

DENGUE WARNING SIGNS

Many people with dengue can be cared for at home with adequate rest and hydration. But, if you experience any warning signs, go immediately to the nearest medical center.

Watch out for dengue warning signs!

A drop in body temperature accompanied by any of the following symptoms:

- Severe and continuous headache
- Diarrhoea
- Profound vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool
- Redness

If you have any of these symptoms, go to the nearest medical center IMMEDIATELY.

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CM Omar meets Home Minister Shah, discusses J&K statehood restoration, other issues

J1 NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in the Parliament here on Monday.

After meeting the Home Minister, CM Omar Abdullah, according to the news agency, told reporters that he discussed several issues, including J&K statehood restoration, security situation, governance and upcoming budget session of the assembly. "I held a detailed discussion with the Home Minister on the important matters," he said.

Pertinently, the Home Minister last week had chaired a security review meeting at his residence in New Delhi. The meeting was attended by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, top security and other officials.

Today's meeting was Omar's third engagement with Union Home Minister Amit Shah since taking over as the J&K Chief Minister.

It may be recalled that soon after assuming office the J&K Chief Minister had met the



Home Minister on October 23, 2024 during his first visit to New Delhi.

That meeting, according to the officials, was primarily a formal introduction. "Omar had briefed Shah about the situation and had exuded hope that J&K's statehood would be restored soon," the officials had said.

On December 19, 2024, the

J&K Chief Minister had met the Union Home Minister for the second time and "discussed the restoration of statehood for J&K, and the hurdles faced by the UT's elected government."

In the December meeting Omar, according to the media reports, had sought clarification on the Transaction of Business Rules (TBR)

to understand the authority of the elected government across various departments. "There are a lot of issues on which I need to talk with the Home Minister. Currently, J&K is a UT and we are expecting statehood. The Home Minister has a different role in the UT," Omar had told reporters before meeting Shah for the second time.

>> FROM THE PARLIAMENT

In 5-yrs, J&K, Ladakh UTs record zero instances of industrial pollution violations: Centre

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 10

Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh have recorded zero instances of industrial pollution violations in the past 5-years, the Government of India informed the Parliament on Monday.

According to the news agency, Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Kirti Vardhan Singh in response to a query in the Lok Sabha, said, "As per the data provided by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), no industries in J&K and Ladakh have been found violating environmental norms between January 2020 and January 2025."

Referring to the data shared by the CPCB about other regions, the Minister said that other states such as Uttar Pradesh reported 39 instances of industrial pollution violations while Madhya Pradesh recorded 14 and Tamil Nadu 12.

The Minister further informed the Parliament that under the National Water



Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP), water quality is tracked at 124 locations in Jammu & Kashmir and nine locations in Ladakh. "The network assesses key parameters such as Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), Dissolved Oxygen (DO), and pH levels to evaluate pollution levels in rivers and other water bodies," he said, adding, "The CPCB data indicates that while industrial pollution is not a major concern, continuous monitoring remains essential to prevent potential environmental degradation."

He said that air pollution control in J&K is also part of the National Clean Air Pro-

gramme (NCAP), a nationwide initiative aimed at reducing Particulate Matter (PM10 and PM2.5) pollution in urban areas. "Major cities like Srinagar and Jammu have been included in the program with the government implementing measures such as pollution control technologies, increased green cover, and stricter vehicular emission norms."

He said that Ladakh, with its sparse population and limited industrial activity, has lower air pollution levels, but concerns remain regarding emissions from tourism-related transport and construction activities.

MLAs push for allotment of residential accommodation for themselves against constituencies

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 10

Cutting across party lines, legislators on Monday pushed for constituency-based permanent allocation of residential quarters to them in Srinagar and Jammu cities.

Sources told news agency that members of a House Committee today advocated that the government should identify residential quarters in both the UT capitals and designate them permanently as residential quarters for MLAs. "We have suggested constituency-based allocation. As per the suggestion,

a residential quarter should be allotted to a particular constituency rather than an individual MLA," National Conference MLA Javid Hassan Baig and member of the panel, said.

He said the proposal would rationalize the allocation of residential quarters for MLAs. "The MLAs are running from pillar to post to get residential quarters. If this proposal is implemented, they would be free from the burden of finding accommodation," he said.

He said they have also pushed for building of residential colonies, where a simi-

lar arrangement of allocation should be made.

"There was a unanimous view that MLAs would themselves decide about their entitlements. The House will take a call on our entitlements," he said.

The meeting was chaired by Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather and attended by Sunil Kumar Sharma (BJP) Ghulam Ahmad Mir (Congress), Nazir Gurezi (NC), Surjeet Singh Slathia (BJP), Ali Mohammad Dar (NC), Javid Hassan Baig (NC), Choudhary Mohammad Akram (Independent) and Waheed-Ur-Rehman Para (PDP). KNO

Speaker chairs House Committee meeting to assess issues raised by legislators

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 10

A meeting of the House Committee was held here Monday under the Chairmanship of Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, to discuss issues raised by different members of the Legislative Assembly.

Legislators, Sunil Kumar Sharma, (Leader of Opposition); Ghulam Ahmad Mir; Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurezi); Surjeet Singh Slathia; Ali Mohammad Dar; Javid Hassan Baig; Ch Mohammad Akram and Waheed Ur Rehman Para were present as members of the Committee.



The Committee discussed accommodation and other related issues being faced by the MLAs during their stay in the twin capitals of J&K.

During threadbare discussions, the Legislators gave their suggestions regarding provisioning of suitable accommodation to them at Jammu/Srinagar. They also suggested

that process should be initiated to identify the government quarters for allotment to the MLAs till new arrangements are made so that they won't face any inconvenience during public meetings and legislative sessions.

The Speaker assured them that all their genuine suggestions including accommoda-

tion issues would be taken up with the government for early resolution. He showed his optimism that these issues would find resolution in a time-bound manner.

Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandit and other senior officers were present in the meeting. KNO

Security forces launch search operation near LoC in Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 10 (UNI)

Security forces on Monday launched a search operation near the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Official sources here said that acting on specific inputs about the suspicious movement, a joint team of Army, police, and Special Operation Group launched searches in Mendhar, Krishna Ghati, Surankote and other border villages close to the Line of Control in Poonch district.

"The search operation is in progress," said the official. Notably on Feb 8, Indian troops effectively retaliated to the firing by suspected terrorists along the Line of Control in Rajouri district.

Official sources said that the suspected terrorists fired a few rounds on the patrol party on LoC in Ra-jouri.



"The Indian Army troops effectively retaliated to the firing," they said adding that no injury was reported on the own side.

Meanwhile, on the intervening night of February 4-5, a major infiltration was foiled when a group of suspected terrorists believed to be killed in a landmine explosion on the Line of Control in the Battal area of Krishna Ghati Sector in Mendhar area of Poonch district.

Sonamarg among other areas receive fresh snowfall

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 10

The fresh snowfall was experienced in the higher reaches on Monday including Sonamarg, Doodhpathri and other places with the weatherman here predicting light snow at isolated higher reaches tomorrow.

As per the news agency, the fresh snowfall was experienced at Doodhpathri, Sonamarg, Zojila Pass, Z Gali, Yusmarg, Peer ki Gali and Sinthan top areas.

At Doodhpathri, a snowfall of 4-6 inches as recorded till this evening while 4 inches of snow was recorded at Sonamarg, 6 inches at Zojila pass, 5 inches at Z Gali, 4 inches at Yusmarg, 2 inches at Peer ki Gali and 4 inches at Sinthan top.

The reports of light rainfall were also received from some plains of north Kashmir.



Overall nothing significant is expected till 15th February, said an Independent Weather Forecaster, Aadil Maqbool.

Meanwhile, generally dry weather with possibility of light snow expected at isolated higher reaches tomorrow, said Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said.

He said that generally dry weather is expected from Feb-

ruary 12 to 14 while generally cloudy weather with possibility of light rain and snow is expected at isolated places on February 15 & 16.

Director MeT also said that on February 17, the weather would remain generally dry while generally cloudy with possibility of light rain and snow is expected at isolated places on February 18 & 19. KNO

Two PSOs of Iltija suspended: Mehbooba

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 10

Two Personal Security Officers (PSOs) deployed with Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Iltija Mufti have been suspended, party President Mehbooba Mufti said on Monday.

Criticizing the move, Mehbooba called it "ironic and unfair."

"Ironic and unfair that Iltija's two PSOs have been suspended for no fault of their own. They were punished simply because Iltija managed to reach Kathua despite being confined to her home like a criminal," Mehbooba said in a post on X.

The former Chief Minister also questioned the lack of action against those responsible for the deaths of Waseem Mir in Sopore and Makhan Din in Bilawar.

"Meanwhile, there has been no reported action



against those responsible for the deaths of Waseem Mir in Sopore or Makhan Din in Bilawar," Mehbooba said.

The PDP chief also hit out ruling National Conference for remaining a silent spectator, effectively legitimizing such actions.

"The ruling NC government, which came to power promising to ensure security and dignity for the people, remains a silent observer. They thus are not only shirking from their responsibility but also thereby normalizing these unjust and abnormal actions," Mehbooba added.

Upcoming Yarn Dyeing CFC to boost quality of Kashmir handicrafts

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 10

In a major fillip to Kashmir's famed handicrafts, the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, Kashmir, is on the verge of commissioning a modern Common Facility Centre (CFC) for Yarn Dyeing in the premises of Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT) at Nowshera, here.

Constructed at a cost of Rs 2.59 Cr, the CFC shall adhere to all international norms and will dye different types of raw materials used in the handicrafts and handloom sector and go a long way in further improving the quality of craft products and boosting its saleability in niche global markets.

In a statement released here today, a spokesman



from the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, stated that CFC will use chemical dyes which shall be 100% Azo-free and have all necessary plant and machinery installed, such as dyeing machines with different capacities, ranging from 5kg to 20 kg, for dyeing of silk, woollen, cotton and viscose yarn. "It will also have Water

Softening System, Dryers, Hydro Extractors, Washing Machines and O2 Mini Boilers along with Effluent Treatment Plant," he added.

The spokesman further stated that the CFC shall also have a Dye House catering to a daily capacity to dye 250 kg of silk, wool and cotton, all in hank form, in different types of

dyeing machines. "The CFC shall also provide natural dyeing facility to 07 kg of Pashmina per day through Soft Flow Dyeing Machine," he added.

The spokesman advised the concerned stakeholders to approach Director IICT for availing the dyeing facility for all types of yarn in hank form against nominal rates.

PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana

DC Rajouri orders door-to-door campaign to encourage registration

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 10

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall, DC Office to review the progress made in the promotion and registration for PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana. The scheme aims to promote solar energy adoption and provide affordable electricity to consumers.

During the meeting, the DC directed officials to identify beneficiaries paying electricity bills exceeding Rs 2,000 per month and prioritize them under the scheme after imparting adequate awareness. He emphasized the need for an



intensive door-to-door awareness campaign to educate the public about the benefits of the initiative.

To strengthen enforcement, ADCs, ACD, and SDMs were instructed to increase monitoring in

their respective jurisdictions to keep check on power pilferage, theft. Additionally, they were directed to inspect commercial units, including crushers and welding shops to check compliance with electricity reg-

ulations. The Deputy Commissioner also stressed the installation of smart meters to enhance transparency and efficiency in power consumption. He further instructed JPDCI to assign daily targets to JEs for registering beneficiaries and mandated their on-boarding to expedite the registration process.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Rajouri, Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa, ACR Mohammad Jahangir Khan, CPO Maqsood Ahmed, SE PDD, Ex En PDD Abdul Rasheed and other district and sectoral officers.

DDC Kulgam reviews implementation of Biomedical Waste Management

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, FEBRUARY 10

District Development Commissioner Kulgam (DDC) Athar Aamir Khan today reviewed the implementation of Bio-Medical Waste Management (BMWM) here.

ADDK Kulgam, CMO, Medical Superintendent District Hospital, District Officer State Pollution Control Board (SPCB),

EO MC Kulgam, District Veterinary Officer Sheep / Animal, DHO, Nodal Officer BMW Committee, representative from Lassipora private firm (CBMWTF) all BMO's and various concerned officers attended the meeting.

DDC highlighted the importance of Bio-Medical Waste Management for reducing the serious



health implications.

He directed the Chief Medical Officer, Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kulgam and all BMOs for ensuring proper implementation of the guidelines besides segregation of Bio-medical waste collected in the hospital.

He further directed the hospital authorities to maintain a proper daily record of the log book of Bio-Medical waste collected by the agency which has been engaged for the said purpose.

The members of the Committee were further directed to conduct aware-

ness programs for the health staff to ensure the proper implementation of the Act.

The MS and DO (SPCB) was also directed to speed up monitoring cum inspections of the registered private clinics, pharmaceutical shops, pharmacies.

CMO informed the meeting that around 200 kgs of Bio-Medical waste is being collected on a daily basis from the entire district including DH Hospital, Sub District Hospital & NTPHCs.

