady growth trend in power demand, with electricity requirement expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of four percent, while peak demand may rise at a faster rate of six percent between 2025-26 and 2035-36, as per estimates by the J&K State Load Despatch Centre (SLDC).

Despite the growing demand, projections indicate that surplus capacity may be available during certain months due to renewable energy generation and demand variations. The UT is expected to have surplus capacity of 700-900 MW during May and June, and around 500 MW between July and September in 2028-29, which could be shared with other states and distribution companies.

The anticipated shortfall during peak hours highlights the continuing challenge of balancing supply and demand in the region, particularly during high-consumption periods.

Dry Spell.....

11—mainly during late afternoon or evening—the overall trend will remain largely dry.

The weather is expected to stay mostly dry on April 12, with only isolated light rain spells. Completely dry conditions are likely to prevail on April 13 and 14, with similar weather anticipated on April 15. A fresh spell of scattered rain and thundershowers may return on April 16 and 17, followed by another dry phase from April 18 to 20.

In view of the stable conditions, the Met department has advised farmers to resume agricultural activities, noting that maximum temperatures are likely to rise gradually over the next five days.

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 20.2°C, above the normal of 18.8°C, while the minimum dipped to 4.6°C, 2.3 degrees below normal. Qazigund registered a high of 20.0°C and a low of 4.0°C, while Pahalgam recorded 16.6°C and 0.2°C respectively.

Kupwara saw a maximum of 19.8°C and a minimum of 2.2°C, while Kokernag recorded 18.6°C and 3.4°C. Gulmarg remained the coldest, with a high of 9.2°C and a low of minus 1.9°C.

In the Jammu region, the winter capital recorded a maximum temperature of 28.3°C, slightly below normal by 2.1 degrees, and a minimum of 12.4°C. Banihal recorded 20.4°C and 4.5°C, Batote 20.8°C and 5.7°C, while Katra registered 26.2°C as the maximum and 10.9°C as the minimum.



Govt committed to equitable development of Jammu, Srinagar cities: Deputy Chief Minister

Meets delegations; assesses key civic, development issues

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, APRIL 10: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today reiterated the Government's firm commitment towards ensuring balanced and equitable development of both Jammu and Srinagar cities.

The Deputy Chief Minister made these remarks while interacting with various public and individual delegations at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu.

A delegation led by former MLC, Rattan Lal Gupta, along with Tejinder Pal Singh (Aman) called on the Deputy Chief Minister and highlighted several issues and demands pertaining to the development of Jammu city.

Giving a patient hearing to the delegation, the Deputy Chief Min-



ister assured that the Government is focused on holistic and robust development across all regions, with special emphasis on key urban

centres like Jammu and Srinagar. He stated that a series of progressive initiatives are being undertaken, ranging from city

beautification to creation and upgradation of essential infrastructure, including roads and civic amenities, aimed at enhanc-

ing the overall quality of life for residents.

The Deputy Chief Minister issued necessary directions to the concerned departments for prompt and effective redressal of issues impacting day-to-day life in the Jammu region.

During the interaction, several other delegations and individuals also met the Deputy Chief Minister and raised concerns related to road and bridge construction, employment opportunities, industrial growth, water supply, electricity, and other public welfare issues.

The Deputy Chief Minister assured that all genuine issues raised by the delegations will be taken up with the respective departments for timely and appropriate resolution.

Prof Nazir Ganai Earns Global Recognition with Fulbright-Nehru Selection

Ganai's Fulbright-Nehru Selection Highlights SKUAST-K's Global Academic Rise

DR. AB QAYOOM

SRINAGAR, APR 10: In a significant recognition of academic leadership from Jammu & Kashmir, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), has been selected for the prestigious Fulbright-Nehru International Education Administrators Award (FNIEA) for the academic year 2025-2026. The announcement



was made by the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF), the nodal body responsible for administering Fulbright-Nehru programs in India. Prof. Ganai's selection places him among a distinguished group of Indian academic administrators chosen for high-level engagement with the United States' higher education ecosystem. The FNIEA program, sponsored by the U.S. government under the broader Fulbright-Nehru Program, is designed for senior academic leaders. It offers participants an opportunity to attend specialized seminars, undertake institutional visits, and interact with universities, policymakers, and education experts across the United States. The program aims to foster mutual understanding, strengthen academic partnerships, and facilitate the exchange of best practices in higher education. As part of the program, Prof. Ganai is expected to engage with leading academic institutions in the U.S., exploring avenues for collaboration, innovation, and global academic integration. His participation is anticipated to further enhance SKUAST-K's international outreach and academic excellence.

Under Prof. Ganai's leadership, SKUAST-K has made notable strides in expanding its global academic footprint. The university has established collaborations with reputed institutions such as the University of Guelph in Canada, Western Sydney University, and Murdoch University in Australia. These partnerships have facilitated joint research initiatives, faculty exchanges, and knowledge-sharing platforms.

In addition, the university has introduced forward-looking academic programs in areas like artificial intelligence in agriculture, agricultural economics, and data sciences. These initiatives are aimed at aligning agricultural education with emerging global trends and technological advancements, thereby equipping students with modern, industry-relevant skills. Reacting to the development, Prof. Ganai expressed gratitude for the recognition, stating that the selection reflects the university's growing engagement with the global academic community. He emphasized his commitment to leveraging the experience to bring back valuable insights that would further strengthen academic standards, research capabilities, and international collaborations at SKUAST-K. Over the years, SKUAST-K has earned recognition as one of the leading state agricultural universities in India, with consistent improvements in research output, academic innovation, and extension services. Prof. Ganai's selection for the Fulbright-Nehru award marks another milestone in the institution's journey toward global academic excellence.

Swift Govt Action Ensures Safety of Nandimarg Students; Classes Shifted to Nearby School Building

FAROQ RATHER

KULGAM, APR 10: In a prompt response to safety concerns, the district administration in Kulgam acted swiftly after a video surfaced on social media showing students from the upper belt of Nandimarg risking their lives by crossing a flowing stream to reach school. Taking immediate cognizance of the issue, the Chief Education Officer (CEO) Kulgam visited the area on the directions of the Education Minister to assess the ground situation and ensure necessary intervention. During the visit, it was observed that nearly 90 students from the upper areas of Nandimarg were compelled to cross the stream daily due to the absence of a bridge, posing a serious threat to their safety and disrupting their educational routine.

Recognizing the gravity of the situation, the authorities resolved the issue on the spot by making alternative academic arrangements. It was decided that students of Classes 9th and 10th would now attend classes at a newly constructed double-storey concrete school building located in the upper area of Nandimarg, which is easily accessible to the majority of the students. To ensure continuity and quality of education, three qualified subject-specific teachers have been deployed at the new facility. This step will enable students to pursue their studies without facing the daily risk of crossing the stream.

With the new arrangement in place, the issue has been effectively resolved, ensuring both the safety and uninterrupted education of the students. Officials stated that academic activities will now continue smoothly, providing much-needed relief to students and their families.

Experts Converge at KU as 45th IACR Meet Opens with Global Focus on Breakthroughs & Challenges

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, APR 10: The Department of Biochemistry, University of Kashmir (KU), on Friday inaugurated the 45th Annual Meeting of the Indian Association for Cancer Research (IACR), alongside a four-day international conference titled 'Advancements in Cancer Research: Discoveries, Therapeutics and Challenges' at the varsity's Main Campus.

Bringing together scientists, clinicians and academicians, the conference aims to serve as a dynamic platform for sharing ideas, presenting cutting-edge research, and exploring innovative approaches in cancer care, with a strong focus on improving diagnosis, treatment, and patient outcomes.

The event has attracted leading experts from across India and abroad, including participants from premier institutions such as AIIMS, IISc Bengaluru, and IITs, as well as globally reputed universities and research centres including Mayo Clinic, Emory University, and Harvard University.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofar Khan, said, "This conference brings together diverse scientific perspectives to address one of the most pressing health challenges of our time. Such academic engagements are essential for developing innovation and strengthening research that can translate into better healthcare outcomes."

Director, SKIMS Srinagar, Prof. M.



Ashraf Ganai, in his remarks said, "Collaboration between clinicians and researchers is key to advancing cancer care. Platforms like this enable meaningful dialogue that can bridge the gap between laboratory research and clinical practice."

Dean Academic Affairs KU, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, and Dean Research KU, Prof. Mohammad Sultan Bhat, highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary research and stressed on the need for sustained academic efforts to address complex health issues like cancer.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, noted that the University is committed to promoting quality research and academic exchange at national and international levels. President, IACR, Prof. Subrata Sinha, spoke about the vision and goals of the association,

and emphasized advancing cancer research through collaboration, innovation, and knowledge sharing.

Earlier, in her welcome address, Head, Department of Biochemistry KU and convenor of the event, Prof. Sharjil Amin, outlined the objectives of the conference and highlighted its importance in bringing together experts working across various domains of cancer research.

The conference abstract book was also released on the occasion. Students and scholars from across the country and abroad are attending the event. It features keynote and plenary lectures, thematic sessions, and oral and poster presentations on diverse areas of cancer research, including immunotherapy, genomics, precision oncology, and emerging therapeutic approaches.

NAVIGATING FUTURES: JU'S BHADERWAH CAMPUS EMPOWERS STUDENTS WITH MANAGEMENT CAREER WORKSHOP

AMIR IQBAL KHAN

BHADARWAH, APR 10: To empower students in making informed professional choices in a highly competitive global market, the School of Management Studies (SOMS) at the University of Jammu's Bhadarwah Campus

organized a comprehensive online career counselling workshop.

Lauding the initiative's nationwide outreach, Bhadarwah Campus Rector Prof. Rahul Gupta underscored the growing significance of management education and assured full institution-

al backing for continuous academic engagements, stating that such proactive steps are vital for enhancing student career readiness in today's dynamic environment.

Highlighting the transformative nature of an MBA programme, SOMS Incharge Head Dr. Umesh

Choudhary told the virtual participants that modern organizations actively seek professionals equipped with analytical acumen, adaptability and strong ethical values. The interactive event, which drew enthusiastic participation from students representing various institutions

across the country, also featured Associate Professor Dr. Rohit Bhat detailing emerging industry trends and placement prospects, ensuring participants received practical, strategic perspectives on aligning their career aspirations with current employability expectations.

Annual Day Celebrated at PMS GHS Sumbal, First Edition of "Nida-e-Sumbal" Newsletter Released

GULFAM BARI

SUMBAL, APR 10: PM Shri Girls High School Sumbal celebrated its Annual Day with great enthusiasm and fervour. Deputy Chief Education Officer Bandipora, G.M. Puju attended the function as the Chief Guest while Principal Degree College Sumbal Prof. Dr. Shabina Iqbal graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. Among others present were ZEO Sumbal Mohammad Azad Lone, In-charge Principal Higher Secondary School Sumbal

Javid Ahmad Malik, District Cultural Coordinator Bandipora Dr. Riyaz-ul-Hasan, Headmaster Girls High School Ajas M. Farooq Bhat, Sajad Ahmad Kachay and Zonal Cultural Coordinator Gh Mohammad Ganai.

The programme commenced with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran followed by Naat Sharif. Headmaster Mohammad Yaseen Qadri extended a warm welcome to the guests and highlighted the academic achievements and overall progress of the institu-

tion. Students presented a variety of colourful cultural performances which were widely appreciated by the audience who lauded their creativity, confidence and talent.

On the occasion, the school also released the first edition of its newsletter titled "Nida-e-Sumbal." The dignitaries appreciated the initiative and described it as an important milestone for the institution. Speaking at the event, Chief Guest G.M. Puju praised the school's performance in academic and co-curricular activ-



ities and emphasized the importance of girls' education. Other speakers also motivated students to work with dedication and perseverance to achieve their goals.

Mementos were presented to the distinguished guests, while meritorious students were felicitated for their outstanding performance. A promising teacher Farooq Sumbal and Headmaster Mohammad Yaseen Qadri were also honoured with citations in recognition of their academic and literary contributions.

Noted poet, cultural activist and President of Inder Cultural Forum Sumbal Saleem Yousof presented a thought-provoking poem which was highly appreciated by the audience. The programme was jointly conducted by students Mehro and Asmat under the supervision of Farooq Sumbal.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Senior Master Manzoor Ahmad who expressed gratitude to the guests and participants for making the Annual Day a grand success.

DC Anantnag reviews JK Samadhan

Stresses on ensuring Time-Bound, quality Redressal of Public Grievances

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, APRIL 10: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat, today directed officers to ensure time-bound and quality redressal of public grievances received through the JK Samadhan and CPGRAMS portals, adding that prompt response by concerned officials is essential to enhance public service delivery.

He also called for the speedy disposal of offline grievances pertaining to various departments to clear pendency in the district. The public must get the benefits of responsible and accountable governance which focuses on expeditious and quality grievance redressal, he remarked.

The DC issued these directions while chairing a comprehensive review meeting of all departments at Dak Bungalow, Khanabal. Principal GMC Anantnag, ADC, GM DIC, SEPWD, ACR, CPO, SDMS, ACD, Executive Engineer R&B, Jal Shakti, PDD and I&FC, all district and sectoral officers attended the meeting.

On the occasion, the DC took a detailed review of the JK Samadhan and CPGRAMS grievances of each department and enquired about the status of their resolution. He was informed that out of 5418 grievances received on JK Samadhan and 5908 on CPGRAMS, 4934 (91.07 percent) and 5350 (84.90 percent) respectively have been resolved so far. Further, a total of 03 and 19 grievances in different departments



are pending resolution above 28 and 60 days respectively.

Taking note of the grievances pending above 28 & 60 days, the DC directed the concerned departments to immediately

resolve the same adding it should be a norm that no grievance remains unresolved beyond 28 days.

Regarding status of citizen registration on JK Samadhan, Dr.

Bilal directed the departments to make efforts to push the figures to 100 percent from current 89 percent, in near future.

Asking officers to personally monitor the grievance redressal

process on JK Samadhan and CPGRAMS Portals, the DC directed them to make proper analysis of grievances received with special focus on their nature and place of origin. The mapping of data will shift the approach of redressal from mechanical to organic one, helping departments to take corrective measures at administrative and grass root levels ab initio and avoid recurrent public concerns, he noted.

He further directed that a uniform format be devised to help the officers to analyse the grievances received and submit details regularly. Committees shall be constituted to test check the quality of grievance redressal and performance of departments will be rated as per the actual public satisfaction, he said.

Stating that quality grievance redressal shall no way act as an impediment, the DC enjoined upon the officers to minimise any delays, ensuring grievances do not become chronic and turn into complaints.

At conclusion, the DC announced that the district is working to launch a Digital Arzi Management System enabling him to keep track of the offline grievances forwarded to the concerned departments.

Further, a provision for the citizens to directly register grievances has been provided in the system, featuring a WhatsApp Chatbot that will interact with applicants in real time. To make the process smooth and seamless, proper training of the officials will be held soon, the DC said.

SEBI organizes Regional Investor Awareness Seminar to promote financial literacy

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, APRIL 10: Regional Investor Awareness Seminar was successfully organized by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd, in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare, Srinagar.

The initiative aimed to promote financial literacy and enhance investor awareness among stakeholders



connected with child care institutions.

The seminar witnessed enthusiastic participation from officials of the Department of Social Welfare, along with representatives and beneficiaries from several child care institutions, including Palaash/Paresha, Intellectual Home, Observation Home, and the Specialized Adoption Agency (SAA).

The program was designed to equip participants with essential knowledge on financial planning, prudent investment practices, and the importance of making well-informed financial decisions.

Key sessions covered a broad range of topics such as an introduction to the securities market, strategies to identify and avoid fraudulent investment schemes, and the critical role of SEBI in protecting investor interests. SEBI officials underscored the importance of extending financial awareness initiatives to grassroots levels, particularly targeting vulnerable and underserved communities.

The seminar also featured interactive sessions that encouraged active engagement, allowing participants to seek clarifications and deepen their understanding of core financial concepts.

The Department of Social Welfare expressed sincere appreciation for SEBI's efforts and emphasized the value of such collaborative initiatives in empowering individuals associated with child care institutions through financial education.

The program concluded with a strong and impactful message advocating responsible investing and reaffirming the collective commitment to fostering a financially aware and informed society.

DC Kathua reviews arrangements for JKSSB Junior Assistant Examination

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, APRIL 10: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today reviewed the arrangements for the smooth conduct of the upcoming JKSSB examination at a meeting held in the DC Office Complex, here.

The JKSSB written examination for the post of Junior Assistant is scheduled to be held on April 19, 2026.

The Deputy Commissioner held a detailed discussion with concerned officers regarding the arrangements being put in place to ensure the seamless conduct of the examination. It was informed that 10 examination centres have been established across the district for the purpose.

The meeting reviewed key aspects including drinking water facilities, power supply, seating arrangements, security deployment and videography at all examination centres.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of close coordination among all stakeholders. He directed them to work in a coordinated manner to ensure smooth and fair conduct of the examination. He also briefed officers on their roles and responsibilities for efficient execution of the process.

The Deputy Commissioner impressed upon the designated officers to strictly adhere to the protocols laid down by JKSSB to maintain transparency and fairness during the examination process.

The Police Department was directed to ensure adequate security arrangements, including proper frisking and deployment of personnel at all examination centres.

General Manager DIC Mushtaq Chaudhary; ADC Vishavjeet Singh; RTO Surinder Sharma; ACR Vishav Partap Singh; SE PWD Arun Gupta; Tehsildar Vikram Kumar; DIO Rajinder Dagra; CMO; Dr Vijay Raina; Dy SPHQ Ravinder Singh, besides other concerned officers, were present in the meeting.

ADC Handwara chairs meeting on digitization of backlog Mutations

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

HANDWARA, APRIL 10: Additional Deputy Commissioner, (ADC), Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi on Friday chaired a meeting to review the progress of digitization of backlog mutations across the sub division.

During the meeting, a detailed assessment of pending mutation cases was carried out. The ADC emphasized the importance of timely and accurate

digitization of revenue records to ensure transparency, efficiency, and ease of access for the public. He directed all concerned Tehsildars to expedite the process and clear the backlog within the stipulated timeframe.

The ADC stressed the need for close coordination among revenue officials and instructed Tehsildars to closely monitor the progress at the field level.

He also underscored the importance of maintaining data accuracy and

adhering to prescribed guidelines during the digitization process.

Officers were asked to identify bottlenecks, if any, and take immediate corrective measures to ensure smooth and speedy completion of the task.

The ADC reiterated that digitization of land records is a key step towards strengthening governance and improving public service delivery.

The meeting was attended by Tehsildars, Naib Tehsildars, and other concerned revenue officials.

Mega 3-day Awareness Drive concludes in Kishtwar

More than 2000 individuals participate in final day rally

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KISHTWAR, APRIL 10: The three-day district-level awareness programme organized by the Department of School Education, concluded successfully today, witnessing enthusiastic participation from the line departments, teachers, students and civil society members across the district. The programme focused on key social themes including road safety, social awareness, environmental protection, mental health, drug de-addiction and career guidance.

The programme focused on key social themes including road safety, social awareness, environmental protection, mental health, drug de-addiction and career guidance.

The overall district-level event was organised under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma, Chief Education Officer Sanjay Dogra coordinated the event. On the second day, a district-wide grand poster-making and slogan-writing competition was organized across educational institutions, drawing large-scale participation from students.

The main district-level event was held here at Government Boys' Higher Secondary School, where students from various schools participated in the poster-making competition. An awareness session on road safety was also conducted during the event. District Traffic Inspector Anil Raina was the resource person. He shared valuable insights on traffic rules, safety measures and responsible road



usage.

On the concluding day, a grand

awareness rally was organized from the New DC Office to TRC Kishtwar. The rally was flagged off by the Deputy Commissioner and saw participation from over 2,000 individuals, including officers from the line departments, students, teachers and civil society members.

Participants carried IEC posters conveying messages on environmental protection, road safety and social responsibility. The Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) distributed road safety IEC materials among the participants.

Similar rallies were also taken out by the educational institutions across the district, spreading awareness through impactful slogans such as "Plant Trees and Save the Earth," "Nazar Hati, Durghatna Ghati," and "Say No to Drugs, Save Lives," among others.

Mega Awareness Rally held in Doda to promote drug-free society, sense of social responsibility

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, APRIL 10: A grand Awareness Rally was organized today by the School Education Department, marking the culmination of the 3-day Divisional Level Awareness Programme. The rally commenced from Government Higher Secondary School Boys and marched towards the Sports Stadium via Clock Tower. A large number of students, officials and the general public participated in the Rally.

The event was attended by MLA Doda West Shakti Raj Parihar; ADC Anil Kumar Thakur; ASP Headquarters Mohd Aslam; Joint Director Education



Mohd Asfaq; DYSP Headquarters Krishan Rattan; CEO Bhushan Kumar Pathak; Dr. Anis Ahmed along with School heads and officials from the Health, Traffic and other Departments.

The programme was effectively coordinated by District Nodal Officer

Education Department Umesh Kumar, who ensured smooth execution and active participation across all levels.

Speaking on the occasion, the ADC emphasized the district administration's firm resolve to make all 237 panchayats of Doda drug-free. He urged students to act as ambassadors of Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan and spread awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse. The MLA also called for strict action against drug peddlers and appealed to society to safeguard children from the menace of substance abuse.

The rally witnessed massive participation from students of the

government and private schools, who carried banners and placards highlighting themes such as environmental protection, anti-drug campaign and career awareness. Slogans promoting a drug-free society and social responsibility echoed across the town, making the rally a vibrant and impactful awareness drive.

Meanwhile, similar awareness rallies were held in all schools and cluster levels on the identified themes. The programme concluded with a strong message of unity, youth empowerment and collective responsibility towards building a progressive and drug-free society.

DLSA Reasi promotes environmental conservation

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

REASI, APRIL 10: Under the visionary leadership of Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Reasi (also Pr. District and Sessions Judge) Khalil Choudhary and the guidance of Secretary Pooja Gupta, awareness events on Afforestation was organized today at Legal Aid Clinic Arabia, Shibrass and several other places in Mahore.

The programme was conducted by the PLVs of TLSC Mahore to sensitize the locals about the importance of tree plantation, environmental conservation for maintaining ecological balance. The PLVs highlighted the adverse effects of deforestation and encouraged the participants to actively contribute towards planting and preserving trees. A Poster making competition on the

theme "Save Environment" was organized at Government Middle School-Nangal-Katra. Ten students took part in the competition and showcased their artistic skills while spreading the message of saving the environment.

The winners of the competition were felicitated with medals. Awareness programme on Water Conservation of Water was organized at Bus Stand Reasi by the Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) of DLSA to sensitize the local populace about the importance of water conservation, sustainable use of water resources and the urgent need to prevent wastage of water in daily life. The PLVs highlighted simple and practical measures for saving water, including rainwater harvesting, judicious use of water in households and protection of natural water sources.

DC reviews progress of ABDP, Sampoonata Abhiyan 2.0 in Aspirational Block Marwah

HT NEWS NETWORK

KISHTWAR, APRIL 10: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the implementation of the Aspirational Block Development Programme (ABDP) and Sampoonata Abhiyan 2.0 in the Aspirational Block Marwah.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed key performance indicators across major sectors, including health and nutrition, education, agriculture and allied activities, basic infrastructure, drinking water supply, sanitation, financial inclusion and social development.

A detailed sector-wise assessment was carried out, focusing on the status of ongoing works, identification of critical gaps and measures required to expedite the implementation of various schemes and projects in the block.

The meeting was informed that all six indicators under Sampoonata Abhiyan 2.0 have been fully saturated. The Chief Education Officer (CEO) was directed to



improve transition rates at the secondary and higher secondary levels.

Further, the Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) was instructed to intensify efforts for the expansion

and promotion of micro-irrigation facilities in Marwah and Warwan areas to enhance agricultural productivity and support the farming community.

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO)

was directed to complete the NQAS certification process and expedite the generation of ABHA IDs in the block to strengthen healthcare delivery systems.

While reviewing the progress

of revolving funds for Self Help Groups (SHGs), the Deputy Commissioner expressed concern over the slow pace of implementation and directed the concerned departments to achieve targets in a time-bound manner.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed the Lead District Manager (LDM) to increase banking access points in Sub-Division Marwah, with special emphasis on establishing ATM facilities.

The DC underscored the importance of timely execution, inter-departmental coordination and focused monitoring to ensure the effective achievement of the objectives of the Aspirational Blocks Programme for the socio-economic upliftment of the people of Marwah.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Vinod Kumar Behnal, PO ICDS Dr. Rishi Kumar Sharma, CPO Akhil Thakur, ACD Manoj Kumar, ACP Neeraj Sharma, DSWO Tariq Parveez Qazi, AD FCS&CA Shafiqat Ali Keen, CAO Kushal Chandel, CHO Sajid Mustafa, DSHO Dr. Jameel Nasir, CEO Sanjay Dogra, BDO, Executive Engineers, along with other officers and officials.

Doda gears up for Baisakhi Festivities

HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, APRIL 10: Additional Deputy Commissioner Anil Kumar Thakur today reviewed civic and security arrangements for smooth celebration of Baisakhi Festival across the district.

During the meeting, the ADC directed concerned officers to make comprehensive arrangements and provide necessary facilities at designated venues. Emphasis was laid on maintaining law and order, sanitation and public safety.

The police department was tasked with ensuring adequate security arrangements, while the Municipality was instructed to maintain proper sanitation and cleanliness in and around festival sites. Magistrate duties were also assigned to ensure effective on-ground supervision.