DC stressed on the strict implementation of the guidelines regarding phasing out of mercury based equipments.

JK Samadhan Portal: Field functionaries oriented about citizen registration procedure at Kishtwar

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 10

An orientation program was hosted here today to update field functionaries about the registration procedure of citizens on the JK Samadhan Portal- an online public grievances redressal mechanism introduced by Jammu and Kashmir Government.

The session, presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Pawan Kotwal, was attended by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and Supervisors from across the district.

Addressing the officials, the ADC reiterated the administration's commitment to ensuring transparent, responsive, and efficient governance. He highlighted that the JK-SAMADHAN portal, launched



by the UT Government, serves as a dedicated grievance redressal platform aimed at strengthening citizen participation and enhancing government accountability.

The program focused on educating participants about the functions of the portal, including grievance registration, redressal mechanism, public engagement and status tracking of grievances on

the portal. The ADC stressed the importance of the public grievance redressal mechanism and set a timeline to complete household registration on the portal.

The awareness session witnessed active participation from BLOs, Supervisors, and other concerned officials, who engaged in discussions to enhance their understanding of the portal's operation.

Industrial Lubricant Manufacturer fined Rs 1 lakh for misleading Net weight declaration

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, FEBRUARY 10

The Legal Metrology Unit Samba, on the instructions of Controlling Legal Metrology Anuradha Gupta, conducted a comprehensive inspection drive to ascertain the adherence to mandatory labeling details on the industrial products brought from outside Jammu and Kashmir.

During the inspection, a case of misleading net quantity declaration on a pre-packaged lubricant was detected.

Upon further inquiry, it was established that a Haryana-based industrial lubricant manufacturer was supplying critical industrial products without declaring net contents, unit sale prices, and other mandatory labeling details. In some instances, the company mentioned approximate weights, which could not be verified, violating the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011.

Taking strict action, the Legal Metrology Department registered a case and issued a notice to the defaulting company. In response, the company admitted to the violations and applied for departmental compounding, a legal remedy under the Act.

The case was compounded, and a penalty of Rs 1 Lakh was imposed. The company assured immediate compliance with packaging and net content declaration requirements as per legal provisions.

As per the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, manufacturers, packers, importers, suppliers, and sellers are legally bound to ensure that consumers receive the exact quantity for which they are paying. Mandatory labeling requirements include Exact Net Quantity, Maximum Retail Price (MRP), Unit Sale Price (USP), Manufacturer/Packer/Importer Details, Country of Origin (for imported products) Customer Care Information (name, address, contact number, email, etc.)

The Legal Metrology Department has urged consumers to remain alert and vigilant while making purchases and report any grievances related to misleading product labeling to the Legal Metrology Department, J&K, for swift redressal.

Power shutdown

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10

Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCI Jammu has informed that the power supply to Ashok Nagar and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 11 and 13 from 10 am to 2 pm. Meanwhile, the Superintending Engineer, O&M Circle-III, JPDCI Batote has informed that the power supply to Rajgarh, Chanderkote area, Sangaldan, Ramban, Banihal, Ramsuo Khari and other adjoining areas will remain affected on February 11, 13 and 15 from 11 am to 3 pm. Similarly, the power supply to Karwa Nai Basti, Rallu Nai Basti, Banihal and adjoining areas will remain affected on February 11 and 12 from 10.30 am to 2 pm. However, the Superintending Engineer (Distribution) JPDCI, O&M Circle Kathua has informed that the power supply to Meen and its adjoining areas will remain affected on February 11 and 13 from 9 am to 3 pm.

CS chairs 14th HLC meet of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today impressed upon all the line departments including the Shrine Board to ensure all arrangements are made well before commencement of the annual Amarnathji yatra this year.

The Chief Secretary issued these directions while chairing the 14th High Level Committee (HLC) meeting of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB).

Present in the meeting were the senior officers of civil administration and security establishments.

The Chief Secretary urged upon all the departments including PWD, PDD, Jal Shakti, RDD, H&UDD, BRO, Telecommunication and others to complete the necessary tendering and other contract related processes in the upcoming month itself. He called upon them to make procurements so that there is no end-time rush in finalizing the requisite arrangements.

The Chief Secretary stressed on the Deputy Commissioners of Anantnag and Ganderbal to ensure marking of the disaster prone areas on both the routes so that no utilities including tents are pitched in such areas. He directed the DMRR&R



department to coordinate with the concerned district administrations regarding framing of SoPs for ensuring safe yatra for the pilgrims.

He asked the concerned Deputy Commissioners to facilitate all the service providers so that the facilities created at each location are appropriate and sufficient for both the devotees and facilitators. He advised them to work in coordination and use the work window efficiently so that every facility is made ready by June this year.

He enquired from each department and Deputy Commissioner about their role and responsibilities. He stressed on designating a nodal officer by each department to look after finalisation of arrangements to be made for smooth conduct of the pilgrimage.

The Chief Secretary also took stock of the budget requirements of all the departments to carry out the necessary works and procurements to be made for yatra. He asked the PDD for completing the job of under-grounding the HT/LT lines and anti-freezing pipeline system by the Jal Shakti Department. He also emphasised upon them to make a traffic plan so that there are no traffic snarls and people do not face any hurdles while commuting. He enjoined upon the Police Department to deploy their personnel in sufficient numbers for facilitating the yatra.

Other issues which came up for discussion were deployment of adequate manpower by the Health Department for making the base hospitals functional besides other

health facilities enroute. He further asked them to initiate the process of inviting manpower from outside as per the practice in vogue.

The need for ensuring only RFID registered pilgrims having valid health certificates was discussed during the meeting. It was also enjoined upon the IMD to send daily weather updates to the registered pilgrims so that they can move accordingly.

Besides, proper sanitation by RDD and H&UDD in their respective areas was deliberated upon. Both the departments were advised to ensure requisite number of toilets/baths are established enroute the cave shrine besides availability of uninterrupted water supply and paraphernalia there. They were directed to install the dustbins

and deployment of manpower for cleanliness purposes all across the transit camps, holding areas and along the track.

The departments like FCS&CA, Transport, Information, IT, Forest, BSNL and others were impressed upon to carry out their routine works as per the past practice wherever required with proper back-up plans in place. He termed their contribution as crucial for conduct of the yatra.

The Chief Secretary further directed the concerned to ensure that installation of lights, water tanks, toilets, back-up generators, Public Address System, communication towers is ensured at each camp location before commencement of the yatra.

CEO SASB, Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari,

Minister Javed Ahmad Rana advocates opening of Centre for tribal languages

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs Javed Ahmed Rana, today advocated opening of Tribal Languages Centre in Jammu University during a thought provoking seminar that delved into the intriguing reciprocal relationship between Gojri and Urdu languages.

The event provided valuable insights on the beautiful exchange of words, phrases and cultural nuances.

The proposed Centre would provide a platform for research, documentation and promotion of tribal languages in J&K.

The Minister was addressing a mammoth gathering after inaugurating the seminar which was organised by JKAACL and Department of Urdu, Jammu University.

The inaugural function was presided over by Professor Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor of University of Jammu while Profes-



sor Shohab Inayat Malik, HOD Urdu, University of Jammu and Dr. Javid Rahi, Divisional Head JKAACL besides renowned researchers were also present in the presidium.

In his address, the Minister applauded the department of Urdu for organising the seminar on a vital topic. He described Gojri as one of the main languages of J&K being spoken by large chunk of population. Urdu has not only influenced Gojri but also the other languages which are being spoken in J&K, he added.

Tracing the history of Gojri, the Minister also quoted some examples

from Mahabarat and Ramyan where Gojri words have been used.

While discussing the cultural heritage of Gujjars, the Minister discussed rich cultural heritage of Gujjar culture and informed that Urdu too has been influenced by Gujjar culture, language and civilisation. He further said that since the language is spoken and written by a large number of people of J&K, therefore, Gujjar and Pahari cultural centres need to be established in University of Jammu for which he offered full support from Tribal department of the Government.

He also advocated con-

stitution of a Research Committee which could made research on the life, culture and language of Gujjars throughout the world.

Professor Umesh Rai announced that interviews for the post of Gojri and Dogri which has been already advertised would be conducted soon. He added that Pahari and Gojri centre would also be made functional shortly by the University of Jammu. He also threw light on the DYD degree being offered by the University of Jammu.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Professor Shohab Inayat Malik, HOD Urdu, highlighted the development of Urdu and Gojri language in the region. He informed that both the languages have close relationship whether it is cultural or social. Urdu has produced good literature having a large number of respectable material while Gojri writers and poets are also contributing to the language by writing prose and poetry.

Felicitation-cum-Awareness Program on Bima Sakhi Scheme held at Doda

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 10

A felicitation-cum-awareness program on the Bima Sakhi Scheme was held today here under the leadership of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Harvinder Singh.

The program, organized by the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), local Branch, marked the official inauguration of the scheme in the district.

The Bima Sakhi Scheme offers a new opportunity for self-employment and community support, empowering women by integrating them into the insurance sector. Under this initiative, 75 women from District Doda have been appointed as Bima Sakhis, taking on the role of financial facilitators to enhance insurance penetration at the grassroots level.

During the event, the DC alongside Senior Divisional Manager, LIC, gave away appointment letters to the newly inducted Bima Sakhis, encourag-



ing them to utilize this opportunity for economic empowerment and community service.

The DC highlighted the significance of the scheme in promoting financial inclusion and empowering women through sustainable livelihood options. He appreciated LIC for bringing this initiative to Doda and urged the newly appointed Bima Sakhis to work with dedication in spreading awareness about the benefits of insurance. He also urged participants to

avail the benefits of the government-sponsored schemes offered by Agriculture, Power Development Department (PDD), and other departments. He emphasized the vast scope in Krishi Udyami and highlighted the significance of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) in promoting education.

He further stated that as Bima Sakhis, women can access various government schemes to improve their economic well-being. He also encouraged them to take advantage of the

Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) for better livelihood opportunities.

Earlier, LIC officials provided a brief history of LIC India's development and highlighted important information regarding the Bima Sakhi Scheme.

The event was attended by Development Officer LIC Jyoti Parkash, the Heads of Government Degree Colleges (GDCs), officers, representatives from LIC and banking institutions, and other distinguished guests.

District Export Plan reviewed to optimise local potential



JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 10

Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal on Monday chaired a meeting of the District Export Promotion Committee to discuss modalities to optimise the export potential in the district.

The meeting was attended by the General Manager District Industry Centre, Chief Planning Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, AGMO, Lead District Manager, Assistant Director Handloom and other stakeholders. The discussions centered on developing the district as an export hub

by exploring the global market for local specialty products. The meeting sought to promote the Pecannut under the "One District One Product" (ODOP) initiative.

Additionally, strategy for promotion of other local specialty products such as walnuts, Rajmash and Chikri woodcraft was discussed in detail, including their cultivation areas, annual production, associated farmers, and available e-marketplaces.

The tourism sector's potential to enhance the district's economic landscape was also a significant topic of discussion.

Speaking at the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised estab-

lishment of a strategic framework that includes enhancing the quality and quantity of local products, improving market access, and providing necessary support and infrastructure to local exporters. He highlighted the importance of collaboration with e-commerce platforms like Amazon to increase awareness and facilitate registrations for local products.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from all stakeholders to work diligently towards positioning Poonch as a key player in the export landscape, contributing to the overall economic growth and prosperity of the district.

MLA Baldev Sharma assesses developmental requirements at GHSS Katra

JI NEWS SERVICE
REASI, FEBRUARY 10

Member Legislative Assembly, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi (SMVD) Constituency Baldev Raj Sharma today visited Government Higher Secondary School Katra to take stock of developmental works sanctioned for the School.

Accompanied by Executive Engineer, PWD Division Katra Shakti Kumar Raina along with other staff, the MLA resolved the long pending issue regarding the site identification for additional accommodation, including staff residential quarters and two rooms in the school premises. The MLA issued on-spot directions to the concerned department to proceed further in this regard.

It was informed that the staff quarters for the



school were sanctioned in the year 2022-23 at an estimated cost of Rs. 74.00 lakh, while construction of two changing rooms and leveling of the school ground were sanctioned in the year 2020-21 at a cost of Rs 20 lakh.

Additionally, the MLA issued directions to stakeholder departments to submit DPR for removing a big tree on the backside

boundary of the school which may damage the school building in future. Moreover, the directions were also issued to submit DPRs for leveling and terracing at the back side of the school and for the construction of the girls toilet block after dismantling the old girls toilet block and cleaning & tiling of existing water tank at the lower most terrace.

DLC approves 444 cases under HADP in Ganderbal



JI NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 10

District Development Commissioner (DDC), Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today chaired a meeting of District Level Committee (DLC) here at DC office to discuss and approve cases received under Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) in the district.

After threadbare discussion on the cases of beneficiaries received, the committee approved all 444 cases of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and other allied sectors.