The District Information Officer was directed to keep strict vigil on social media to curb misinformation and ensure timely dissemination of information. Block Development Officers were directed to sanitize festival venues in their respective blocks.

The Power Development Department was instructed to remove low-lying cables to prevent any untoward incidents. The Food and Supplies Department was asked to conduct inspections to ensure the availability and quality of essential items. The Fire and Emergency Department was directed to remain on alert for any emergencies.

Furthermore, the ADC Baderwah and Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) appraised the chair about the arrangements and facilities being put in place within their respective jurisdictions.

The meeting was attended by ACR, ACD, Tehsildar, DIO, DySP Headquarters, Executive Officer Municipality and other concerned officers and officials. The ADC Baderwah, SDMs, Tehsildars and BDOs of the district also participated virtually in the meeting.

NDRF conducts Disaster Management Awareness, Training Programme at GDC Billawar

HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, APRIL 10: The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), Activity Club, NSS & NCC unit of Government Degree College Billawar, in coordination with the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), organized an Awareness and Training Programme on Disaster Management in the college premises, today. The event was organized under the patronage of the College Principal Dr. Alka Sharma.

The NDRF team, comprising around 30 trained personnel and led by Deputy Commandant Parveen Singh, conducted the programme. The event witnessed active participation from the college faculty, non-teaching staff and students, making it a highly engaging and informative session.



The Deputy Commandant provided valuable insights into the role, responsibilities and functioning of the NDRF in managing the disaster situations. The session aimed at creating awareness and building preparedness among the participants.

The NDRF team conducted detailed live demonstrations on handling different disaster scenarios, including earthquakes, fire incidents, floods, accidents and drowning cases. The demonstrations focused on practical approaches using simple techniques and easily available household items, making the training highly relevant and accessible.

After the demonstrations, the participants were given an opportunity for hands-on training, where students and staff actively engaged with the NDRF team to practice the techniques demonstrated during the session.

The event proved to be highly informative and much-needed, equipping the participants with essential life-saving skills and awareness to effectively respond to emergencies.

DC Reasi flags off multi-thematic awareness rally

HT NEWS NETWORK

REASI, APRIL 10: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today flagged off a multi-thematic awareness rally as part of a three-day comprehensive awareness programme aimed at sensitizing the public, particularly the youth, on key social and developmental issues, including mental health, drug de-addiction, career counselling, Road Safety awareness and environmental conservation.

The rally commenced from the DC Office Complex, passed through the main Bus Stand and adjoining market areas and culminated back at the

starting point.

Students from various educational institutions participated in large numbers. Carrying placards and raising slogans, they actively spread messages on the importance of a healthy lifestyle, responsible behaviour, road safety and environmental conservation among the general public.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of awareness programmes in shaping a responsible and informed society. "Students act as effective change-makers, capable of influencing their families and communities through informed actions and positive behavior," he

noted.

He further urged the youth to remain focused on their studies, adopt a disciplined lifestyle and actively contribute to nation-building. He also advised them to stay away from drugs, noting that it harms both individual health and society.

The DC also called upon the participants to follow traffic rules diligently and contribute to maintaining a clean and green environment. He reiterated the administration's commitment to organizing such outreach programmes to build awareness and promote responsible citizenship among the masses.

DHO Doda reviews implementation of NVBDCP Stresses Micro-Planning, Field Intensification

HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, APRIL 10: To review the functioning of the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) in the district, District Health Officer Dr. Raj Kumar Sharma chaired a meeting of Malaria staff and field functionaries at his office chamber here today.

At the outset, the Malaria staff presented indicator wise progress and highlighted various activities carried out under the NVBDCP across the district. The meeting focused on reviewing surveillance activities, preventive measures, awareness campaigns and field level interventions undertaken to control vector borne diseases.

After a detailed review of the progress, the DHO impressed upon the concerned staff to devise a comprehensive micro-plan

followed by a structured tour plan to further intensify activities under the programme. He emphasized strengthening surveillance, ensuring timely reporting, enhancing community awareness and improving field monitoring to achieve better outcomes.

Dr. Sharma also stressed the importance of coordinated efforts, regular field visits and close monitoring to ensure effective implementation of the programme and prevention of vector-borne diseases in the district.

The meeting was attended by Malaria Inspector, JHIs, BHWs and other field functionaries associated with the programme.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from all participants to further strengthen the implementation of NVBDCP and ensure improved public health outcomes in the District.

3-day Divisional-level awareness programme concludes in Udhampur

HT NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 10: The three-day Divisional-level awareness Programme concluded today with the District Administration Udhampur, in collaboration with School Education Department, organizing a padyatra to promote Nasha Mukta Udhampur Abhiyan, with the message "Say No to Drugs, Yes to Life."

The padyatra was flagged off from Domail Chowk by Deputy Commissioner Minga Sherpa in presence of Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh; Joint Director School Education Udhampur-Reasi Dr. Jagdish Chander Mehra and Chief Education Officer Subash Gupta. Briefing the media, the Deputy Commissioner informed that a series of activities were conducted across the district during the three-day programme

to sensitize students and other stakeholders on essential issues such as road safety, environmental protection, mental health, drug de-addiction and career guidance. He emphasized the need to promote responsible behaviour and strengthen grassroots outreach. The DC stated that the main objective of organizing the padyatra was to educate people about the harmful effects of drug and substance abuse. He reiterated that awareness and education are the most powerful tools in the fight against drug abuse. A large number of staff members, students and other stakeholders participated enthusiastically in the rally.

The padyatra passed through Dhar Road, Barrian, Slathia Chowk, Court Road, Ramnagar Chowk, Gole market and culminated at Government Boys Higher Secondary School.

J&K Resident Commission's Samuhik Charcha fuels professional growth during Sadhana Saptah

HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10: The Resident Commission of the Jammu and Kashmir government organized a "samuhik charcha" as part of the Sadhana Saptah observance, which was held from April 2 to April 8 with extension upto April 10, 2026.

The event was conducted in the Resident Commission office

to review the activities related to the Karmayogi Portal. The participation and response of the employees was encouraging which highlighted the success of the programme in promoting professional development and inter-departmental coordination.

The discussion included a structured review of the office's hourly progress with the employees being informed about the key



courses under the programme. It emphasized their significance for professional development and capacity building. The samuhik

charcha provided a platform for open interaction, wherein the officials shared their experiences and discussed various issues faced

while accessing and undertaking the courses. These issues were suitably addressed and the individual concerns were resolved on a one-to-one basis to ensure smooth participation. The initiative aimed at enhancing awareness, promoting active engagement and enabling the employees to derive maximum benefit from the learning modules available on the Karmayogi Portal.

Awareness Campaign concludes in Kathua with enthusiastic student participation

DC flags off rally; Emphasis on Drug-Free, Responsible Youth

HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, APRIL 10: The three-day Awareness Programme organised by the School Education Department concluded here today with an awareness rally and felicitation ceremony, marking the successful culmination of the initiative.

The rally was flagged off by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma from Government Boys

Higher Secondary School. Students, teachers and officials participated enthusiastically, spreading awareness on key themes including traffic awareness, environmental protection, mental health, drug de-addiction and career counselling.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the importance of staying away from substance

abuse and maintaining focus on studies. He exhorted students to remain disciplined, motivated and committed towards their goals while adopting a healthy and responsible lifestyle.

Chief Education Officer Kewal Krishan also accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the flagging off ceremony. Among others present on the occasion were Forest Range Officer Gulshan Kumar; District Health Officer

Dr Uttam Chand and District Traffic Incharge Vikas Sharma.

The Forest Range Officer sensitised students to environment conservation, listing the government initiatives for conservation of environment. He solicited the participation of youth in plantation drives.

The District Health Officer highlighted the importance of mental health and cautioned students against excessive mobile

usage, terming it a growing problem among the youth.

The programme was also attended by District Education Planning Officer Anjana Manyal; Principal, Government Model Girls Higher Secondary School Jatinder Sethi; Principal Government Boys Higher Secondary School Rajesh Sharma, besides other teaching staff.

Earlier, students who excelled

in the competitions held on the second day at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, were felicitated and awarded prizes. In the Painting Competition, Aditya from APS Janglot secured first position.

Lavanya from the same school bagged second place and Niharika Sharma from Jammu Sanskriti School secured third place. In the Essay Competition, Drishti from Jammu Sanskriti School

secured first position, Nithik from APS Janglot secured second place, while Aruna from Government Higher Secondary School Keerain stood third. In the Quiz Competition, Government Higher Secondary School Hatli secured first position, followed by Government Higher Secondary School Forelain in second place and Government Higher Secondary School Barwal in third place.

HT EDITORIAL

Stop blowing sirens on roads

Few years back the Supreme Court of India imposed restrictions on the usage of sirens and it was impressed upon the officers and officials not to use the sirens while they are moving in the official vehicles. The apex court of the country issued directions that the sirens can be used only by the hospital ambulances and by VVIPs only in extraordinary situations.

The apex court order was implemented in principle for some time by the stakeholders but with the passage of time the order somewhat fizzled out. For some time, the people in general heaved a sigh of relief since there was no buzzing of sirens on the roads. This ensured that the movement of ambulances was hassle free and the patients could reach the hospitals well in time and as such many precious lives could be saved.

The joy in this regard was short lived and violations started to come up. It has been observed that people irrespective of their status in the society extend their cooperation to a particular campaign for some time. However, with the passage of time these people tend to lose interest and the situation is back to square one. Same has happened with the apex court order regarding the ban on the usage of sirens by the official vehicles. This has complicated the problems for the common masses and they are at the receiving end.

Since many of the officials have restarted the process of blowing the sirens the passage of ambulances has somewhat been hindered. Most of the motorists believe that some official vehicle is following them whenever there is siren from the back. In such a case the people tend to take things for granted and they are not ready to give way to the ambulances. In such a manner the patients suffer and in some cases the delay turns out to be fatal.

It is important that people as a whole behave as responsible citizens and the onus is more on people who are holding important positions and posts in the setup. It is imperative that the apex order regarding the usage of sirens is followed religiously so that there are no problems for people in general especially, the patients who have to be shifted to the hospitals. If such a thing happens then only, we can say that ours is an ideal society.

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Young Innovators Shine: Class 4 Students Turn Waste into Wonder



■ MOHAMMAD HANIEF

In an inspiring celebration of creativity, resilience, and environmental awareness, the students of Class 4 at The Legends School of Education, Sadrebal, Srinagar, captivated hearts with their remarkable "Best Out of Waste" activity held on April 06, 2026. The event carried special significance as it coincided with the birthday of one of its most determined participants, Mohammad Numaan, making the occasion even more memorable and meaningful for everyone involved.

The school campus buzzed with excitement as young learners proudly presented their innovative creations. Using simple discarded materials such as plastic bottles, old newspapers, cardboard boxes, and worn-out fabrics, students transformed what is commonly regarded as waste into objects of beauty and utility. The exhibition showcased a wide range of items, including colorful flower vases, artistic wall hangings, decorative crafts, and delightful models and toys. Each creation reflected imagination, patience, and a remarkable level of effort, proving that creativity can flourish even with the simplest of resources.

Beyond the visual appeal of the exhibition, the event carried a deeper message about sustainability and environmental responsibility. In a time when waste management has become a pressing global concern, such initiatives play a vital role in shaping responsible attitudes among young minds. Through this activity, students learned the importance of recycling, reusing, and reducing waste. They discovered that even discarded items, when approached with creativity and care, can be transformed into something meaningful and valuable.

Teachers and parents who attended the event were highly impressed by the enthusiasm and confidence displayed by the students. Each participant eagerly explained their project, sharing the inspiration and process behind their work. This not only enhanced their communication skills but also instilled a sense of pride and accomplishment. The activity provided a platform for students to express themselves freely, think independently, and showcase their abilities in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Among the many inspiring stories that emerged from the event, one stood out as a powerful example of determination and courage. Mohammad Numaan, a student of Class 4 (Blue Section), displayed exceptional spirit by actively participating in the activity despite facing a hearing impairment. Undeterred by his challenge, he competed alongside his peers with confidence and enthusiasm. His participation not only highlighted his resilience but also reflected the inclusive environment fostered by the school. Celebrating his birthday on the same day added to the joy of the occasion, boosting his morale and confidence significantly. His efforts earned admiration from teachers and fellow students alike, serving as a reminder that with encouragement and support, every child can overcome obstacles and shine.

In today's digital age, where children are often absorbed in mobile phones and screens, the "Best Out of Waste" activity brought about a refreshing change. Instead of spending hours in the virtual world, students directed their focus and energy toward hands-on creativity. This shift from passive screen time to active learning was evident in their deep engagement and concentration throughout the activity. By working with materials collected from their homes, they explored ideas, solved problems, and created something unique from their own imagination. The experience highlighted how meaningful activities can help reduce screen dependency while nurturing creativity, critical thinking, and independent learning.

The success of this initiative reflects the broader vision of The Legends School of Education in promoting holistic development among students. At the core of this vision is the LPD (Learning and Personality Development) Department, which continuously strives to make learning engaging, meaningful, and enjoyable. The department plays a crucial role in organizing activities that go beyond traditional classroom teaching, ensuring that education becomes a practical and interactive experience.

Through thoughtfully designed programs, the LPD Department encourages students to develop essential life skills such as creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving. These skills are increasingly important in today's rapidly evolving world. By participating in such initiatives, students not only strengthen their academic knowledge but also build confidence and develop a well-rounded personality.

The "Best Out of Waste" activity also emphasized the importance of experiential learning. Rather than simply learning about environmental conservation from textbooks, students actively engaged in the process of recycling and reusing materials. This hands-on approach made learning more impactful and memorable, helping students connect



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theoretical knowledge with real-life applications. It reinforced the idea that education is most effective when it is interactive, practical, and meaningful.

Another notable aspect of the event was the spirit of collaboration and teamwork it fostered among students. Many participants worked together, sharing ideas and helping each other bring their creations to life. This sense of cooperation not only enhanced the quality of their projects but also taught valuable lessons in empathy, communication, and mutual respect. Such experiences play a vital role in shaping individuals who can work effectively in diverse and dynamic environments.

The vibrant atmosphere of the exhibition was beautifully captured in photographs, reflecting the enthusiasm, curiosity, and active participation of the students. These images serve as lasting memories and highlight the dynamic and inclusive learning environment at the school. The joy and excitement visible on the faces of the students spoke volumes about the success of the activity.

The event was carefully supervised by the class teachers, ensuring that every student received guidance and encouragement throughout the process. The school management also played an active role in overseeing the program. Notably, the Chairman, Imran Shah, personally monitored the event throughout the day and appreciated the efforts of students, teachers, and organizers for its grand success. His presence and encouragement added great motivation and recognition to the participants, making the event even more memorable.

Behind the success of this initiative was the

dedicated effort of the teachers and the LPD team. Their guidance, encouragement, and careful planning ensured that every student had the opportunity to participate and excel. By creating a supportive and inspiring atmosphere, they helped bring out the best in each child. Their commitment to nurturing young minds continues to play a vital role in shaping the future of the students and the institution.

The event also served as an important lesson in responsibility and awareness. It encouraged students to reflect on their role in protecting the environment and to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives. By learning to reuse and recycle materials, they are taking small but meaningful steps toward becoming environmentally conscious citizens.

Parents expressed their appreciation for the initiative, noting how it helped their children develop new perspectives and skills. Many were pleasantly surprised by the creativity and innovation displayed by the students. The activity strengthened the connection between the school and families, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts in a child's overall development.

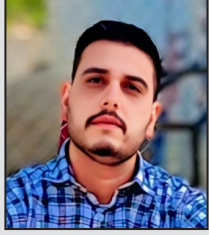
As the event concluded, it left behind a deep sense of pride and accomplishment among students, teachers, and parents. The "Best Out of Waste" activity not only showcased the creative talents of young learners but also reinforced important values such as sustainability, perseverance, and inclusivity. It demonstrated that when education is combined with creativity and purpose, it can inspire students to achieve remarkable outcomes.

The Legends School of Education continues to set an example by fostering a learning environment that is both vibrant and inclusive. By integrating such meaningful activities into the curriculum, the school ensures that students receive a well-rounded education that prepares them for the future. These initiatives go beyond academics, contributing significantly to the overall growth and personality development of each learner.

In a world that increasingly values innovation and environmental responsibility, the efforts of these young students stand as a source of inspiration. Their ability to transform waste into something beautiful and useful reflects the power of creativity and the importance of nurturing young minds. With continued guidance and encouragement, these students are well on their way to becoming confident, responsible, and forward-thinking individuals.

The "Best Out of Waste" activity stands as a powerful reminder that learning can be both meaningful and enjoyable. It highlights the role of schools in shaping not just knowledgeable students but also creative and compassionate citizens. Through such initiatives, The Legends School of Education is truly making a difference—one young innovator at a time.

The author is a senior analyst and can be mailed at m.hanief@gmail.com
X/Twitter: @haniefmha



■ JAWAID IQBAL

Social Media: Connecting Minds or Dividing Hearts?

In the intricate tapestry of human civilisation, few innovations have altered the dynamics of communication as profoundly and irrevocably as social media. Conceived initially as a digital apparatus for facilitating interpersonal interaction, it has evolved into a pervasive and omnipresent force that shapes perceptions, behaviours, and relationships on a global scale. It promises an unprecedented confluence of ideas and individuals, dissolving geographical and temporal barriers with astonishing ease. Yet, beneath this veneer of connectivity lies a paradox that invites rigorous scrutiny: does social media genuinely unite minds, or does it, in a more subtle and insidious manner, fragment emotional bonds and divide hearts?

At its most idealistic, social media represents the apotheosis of connectivity. It has effectively transcended the constraints that once governed human interaction, enabling instantaneous communication across continents. Individuals separated by vast distances can now exchange ideas, collaborate on intellectual pursuits, and cultivate relationships that would have been inconceivable in earlier epochs. This digital interconnectivity has fostered a sense of global community, wherein cultural, linguistic, and ideological boundaries appear increasingly permeable.

Moreover, social media has democratised the dissemination of information. Traditional hierarchies of knowledge, once monopolised by institutional authorities, have been disrupted by the participatory nature of digital platforms. Individuals are no longer passive recipients of information; they are active contributors, capable of shaping discourse and influencing public opinion. This decentralisation has empowered marginalised voices, providing them with a platform to articulate their experiences and advocate for social justice. Movements that might once have languished in obscurity can now garner international attention, mobilising support and effecting tangible change.

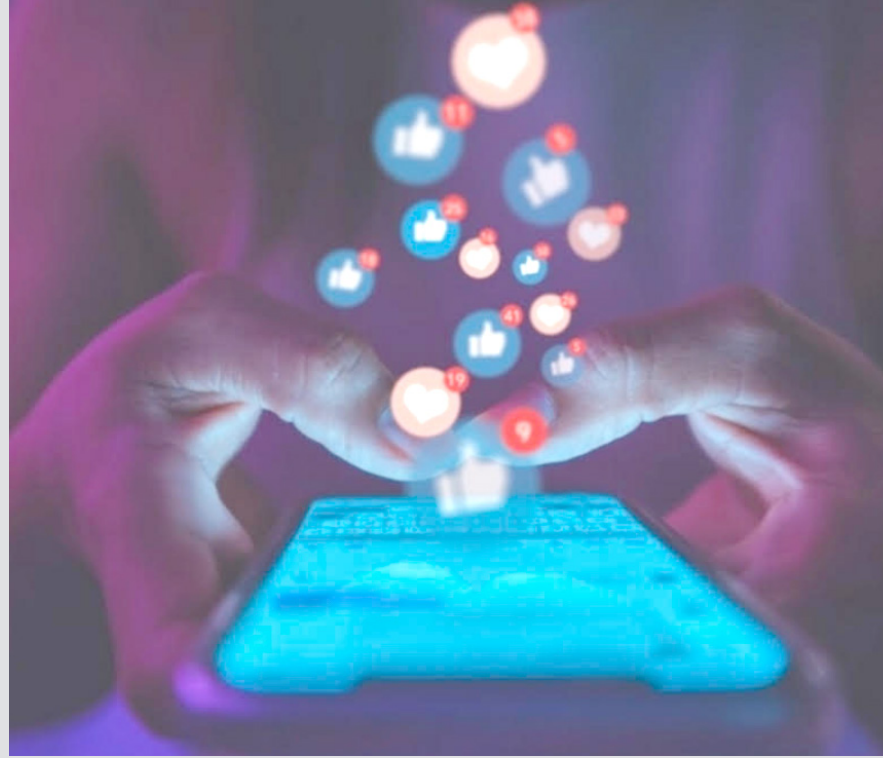
In times of crisis, the connective potential of social media becomes particularly evident. It serves as an indispensable conduit for real-time information, enabling rapid coordination of relief

efforts and fostering a sense of collective solidarity. Whether in the aftermath of natural disasters or during public health emergencies, these platforms facilitate the swift exchange of critical information, often bridging gaps left by traditional communication channels. In such contexts, social media emerges not merely as a tool of convenience but as a vital instrument of communal resilience.

However, this narrative of connectivity is neither unambiguous nor universally applicable. The same mechanisms that enable social media to unite individuals can also engender division. Central to this phenomenon is the role of algorithmic curation, which tailors content to align with users' preferences and behaviours. While ostensibly designed to enhance user engagement, this process often results in the formation of echo chambers—insular digital environments in which individuals are exposed predominantly to viewpoints that reinforce their existing beliefs. This selective exposure fosters ideological polarisation, diminishing the likelihood of meaningful dialogue and mutual understanding.

The consequences of such polarisation are manifold. As individuals become increasingly entrenched in their respective ideological enclaves, the capacity for empathy and nuanced discourse is eroded. Divergent perspectives are not merely contested but frequently vilified, leading to a climate of hostility and antagonism. In this fragmented digital landscape, social media ceases to function as a bridge between minds and instead becomes a battleground of competing narratives.

Equally concerning is the performative nature of social media interactions. In an environment where social validation is quantified through metrics such as likes, shares, and comments, individuals are incentivised to curate idealised representations of themselves. This phenomenon engenders a disjunction between one's online persona and lived



reality, fostering a culture of superficiality and inauthenticity. The relentless pursuit of digital affirmation can precipitate feelings of inadequacy and anxiety, particularly among younger users who are more susceptible to external validation.

The concept of "ambient awareness," wherein individuals maintain a continuous yet superficial connection with others through sporadic updates, further complicates the notion of genuine interaction. While it creates an illusion of closeness, it often lacks the depth and emotional resonance that characterise meaningful relationships. Communication is frequently reduced to brief, impersonal exchanges, depriving it of the richness and complexity inherent in face-to-face interaction. In this sense, social media may be seen as a simulacrum of connection—an imitation that

fails to capture the essence of authentic human engagement.

Another critical dimension of this discourse is the proliferation of misinformation. The velocity with which information circulates on social media platforms often surpasses the mechanisms designed to verify its accuracy. This creates an environment in which falsehoods can propagate with alarming rapidity, undermining public trust and distorting collective understanding. The deliberate dissemination of disinformation, whether for political or economic gain, further exacerbates this issue, highlighting the vulnerability of digital ecosystems to manipulation.

The psychological ramifications of pervasive social media use are equally significant. The constant influx of information and stimuli can lead to cognitive overload, impairing concen-

tration and diminishing the capacity for reflective thought. Moreover, the compulsion to remain perpetually connected can encroach upon real-world interactions, weakening interpersonal relationships. Individuals may find themselves physically present yet emotionally absent, their attention fragmented by the incessant demands of the digital realm.

Despite these challenges, it would be reductive to categorise social media solely as a divisive force. Its impact is inherently contingent upon the manner in which it is utilised. When approached with intentionality and critical awareness, social media can indeed foster meaningful connections and facilitate constructive discourse. Educational initiatives that promote digital literacy and critical thinking are essential in enabling individuals to navigate these platforms responsibly. Furthermore, there is a pressing need for greater accountability on the part of technology companies. The design and implementation of algorithms must be guided by ethical considerations, prioritising the well-being of users over the maximisation of engagement. Transparency in content moderation and data usage is equally imperative, as it fosters trust and empowers users to make informed decisions. On an individual level, cultivating a balanced relationship with social media is of paramount importance. This may involve setting boundaries, engaging in mindful consumption, and prioritising depth over breadth in digital interactions. By exercising discernment and self-regulation, individuals can mitigate the adverse effects associated with social media while harnessing its potential for positive engagement.

In conclusion, the question of whether social media connects minds or divides hearts is inherently complex and multifaceted. It embodies both the promise of unprecedented connectivity and the peril of profound fragmentation. Social media is neither intrinsically benevolent nor inherently detrimental; rather, it is a reflection of human behaviour and societal values. Its ultimate impact depends on the choices made by its users and the ethical frameworks that govern its operation. If wielded with wisdom and responsibility, social media can serve as a powerful instrument for unity, understanding, and collective progress. Conversely, if approached without critical awareness, it risks exacerbating division and eroding the very fabric of human connection. The challenge, therefore, lies not in the technology itself but in our capacity to navigate it judiciously, ensuring that it fulfils its potential as a bridge between minds rather than a barrier between hearts.

Tral Deserves District Status: A Voice for Justice, Development, and Equality



■ WANI ARFAT

Tral a significant sub-region of the Pulwama district located in South Kashmir, is an area endowed with immense beauty, significance, and utility. Tral is famous for its large area, natural beauty, and rich history. Encircled by lofty mountains, enveloped by dense forests, graced by fresh springs, and dotted with picturesque lakes, Tral resembles a paradise on Earth.