The DDC emphasized that the HADP was a major

step towards creating a sustainable and profitable agricultural ecosystem.

He also stressed the importance of meeting the targets within the timeframe set for the concerned departments. He assured all possible support from the district administration to facilitate the success of HADP in the district.

The meeting was attended by GM DIC, Bilal Mukhtar; CPO, Shahnawaz Ahmad Khan; Chief Animal Husbandry Officer; Chief Agriculture Officer; Chief Horticulture Officer, AD Fisheries, District Manager NABARD, LDM and other committee members.

Training for Hajj Pilgrims of District Ramban scheduled on Feb 13, 2025

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 10

As per the communication received from the Office of Deputy Commissioner Ramban and in accordance with the program devised by the J&K Hajj Committee, the training on Manasik-e-Hajj for the selected Hajj pilgrims of District Ramban has been scheduled on February 13, 2025.

The training will take place at Jamia Masjid Qadim, where experts will guide the pilgrims on the travel procedures, and essential arrangements for their sacred journey. All selected pilgrims have been advised to attend the session to ensure a smooth and well-prepared pilgrimage.

3-day training on Geo-Spatial Techniques begins for Soil Survey officials at Baba Jitto Kissan Kendra

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10

Director Agriculture Jammu S. Arvinder Singh today inaugurated a three-day Training Programme on Geo-Spatial Techniques in Soil Survey & Mapping, under the Capacity Building Component of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Project No. 19 (JKSLRI).

The programme has been organised by the Divisional Soil Survey Scheme, Directorate of Agriculture Jammu, in collaboration with the Soil & Land Use Survey of India (SLUSI), New Delhi here at Baba Jitto Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo.

The programme aims to equip 20 officers from the Soil Survey and Soil Testing wings of the Agriculture Department with advanced technical expertise in modern soil mapping methodologies.

In his address, the



Director highlighted the diverse agro-climatic conditions and soil types of the Jammu division. He expressed confidence that the training would significantly enhance the technical capabilities of field officers, enabling them to adopt state-of-the-art tools and methodologies for effective soil resource assessment and

management.

The programme features sessions by distinguished professionals from SLUSI, New Delhi, including Dr. A.K. Yadav (SSO, SLUSI), Dr. Suman Saha (SLUSI), N.S. Gahlot (ASSO, SLUSI), and Mahendra Singh (ASSO, SLUSI, Noida). The training will combine theoretical knowledge with prac-

tical demonstrations, covering varied aspects of geo-spatial applications in soil survey and mapping for sustainable agricultural planning.

Earlier, Welcoming the experts and participants, Sh. Suresh Khajuria, DSSO Jammu, outlined the objectives of the training, emphasizing the critical role of geo-spatial techniques in achieving precision in soil survey and land-use planning.

The event witnessed the presence of key officials, including Satish Sharma, Joint Director (Extension/SLUB) Jammu (Nodal Officer, Project No. 19, HADP), Aman Jyoti, Agriculture Chemist Jammu, Alok Pandotra, Deputy Director Agriculture (Trainings) Jammu and Dharmesh Vaid, SMS-RL. The inaugural session was conducted by Rajeev Katoch, Programme Officer, JDAE.

Poonch admin plans augmentation of Bio-Medical Waste Management setup

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 10

In a significant move to enhance public health and environmental safety, Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal has asked stakeholder departments to take measures to strengthen the infrastructural base for effective Bio-Medical Waste (BMW) Management in the district.

Chairing a meeting here today, the DC emphasized the critical need for effective Bio-Medical Waste Management to mitigate health risks associated with improper waste disposal.

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) was asked to coordinate with the J&K Pollution Control Committee to secure necessary authorization for the installation of Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs) in hospitals with more than ten bed accommodation, reinforcing the district's commitment to sustain-



able healthcare practices. The DC further instructed to initiate the excavation of Kaccha and Pacca waste disposal sites at all sub-centers in accordance with established guidelines. He set Feb 20, 2025 as the deadline for obtaining consent and authorization from the Pollution

Control Committee. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik; CMO Dr. Parvaiz Khan; District Officer Pollution Control Committee, Block Medical Officers from Mandi, Surankote, and Mendhar among others.

PM interacts with students during Pariksha Pe Charcha 2025

JINNEWSERVICE

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB 2025

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi interacted with students at Sunder Nursery, New Delhi today during the 8th edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC). The Prime Minister in an informal interaction with the students from across the country discussed a host of topics. He distributed sweets made of Til (sesame) which is traditionally served during winters to keep the body warm.

Nourish to Flourish

On the topic of Nutrition, Shri Modi remarked that the United Nations had declared 2023 as the 'International Year of Millets' and promoted it across the world on a proposal from India. He added that the Government of India strongly urged that there should be a lot of awareness regarding nutrition, as proper nutrition helps prevent many diseases. The Prime Minister highlighted that Millets were known as a superfood in India. He added that in India, most things like crops, fruits were linked to our heritage and cited an example where every new crop or season was dedicated to God and festivals were celebrated in most places across India. He further mentioned that the offerings to the God were distributed as Prasad. Shri Modi urged the children to eat seasonal fruits. He encouraged the children to avoid junk food, oily food and food products made of Maida. Touching upon the importance of how to eat food correctly, the Prime Minister encouraged the children to chew their food at least 32 times before swallowing. He also shared tips to the children to take small sips of water and savor its taste, whenever they drink water. On the topic of eating the right food at the right time, Shri Modi citing the example of farmers, said that they had a hearty breakfast in the morning before going to the fields and completed their supper before the sunset. He encouraged the students

to follow similar healthy habits.

Nutrition and wellness

Discussing Wellness, the Prime Minister underlined that absence of wellness does not mean that one is healthy, and urged the children to focus on wellness. He added that the right amount of sleep was important to ensure the fitness and wellness of the body. He mentioned that there were many research projects being conducted on the importance of sleep in human wellness. Shri Modi, stressing on the importance of sunlight for the human body, encouraged the children to cultivate a daily habit of soaking in the morning sunlight for a few minutes. He also told them to take deep breaths standing under a tree right after the sunrise. The Prime Minister summed it up by informing that for an individual to progress in life, the importance of nutrition lies in what, when, how and why one eats.

Mastering Pressure

On the topic of Mastering Pressure, the Prime Minister remarked that it is unfortunate how our society has ingrained the idea that not scoring high marks in school exams like 10th or 12th means life is ruined. This, he said, added to the pressure on the children. Citing a reference to the batsman's concentration on the ball in a cricket match, Shri Modi encouraged the children to evade the outside pressure like the batsman and focus and concentrate on their studies only which would help them overcome the pressure.

Challenge Yourself

Asking the students to be well prepared and keep challenging themselves every time, the Prime Minister remarked that many people do not fight their own battles against themselves. He remarked on the importance of self-reflection, urging individuals to frequently ask themselves what they can become, achieve, and what actions will bring them satisfaction.

He highlighted that one's focus should not be swayed by daily external influences like newspapers or TV, but rather should be steadily cultivated over time. The Prime Minister pointed out that many people often let their minds wander without direction. He advised them not to be frivolous in their decisions and make up their mind to find stillness on something which will help them to tackle the challenges.

The Art of Leadership

On being asked by a student to share tips on effective leadership, Shri Modi said that outer appearance does not define a leader but a leader is one who leads by setting an example for others. To achieve this, he said that individuals must change themselves, and their behavior should reflect this change. "Leadership is not imposed, but accepted by those around you", said the Prime Minister. He remarked that preaching to others will not earn acceptance; it is one's behavior that is accepted. He cited an example, noting that if one gives a speech on cleanliness but does not practice it, they cannot be a leader. Shri Modi emphasised that teamwork and patience are essential for leadership. He underlined that when delegating tasks, it is important to understand the challenges faced by the team members and helping them through difficulties will build their confidence and trust in leadership. The Prime Minister illustrated this by sharing a childhood story about a child holding a parent's hand at a fair. The child preferred the parent to hold their hand, ensuring a sense of security and trust. This trust is a significant strength in leadership, he emphasised.

Beyond Books - 360J Growth

On the topic of balancing hobbies with studies, while the general belief is that academics is the only path to success, the Prime Minister stated that students are not robots and emphasized



the importance of holistic development. He noted that education is not solely for advancing to the next class but for comprehensive personal growth. Reflecting on the past, he highlighted how the lessons from early schooling like gardening might have seemed irrelevant, but they contribute to overall development. The Prime Minister urged parents and teachers not to confine children to a rigid academic environment, as this stunts their growth. He added that Children need an open environment and activities they enjoy, which in turn enhances their studies. He emphasized that exams are not everything in life, and told students that adopting this mindset will help convince families and teachers. The Prime Minister also clarified that he is not advocating against reading books; rather, he emphasized the importance of acquiring as much knowledge as possible. He remarked that exams are not everything and that knowledge and exams are two different things.

Finding Positives

The Prime Minister remarked that people often question advice given to them, wondering why it was said and if it reflects a flaw in them. This mentality hinders one's ability to help others. Instead, he advised identifying the good qualities in others, such as singing well or dressing neatly, and discussing these positive traits. This approach shows genuine interest and builds rapport. He further suggested offering assistance by inviting others to study together. The Prime Minister also highlighted the importance of developing the habit of writing.

He noted that those who develop the habit of writing would capture their thoughts effectively.

Find your Uniqueness

Recounting an incident in Ahmedabad where a child was about to be expelled from school for lack of attention, the Prime Minister said however, the child excelled in a tinkering lab and won a robotics competition, showcasing unique strengths. The Prime Minister emphasized that it is the teacher's role to recognize and nurture unique talents and strengths of children. Shri Modi proposed an experiment for self-reflection and understanding relationships. He suggested recalling 25-30 childhood friends and writing their full names, including their parents' names. This exercise often reveals how little we know about those we consider close friends. The Prime Minister encouraged identifying positive traits in people and cultivating the habit of finding positivity in others. This practice, he noted, would be beneficial for personal growth.

Master your time, Master your life

On being asked by a student about time management, Shri Modi pointed out that everyone has 24 hours in a day, yet some people accomplish a lot while others feel nothing is achieved. He highlighted the importance of time management, noting that many lack an understanding of how to utilize their time effectively. The Prime Minister advised being mindful of time, setting specific tasks, and reviewing progress daily. He also emphasized the importance of focusing on

subjects that are challenging rather than avoiding them. He cited an example of how to take up the subject which one feels difficult first and tackle it head on. By taking on these challenges with determination, individuals can overcome obstacles and achieve success. Addressing the issue of distractions caused by various ideas, possibilities, and questions during exam time, the Prime Minister remarked that students often do not truly know themselves and engage in conversations with friends, making excuses for not studying. He noted that common excuses include being too tired or not in the mood. The Prime Minister highlighted that such distractions, including those from phones, hinder focus and academic performance.

Live in the moment

The Prime Minister emphasized that the most valuable thing is the present moment. Once it passes, it is gone, but if lived fully, it becomes a part of life. He highlighted the importance of being mindful and appreciating the moment, such as noticing a gentle breeze.

The Power of Sharing

On the topic of Coping with anxiety and depression while managing their studies, Shri Modi said the issue of depression often starts with feeling disconnected from family and gradually withdrawing from social interactions. He emphasized the importance of expressing inner dilemmas openly to prevent them from escalating. The Prime Minister highlighted the traditional family structure, where open communication with family members

acted as a pressure release valve, preventing emotional build-up. He reflected on how his teachers worked hard to improve his handwriting, which deeply touched him and emphasized the impact of genuine care from educators. The Prime Minister noted that this care and attention can greatly influence a student's well-being and academic performance.

Follow your interests

Shri Modi addressed parental pressure on children to choose certain careers. He remarked that parents' expectations often stem from comparing their children to others, which can hurt their ego and social status. He advised parents not to showcase their children as models everywhere, but to love and accept their strengths. He cited the previous example of a child who excelled in robotics after being on the verge of expulsion from school, illustrating that every child has unique talents. He also cited the example of cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar. The Prime Minister encouraged parents to recognize and nurture their children's strengths, even if they are not academically inclined. He emphasized the importance of skill development and mentioned that he would have chosen the Skill Development Department if he were not the Prime Minister. By focusing on their children's abilities, parents can reduce the pressure and help them thrive.

Pause, Reflect, Reset

The Prime Minister illustrated how focusing on identifying different sounds can help in concentrating. He shared that practicing breathing exercises, such as Pranayama, can generate a different kind of energy, helping to manage anxiety. The Prime Minister provided a technique to balance breathing through both nostrils, which can bring the body under control in seconds. He mentioned how learning about meditation and breath control can alleviate stress and help

maintain focus.

Realising your potential, Achieving targets

Addressing the concern of staying positive and finding happiness in small victories, Shri Modi highlighted that sometimes people become negative due to their own thoughts or the influence of others. Interacting with a student who aimed for 95% in the 10th grade but achieved 93%, which led to disappointment, the Prime Minister considered this a success and congratulated the student for setting a higher target. He emphasized that targets should be ambitious yet realistic. Shri Modi encouraged viewing achievements from a positive perspective, understanding one's strengths, and appreciating the effort put into reaching close to the target.