Nature has endowed this entire area with every aspect that renders it unique and attractive. Nevertheless, even after possessing all these assets, Tral has not been granted its proper status of administration yet. This poses a crucial and vital question to be asked, How long would this situation persist.

Tral possesses huge territory and sizeable populace and hence is completely deserving of being bestowed upon with district status. This area encompasses more than 60 villages with a population exceeding one lakh people. To manage a large populace demands an efficient and potent administrative system. Unfortunately, the present system cannot cope with the requirements of such a large area. Common man living in distant areas

suffers immensely from several problems in his day-to-day life. Not even for any official matter, he is compelled to move far off places like Pulwama or Srinagar, thus squandering precious time and money too.

The problem worsens further in the rural parts of Tral, where many places do not have adequate road connectivity and transportation means. These villages are inaccessible during rains and snowfall and get isolated from other parts of the area. It is hard for anyone to move out of these villages. Such conditions adversely impact patients, children who need to go to schools, and elderly people who require urgent medical treatment. At times, reaching the hospitals becomes a herculean task. This situation proves to be deadly at times. All these facts prove that Tral needs proper administration and infrastructural improvements.

Health facilities in Tral leave much to be desired. There is a Sub-District Hospital and a few Primary Health Centers, but their facilities are inadequate. They lack specialists, advanced technology, and emergency facilities. As a result, people are compelled to visit Srinagar or Pulwama for getting treatment. In some cases, it results in losing their lives. Had there been adequate health facilities within Tral, many lives could have been saved. Health care is a fundamental right, and people living in Tral deserve the best health facilities without any hindrance.

There are some positive aspects in Tral regarding the education sector. There are various government schools, private

institutions, a degree college, an Islamic Oriental College, and an ITI (Industrial Training Institute) located in Tral. These institutes are contributing significantly to mold the careers of the young generation. The youths of Tral are very capable, energetic, and ambitious; all they dream of doing is achieving success and serving the society. But for proper planning, management, and development, district-level administration is necessary.

Tral is economically a prosperous place. It has very fertile land, which is perfect for agricultural, horticultural, and dairy farming activities. Many fruits such as apples and walnuts are cultivated on a large scale and contribute immensely towards the local economy. The reason why farmers and businessmen are unable to reap profits is that of inadequate road connectivity, lack of infrastructure, and absence of good markets. Consequently, their efforts go unrewarded. By granting district status to Tral, it will become possible for the area to develop its road network, enhance storage capacity, and have better connections with the marketplaces.

Tourism is yet another flourishing industry of Tral. Nature provides Tral with immense charm. Its lush valleys, serene lakes, and water springs are alluring to tourists. Some famous spots include Nagberan, Tarsar, Marsar, and Arupal. Places like Bugmad and Wasturwan provide suitable grounds for trekking and camping. If proper attention, marketing, and facilities are provided, Tral can emerge as a popular tourist spot. This will boost tourism, create job opportuni-

ties, and enhance the quality of life of the locals.

The region has rich historical and cultural backgrounds as well. Ancient settlements like Gufkral speak volumes about Tral's inhabitation dating back several millennia ago. Numerous Sufi dargahs, holy sites, and cultural practices make it unique. This heritage is an integral part of the heritage of Tral and its natives. This heritage has the capacity to entice historians, scholars, and tourists from across the globe. However, for this to happen, effective administration must come into play.

The people of Tral have been neglected for years. The absence of basic facilities, poor administrative control, and little political focus have made the development process in this region very slow. It is unfair for any region to be treated this way. Each and every region needs to get equal opportunities, equal development, and equal treatment. To neglect such an important region as Tral is not only wrong; it amounts to injustice.

There are other regions too, which are asking for recognition as districts. But their case does not seem as strong and valid as that of Tral, because Tral fulfills all the requirements needed for being declared as a district. There are many people here, it is a large region, it has educational institutions, it is economically strong and historically important as well.

The need for this demand receives strong support from the general public. People have expressed their opinion on various social media platforms such as

Facebook, including well-known social activists and Citizens' Council Tral member Farooq Trali, along with Ghulam Ahmad Kantroo, Shah Manzoor, Shakir Hussain, Tanveer Shah, Shaikat Ali, Ammar Shaikat, Khaksar Abdul Rasheed, Gohar Sahib, and Khalil Ahmad. This demand is not emotional; rather, there is genuine reason behind it, and that is the development and betterment of the region.

The decision of declaring Tral as a district will have several advantages. The administrative system will be improved and more responsive towards citizens' needs. Health facilities and educational institutions will be provided to all citizens. In addition, the region will receive proper roads, bridges, and necessary infrastructures. Tourism will increase and help develop the economy. However, the most important advantage of this decision is the pride felt by its citizens.

In conclusion, awarding district status to Tral is a decision that goes beyond the bureaucratic level. It involves a question of justice, as well as acknowledging the importance of such a special and beautiful place. After waiting for so long, Tral's time has finally come.

Mohammad Arfat Wani is a writer, social activist, and nursing student from Kuchmulla, Tral. He writes on social issues, culture, and public concerns with the aim of raising awareness and inspiring positive change. Email: wania6817@gmail.com

Focus Like Fire



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

In a world full of noise, the ability to focus has become a rare and powerful skill. People are constantly pulled in different directions—notifications, social media, comparison, and endless choices. In such a situation, those who turn their focus into a disciplined obsession for their goals rise above the crowd. This is not about unhealthy fixation, but about clarity, commitment, and unwavering dedication to what truly matters.

What It Really Means

Focus is the art of giving your full attention to one task without distraction. Turning that focus into obsession means making your goals a central priority—thinking about them consistently, working toward them passionately, and allowing them to guide your daily decisions. It is a mindset where purpose drives action.

Building Pinpoint Focus

Pinpoint focus is like a laser beam—sharp, powerful, and precise. It can be developed with conscious effort.

Start by setting clear and specific goals. Confusion weakens focus, while clarity strengthens it. Replace vague ideas like “I want success” with concrete targets such as clearing an exam or growing a business.

Next, remove distractions. Keep your phone away, silence unnecessary notifications, and create a quiet workspace. Your environment shapes your concentration. Working in time blocks also helps. Focus deeply for 30–60 minutes, then take short breaks. This method improves efficiency while preventing burnout.

Equally important is mind control. Your mind will wander—it is natural. The key is to bring it back, again and again, to the task at hand.



Finally, build a routine. Consistent practice at a fixed time trains your brain to concentrate better over time.

Why Focus Leads to Success

Focus is the foundation of achievement. It boosts productivity, allowing tasks to be completed faster and with better quality. It deepens learning, helping you understand concepts thoroughly rather than superficially.

It builds consistency—the true driver of success—by keeping you aligned with your goals. A focused mind also makes fewer mistakes and better decisions. When your energy is not scattered, it channels into one direction, resulting in faster growth.

In simple terms, focus converts effort into meaningful results.

Turning Focus into Obsession

Focus becomes obsession when it integrates into your identity and lifestyle.

Start by connecting your goals with a strong purpose. Ask yourself why your goal matters. Emotional meaning strengthens commitment.

Visualising success daily can keep motivation alive. Imagine achieving your goal—feel the pride and satisfaction. This mental rehearsal fuels determination.

Stay emotionally invested. When you care deeply, focus becomes natural rather than forced.

Be ruthless in eliminating time-wasters. Learn to say no to distractions that do not serve your purpose.

Track your progress and celebrate small wins. Each step forward builds momentum and reinforces your drive.

Surround yourself with a goal-oriented environment—people, books, and content that constantly remind you of your mission.

Healthy vs Unhealthy Obsession

It is important to maintain balance. A healthy obsession provides energy, discipline, and purpose. It keeps your mind focused and positive.

An unhealthy obsession, however, creates stress, disrupts balance, and neglects health and relationships, often leading to burnout. The aim is deep commitment without losing control of your well-being.

The Final Thought

Turning your focus into an obsession for your goals is one of the most powerful habits you can develop. It helps you rise above distractions, use your time wisely, and move steadily toward success.

Pinpoint focus sharpens your efforts. Consistent focus builds progress. Purpose-driven obsession creates extraordinary results.

Success is not about doing many things—it is about doing the right things with full focus, again and again. Train your mind, guard your attention, and let your goals become your driving force.

The author is a Faculty, Science Department Sri Amritsar Sahib, Punjab

Health Benefits of Mango



■ SAHIL MANZOOR

Anyone who wants to stay away from lethal infections and diseases needs an adequate amount of fresh and healthy food on a regular basis. It is our responsibility to introduce seasonal fruits and vegetables

into our families and share their health benefits. Health experts believe that fresh fruits and vegetables are good for our health. Natural and pure food items are always beneficial.

One thing is quite interesting: everyone of us has different choices. The same is true when choosing food items and recipes. All is well, but health should always be a priority. Never ignore or avoid health-related issues.

In this article, let's learn some amazing facts about the mango, one of the most favourite and beneficial fruits the Almighty has bestowed upon us. Mango is a seasonal fruit with great health benefits. It is native to India and Southeast Asia. Maharashtra, Odisha, and Punjab are among the states where mangoes have been cultivated for centuries.

Mango is beneficial for digestive health, heart health, and eye health. It contains antioxidants that may lower the risk of cancer. Mangoes have their own characteristics, such as taste and size. This delicious fruit offers many health benefits.

Benefits of Mango

Mango boosts the immune system as it

contains vitamin E, which helps protect us from various infections. Those who take insufficient amounts of vitamin E are at a higher risk of getting infections.

Mango contains important minerals like folate and copper, along with several vitamins such as vitamins E and B.

Mango supports heart health due to the presence of potassium and magnesium, which help maintain good blood flow and reduce the risk of high blood pressure. It also helps lower bad cholesterol.

Mango helps in digestion. It is a very friendly fruit for digestive health as it contains a group of digestive enzymes called amylases.



Mango supports eye health as it contains nutrients that help keep our eyes healthy. It also contains antioxidants that protect us from cancer.

Suggestion

We should eat a balanced diet to keep our bodies fit and healthy. A balanced diet includes adequate amounts of nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, and fats. It plays a crucial role in our overall development.

We need to stay away from junk food and oily, recycled food items that are commonly available on the streets. We should avoid unhealthy food that spoils our lifestyle and makes us ill.

sahilmanzoor0401@gmail.com

MS. JAASINDAH MIR

RCI-LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST | EFT MASTER PRACTITIONER | FLOWER ESSENCE PRACTITIONER | AUTHOR

TRAUMA-FOCUSED PSYCHOLOGIST

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JKAACL Releases Three Books by Young Writers

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, APR 10: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) today organized an impressive literary function at Tagore Hall, Srinagar, to release three books authored by young writers from Jammu and Kashmir. The books released on the occasion included Your Presence and The Sole Burst of Colours in My World of Words by Prabhleen Kour, and When the Air Turned Heavy by Huzaifa Afzal.

Prof. Neerja Mattoo, noted writer and academician, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while Dr. Amit Ranjan was the Guest of Honour. Among other dignitaries present were Smt. Harvinder Kour, Secretary, JKAACL, and Mr. Ideel Saleem, Additional Secretary, JKAACL.

The event witnessed the participation of several prominent writers, poets, artists and students, including Smt. Amita Ranjan, Gulzar Ahmad Bhat, Shah-e-Jehan Ahmad Bhat, Javed Iqbal Khan, Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather, Saleem Saghar, and Dr. Iqbal Afroz, among others.

Prof. Neerja Mattoo in her speech underscored the need of engaging the youth in creative pursuits. She also congratulated the young authors for showing their potential and prowess at a young age.

Welcoming the guests, Smt. Harvinder Kour highlighted the importance of sustaining the spirit of literature and books in contemporary times. She emphasized the need to nurture literary culture and encouraged the younger generation to engage in creative expression as a means of articulating their thoughts and channeling their energies into



meaningful artistic pursuits.

Dr. Amit Ranjan, while presenting his paper on the books, elaborated on various dimensions of creative writing, particularly poetry. He situated Prabhleen Kour's work within the broader framework of contemporary literary trends, including Memory Studies, noting its reflective and evocative qualities.

Reviewing Huzaifa Afzal's novellette, Dr. Abid Ahmad remarked that the work derives its strength from the authenticity of its emotions and the depth of lived experience it portrays. He further observed that the text may be placed alongside contemporary Kashmiri literary expressions that foreground interiority and existential reflection.

In his remarks, Mr. Ideel Saleem, Additional Secretary, stated that the primary objective of organizing such literary programmes is to provide a platform for writers from different regions to present and share their work with a wider audience. He appreciated the dedication and creative spirit of the young authors.

Speaking on the occasion, both authors shared insights into their writing journeys, reflecting on their inspirations and creative processes. They expressed gratitude to the Academy for providing them with the opportunity to present their work to a larger audience. The proceedings of the event were moderated by Dr. Abid Ahmad, Editor, JKAACL, who also presented the vote of thanks.

Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my Fathers name Gh Mohi ud din Rather S/O Ab Khaliq Rather Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040003446 wants to be registered on my own name Irshad Ahmad Rather S/O Gh Mohi ud din Rather .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/ her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

IRSHAD AHMAD RATHER S/O GH MOHI UD DIN RATHER R/O WARIPORA BALA

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application AB MAJEED PARRA S/O AB HAMEED PARRA R/O KOKATHAL Tehsil KREERI for the issuance of OBC (Other Backward classes) in his/her favor

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of OBC in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of KOKATHAL of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the PARRA community having annual income 440000/ (Four Lack Forty Thousand) the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..AB MAJEED PARRA self 49 years Farmer
- 2.FAMEEDA BEGUM wife 49 years H/W
- 3... ZAHID MAJEED Son 16 years student
- 4..ANZAR MAJEED Son 16 years student

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to death of ABDUL SALAM MIR S/O AB AZIZ MIR R/O. DOLIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of death as 21/03/2024 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 death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given that Ms. Kaneez Fatima, Proprietor of the Excursion/Travel Agency under the name and style "Red Stag Holidays", registered with the Tourism Department Kashmir (Reg. No. JKEA00004249, valid up to 31/12/2025), has applied for change in location of the said agency from Saida Kadal Chowk to Arabal Shalimar, Srinagar under the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Registration of Tourist Trade Act.

Any person having objection to the proposed change may file the same before the Deputy Director Tourism (Registration) within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my Father in Law name NOOR UD DIN SHAH S/O GH AHMAD SHAH R/O CHANDERSEERA Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0213040007978 wants to be registered on my name SYED RIYAZ AHMAD S/O SYED GHULAM MOHAMMAD R/ O CHANDERSEERA Tehsil PATTAN .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name...SYED RIYAZ AHMAD S/O ..SYED GHULAM MOHAMMAD R/O ..CHANDERSEERA TEHSIL...PATTAN DIVISION.... SOPORE

Laptop Care House

Wholesale Dealer Of New And Pre Used Laptops

DEALS IN ALL KINDS OF LAPTOPS AND ACCESSORIES

REPAIRING OF: ALL TYPES OF LAPTOPS & DESKTOPS

SERVICE FOR ALL LAPTOPS

DELL HP lenovo

7006083461

Major Crackdown on Drug Network in Kulgam: 5 Peddlers Held, Over 1.2 Kg Charas Seized; Medical Shop Sealed

■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, APR 10: In a major offensive against narcotics trafficking, Kulgam Police arrested five drug peddlers, including two key operatives identified through backward linkages, and seized a substantial quantity of contraband in multiple operations across the district. In a parallel action, a medical shop was sealed for violating mandatory norms governing the sale of Schedule H medicines.

According to official reports, a police party from Police Post Mir Bazar, during naka checking at Furrah New Bypass, intercepted a suspicious individ-



ual who attempted to flee upon spotting the police. Upon search, officers recovered 110 grams of charas powder-like substance, 2 grams of heroin-like substance, and Rs. 22,000 in cash. The accused was identified as Danish Khurshid, a resident of Redwani, Qoimoh in Kulgam. A case under FIR No. 65/2026 under Sections 8/20 and 21 of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Qazigund, and further investigation is underway.

In another operation conducted on April 8 at Akhran, a police team apprehended another suspect during naka checking. The accused, identified as Faruk Ali from JJ Colony Bawana, North-West Delhi, was found in possession of 63.31 grams of charas and 2.03 grams of heroin-like substance. Accordingly, FIR No. 70/2026 under relevant sections of the NDPS Act was registered at Police Station Qazigund.

In a separate action based on credible inputs, Police Station Qazigund established a naka at Kurigam Railway Bridge, where one individual was intercepted. During personal search, 109 grams of charas concealed in corn husk was recovered. The accused was identified as Abdul Qayoom Shah of Shastargam, Dooru Anantnag. A case under FIR No. 71/2026 under Section 8/20 of the NDPS Act was registered.

Further investigation into FIR No. 71/2026 led to the unearthing of a larger narcotics network. Acting on backward linkages and after securing necessary warrants, police conducted raids in the Sirhama area of Anantnag district.

Fake Land Deal Foiled in Baramulla, Seven Arrested for Impersonation and Fraud

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Police in Baramulla district have busted a major land fraud racket in Wussan Kunzer, arresting seven individuals who allegedly impersonated land brokers and government officials to dupe a prospective buyer.

According to officials, the accused fabricated ownership claims over a 13.5-kanal parcel of land and staged a fake transaction by presenting one of their associates as the owner. To lend credibility to the deal, one of the accused posed as a patwari while others impersonated revenue officials.

The complainant, Abdul Ahad Malik of Panzi Nara Shalteng, had already paid Rs. 4.10 lakh — including Rs. 4 lakh in cash and Rs. 10,000 through bank transfer — and was reportedly being pressured to arrange an additional Rs. 20 lakh when police stepped in and foiled the fraud.

The arrested have been identified as Ghulam Mohammad Wani of Pulwama, Masood Ahmad Wani of Pir Bagh Srinagar, Mohammad Yousuf Wani of Pandithpora Kunzer Baramulla, Mohammad Abdullah Mir of Shilwat Sonawari Bandipora, Bilal Parry of Markundal, Fayaz Ahmad Khanday of Takkanwari Srinagar, and Riyaz Ahmad Mir of Sheikhzoo Ganderbal.

Police said Mohammad Wani impersonated a patwari, while Masood Wani posed as the son of the purported landowner. The remaining accused allegedly acted as brokers facilitating the fraudulent deal.

During the operation, forged revenue documents linked to land at Wussan Bangil were recovered and seized.

A case has been registered at Police Station Kunzer under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and further investigation is underway to uncover any additional links or accomplices.

Authorities have urged the public to verify land ownership records and identities through official channels before entering into property transactions.

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MASOOB ALI PANDITH S/O REYAZ AHMAD PANDITH R/O. AUTHOORA RESHIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 03/04/2013 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.

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION PATTAN

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT NO: 01 /R&B OF 2026-27/ 167-73 | DATED: 09.04.2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S.No	Name of work	Adv. Cost	T.D Cost	Time	Class
1	Construction of Biology Room, Chemistry Room and Physics Room at Higher Secondary School Khaipora (under Samagra Shiksha 2025-26 PAB 2025-26)	53.87 lacs	1600/-	365 Days	A

Earnest Money (In Rupees): 107740/-

Project Authority: Education

Position of T.S: Accorded

M.H of Account: PAB

Position Of AAA: Accorded

Position of funds: Available

1. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	09.04.2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	10.04.2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	10.04.2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	20.04.2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	21.04.2026 11:00 AM Office of The Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan

3. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No. , Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender inviting authority) Falling under three Competence of under sign.

4. All the bidders must upload Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender receiving authority) (The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, as per PWD norms).

5. The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender receiving authority) as per rule-171 (I) of GFR 2017. The earnest money/ Bid security @2% shall be released to the successful bidder only on receipt of Performance Security @ 5% of Contract value which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period for different nature of works i.e. for M&R works six months (6 months) Bituminous works Three Years (03 Years) and Building works Eighteen Months (18 months) etc as per Physical nature of work.

6. The Additional Performance Security deposit if any shall be released after the completion of work.

7. The bidder shall also upload a Certificate Where he should mention that his bank Account No has been linked with GST PAN and Adhar No this is as per the circular issued by the Finance department

8. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender receiving authority).

9. The earnest money/ Bid security in favor of unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of original Treasury Challan.

10. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

11. The earnest money shall be forfeited, If:

i. Any bidder/ tenderer withdraw his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or make any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.

ii. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.

iii. Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.

12. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

i. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" option on website www.jktenders.gov.in to familiarize themselves with the bid submission process.

ii. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate(DSC)' as per information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.

iii. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.

iv. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

v. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid.

Note: Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

No: R&B / Divn./ 167-73 | Dated: 09.04.2026

Sd/- Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan

DIPK: 286/26 | Dated: 10-04-2026

DC Budgam chairs follow-up review to assess progress of 125-Bedded Hospital, 100-Bedded CCU at Reshipora

Emphasises timely completion, quality standards & strengthened healthcare infrastructure

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, APRIL 10: In a follow-up review meeting, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today assessed the progress of the under-construction 125-bedded hospital and the 100-bedded Critical Care Unit (CCU) at Reshipora Budgam.

The DC conducted a comprehensive review of both projects, which are being developed to significantly enhance healthcare infrastructure and ensure improved medical services for the people of the district.

During the meeting, the DC took a detailed appraisal of the proposed hospital infrastructure, including building arrangements, functional requirements, and floor-wise facilities.

He emphasised that the hospital must be developed as a modern,



patient-centric institution equipped with all essential healthcare services.

A detailed status of the 100-bedded CCU, a G+3 structure,

was also reviewed.

The CCU is envisioned as a key facility for strengthening emergency and critical care services in the district.

Officials informed that since the project was handed over in May 2024, substantial physical progress has been achieved. Major works including pile cap casting, plinth level columns, plinth beam RCC, and ground floor slab have been completed. Construction of upper floors is progressing steadily, with nearly 50% completion of the first and second floor slabs, while AAC block masonry work is also underway.

It was further informed that the remaining work on the second floor slab is targeted for completion by mid-April 2026, and the overall project is expected to be completed by September 2026.

The DC directed the executing agency to ensure optimal utilisation of resources to accelerate the pace of work. He stressed strict adherence to quality standards, safety norms, and timelines.

He reiterated that the 125-bedded hospital and the 100-bedded CCU at Reshipora Budgam will play a transformative role in strengthening healthcare delivery, particularly in critical and emergency care services.

The DC instructed officers to maintain close coordination, promptly address bottlenecks, and ensure timely completion of both projects for the larger public benefit. He further reiterated that the district administration remains committed to augmenting healthcare infrastructure and providing accessible, quality medical services to the people of Budgam.

The meeting was attended by JD Planning, SE R&B, officials from Jal Shakti, CMO, concerned executive engineers, and other officers.

DC Samba finalises modalities for 100-Day "Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan"

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA, APRIL 10: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a comprehensive meeting in the Conference Hall of District Administrative Complex, Nandani Hills to finalise the modalities for the 100-day "Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan" in the district.

The meeting was attended by the officers from Education, Youth Services & Sports, Health, Social Welfare, Police, Information and others.

The Deputy Commissioner undertook a detailed review of the preparedness of all participating departments and issued comprehensive directions for the effective and time-bound implementation of the campaign.



The DC underscored the pivotal role of the Education Department in organising awareness programmes in schools and colleges, while the Youth Services & Sports Department was tasked with engaging the youth through sports activities and community outreach. The Health Department was directed to strengthen de-addiction services and conduct regular medical and counselling camps at the grassroots level.

The Police Department was asked to intensify enforcement measures against drug trafficking and abuse, while the Information Department was instructed to ensure wide publicity and sustained community outreach throughout the campaign period. All other departments were also assigned specific roles to ensure saturation coverage of awareness and preventive measures at the ground level.

The Deputy Commissioner reiterated the importance of community participation and called for collective resolve from all stakeholders to make the campaign a success. She further directed all officers to prepare detailed departmental action plans and ensure timely execution of all scheduled activities within the 100-day period.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Jagdish Singh; ASP Garu Ram; SDMs and other district and sectoral officers from various line departments.

JKAACL, CUJ organise Vibrant Punjabi-Dogri Cultural & Music Programme

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, APRIL 10: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), in collaboration with Central University of Jammu (CUJ), organised a Punjabi-Dogri Cultural-cum-Music Programme today in the Brigadier Rajinder Singh, MVC Auditorium of the Varsity.



The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from eminent local artists and cultural troupes from district Samba, presenting a rich tapestry of Punjabi and Dogri folk traditions. The audience was enthralled by vibrant performances, including soulful folk songs and the energetic Punjabi Gidda.

Renowned local groups-Rattan Lal and Party, Sudesh Kumari and Party and Bodh Raj and Party created a captivating folk ambience through their diverse and traditional musical presentations, reflecting the region's deep-rooted cultural heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, Editor Punjabi Sheeraza Popinder Singh Paras highlighted the initiatives undertaken by JKAACL to promote and preserve Punjabi and Dogri folk culture, especially in far-flung areas of the Jammu region. He also outlined the Academy's upcoming programmes aimed at further strengthening cultural outreach.

Dean Students Welfare Prof. Ritu Bakshi appreciated the Academy's dedicated efforts in preserving and promoting local folk traditions and literature. She described such initiatives as vital steps towards safeguarding the rich cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. Senior Faculty members Dr. Neeta Rani and Dr. Aman also appreciated the Academy for organizing such cultural programmes.