Every Child is Unique

On the topic of maintaining good health during exams, the Prime Minister remarked that the primary issue lies less with students and more with their families. He highlighted that many parents pressure their children to pursue specific careers, like engineering or medicine, despite the child's interests in fields like art. This constant pressure leads to a life of stress for the child. He urged parents to understand and recognize their children's abilities and interests, monitor their progress, and provide support. For instance, if a child shows interest in sports, parents should encourage and motivate them by taking them to watch sports events. The Prime Minister also addressed teachers, urging them to avoid creating an environment where only top-performing students receive attention while others are neglected. He emphasized the importance of not comparing students and encouraging each child's unique abilities. He reminded the students to strive for improvement and perform well, but also recognize that academics is not everything in life.

Minister for Jal Shakti, FE&E and Tribal Affairs reviews progress on development works in Poonch



JINNEWSERVICE

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today directed the district administration, Poonch, to expedite ongoing developmental works, with focus on projects being executed under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

Highlighting that Jal Jeevan Mission is the top priority of Union Government and JK administration, Javed Rana enjoined upon the officers that no lackadaisical approach will be tolerated while carrying out different works under this prestigious project.

Taking serious notice of delays in execution of certain developmental projects, he instructed them

to work in mission mode so that safe and adequate drinking water is made available to people of the district.

He further instructed the Deputy Commissioner Poonch and sectoral heads to ensure timely completion of ongoing projects while maintaining quality standards. He asked the officers of the Jal Shakti to monitor execution of works in their respective divisions to ensure steady progress.

The Minister further instructed for adopting a proactive approach to resolve all bottlenecks in project execution including land acquisition, procurement, inter-departmental coordination and conducting field inspections to monitor progress, ensuring successful completion of projects.

Charanjeet Kour of Jammu becomes second Runner-up in Kahin Gum Na Ho Jayein contest



JINNEWSERVICE

JAMMU, FEB 10

On February 8 the highly anticipated National Cookery Contest - Kahin Gum Na Ho Jayein Season 7 reached its spectacular conclusion at the Indian Culinary Institute and NCHM in Noida.

The event was organized by Let's Give Back, a registered NGO under the banner of Back to Roots, under the leadership of Col Atul Saxena, co founder of trust. After intense competition Fathima Sheeba from Kanyakumai, emerged as the National Winner, followed by Sumona Deb from Jharkhand as first Runner-up and Charanjeet Kaur from Jammu, as second Runner-up, and Priyanka Jain as Jury's Choice Award. Each of the top contestants received prize money of Rs 51,000,

Rs 31,000, Rs 21,000 and Rs 11000 respectively.

Charanjeet Kour from Jammu has made her mark as the 2nd runner-up among an impressive group of 50 participants hailing from 13 diverse states, showcasing remarkable talent and dedication.

Her outstanding achievement speaks volumes about her skills and determination, making her a true ambassador of talent from Jammu. The contest, held in November 2024, was expertly coordinated by Kalpana Vinay, founder of Studio Kava, who ensured a seamless and inspiring experience for all contestants.

Charanjeet's victory not only highlights her individual brilliance but also brings pride and recognition to the vibrant culture of Jammu. Indeed, Jammu Rocks!!!

Free health checkup camp organized for advocates, court staff & locals

JINNEWSERVICE

JAMMU, FEB 10

In a noble initiative to support the health and well-being of the legal community and the staff at the Jammu High Court, SIBA Events, in collaboration with the BAR Association Jammu High Court, JKDCF, MJ Colors trends, organized a Free Multispecialty Health Checkup Camp on 10th February 2025. This special camp was dedicated to the advocate fraternity, court staff, and employees, providing them with essential medical checkups and consultations at no cost.

A large number of advocates (more than 600), court staff, and local residents took full advantage of the camp, which included a wide range of medical tests and consultations across various specialties. The event was aimed at addressing the health needs of those who play a crucial role in the justice system but often face challenges in accessing regular healthcare services due to their demanding schedules.

During the event, several specialists which includes Amandeep Hospital Team, Shine and Glow Dr Amit, Dermatologist, Sharp



Sight Eye Hospital shoket, Deepak, Ajay, suraksha RamaKrishna Mission Swami Vijayeshananda ji, Dr. Shakti Kumar, MBBS, General Physician, Dr. Manjula Sharma, MBBS, MD, Gynaecologist, Dr. Suby Kakkar, MBBS, MS, Dermatologist, Dr. Nidhi Rajput, BAMS Ayurveda Physician, Ambika Devi, NO, Kajal Parihar, GNM, Shivali Patgotra, Lab Technician, Path Square Labs Vijay Bhatia Ji Ceo & director, Sharda suri Marketing executive Orzu Multispecialty Dental & Implant Centre Dr Akash bhat, manik, naveen, Hear Clear Anmol ji, Dr Manas,

Senior Audiologist Gulshan ji conduct-ed comprehensive health assessments and provided valuable health advice. The camp proved to be a significant boon for participants, promoting preventive healthcare and offering early detection of potential health issues.

Advocate Nirmal Kishore Kotwal, President of the BAR Association Jammu High Court and his team Adv Baldev Singh Vice President, Advocate Pardeep Majotra General Secretary, Advocate Anshu Mahajan Joint Secretary and Rahul Aggarwal as Cashier, expressed

his heartfelt appreciation for the initiative, stating, "I commend the efforts of SIBA Events for organizing this health camp. It is a commendable step toward prioritizing the health and well-being of the legal community, who often face stressful working conditions. This initiative will go a long way in ensuring the health of advocates, court staff, and their families."

Chairman Jammu Dairy Cooperative Federation and UNATI Multistate Cooperative Sh. Vikrant Dogra ji along with Tariq Mirza General Secretary Society for Schedule and Backwards also supported the camp and present during the programme he appreciated the efforts of Team SIBA, also congratulate Team SIBA on the Cooperative Year Celebration as SIBA events is one of its kind event management cooperative in India.

SIBA Events Co-founders Sidharth Verma & Baljeet Singh also extended its gratitude to all the medical professionals and volunteers who contributed their time and expertise to make the camp a success. The organizers are committed to continuing such initiatives in the future to foster a healthier, happier community for all.

Seminar on Punjabi poetry, culture organised at GDC Ramgarh



JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, FEBRUARY 10

Government Degree College (GDC) Ramgarh, in collaboration with the Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL), organized a one-day seminar on Punjabi poetry and culture.

The literary event was hosted under the guidance and supervision of the College Principal Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra.

The event began with an insightful introductory lecture by Prof. (Dr.) Snobar, Head of the Department, Punjabi. The seminar was attended by, Secretary, JKAACL Harvinder Kaur; Sr. Editor Sheeraza Punjabi (JKAACL) Dr. Sukhwinder Singh; Eminent Punjabi Critic Popinder Singh Paras; Senior Journalist/

writer Jang S. Verma and Dr. Lekh Raj.

Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra welcomed the guests and participants to the seminar. The inaugural session highlighted the significance of organizing such seminars to promote the Punjabi language, literature, and culture in particular and other local languages in general. The speakers emphasized the unique sweetness and impact of the Punjabi language and discussed the growth of Punjabi literature in J&K and the importance of sustaining and popularizing it across the region.

In her address, JKAACL Secretary Harvinder Kaur stressed the importance of reviving traditional languages for the younger generation. "In the future,

our aim is to conduct more seminars that will provide opportunities to the youth to showcase their talents," she asserted.

The event included a vibrant poetry recitation session, where writers presented their poetry, celebrating the rich heritage of Punjabi language and culture. The participants, including college students, also recited poems during the event. Among the notable speakers who shared their poetic works were Dr. Sukhwinder Singh, Jang S. Verma, Dr. Lekh Raj, and Dr. Snobar.

At the end of the programme, a lively cultural program, featuring Gidda and Bhangra, was presented by the students showcasing the vibrant tradition of Punjab.

Convener of the literary club Dr. Snobar conducted the event along with the other members. The programme was attended by Dr. Aditi Khajuria, Prof. Sandeep Kumari, Ashok Kumar (PTD), Prof. Brham Dutt, Dr. Shivali Pnagotra, Dr. Neeraj, Priya Sharma, Anjali and Vikas and students of the college.

Live Streaming of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2025' held across District Kupwara



JI NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 10

The live streaming of "Pariksha Pe Charcha-2025," an interactive program hosted by Prime Minister of India, was observed in the entire district of Kupwara. The main event was held at Model Higher Secondary School, Kupwara, where hundreds of students, teachers, and parents joined to gain valuable insights on managing exam stress and achieving academic success.

More than 1 lakh individuals, including students, teachers, and parents, have participated in this event by watching the live broadcast in 745 schools spread across the district. This initiative aims to engage and guide students on how to handle exam-related pressures, encouraging a positive mindset and stress-free

approach to exams.

The program focuses on the overall well-being of students, providing them with practical tips for better time management, dealing with exam anxiety, and excelling in academics while maintaining mental health. It also serves as a great platform for parents to understand how they can support their children during exam times, ensuring a nurturing environment.

At Model Higher Secondary School Kupwara, the live streaming event was viewed by a large audience, reflecting the enthusiasm of the community. Chief Education Officer Kupwara expressed that this is an excellent opportunity for students to learn directly from the Prime Minister, and emphasized the importance of this interactive session in reducing exam stress across the district.

DC Kupwara presides over seminar on Beekeeping



JI NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 10

The Agriculture Department Kupwara today organized a district-level seminar on the "Transformation of Beekeeping" at the Town Hall, Kupwara.

The seminar, aimed at promoting the growth and sustainability of the beekeeping industry, was presided over by the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan. The event brought together local farmers, beekeepers, and experts from the agriculture sector to discuss innovative methods, challenges, and opportunities in modern beekeeping.

The seminar also highlighted the importance of beekeeping for boosting agricultural productivity, enhancing biodiversity, and promoting sustainable farming practices in the region.

Speaking at the occa-

sion, Deputy Commissioner emphasized the vital role that beekeeping plays in the district's agricultural ecosystem. She said that more than 30000 applications have been received in the district under HADP which signifies the motivation of the youth towards generating their livelihood under the Agriculture sector.

She highlighted different sources of income under Bee Keeping sector which benefits its growers and Agri-entrepreneurs. She emphasized the need for promotion and branding of the honey products made in the Kupwara district which will boost the industry.

The Chief Agriculture Officer and experts from the Agriculture department also highlighted the schemes for promoting the honey industry in the district. The seminar

also provided a platform for experts to share their knowledge on advanced beekeeping techniques, pest management, and honey production processes.

Various stakeholders discussed government schemes and support available to farmers to encourage the growth of this sector.

The event witnessed active participation, with several beekeepers sharing their experiences and success stories.

The Agriculture Department also announced plans for further training and workshops to equip local farmers with the skills needed to adopt innovative beekeeping practices.

The seminar is part of the district's ongoing efforts to support sustainable agriculture and improve the livelihoods of local farmers.

DC Shopian chairs District Export Promotion Committee meeting



JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, FEBRUARY 10

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting of the District Level Export Promotion Committee here to review and approve the District Export Action Plan (DEAP) for Shopian district.

The meeting comprehensively discussed the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative, with special attention to positioning Shopian as an Export Hub, particularly for products like apples.

It was informed that that 51000 MT CA storage is already functional in the district, 28000 MT under MSME and 14000 MT under PPP mode are in pipeline. It was also

informed that 17 KKG's are already functional in the district and another 33 KKG's will be made functional in the near future.

DC stressed for enhancing the export potential of Shopian district, contributing to its economic progress and prosperity.

He also directed the Horticulture and Agriculture departments for preparing a plan for establishment of quality control labs in the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, General Manager, DIC, Shopian, CPO, CHO, CAO and others.

Joint Director, DGFT, Joint Director, MSME, DDM, NABARD and others attended the meeting in virtual mode.

DC Kulgam reviews functioning of Nursing College Kulgam



JI NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM FEBRUARY 10

Following upgradation of GNM School in Kulgam as the Nursing College and its association with GMC Anantnag, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan today reviewed the upgradation of the infrastructure, academic arrangements, expansion plan and land allotment besides other aspects like sanitation arrangement and arrangements for support staff.

To ensure smooth

functioning of class work Chief Medical Officer Dr Showkat Parray was directed to engage additional teaching staff for the College on roster basis till the permanent faculty gets arranged.

The meeting was attended by ADC Viqar Ahmed Giri, Principal GMC Anantnag Dr Rukhsana, Coordinator GNM Nursing College Dr Mehak, CPO Zahid Sajad, Executive Engineer PWD Kulgam, Administrative Officer GMC Anantnag and others.