The proceedings of the programme were conducted by Sat Sarvi. Students, faculty besides a large number of music lovers witnessed the programme.

Director FCS&CA inspects stock position at Central Food Store

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, APRIL 10: Director Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Jammu Rajesh Kumar Shavan today inspected the Central Food Store at Bikram Chowk to review the overall stock position, storage arrangements, infrastructure and upkeep of the premises.

The Director checked the stock position of food grains, office record, functioning of CCTV cameras and cleanliness of food godowns. He emphasized the need for maintaining proper storage standards to safeguard departmental stocks and ensure efficient functioning of the Central Store.

The Director issued strict instructions to the concerned Supervisor and Storekeepers to ensure thorough cleanliness of the entire Central Store premises, including godowns, office



spaces and surrounding areas. Special stress was laid on maintaining hygiene, proper stacking of materials, removal of obsolete and unserviceable items and systematic record maintenance and inventory of the stores.

Directions were issued for immediately starting repair and

renovation of damaged portions of the godowns to protect the ration.

The Director laid stress on regular inspections, cleanliness and timely maintenance of infrastructure for the smooth and efficient management of ration dispatches and storage.

DC Budgam reviews Power Infrastructure, Renewable Energy progress with KPDCL

Review KPDCL operations, PM Surya Ghar Yojana, RDSS implementation across district

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, APRIL 10: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) Budgam and allied departments.

The meeting was convened to deliberate on power sector initiatives and ongoing projects in Budgam, with a focus on improving energy access, grid efficiency, and solar energy implementation under the Government of India's flagship schemes.

The Key agenda points discussed during the meeting included overall functioning and performance of KPDCL in the district, progress of solarization initiatives under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, including targets, achievements, and vendor performance.

At the onset, implementation status of RDSS in the district, assessment of capacity, load

management, and augmentation plans for Receiving Stations and Grid Stations across Budgam were also reviewed.

Executive Engineer KPDCL division Budgam delivered a detailed presentation covering each agenda point. The presentation outlined current infrastructure capacities, ongoing augmentation works, technical gaps, and proposed upgrades required to meet the growing power demand.

The DC emphasised the urgent need to modernize the district's power infrastructure to reduce transmission losses and improve quality and reliability of power supply, particularly during peak demand. He said, reliable electricity supply is critical for socio-economic growth, our focus must remain on infrastructure strengthening, clean energy integration, and timely implementation of central schemes.

He also highlighted the significance of solar energy in reducing dependency on



conventional power sources, urging officials to fast-track household-level installations under PM Surya Ghar, while

ensuring awareness and affordability for rural households. The DC directed all concerned departments to work in close

coordination and monitor implementation timelines closely under RDSS to achieve the desired impact.

The DC said, there should be firm commitment from all stakeholders to overcome existing gaps, and ensuing accelerated implementation of all ongoing power and renewable energy projects in the district. He assured full administrative support from district administration.

He directed periodic monitoring to ensure efficient delivery of services and long-term sustainability of the power ecosystem in Budgam.

Besides, CPO Budgam, Deputy CEO (JAKEDA) Kashmir, Executive Engineer, KPDCL Division Budgam, along with all AEEs and AEs, Executive Engineer, STD-II Division Srinagar, Executive Engineer, Project Division Left KPDCL, Assistant Executive Engineer, JAKEDA Budgam, District Nodal Officer, JAKEDA Budgam, representatives of installation companies were present in the meeting.

KVK Bandipora-1 organizes Training Programme on Nutritional Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, APRIL 10: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora-1 today organized a training programme on "Nutritional Empowerment of Adolescent Girls Through Balanced Diet Promotion" in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Association of Social Workers with the objective of creating awareness among adolescent girls regarding the importance of balanced nutrition, dietary diversification, and adoption of healthy food practices for improved health and well-being.

The programme was attended by Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension SKUAST-Kashmir, who delivered a comprehensive and insightful lecture on the significance of proper nutrition during adolescence. The Director highlighted that adolescence is a critical stage of growth

requiring adequate nutrition for proper physical, mental, and overall development. She also appreciated the efforts of KVK Bandipora-1 in addressing nutritional challenges through effective extension programmes. She further highlighted the role of KVK Bandipora-1 in empowering rural women and adolescent girls through capacity building initiatives and encouraged them to actively participate in various vocational training programmes being organized by the Kendra.

On the occasion, Dr. Tariq Sultan, Head, KVK Bandipora-1, emphasized the importance of nutritional awareness among adolescent girls and highlighted the role of kitchen gardening and dietary diversification in ensuring household nutritional security. He further stressed the need for continuous awareness programmes to address malnutrition at the grassroots level.

DDC Shopian reviews preparation of District CAPEX Budget 2026-27

Assesses achievements of District Capex 2025-26

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN, APRIL 10: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting to review and discuss the preparation of the District CAPEX Budget 2026-27.

At the outset, the DDC emphasized the importance of timely and comprehensive planning for the upcoming financial year.

All departments were directed to prepare and submit well structured, realistic, and need based proposals in line with the developmental priorities of the district.

The meeting primarily focused on identifying priority sectors,



ensuring optimal allocation of resources, and streamlining the planning process for effective implementation of works under CAPEX 2026-27.

Officers were instructed to give due importance to projects of public utility and long-term impact.

During the deliberations, review of District CAPEX 2025-26 was also

discussed. It was highlighted that the district achieved 100% physical targets, reflecting effective execution and monitoring of developmental works across sectors.

The DDC stressed the need for improved coordination among departments and adherence to timelines to avoid delays in project execution. Emphasis was also laid

on maintaining quality standards and ensuring transparency in implementation.

The meeting also discussed tourism development proposals, with departments directed to identify potential sites and submit viable, project based proposals under CAPEX 2026-27.

Emphasis was laid on developing basic infrastructure, improving accessibility, and creating facilities to promote tourism and generate local employment.

Officers were further directed to ensure timely submission of inputs, removal of bottlenecks, and proactive planning to facilitate smooth execution of works in the upcoming financial year.

Telangana CM Unveils Brochure of 3rd IGBC Green Property Show 2026

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, APR 10: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Thursday unveiled the brochure for the third edition of the IGBC Green Property Show 2026, reinforcing the State Government's commitment towards a net-zero and sustainable future.

The CII Indian Green Building Council, in partnership with the Telangana Government, will organise the third edition of the IGBC Green Property Show 2026 at the HITEC Exhibition Centre from May 22 to 24, 2026, with the theme "Better Homes for You!"

The event will showcase IGBC-certified and pre-certified green projects making an impact on Telangana's sustainable development goals.

The Chief Minister was joined on the occasion by Telangana Principal Secretary (Education)



Dr. Yogita Rana, Director of Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Limited and Chairperson of Sudha Reddy Foundation Sudha Reddy, Founder of Ramky Foundation A. Dakshayani, and IGBC National Chairman C. Shekhar Reddy.

The event aims to promote awareness of green building practices, encourage sustainable living and drive investments in eco-friendly developments. The exhibition will feature

IGBC-certified and pre-certified green residential and commercial projects contributing to the State's sustainability goals.

Apart from property showcases, the event will also present a curated range of eco-friendly products, technologies and services aimed at making sustainable living more accessible and practical.

Speaking on the occasion, Shekhar Reddy said the platform will bring together developers, homebuyers and industry stakeholders to showcase innovations in green homes and infrastructure.

He thanked the Telangana Government for its continued support in strengthening the State's leadership in sustainable urban development and invited citizens to experience the benefits of green buildings, including healthier living, lower operating costs and long-term environmental gains. UNI

Zoom expands contact center capabilities in India with native phone number Availability

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, APR 10: Zoom Communications on Thursday announced the availability of native India phone numbers for its Zoom Contact Center across six telecom circles, strengthening its cloud-based customer service capabilities in the country.

The service is now live in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu (Chennai), Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Karnataka (Bengaluru), and Andhra Pradesh & Telangana (Hyderabad), enabling organisations to deliver AI-powered and compliant customer experiences through cloud contact centre services, the company said in a release.

Zoom said the service is being provided through Zoom India, which holds a pan-India Unified Licence from the Department of Telecommunications, allowing businesses to offer local cloud contact centre services in accordance with Indian regulations.

Built as an AI-integrated platform, Zoom Contact Center combines voice, video, chat and digital channels into a single interface and offers agentic AI capabilities to help agents and improve



customer interaction outcomes.

Zoom President of Product and Engineering Velchamy Sankarlingam said the move will help businesses deliver intelligent and personalised customer experiences while ensuring regulatory compliance.

Zoom India and SAARC Head Sameer Raje said India remains a key growth market for the company and the launch reflects its continued investment in locally relevant capabilities.

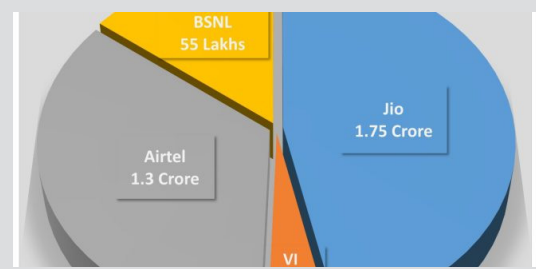
The company said the service uses Zoom's data centres in India and operates over the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), allowing businesses to manage inbound and outbound calls across the country irrespective of location. UNI

Jio adds over 1.88 lakh new subscribers in Odisha in February: TRAI Data

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

BHUBANESWAR, APR 10: Continuing its excellent march as the No. 1 digital service provider in Odisha, telecom major Reliance Jio has added the highest 1.88 lakh new mobile and home broadband subscribers in the state in the month of February 2026.

As per the latest telecom subscription data, released by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), over 1.74 lakh new mobile subscribers and over 13,600 new home broadband subscribers joined the Jio network in Odisha, in February. In fact, Jio added nearly four times more new sub-



scribers in Odisha in February than its nearest competitor.

With this, Jio has further consolidated its market leadership in the wireless, wireline and FWA segments in Odisha, with the highest 1.75 crore mobile subscribers, 3.66 lakh JioFiber subscribers and 3.63 lakh JioAirFiber subscribers. Driving digital inclusion in thousands of villages across the rural hinterlands of Odisha, Jio has made high-speed broadband connectivity available at their doorsteps.

As per the data, in the wireless segment, Reliance Jio added the highest 1,74,810 new mobile subscribers followed by a distant second Airtel with 46,192 new mobile subscribers and Vodafone Idea with 17,067 new mobile subscribers this month, whereas BSNL lost 5,532 mobile subscribers during this period. The total mobile subscribers base in Odisha increased by over 2.32 lakhs in February and crossed 3.77 crores as of 28 February 2026.

As per TRAI data, nationally, Jio added over 16.24 lakh new wireless subscribers, 1.17 lakh new wireline (JioFiber) subscribers and over 3.41 lakh new FWA (JioAirFiber) subscribers in the month of February.

Market forces drive March rupee fall; favourable opportunity for NRI investors to consider Indian markets

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10: The depreciation of the Indian rupee against the US dollar in March reflects the workings of a market-determined exchange rate system amid global uncertainties, while also opening up opportunities for Non-Resident Indian (NRI) investors, according to experts.

According to data, the rupee depreciated by over 3pc alone in March in terms of USD, which is led by war escalation in West Asia and surging crude prices in international markets.

Adhil Shetty, CEO & Co-Founder of BankBazaar, said comparisons of the rupee's depreciation with other currencies should be made carefully, keeping in mind the differences in exchange rate frameworks.

"The comparison needs to be viewed in the context of differing exchange rate frameworks. The Indian rupee operates under a market-determined regime, so it reflects real-time adjustments to global factors such as capital flows, oil prices, and geopolitical developments," he said.

The Indian rupee is primarily determined by market forces of demand and supply in the foreign exchange market. It is a fiat currency managed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and it is operating under a "managed float" exchange rate system since 1993.

He noted that recent movements have been sharper, with the rupee weakening meaningfully over the month and briefly testing lower levels against the US dollar. "This can result in higher visible volatility," he added.

Shetty pointed out that currencies under tighter management may show relatively lower day-to-day movement, but this is due to their operating framework rather than a true reflection of underlying pressures.

"In contrast, more tightly managed currencies may show relatively lower day-to-day movement, which is a function of the operating framework rather than a direct reflection of underlying pressures," he said.

Highlighting the broader macroeconomic picture, he said India remains on a strong foot-



ing. "From a macro standpoint, India remains well anchored, with comfortable foreign exchange reserves and a stable policy environment. The Reserve Bank of India continues to ensure orderly market conditions while allowing the currency to adjust in line with fundamentals."

Adding an optimistic perspective to the rupee depreciation in March, N ArunaGiri, CEO of TrustLine Holdings, said the current phase presents a favourable opportunity for NRI investors to consider Indian markets.