PM National Apprenticeship Mela held at Govt. ITI Bandipora

JI NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA FEBRUARY 10

The Prime Minister National Apprenticeship Mela was held on Monday at the Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Bandipora, drawing participation from over 200 aspiring candidates along with representatives from various local industries and business units.

Vice Chairperson, District Development Council Bandipora Kousar Shafeeq, the chief guest of the event, highlighted the significance of skill development and the numerous opportunities available for skilled youth. She encouraged participants to fully utilize these schemes to enhance their expertise and excel in their respective fields.

The event aimed to promote skill development and apprenticeship opportunities for the youth, equipping them with practical experience across diverse fields. Officials from the District Industries Centre Bandipora, Entrepreneurship Development Institute and Jamkash Vehicleleads Bandipora were also present, sharing valuable insights on the increasing demand for skilled professionals in the industries.

Speaking at the event, Sahil Rashid, Superintendent ITI Bandipora, underscored the crucial role of apprenticeships in addressing the skill gap.

He said that the scheme has been launched by the Govt. of India in order to reduce the skill gap among the youth of the country and candidates who will register on the PMNAM portal, will be selected and called by the industry.

He stressed that such programs not only enhance youth employability but also build a workforce essential for local industry growth.

Encouraging both aspirants and industry stakeholders to leverage the National Apprenticeship Portal, he reaffirmed ITI Bandipora's commitment to facilitating high-quality apprenticeship training for candidates.

DLSA Shopian organises awareness prog on Legal Services for senior citizens

JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, FEBRUARY 10

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Shopian today organized a legal awareness program on implementation of Legal Services to Senior Citizens, (NALSA) Scheme, 2016 at ADR Centre District Court Shopian.

The programme was held under the directions of Secretary District Legal Services Authority Shop-

ian, Mudasar Farooq.

Deputy LADC Shopian Rafie Ahmad Ganie & Social Activist Mansoor Ahmad Margay were the resource persons for the legal awareness program.

The objective of the program was to provide information to senior citizens about their legal rights and the benefits under the NALSA Senior Citizens Scheme 2016 and different government schemes pertaining to senior citizens.

District Administration Reasi hosts 8th edition of Pariksha pe Charcha 2025

JI NEWS SERVICE
REASI, FEBRUARY 10

Students from different parts of Reasi district today attended Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unique interactive program, "Pariksha Pe Charcha."

Organized by the District Administration, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik, the live streaming of PM Modi's interaction was facilitated in the main Auditorium of the DC Office Complex in presence of ADDC Sukhdev Samyal.

Chief Education Officer Deepak Gupta and Principals of Educational and Professional institutions made meticulous arrange-

ments to ensure students comfortably participate in the program.

Around 500 students and staff members from various Government educational and professional institutions attended the virtual program.

The students shared their positive feedback, highlighting the valuable information and tips provided by PM Modi. Tips and messages such as How to deal with stress, Start the habit of writing, Read the question paper beforehand, prepare a strategy, A balanced lifestyle is important, Healthy competition is important, but not jealousy, resonated with the attendees.

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PH./FAX NO.01998-266649

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION RAMBAN(R&B) DEPARTMENT

Sh. Vinay Kumar Sharma
S/o Ratan Lal
R/o Village Badali
Tehsil and District Udhampur.
Mob. No. 9103277777
Email:

NOTICE-III (FINAL) & CONCLUDING NOTICE

No: EE/R&B/RBN/ 15581-87 **Date:-08.02.2025**

Subject: Construction of road from High School Chachwa to Bhatt Mohalla Galli under NABARD RIDF-XXVIII.

Reference:- **1. This office No. EE/R&B/RBN/14304-08 dated 17-01-2025.**
2. This office No. EE/R&B/RBN/14880-85 dated 27-01-2025.

Whereas above mentioned work was allotted to you vide Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B) Circle Udhampur-Ramban's allotment No. SEU/2023-24/784-86 dated 13-09-2023 and you were supposed to restart / resume the work within three days after issuance of Notice-II. However, as reported by the field staff concerned that you have not resumed / restarted the work despite a lapse of 10 days as you were apprised of fact through this office communicate No: EE/R&B/RBN/14880-85 dated 27-01-2025 that there is no legal hurdle or any objection on the part of land/ structure owners which shall prevent you from resuming the construction activity on the aforementioned road.

Whereas sufficient funds has been released by the Govt. against aforementioned road placed at the disposal of undersigned owing to commitment made by you that the said work will be accomplished in time bound manner, but due to your non seriousness the said work remained suspended till date which is of high public importance where the huge state exchequer is also involved and you are misleading the Department on the one pretext or other, the undersigned have to cut a sorry figure before higher authorities for not completing the project.

Whereas the department acted promptly to resolve all disputes raised from time to time by the land/structure owners at the site but due to your non-serious attitude towards the work you deliberately stopped the construction activity of the said road reasons best known to you.

Whereas your casual attitude towards the said work is viewed very seriously by the Worthy DDC Chairperson, Hon'ble MLA Banihal and District Administration as well as by this Department and you are suppressing the interest of general public of the area for which the inhabitants of the area are time and again visiting this office and pressing hard for early restart of the work as well as completion in time bound manner of the said project.

Therefore, you are once again directed through the medium of this notice to report at site along with men and machinery and restart the work within 07 days after issuance of this final notice without any further delay. In case you fail to comply this notice, you will be personally responsible and necessary action will be recommended to the competent authority under rules against you as per the terms and conditions of e-NIT/SBD/allotment of contract and your CDR/Extra CDRs will be for-feited and fresh tender shall be floated at your risk and cost and you will be black-listed from JKPWDOMS.

Sd/-
DIP/J-10000/24
Date: 10-2-25
Executive Engineer
PWD(R&B) Division Ramban

EDITORIAL

Rationalizing Residential Quarters for Legislators

In a significant move that transcends party lines, legislators in Jammu and Kashmir have collectively advocated for constituency-based permanent allocation of residential quarters in Srinagar and Jammu. This initiative, if implemented, could streamline accommodation for MLAs and ensure an equitable distribution of housing facilities.

The proposal, discussed by a House Committee, recommends that specific residential quarters be designated for each constituency rather than being allocated on an individual basis. This approach, as articulated by National Conference MLA Javid Hassan Baig, would not only ease the logistical burden on legislators but also introduce a structured, long-term solution to the persistent issue of MLA accommodations.

The current system often forces legislators to struggle for suitable housing, leading to unnecessary administrative delays and inefficiencies. By institutionalizing a constituency-based model, the government can eliminate the recurring problem of ad-hoc allocations, thus allowing MLAs to focus more on their legislative and developmental responsibilities. Moreover, the proposal to establish dedicated residential colonies further strengthens the case for a sustainable housing arrangement for elected representatives.

Another notable aspect of this initiative is the consensus among MLAs across party lines. The meeting, chaired by Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather and attended by members from the National Conference (NC), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Congress, and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), reflects a rare but crucial unity in addressing administrative challenges. The collective endorsement of this proposal signals a pragmatic approach to governance, prioritizing efficiency over political rivalry.

However, the success of this initiative will depend on the government's willingness to act upon the recommendations. Proper implementation requires careful identification of suitable quarters, transparent allocation mechanisms, and sufficient funding to develop new residential colonies if needed. The proposal should also consider factors such as security, accessibility, and proximity to the legislature to ensure that the allocated residences are practical for legislative duties.

Furthermore, it is imperative that the allocation of these quarters remains free from bureaucratic red tape and favoritism. The process should be institutionalized through well-defined policies that can withstand political changes, ensuring continuity and stability.

The initiative to rationalize MLA accommodations is a step in the right direction and sets a precedent for administrative reforms that prioritize functionality and fairness. If successfully executed, it could serve as a model for other states facing similar accommodation issues for their legislators. The government must now translate this consensus into action, ensuring that elected representatives can perform their duties without the undue distraction of housing concerns.

Trump's vision for Gaza: Paradise or purgatory?

NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

Everyone saw it unfold. This is the harsh reality of life in the Devil's paradise, where desires are transformed into laws, ambitions become twisted ethics, and behaviour is coerced into the very fabric of the system. The truth? To survive here, one must bow to the powers that be, no matter the cost. Conscience and integrity are irrelevant—praise those in power or face annihilation. President Donald Trump welcomed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—an alleged war criminal wanted by the International Criminal Court—as the first foreign leader in his second term, declaring his grand vision to take control of Gaza, turning it into a “brave new Levantine Riviera” by cleansing over 2 million Palestinians.

Nevertheless, the proposal has sparked strong opposition. Saudi Arabia, a key ally of Trump, swiftly condemned it, insisting that no nation would recognise Israel without the creation of an independent Palestinian state. Jordan and Egypt also rejected the idea of accepting millions of displaced Palestinians. The mere announcement of this plan starkly illustrates the chaotic grandeur of Trump's vision. Yet, his proposal, however audacious, was no accident of rhetoric.

It was a calculated, methodical blueprint, crafted long before Trump's second term in office. With Netanyahu—a willing ally in these

manoeuvres—Trump painted a picture of Gaza not as a refuge for the Palestinian people, but as a commercialised “paradise” defined not by its displaced residents, but by foreign investments and a transformation into a luxury resort.

Trump's proposition, laden with both visionary ambition and horrific repercussions, challenges the entrenched paradigm. This proposal, as reported, was not born of sudden whim, but the culmination of years of deliberation within Trump's inner circle—an enterprise in which his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, played a pivotal role in positioning the geopolitical and commercial components across Asia.

Kushner's claim, in a recent interview with the Financial Times, that his “ability to see trends before others” uniquely positions him to capitalise on opportunities others find unpalatable, resonates with the underlying logic of Trump's plan. It's a logic that blurs the line between statecraft and property development, where geopolitical ambitions are pursued not merely for strategic supremacy but also as a means to expand a business empire throughout Asia.

This fusion of commerce and conquest is as disquieting as it is unprecedented, conjuring images of modern-day feudalism, where land and people are subjugated to serve the profit motives of a privileged few. What is truly striking, however, is that Trump's plan could offer



a rare and pivotal opportunity for Arab nations, whose history of disunity has long hindered their collective potential.

Regional players—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Qatar, Jordan, and others—have long danced to contradictory rhythms, using Palestine as a symbol to justify their betrayals, while failing to act with sincerity or consequence.

These rivalries, cultivated over decades of political expediency, have reduced Palestinians from champions of an independent cause to mere pawns in a game that has been further complicated by internal rifts within Palestinian movements.

For far too long, the Arab states have abandoned Palestine's plight in favour of personal ambition and strategic alliances, turning the Palestinian cause into a commodity—moulded and shaped according to the whims of foreign powers. This latest manoeuvre must be understood within the context of the convoluted history of Arab disunity—an entangled web of colonial subterfuge, sectarian fragmentation, and a legacy of betrayal that has persistently eroded Palestinian sovereignty and reduced their cause to a tragic geopolitical instrument.

The Arab world, once intoxicated by the idea of pan-Arab unity, has repeatedly succumbed to its internal fissures, never able to overcome the corrosive forces of realpolitik and self-interest. Behind the veneer of solidarity and proclamations of support for Palestinian self-determination, there lies a catalogue of secretive agreements, covert operations, and Machiavellian plots that have long entangled the region.

While the Sykes-Picot Agreement remains the most infamous symbol of colonial partition, it is far from the only clandestine accord that has shaped the fate of Palestine. Lesser-known pacts, such as the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence, which promised Arab independence in exchange for rebellion against the Ottoman Empire, were later betrayed in favour of European imperial ambitions.

Similarly, the post-World War II period saw Arab states engage in secret dealings with both Western and Soviet powers, each prioritising their strategic interests over Palestinian rights. Agreements such as the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower Doctrine—purportedly aimed at regional stability—left the Palestinian cause sidelined in favour of Cold War allegiances, perpetuating cycles of betrayal.

And perhaps most insidious of all were the secret negotiations between Arab leaders and Israel, at times tacit and other times more explicit, often involving quiet exchanges of terri-

tory, economic support, or even military cooperation, all under the guise of broader diplomatic manoeuvres.

These acts of realpolitik—often driven by the selfish interests of a few at the expense of the many—have left Palestine isolated, its sovereignty forfeited in a game of geopolitical chess. The fractured nature of Arab leadership, perpetuated by sectarianism and divergent national ambitions, only serves to deepen the wound. While leaders such as Egypt's Nasser sought to rally the Arab world under a banner of unity, his efforts were consistently thwarted by rivalries and internal conflicts.

Today, these past betrayals reverberate in the region's collective psyche, leaving Palestinian aspirations still choked by the suffocating embrace of powers both external and internal, with the dream of a unified Arab world and a free Palestine rendered ever more elusive by the cynical.

Yet, it is precisely this history that makes Trump's audacious proposal so paradoxically compelling. Here lies an opportunity for the perennial exiles—the Palestinians—not as pawns in a geopolitical chess game, but as potential agents for the reawakening of Arab unity.

For decades, Palestinian suffering has been wielded as a symbol of resistance, a poignant reminder of an exodus that began with the Nakba in 1948. However, the continued instrumentalisation of Palestinian

tragedy by neighbouring Arab regimes—who have long used the plight of these people as a rhetorical tool without offering substantial solutions.

It is within this environment of ambivalence and simmering tension that Trump's proposal must be viewed as a paradigm-shifting moment. The convergence of statecraft and property development, epitomised by Trump and Kushner's ambitions, signals a departure from conventional geopolitical paradigms. We are stepping into an era where the shifting power of oligarchies is increasingly driven by the convergence of economic gain and political opportunism—a transformation with far-reaching consequences for the future of West Asia.

Whether this radical reimagining of Gaza could catalyse Arab unity remains uncertain, inherently tied to the unresolved contradictions within the region's historical legacy. Trump's Riviera dream for Gaza is as much a test of American resolve as it is a crucible for Arab unity—a proposition that, if realised, could compel the Arab states to transcend their long-standing acrimony and mistrust.

However, the likelihood remains that this bold gambit, with all its extravagant rhetoric and ambitious visions, will only serve to deepen existing rifts, leaving Palestinians once again at the mercy of external schemes.

(The writer is a journalist and a policy analyst. Views expressed are personal)

Life is a mountain: Climb your peak, your way

OPSINGH

I have come to believe life is a lot like climbing a mountain. It's not a race or a competition, and it's not about finding a shortcut. The absolute joy of life isn't standing at the summit—it's in the climb. It's in slipping on loose gravel, feeling the burn in your legs, and wondering halfway through if you should turn around. But when you catch your breath at a ridge or find your footing after a stumble, you realise something powerful: the climb isn't about the mountain—it's about who you become along the way.

Each of us has a moun-

tain to climb. It doesn't need to be Everest or Kilimanjaro. It doesn't have to impress anyone else. What matters is that your mountain challenges you, excites you and pushes you to grow. And yes, the climb will be messy. The trail will disappear just when you think you're getting somewhere. The air will get thin. You might even feel like quitting. But that's the beauty of it—the mountain shapes you with every step. Every great climb starts with a dream—no so audacious it gives you butterflies. Don't let its enormity overwhelm you. Focus on taking the next step, then the one after that. Progress isn't about

giant leaps but small, consistent efforts.

Moving forward, even a little each day, builds the path to big dreams. Mountains don't reward the fastest or most competent climber—they reward perseverance. Talent may get you started, but resilience carries you through fatigue, failure, and seemingly impossible moments. You don't need to be perfect; you need to keep climbing. Your journey is unique; not everyone will understand or agree with it. That's okay. When the trail disappears, create your path, even if it's messy.

The best routes are discovered through impro-

visations and authenticity, not by meeting others' expectations. Slips and falls are inevitable, and they hurt. Yet, each stumble teaches something valuable about the terrain, limits, and strength. Mountains don't demand perfection—they demand persistence. Learn from every fall, and rise stronger. The mountain doesn't care who reaches the summit first. It isn't about trophies or comparisons. The climb is about pushing yourself, growing beyond your comfort zone, and becoming someone who belongs at the summit.

True success is transformation, not competition. The best climbers don't

focus solely on themselves. They lend a hand, share tools, and cheer others on. Life's peaks are more meaningful when shared. Those you help will often support you, making the climb richer for everyone. When you reach your summit, pause and reflect. Did your climb inspire others? Did you leave the path better for those who follow? Success isn't standing alone at the top; it's in the legacy you leave—the encouragement, improvements, and hope for others to climb higher. Ultimately, the climb makes life beautiful.

The summit is fleeting, but the slips, breakthroughs, lessons, and growth endure. These

moments shape you into someone worthy of the top. If your mountain feels daunting, don't let the height scare you. Start small. Take one step at a time. You don't need to move fast or know the whole path. Just keep climbing. One day, standing at your summit, you'll look back and realise it wasn't about the peak. It was about the person you became along the way. That's the valuable reward of the climb—knowing every inch of it was unapologetically yours.

(The author is DGP & Head of Haryana State Narcotics Control Bureau, with three books to his credit; views are personal)

Uttarakhand leads the way: The first state to implement Uniform Civil Code

GEETA BHATT

Uttarakhand has led the way in formalising laws for women of different faith as equal, upholding the spirit of the constitution. Babasaheb Ambedkar would have been a contented man knowing that Uttarakhand has become the first state in India to have put an end to the disparity in legal protection provided to women, as till now, they were governed by their respective personal laws based on religion and customary state practices.

By implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) from January 26, 2025, with less than 2 per cent of total land area and less than 1 per cent of total population, Uttarakhand has taken the lead in reinstating the ethos of social equality, part of our synthetic culture/constitution.

The courageous step taken by this young state will pave the way as a paradigm for others to follow similar footsteps. For the first time post-independence, a legislative body has drafted rules for marriage, divorce, inheritance of property, and live-in relationships. UCC has been used as a political tool ever since it was tabled for discussion in the Constituent Assembly when Babasaheb, as Chairman of Drafting Committee, had expressed need for uniformity in fundamental laws, both civil and criminal. UCC was placed under a sub-committee which proposed to list it as a non-justiciable right hence, making it non-disputable in the courts.

Majority of the members of this sub-committee were in agreement with the proposal except Minoo Masani, Hansa Mehta and

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who wrote to Patel stating, “One of the factors that have kept India back from advancing to nationhood has been the existence of personal laws based on religion”. The dissent observed by the women members of the constituent assembly got support from Dr BR Ambedkar, KM Munshi and Alladi K Ayyar. The opposition from the Muslim members ensued the UCC under Directive Principles Article 44, where the Constituent Assembly was not obliged to enforce the provision and at the same time, the provision could be implemented by the legislatures in the future.

A compromise made between those in support and those in disagreement of the UCC. The changing social milieu has seen a trend in rigorous churning to shed away repressive,



orthodox practices so as to evolve a social structure which believes in equal rights. This led to the codification of matrimonial, inheritance, succession and adoption laws for the Hindus from 1955-56.

The women's rights under Muslim Personal law were challenged by Shah Bano in 1985 demanding maintenance from her husband.

The landmark Supreme Court judgement in favour

of Shah Bano was later overturned when the incumbent Rajiv Gandhi-led Congress government, under pressure, enacted the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986. The lingering wait for gender rights saw a ray of hope after 30 years when on the plea filed by Shayara Bano and others, who were victims of matrimonial dispute, the Supreme Court declared “talaq-e-biddat,” or instantaneous triple talaq as unconstitutional in 2017.

This time the government of the day stood by the rights of Muslim women and vindicated the crusade undertaken by Shah Bano by legally prohibiting triple talaq and protecting the rights of married Muslim women by bringing The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act in

2019. Though the present government has asserted equal rights and status to Muslim women by bringing this act, there are miles to go as social customs of polygamy and Halala still looms large.

The judiciary has reminded the legislators to fulfil their obligation towards the Constitution and promote equal rights for women. A five-member panel constituted in the chairmanship of retired justice Ranjana Prakash Desai diligently worked on the draft for two years besides holding public interactions, taking suggestions from people of the state and internal meetings of the panel to discuss the points to be taken under the draft.

The bill in its four parts covers marriage and divorce, succession, live-in relationships. The section 4 of the bill outlines

that “neither party has a spouse living at the time of the marriage” with marriage age of 21 and 18 for man and women respectively, making polygamy and child marriage illegal.

The bill also requires compulsory registration of marriages within 60 days where the couple has equal right to dissolve the marriage through a decree of divorce only through court proceedings.

The Bill says that marriages can be dissolved only through the provisions of the law “notwithstanding any usage, custom, tradition, [or] personal law of any party to the marriage.” This bill provides legal safeguards to protect women who cohabit in a live-in relationship.

(The writer is Director, Non Collegiate Women's Education Board, University of Delhi; views are personal)

POSHAN Abhiyaan, FSSAI's Eat Right School educating children on healthy choices: Experts

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Amid concerns about unhealthy food habits and the consequent rise in diseases like diabetes and hypertension in India, public health experts on Monday said that the government's POSHAN Abhiyaan and FSSAI's Eat Right School initiative is educating children about the importance of balanced diets and sustainable eating practices.

Increasing consumption of ultra-processed foods (UPF) -- rich in sugar, salt, and unsaturated fats and nutrient deficient has become a major health concern in India.

According to the recently released Economic Survey 2024-25, it is leading to multiple chronic conditions and even mental health issues in India.

The experts stressed that parents, schools, and the community play a larger role in educating children about healthy eating. This will not only help build a generation with better health but also

reduce economic burden and increase productivity.

"India's POSHAN Abhiyaan provides a structured approach on the role school, parents and communities can play, to help children develop healthy practices," Dr. Anuja Agarwala, former nutritionist at AIIMS, New Delhi, and currently the Vice President of Indian Diabetic Association.

"Programmes like FSSAI's Eat Right School initiative teach students the importance of balanced diets and sustainable eating practices through interactive sessions and activities. The programme also encourages parental and school collaboration to instil healthy eating habits through interactive workshops and resources," she added.

Launched in March 2018, POSHAN Abhiyan (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme For Holistic Nourishment) is the government's flagship initiative which focuses on advancing nutritional outcomes for children under six years, adolescent girls,



pregnant women, and lactating mothers holistically. Eat Right School was launched by FSSAI to create awareness about food safety, nutrition, and hygiene among school children and through them among the community at large.

Agarwala called parent-school collaboration the key to sustaining nutrition education. This can include involving parents in food education by organising nutrition awareness workshops and cooking demonstrations.

"These initiatives encourage parents to engage actively with teachers and school nutrition-

ists, discussing their child's dietary preferences and habits. Through collaboration, schools and parents in India can work together to ensure that children not only receive nutritious school meals but also develop healthy eating practices at home, creating a consistent approach to nutrition education that supports children's growth and well-being," the expert said.

Parents, as primary role models, can also instil good habits by promoting hygiene, teaching children to wash their hands before meals, avoiding food wastage, and maintaining cleanliness.

"When parents,

schools, and the community collaborate, children not only learn about the importance of healthy eating but also adopt hygienic practices, develop values of inclusivity, and appreciate the significance of nutritious meals," Agarwala said.

Dr. Jamuna Prakash, food consultant and former Professor, at the Department of Food Science and Nutrition, University of Mysore stressed the need to integrate nutrition in the school curriculum.

"Nutrition should be an integral part of the school curriculum as it equips children with essential knowledge to make informed food choices. It also promotes lifelong health and prevents issues like malnutrition, obesity, and micronutrient deficiencies," Prakash told IANS.

She cited the example of Japan's Shokuiku (food education) programme which teaches students about balanced diets, food origins, and healthy eating practices.

It engages local farmers,

food producers, and community organisations to help children learn where their food comes from, and the kids actively assist with meal preparation, cleanup, and food nutrition education.

"Incorporating similar practices in schools can teach students the importance of balanced nutrition, the risks of processed foods, and how to address deficiencies," Prakash said.

Further, Prakash also suggested activities like school gardens or cooking classes to make lessons more engaging and relatable which can build a solid foundation, empowering children to adopt healthy lifestyles and influence their families and communities positively in the future.

Agarwala also stressed the need to focus on early childhood nutrition by involving nutritionists in maternal care, breastfeeding, and early feeding practices to build a solid nutritional foundation before schooling -- a key target of POSHAN Abhiyaan.

Adani Group joins Mayo Clinic, donates Rs 6,000 cr to build two integrated health campuses in India

AGENCIES
AHMEDABAD, FEB 10

Gautam Adani, the Chairman of the Adani Group, on Monday announced to launch Adani Health City (AHC) in partnership with US-based Mayo Clinic that aims to pioneer world-class medical research, affordable healthcare and education. The Adani family will donate upwards of Rs 6,000 crore to build the first two of these integrated health campuses in Ahmedabad and Mumbai.

These will constitute two 1,000-bed multi-specialty Hospitals and Medical Colleges in Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

The Rs 6,000 crore donation is part of the recent announcement of Rs 10,000 crore social donation by the billionaire industrialist at his son Jeet Adani's wedding, which would be channelled into various social causes.

Gautam Adani has plans for more such integrated Adani Health Cities in cities and towns across the country, according to the company.

"Proud to launch Adani Health City in partnership with Mayo Clinic, pioneer-

ing world-class medical research, affordable healthcare and education," the Adani Group Chairperson said in a post on X social media platform.

"Starting with two 1,000-bed hospitals and medical colleges in Ahmedabad and Mumbai, we are on a mission to bring cutting-edge medical innovation across India. This is just the beginning for a healthier, stronger India - one campus at a time," the billionaire industrialist noted.

Mayo Clinic, the world's largest integrated not-for-profit medical group practice, will provide technical expertise in healthcare excellence.

Each of these integrated AHC campuses will comprise hospitals, medical colleges with an annual intake of 150 undergraduates, 80+ residents and 40+ fellows, step-down and transitional care facilities, and cutting-edge research facilities.