"For NRI investors, the current phase presents an interesting

opportunity to look at Indian equities. The potential upside is not limited to equities alone, but extends to the currency as well. In our view, both have seen an element of overstretched selling in the recent phase," he said.

He explained that while the rupee has seen some recovery following regulatory measures aimed at curbing speculative positioning, it continues to remain undervalued on a Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) basis.

"At current levels (sub-95), the rupee is trading meaningfully below its long-term equilibrium range of 100 to 102,

indicating potential for appreciation as macro conditions normalize, particularly with easing geopolitical tensions in West Asia," ArunaGiri said.

He added that a similar trend is visible in equities, where easing geopolitical tensions could reverse selling pressure. "Any constructive resolution or de-escalation in the West Asia conflict is likely to ease selling pressure and trigger a reversal in market sentiment, as evidenced by the sharp bounce following the recent ceasefire announcement," he noted.

"In that sense, the current environment offers NRIs a dual opportunity to participate in the recovery of equity markets while also benefiting from a potential appreciation in the rupee. This remains our broad house view on the outlook for NRI investments into Indian markets," he added.

The views indicate that while the rupee's depreciation reflects global market dynamics under a flexible exchange rate system, it may also create strategic investment opportunities as macroeconomic conditions stabilise. UNI

FTCCI hosts programme on safe, sustainable industrial operations in Hyderabad

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, APR 10: The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry organised an industry programme on Safe and Sustainable Operations - Role of Cross-Functional Leadership here on Thursday.

The programme focused on the growing importance of safety and sustainability in today's evolving industrial and business environment, emphasising the need for cross-functional leadership and collabora-

tion across organisations.

According to a release, the session highlighted the significance of integrating safety and sustainability practices across departments to build resilient and responsible organisations.

The programme featured expert addresses by Y Mohan Babu, Director of Factories, Government of Telangana, and D. Narender, Joint Chief Environmental Engineer, Telangana Pollution Control Board.

The speakers shared insights

on regulatory frameworks, industry best practices and strategies for strengthening organisational resilience and responsible business operations. Key themes discussed during the session included strengthening leadership in safety and sustainability, integrating sustainability culture across departments, adopting industry best practices, and building future-ready organisations.

The event also facilitated interactive knowledge-sharing sessions with domain experts.

Four out of five firms deploy AI under pressure: TrendAI Report

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

BENGALURU, APRIL 10: AI adoption in India is accelerating at a pace far ahead of security preparedness, with nearly four out of five firms admitting they have approved deployments under pressure despite known risks, according to TrendAI study.

The global research, which surveyed 3,700 business and IT decision-makers including 200 respondents from India, highlights a widening gap between rapid AI rollout and the ability of organisations to manage associated security and governance challenges.

According to the findings, around 80 per cent of Indian respondents said they felt compelled to approve AI deployments despite security concerns, reflecting mounting pressure to

keep pace with business demands and technological change. However, readiness remains limited, with only 42 per cent of IT managers and 49 per cent of business managers describing themselves as moderately prepared to handle the speed of AI adoption.

The report underscores that AI deployment is outpacing control mechanisms, creating vulnerabilities across enterprise systems. A majority of IT and business decision-makers acknowledged that AI technologies are advancing faster than their organisations can effectively secure them, leaving critical gaps in oversight and risk management.

Governance remains a key concern, with organisations grappling with fragmented ownership of AI risk, lack of specialised expertise, and evolving

regulatory uncertainty. Security teams are often forced into a reactive mode, responding to top-down AI adoption decisions, which in many cases leads to the rise of unsanctioned or "shadow" AI tools within enterprises. The study also points to a growing threat landscape, where cybercriminals are increasingly leveraging AI to automate reconnaissance, enhance phishing attacks, and scale operations with greater efficiency. Despite these risks, nearly 60 per cent of malicious activity is estimated to go undetected, further compounding the challenge. The shift towards more advanced, autonomous or agentic AI systems is adding another layer of complexity. While about half of the respondents believe such technologies could significantly strengthen cyber de-

fence, concerns around data access, misuse, and lack of accountability remain high.

Nearly 46 per cent of IT decision-makers warned that malicious prompts could compromise AI systems, while 43 per cent of business leaders pointed to an expanding attack surface for cyber threats. Risks such as exposure of sensitive data, abuse of trusted AI agents, and lack of auditability were also flagged as major issues.

The report reveals a lack of consensus on critical safeguards, with only about half of IT managers supporting the introduction of AI "kill switch" mechanisms to shut down systems in case of failure or misuse, while others remain uncertain. Among business leaders, views were similarly divided, reflecting broader ambiguity on how to

retain control over increasingly autonomous systems.

Officials said organisations are not short of awareness but lack the structural readiness to act, with pressure-driven deployment, fragmented accountability and limited expertise allowing AI to be embedded in critical systems before adequate safeguards are in place.

They emphasised that as organisations move towards autonomous AI, closing these gaps will become significantly more difficult, and called for stronger governance frameworks and proactive, unified security strategies. The findings highlight an urgent need for enterprises to balance innovation with accountability, ensuring that AI adoption is supported by robust governance, clear ownership of risk, and real-time threat intelligence.

Japan's MUFG Bank completes investment in Shriram Finance in largest cross-border investment

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, APR 10: MUFG Bank Ltd, Japan's largest bank and a leading global financial institution, on Wednesday completed its investment in Shriram Finance Limited (SFL) which is the largest cross-border investment in India's financial services sector, an official statement said here.

MUFG Bank has subscribed to 471,121,055 equity shares at an issue price of Rs 840.93 per share. The total investment amounting to Rs 396.18 billion.

This investment has been undertaken after obtaining all requisite regulatory and statutory approvals including approval from the Competition Commission of India, the statement said.

As the allotment will be completed, MUFG Bank will hold 20pc equity stake in SFL on a fully diluted basis.

This transaction represents the largest cross-border investment in India's financial services sector. Junichi Hanzawa, President and Group CEO of MUFG group said, "We are very pleased to commence our strategic collaboration with SFL. SFL is a leading financial institution in India with a strong business foundation and significant growth potential in the MSME and retail segments. This investment represents an important step that underscores MUFG's long-term commitment to the Indian market, and we believe it will contribute to India's sustainable economic growth and the advancement of financial inclusion."

"Going forward, we will support SFL's sustainable growth by leveraging MUFG's customer network and experience cultivated through partner bank management" he added.

The completion of this transaction is a way forward in strengthening long-term relationship between MUFG and SFL.

INDIAN PREMIERE LEAGUE



KKR's pace woes exposed as LSG pull off last-ball win

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

KOLKATA, APR 9: Kolkata Knight Riders' inexperience in pace bowling came back to haunt them yet again as Lucknow Super Giants rode on a stunning late assault from rookie Mukul Choudhary and a fifty from Ayush Badoni to clinch a three-wicket win in a last-ball IPL thriller here on Thursday.

Defending 181, KKR looked in control when Cameron Green, making his much-anticipated bowling debut this season, struck with his second ball to remove LSG skipper Rishabh Pant.

But the Australian all-rounder, short on bowling rhythm following workload management after back surgery, could not deliver at the death.

Tasked to bowl the crucial penultimate over with 30 runs needed off the last two overs, Green conceded 16 runs as 21-year-old debutant Choudhary turned the game on its head with fearless hitting, smashing two sixes and a four, including a flat hit over long leg. With 14 required off the final over, Vaibhav Arora, who has played the lead bowler this season for KKR in the absence of Harshit Rana and Matheesha Pathirana, faltered under pressure.

Choudhary sealed the contest in dramatic fashion, launching two sixes, including one off the penultimate delivery after a missed yorker that was dispatched over deep cover.

Needing just one off the final ball, the batters scampered through as

Choudhary capped a sensational knock, finishing unbeaten on 54 off 27 balls (7x6, 2x4), one of the finest cameos down the order this season.

He shared an unbroken 54-run stand with Avesh Khan, which came off just 24 balls, underlining KKR's struggles at the death.

Earlier, Badoni had anchored the chase with a well-compiled 54 (34 balls; 7x4, 2x6) to keep LSG in the hunt before Choudhary's late blitz as they scripted a remarkable turnaround from being 128/7 in 16 overs.

The defeat meant KKR remained winless after four matches, with their lone point coming from a rain-abandoned game against Punjab Kings.

Vaishnavi, Sahaja power India to 3-0 sweep over NZ in BJK Cup

■ AMIT KUMAR DAS

NEW DELHI: Young debutant Vaishnavi Adkar and Sahaja Yamalapalli notched up convincing wins as India bounced back in style, blanking New Zealand 3-0 in their second Asia/Oceania Group 1 tie of the Billie Jean King Cup here on Wednesday.

Vaishnavi and Sahaja had endured contrasting defeats as India went down 1-2 to Thailand in their rain-hit opener.

However, the hosts scripted a swift turnaround, with both players showing composure under pressure in their respective singles matches against New Zealand, who are without their star player Lulu Sun.

Entrusted with the responsibility again, Vaishnavi showed marked improvement, executing her shots with far greater control to outplay Aishi Das 6-2 6-4 in one hour and 30 minutes.



Sahaja then outclassed Valentina Ivanov 6-1 6-3 in the second singles to keep their campaign alive.

In the doubles, Rutuja Bhosale and Ankita Raina recorded a 6-4 6-2 win over the combination of world No. 11 Erin Routliffe and world no. 338 Monique Barry to complete the drubbing.

Vaishnavi capitalised on Das' inconsistency to take control of the opening set.

Despite trailing 15-40 early on serve, the Indian earned the first break as Das squandered a 40-15 lead with a string of errors. She then held through a tight deuce battle to move 2-0 ahead. Vaishnavi showed resilience under pressure in the third game, saving two break points, and maintained her advantage as both players held their serve to 3-1.

The Indian struck again in the fifth game, converting her second break point to extend the lead.

Although Das broke back, Vaishnavi responded immediately with another break and comfortably served out the set 6-2, finishing with an ace. (UNI)

Arsenal wary of in-form Man City hunt, De Zerbi begins Spurs salvage mission

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

MANCHESTER: The Premier League returns from a three-week hiatus this weekend with huge clashes in the battle for the title, European places and survival.

Arsenal can shrug off their domestic cup disappointment by moving ever closer to a first league title in 22 years when they host Bournemouth before Manchester City travel to Chelsea.

Liverpool boss Arne Slot cannot afford another damaging defeat when Fulham visit Anfield with Champions League qualification on the line.

Tottenham have turned to Roberto De Zerbi to save them from the drop for the first time in nearly 50 years and the Italian takes charge for the first time at Sunderland.

Defeat in the League Cup final to City and at second-tier Southampton

in the FA Cup have quickly turned Arsenal's quest for a quadruple into dreams of a Premier League and Champions League double.

Mikel Arteta's men can go 12 points clear at the top with victory over Bournemouth on Saturday, with City not in action until Sunday.

A 1-0 Champions League victory at Sporting Lisbon got the Gunners back to winning ways, but they need heroic heroics from goalkeeper David Raya after another unconvincing performance.

City, by contrast, appear to be hitting top form after thrashing Liverpool 4-0 in the FA Cup quarter-finals and will smell blood should Arsenal stumble at the Emirates.

Pep Guardiola's men still have a game in hand on Arsenal, and the two face off next weekend in a potentially decisive clash in the title race.

FIFA picks 52 referees for the World Cup, including two women

■ AGENCIES

MANCHESTER: Two women will be among the record 52 referees officiating matches at the World Cup starting in two months. American Tori Penso and Mexican Katia Garcia were on the list of referees announced by global soccer body FIFA on Thursday for the tournament in the United States, Mexico and Canada. Three women were selected as assistant referees and one as a video match official. It's the second time that female referees take part in a men's World Cup — in Qatar four years ago there were three female referees and three female assistant referees. Penso was the referee in the Women's World Cup final in 2023. FIFA said appointments were made on its "long-standing 'quality first' principle."

"The fact that six women match officials have been selected continues a trend that was started four years ago in Qatar as we aim to further develop women's refereeing," referees chief Pierluigi Collina said.

FIFA said 170 match officials — 52 referees, 88 assistant referees and 30 video match officials — will take part in the tournament. That's up from 139 match officials in 2022. The 2026 World Cup is the biggest ever, with 48 teams and 104 matches, and the first to be co-hosted by three countries.

Several referees who took part in the 2022 tournament will be back at this World Cup, including Poland's Szymon Marciniak, who refereed the final four years ago.

Missing from the list was Congolese referee Jean-Jacques Ndala, who was in charge of the chaotic Africa Cup of Nations final in January when Senegal beat Morocco in extra time. Last month, the result was stunningly overturned by African soccer's governing body and Morocco was awarded title. Senegal has appealed to the Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sport and both countries claim to be African champion pending the outcome.

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