The AHC medical ecosystem aims to serve people from all socio-economic backgrounds, train the next generation of doctors and focus on clinical research, artificial intelligence and biomedical informatics.

IIT Roorkee team finds superbug's defense mechanism, to boost new treatments

AGENCIES
ROORKEE, FEB 10

Scientists at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee have uncovered a crucial regulatory mechanism in *Acinetobacter baumannii* -- a highly drug-resistant superbug responsible for life-threatening infections.

Their study, published in the journal *mBio*, reveals how the pathogen controls its attack and defense systems, paving the way for new treatment strategies.

Acinetobacter baumannii poses a serious threat in healthcare settings as it resists multiple antibiotics. It causes severe hospital-acquired infections, including pneumonia, bloodstream infections, and urinary tract infections.

To attack competing microbes, the superbug uses the Type 6 Secretion System (T6SS) -- a bacterial "weapon". However, its mechanism for maintaining antibiotic resistance has remained unclear until now.

The research team, led by Prof. Ranjana Pathania, discovered that *A. baumannii* switches T6SS on or off based on environmental conditions. They found that a small RNA molecule -- AbsR28 -- plays a key role in this regulation, influenced by manganese levels.

When manganese levels are high, AbsR28 binds to an essential gene (tssM) required for T6SS function. This not only



leads to its degradation but also prevents the activation of T6SS, said the researchers.

Increased manganese levels also enable *A. baumannii* to retain plasmid pAB3, which carries multiple antibiotic-resistance genes.

"We found that when *A. baumannii* activates T6SS, it becomes more vulnerable to antibiotics and oxidative stress. So, the bacteria must carefully regulate this system to survive in different conditions," said Prof. Pathania.

"Our discovery sheds light on how this pathogen adapts during infections, helping it evade both antibiotics and the immune system," she added.

The findings showed that targeting AbsR28 can help disrupt the superbug's regulatory system. This makes it more susceptible to antibiotics without directly attacking resistance genes. The discovery also opens new avenues for precision medicine and novel drug development against multidrug-resistant infections.

Lumpy skin disease: CDSCO grants license to India's 1st vaccine for cattle, buffalo

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

The Central Drug Standards Control Organization (CDSCO) has granted license to Biolumpivaxin -- the country's first vaccine against lumpy skin disease (LSD) in dairy cattle and buffaloes, Bharat Biotech group company Biovet said on Monday.

The novel indigenous live-attenuated marker vaccine was developed using the LSD virus/Ranchi/2019 vaccine strain from Indian Council of Agriculture Research-National Research Centre on Equines (ICAR-NRCE), Hisar. The technology was commercialised to at least four vaccine manufacturers, including Bengaluru-based Biovet, in 2022.

"Biolumpivaxin is India's first LSD vaccine. It is also the world's safest and first-ever Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals (DIVA) marker



vaccine," said Biovet, an innovative animal health vaccine producer based in Mallur, Karnataka, in a statement.

The vaccine, slated for launch soon, offers a high safety and efficacy profile while enabling serological differentiation between naturally infected and vaccinated animals with the DIVA concept in it. The quality, safety, and efficacy of the vaccine have been extensively tested at ICAR-NRCE and the Indian

Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), ensuring it meets the highest global standards.

"This DIVA marker vaccine is a game-changer for veterinary medicine for disease surveillance and eradication programmes. Epidemiologists and field workers can now distinguish if an animal received Biolumpivaxin or was previously infected with LSD," said Dr. Krishna Ella, Founder of Biovet, in the statement.

"The CDSCO licensure for this vaccine is a significant step toward India's self-reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat) in veterinary healthcare, which avoids dependency on imported vaccines. As India moves towards a disease-free livestock population, this path-breaking vaccine will play a crucial role in ensuring the dairy industry's sustainability," Dr. Ella added.

The company noted that "Biolumpivaxin will very soon be commercially available. The Biovet Mallur facility can produce 500 million doses of Biolumpivaxin annually".

LSD is a transboundary animal disease that has gained significant attention in India due to its severe impact on cattle health and the dairy industry. The disease is characterised by the development of skin nodules across the body, fever, swollen lymph nodes,

decreased milk yield, and difficulty in movement.

LSD virus transmission is largely attributed to vector bites, with mosquitoes, ticks, and other biting insects playing an essential role.

In the last two years, about 200,000 cattle have died across the nation, while millions more have lost their milk production capabilities due to LSD.

Biolumpivaxin is a single vaccination regimen given once a year to cattle and buffaloes above 3 months of age.

In clinical trials, thousands of cattle/buffaloes were vaccinated under field conditions by ICAR-NRCE, Hisar as well as Biovet, and the vaccine was found to be safe and efficacious.

It was also found to be safe in all groups of animals including pregnant and lactating cattle and buffaloes apart from breeding bulls.

Lymphatic Filariasis: Centre rolls out mass drug administration campaign in 13 endemic states

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Reiterating its commitment to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by 2027, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare J P Nadda on Monday launched the annual nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign in 13 identified endemic States.

The MDA campaign will cover 111 endemic districts across 13 states -- Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

Beginning today, the filaria prevention medications will be administered door-to-door and "free of cost to over 17.5 crore population across 111 endemic districts," Nadda said while launching the campaign via a video conference.



LF, commonly known as "Hathi Paon", is a parasitic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes. It can lead to physical disabilities such as lymphoedema (swelling of the limbs) and hydrocele (scrotal swelling) and impose long-term burdens on affected individuals and families.

"An LF-free India is our commitment, and achieving this goal requires the participation of every citizen and with active community involvement. With a shared sense of responsibility, we can eliminate

Lymphatic Filariasis, ensuring protection for crores," said Nadda.

Led by the National Center for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC) under the Ministry of Health, the MDA campaign involves medication regimens: double Drug Regimen (DA): Diethylcarbamazine Citrate (DEC) and Albendazole; and triple Drug Regimen (IDA): Ivermectin, Diethylcarbamazine Citrate (DEC), and Albendazole.

The medicines work to

reduce the spread of LF by eliminating the microscopic filarial parasites present in the bloodstream of infected individuals, thus preventing further transmission by mosquitoes.

The Union Health minister urged residents living in these areas "to consume the medicines, protecting themselves and their families from this debilitating disease".

"The endemic districts must ensure that over 90 per cent of the eligible population consume anti-filaria medicines. Our collective commitment and determination will help transform lives and ensure a future free from Lymphatic Filariasis," Nadda said.

While the MDA medication is extremely safe and effective, it should not be consumed on an empty stomach. Children below 2 years of age; pregnant women and seriously ill individuals should not consume the drugs.

Pariksha Pe Charcha: Radhika Gupta discusses AI, mental health with students

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Edelweiss Asset Management's MD and CEO, Radhika Gupta, on Monday expressed her happiness on being part of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha', calling it an important and much-needed initiative.

"I felt really happy to be a part of this event. When I received the invitation, I was quite surprised," she said during an exclusive interview with IANS.

Gupta further stated that the event facilitated discussions on key contemporary issues like artificial intelligence (AI) and mental health with students.

"Platforms like 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' provide students with an opportunity to openly discuss mental health, time management,



and technology-related concerns as they face the immense stress and pressure in today's fast-paced world," she noted.

Gupta also praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his ability to inspire individuals, whether athletes or profession-

als, by engaging with them as a friend and motivator.

She stated that being given such an opportunity as a citizen and an achiever was a significant experience.

According to Gupta, this year's edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' addressed pressing issues that were not relevant two decades ago, such as AI and mental health.

"When such topics are discussed by the Prime Minister, they naturally become part of conversations in households and society, helping spread awareness," she added.

On a separate note, Gupta also commented on the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recent decision to cut the repo rate by 25 basis points.

The RBI has reduced

the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent. This marks the first instance in five years that the central bank has cut interest rates. The last time a rate reduction was implemented was in May 2020.

"Lower interest rates will reduce borrowing costs, encouraging investments and consumption, which will ultimately boost the economy," Gupta mentioned.

Gupta further mentioned that despite global uncertainties, India's economy is progressing at a steady pace.

"Increasing the Income-Tax exemption limit and reducing the repo rate are steps in the right direction. These measures will help accelerate the country's development," she emphasised.

Aero India 2025: India a global hub for aerospace components & defence manufacturing, says Rajnath Singh

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, FEB 10

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, while inaugurating Asia's largest five-day air show -- 'Aero India 2025' -- declared that "India has become a globally preferred destination for aerospace components and complex system assembly."

He emphasized that India is undergoing a transformational phase, moving towards becoming a developed nation. "From physical and digital infrastructure to the startup ecosystem, industrial support base, MSMEs, and innovation, India has taken a giant leap forward," he said.

Highlighting the rapid advancements in the defence sector, Singh stated, "A wave of innovation is sweeping across. Our research and development, MSMEs, scientists, and engineers are not just giving India a competitive

edge but are proving to be world-class."

He credited this progress to a strategic and sustained roadmap laid out by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. "A thriving defence industry ecosystem has emerged in India due to well-planned policies and reforms," he noted.

Earlier, the defence sector was viewed merely as a national security necessity rather than a key economic contributor. However, Singh pointed out that the past decade has seen a paradigm shift. "We have positioned the defence industry on par with agriculture, infrastructure, and manufacturing, integrating it into the broader economy," he asserted.

Singh highlighted the increasing budgetary allocations for defence. "For the financial year 2025-26, a record Rs 6.81 lakh crore has been allocated, marking a 9.53 per cent



increase over the previous year. The defence capital budget alone has risen to Rs 1.80 lakh crore," he stated.

He further emphasized India's commitment to self-reliance. "Seventy-five per cent of the defence modernization budget has been earmarked for domestically manufactured equipment, bolstering indigenous capabilities. Through various schemes, we are encouraging private sector participation, and Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) are

witnessing unprecedented growth."

Underlining recent achievements, including HAL being conferred 'Maharatna' status, Singh said, "This recognition places HAL among India's elite PSUs, a matter of great pride. Our defence manufacturers, in collaboration with private players, are driving the sector forward," citing the Tata Advanced Systems and Indian Air Force joint venture for C-295 aircraft manufacturing in Gujarat. Bengaluru, the venue

for Aero India 2025, remains a key player in aerospace and defence innovation. "Known as the 'Silicon Valley of India' for its strong software sector, Bengaluru is also emerging as a powerhouse in aerospace. The city plays a crucial role in producing fighter aircraft, helicopters, radars, drones, and electronic warfare systems," he noted.

Singh highlighted India's growing capabilities, mentioning recent developments such as the 'Astra' and new-generation Akash missiles, autonomous underwater vehicles, unmanned surface vessels, and the Pina-ka-guided rocket system. "Since the last Aero India, we have made remarkable progress, and I am confident that our pace of development will accelerate in the coming years."

Over the last decade, India's defence manufacturing output has reached a record Rs 1.25

lakh crore, while exports have surpassed Rs 21,000 crore for the first time. "We are committed to further improving these figures," he added.

Singh stressed the need for increased private-sector involvement. "In many advanced nations, private industries lead the defence sector. It is time for India's private sector to play an equal role in defence production."

He concluded by announcing 2025 as a year of defence sector reforms. "This is not just a slogan -- it is our commitment. The decision-making process will involve all stakeholders, including the armed forces and DPSUs. We welcome suggestions from all quarters," he said.

With Aero India 2025 showcasing India's growing aerospace and defence capabilities, Singh's address underscored the nation's determination to become a global leader in this critical sector.

Delhi voters trusted PM Modi, dumped AAP-da, says Anurag Thakur in LS

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

The BJP's historic win in the Delhi Assembly election came up for mention in Parliament on Monday when former Union minister Anurag Thakur took a swipe at the AAP, saying that voters in the Capital trusted Prime Minister Narendra Modi and put an end to the former's loot.

Taking part in the discussion on the Union Budget 2025-26 in Lok Sabha, Thakur, BJP MP from Hamirpur, hailed the BJP's victory and said Delhi voters have reposed faith in PM Modi and chosen his development model over the corruption-riddled model of AAP. The voters in the national capital have given their verdict against the AAP for its 10-year misgovernance and pollution, he said, as members of the treasury bench

members welcomed his remarks by thumping tables.

"The Lotus has blossomed in Delhi and AAP-da has been routed," he said, claiming that PM Modi lives in the heart of every citizen in the Capital.

Referring to the Rs 12-lakh exemption limit for income tax offered in the Budget, Thakur said, "Something that seemed impossible till now has been delivered all because 'Modi hai toh mumkin hai' (Nothing is impossible for Modi)."

Thakur, who had addressed several rallies during the Delhi election campaign to woo Himachali voters in the city, earlier said in Lucknow on Sunday that the people of Delhi have embraced the "Modi Ki Guarantee" while rejecting the "false guarantees" of AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal.

USAID funded outfits to break India? BJP MP asks pointed questions, draws Rajiv Gandhi Foundation link

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

BJP lawmaker Nishikant Dubey on Monday said that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), closed down recently by the US President, funded anti-India elements with an aim to destabilise the nation and demanded that the government launches a thorough investigation to unearth its evil plot.

Speaking in Lok Sabha during the zero hour, Nishikant Dubey also drew a connection between George Soros, a known India baiter and the Congress party and its first family, claiming that the latter received funding via indirect means to further the 'Western' agenda.

The BJP lawmaker stated that US President Donald Trump completely shut down the USAID because it was purposely used to bring down and topple sovereign governments in other nations, with 'illicit' funding.

Firing a volley of questions, the BJP MP asked, "Did the USAID provide Rs 5,000 crore to the Open Society foundation run by George Soros to destabilise India? Did USAID and George Soros Foundation give money to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and Rajiv Gandhi charitable trust or not?"

He also claimed that USAID-funded organisations fanned stir in the country against government schemes like Agniveer Yojana and also

supported the clamour around caste-based census and the Naxal movement.

As the BJP lawmaker claimed that the anti-India elements were being funded by USAID and they also enjoyed the backing of the Congress party, it evoked strong reactions from the opposition benches. Congress members erupted in protest and demanded a point of order in the House but the same was declined by the chair.

The Lok Sabha MP further accused USAID of engaging in a wider conspiracy to destabilise nations including the transition of Nepal from a 'Hindu' nation to a secular one and claimed that it happened at the former's behest.

Govt spending on infra has surged to Rs 11 lakh crore in 2024 from Rs 2 lakh crore in 2014: Scindia

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has highlighted that government investment in the development of infrastructure such as highways, railways and ports has surged to Rs 11 lakh crore in the last one year under the Modi government compared to a mere Rs 2 lakh crore a year during the erstwhile UPA regime.

Explaining the rationale of the budget, the Communications Minister told journalists that Prime Minister Narendra Modi considers the poor, farmers, women and youth as the only four castes in India and the Budget for 2025-26



focuses on empowering these four categories.

The minister said that national highways had been constructed across 6,000 km while new railway lines had been laid over 2,031 km in the last one year.

Besides, in the telecom sector, towers have been installed in 10,700 villages

to provide connectivity to rural areas.

Highlighting that India has emerged as the fastest growing economy, Scindia said while the global growth rate is stuck at 3.2 per cent, India has registered a 6.5 per cent GDP growth. The country's agriculture sector has recorded a 3.5 per cent

growth rate, he added.

"Our aim is that India becomes the third-largest economy by 2027 overtaking Germany and Japan in the next two years. The target is that India will be a \$5 trillion economy by 2028 and \$6 trillion by 2030," the minister said.

Scindia further stated that the banking sector was reeling under a huge burden of non-performing assets (NPA) of 11.5 per cent of total loans in 2014 which was a legacy of the erstwhile UPA government.

The Modi government has restored the banking system to robust health with the NPAs coming down to 2.6 per cent which has helped to expand

credit and fuel growth in the economy, he added.

Underscoring the inclusive development that was taking place in the country, Scindia said the Indian Postal Department, with its 1.64 lakh post offices and four lakh postmen, will be converted into logistics centres.

These would provide services like parcels and e-commerce nationwide to cover the rural areas.

Besides, 2.12 lakh gram panchayats in the country have been connected through BharatNet and the network was being expanded to provide broadband connectivity to all village panchayats in the country, the minister added.

Calcutta HC warns Bengal Police of summoning CAPF for demolition if it fails

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, FEB 10

A single-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court on Monday cautioned the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) about the possibility of summoning Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) to demolish illegal construction in the city if the municipal authorities fail to do so with the assistance of state police.

The bench, presided over by Justice Amrita Sinha, also set a deadline for this process. If the deadline is not met, the court will assign the task of demolishing the illegal construction in the city to the central forces.

The illegal construction in question is a five-storey building in Narkeldanga, North Kolkata. Although KMC authorities have



declared the construction illegal, issued a demolition order, and received a court order on this matter some time ago, the demolition work has yet to begin for unknown reasons.

The matter was brought before Justice Sinha's bench, where she set March 10 as the deadline for KMC to ensure the

demolition of the building with the help of state police. Failing this, CAPF will be summoned.

Justice Sinha's observations were based on complaints by KMC authorities that they were not receiving the necessary cooperation from Kolkata Police to demolish the illegal construction. KMC also

informed the court that without police assistance, their officials are unable to vacate the building of its occupants and commence the demolition process.

Justice Sinha noted that since KMC had issued the notice for the demolition of the building, it must take responsibility for it. She remarked, "If cooperation from the city police is not available, there will be no other option but to seek assistance from central forces to ensure the demolition."

The opposition BJP claimed that the entire situation highlights the state of law and order in Bengal, where deployment of CAPF is necessary to ensure the demolition of an illegal construction, despite the order being issued by an autonomous body under the state government.

Comprehensive plan to reuse polluted water to be developed: Maharashtra Minister

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, FEB 10

Maharashtra Minister of Environment Pankaja Munde on Monday said that the government is set to develop a comprehensive plan to prevent sewage from contaminating rivers and lakes while promoting the reuse of polluted water.

Additionally, a technical cell will be established to implement innovative technologies for pollution control in municipal and metropolitan areas.

She was speaking at a one-day conference on "Municipal Wastewater Management Gaps, Sustainability, and the Way Forward," organised jointly by the Department of Environment and Climate Change, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), and IIT Powai.



be set up to provide training and awareness programmes for local governing bodies on innovative wastewater management technologies.

She also stressed that pesticides used in agriculture contribute to water pollution. To mitigate this, a collaborative approach between various government departments is necessary to ensure strict pollution control measures. This includes public awareness campaigns, legal actions where required, and enforcement of environmental regulations.

She urged citizens to actively participate in environmental protection, emphasising that sustainable efforts today will ensure a healthier future for coming generations.

The state urban development principal sec-

retary K.H. Govindrao highlighted that untreated sewage often contaminates drinking water sources. He suggested that if sewage could be treated and reused locally, pollution levels could be significantly reduced.

He emphasised the need for wastewater treatment plants, awareness campaigns, and interdepartmental cooperation to address this challenge effectively.

The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board Member Secretary Dr. Avinash Dhakne presented a detailed assessment of the current state of water pollution in Maharashtra's municipal areas.

Experts like Dr. Rakesh Kumar from Indore and Prof Anil Kumar from IIT Bombay discussed natural pollution control methods.

Oppn in Lok Sabha slams govt for ignoring common man's interests in budget

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

The Opposition on Monday criticised the Union Budget 2025-26 for ignoring the interests of the common man and said that on one hand the government is not making any provision to control inflation and unemployment and on the other hand it has cut the budget of public welfare schemes.

Participating in the discussion, DMK member Dayanidhi Maran said that the needs of the common man have not been kept in mind in the budget.

He said that this budget has failed to solve the real problem of Indians. Nothing has been said about controlling unemployment and inflation in the country. Maran said that the government is deliberately

turning its back on reality.

The DMK member said that the rupee has slipped down to a historically low against the dollar.

Maran said that before the Delhi Assembly election, populist announcements were made in the budget but the Election Commission remained silent.

Congress member Manish Tiwari said that

demonetisation was an achievement since the last ten years under the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) tenure. Some of the goals that were set in demonetisation have not been achieved, but the economy has deteriorated. He said that every economist had said the same thing that instead of giving money to the capitalists, give money to the common

people of the country, but this was not done. Due to this, the country's economy was stuck for five years.

Tiwari said that there is a severe crisis in the agricultural sector, but the government is not providing the correct data. He said that in 2014, the unemployment rate was 5.44 per cent, which has now increased to around 8 per cent.

BJP MP Anurag Thakur

said that this is not just an annual budget but a resolution for a developed India.

"As soon as we talk about a developed India, the opposition starts feeling uncomfortable," he said.

Thakur said that the loot and corruption that was going on in Delhi has been shown the way out by the people of Delhi.

He said that we have not

just one but many schemes to build a developed India.

"For us, the nation is our priority, not family. The opposition sees the middle class as taxpayers, which is why they are troubled with the tax relief given to them. The country's GST collection is reaching record levels, benefiting the states. The Modi government has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty, which is being

discussed worldwide," he said.

TDP's Lavu Sri Krishna said that the country currently has the lowest NPA. He thanked the Finance Minister for making an income of Rs 12 lakh tax-free for the middle class. He said that the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme has greatly benefited the manufacturing sector in the country.

INDIA, FRANCE LOOK BEYOND DEFENCE TO DEEPEN BILATERAL ECONOMIC TIES

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

After forging close partnership in the defence domain, India and France are now looking at significantly deepening trade and investment relations especially in sectors like clean energy, new technologies and aviation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi landing in Paris on Monday.

France has emerged as a major source of FDI for India with more than 1,000 French establishments already present in India. France is the 11th largest foreign investor in India with a cumulative investment of \$10.84 billion from April 2000 to December 2023.

PM Modi, who is on visit to France from February 10 to 12, will be co-chairing the AI Action Summit, a gathering of the world leaders and global tech CEOs, to exchange views on collaborative approach to AI technology for innovation and larger public good.

PM Modi will also visit the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project, in which India is a member of the consortium of partner countries including France, to harness energy for the global good.

The two countries are in talks for small modular reactors to boost bilateral civil nuclear cooperation as part of the thrust on green energy to fight climate change.

French Foreign Trade Minister Sophie Primas said during a recent three-day visit to Delhi that France was looking forward to further negotiations between New Delhi and the European Union for finalisation of a "mutually beneficial" free trade deal that could expand two-way economic engagement.

On India-France trade relations, the French minister said the focus now is on expansion of the economic engagement as both sides have already built a robust partnership in the strategic domain.



The Horizon 2047 partnership was unveiled in July 2023 following wide-ranging talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron with an aim to shore up bilateral ties, including in trade and investment.

An India-France Triangular Development Cooperation initiative is also likely to be launched. The two countries are expected to declare 2026 the India-France Innovation Year.

According to the Presi-

dent of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry France-India, Coumar Ananda, the trade between India and France remained below \$20 billion, with most transactions focused on defense and aerospace industries.

France is one of India's key partners in the development of a self-reliant defence industrial and technological base.

India and France are committed to cooperating in the co-development and co-production of advanced defence technologies,

including for the benefit of third countries.

In line with their outstanding cooperation in military aviation spanning over five decades, India and France welcome the timely delivery of the 36 Rafale ordered by India.

In the future, India and France will extend their ground-breaking defence cooperation in advanced aeronautical technologies by supporting the joint development of a combat aircraft engine.

They also support industrial cooperation for motorization of heavy-lift helicopters under the Indian Multi Role Helicopter (IMRH) programme with Safran Helicopter Engine, France.

To enable progress on the IMRH programme, a Shareholders' Agreement between Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), India and Safran Helicopter Engine, France has been concluded for engine development.

India and France hail the success of the first Scorpene submarine con-

struction programme (P75 - Kalvari), a model of Make in India and the sharing of naval expertise between companies in the two countries.

India and France are ready to explore more ambitious projects to develop the Indian submarine fleet and its performance.

Another such example is the MoU between Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd. (GRSE), and Naval Group France, a leader in European Naval Defence Industry to collaborate in the field of surface ship that caters to fulfil the requirement of India and International Naval forces.

India and France are also cooperating closely on transition towards a low carbon economy, with the triple objective of meeting the growing demand for energy driven by India's urbanisation and industrialisation, increasing energy security and achieving the SDG7 and Paris Climate Agreement objectives.

No one has power to displace Palestinians: Turkish President

AGENCIES
ISTANBUL, FEB 10



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that no one has the power to displace Palestinians from their homeland.

"No one has the power to expel Gazans from their ancient and eternal homeland. Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem all belong to the Palestinians," Erdogan told a press conference on Sunday at Ataturk Airport before departing for a three-nation Asia tour.

Despite the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, "we see that the Israeli government has more sinister and inhuman plans in mind," Erdogan said. "Under the pressure of the Zionist lobby, the new US administration's suggestions regarding Gaza have no merit or value for us," he added.

During a joint press conference in Washington with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday, US President Donald Trump said the United States plans to "take control of the Gaza Strip," move Palestinians to neighbouring countries, and redevelop the coastal enclave, Xinhua news agency reported.

"The Gaza Strip would be turned over to the United States by Israel at the conclusion of fighting," Trump wrote, insisting that no US soldiers would be needed to gain control of the region.

"The Palestinians, people like Chuck Schumer, would have already been resettled in far safer and more beautiful communities, with new and modern homes, in the region," the president added. On Thursday, Netanyahu suggested during an interview with Israel's Channel 14 that "Saudis can establish a Palestinian state in Saudi Arabia; they have plenty of land there."

Both Trump's and Netanyahu's remarks have sparked regional and international outcry, with many countries voicing their rejection of displacing Palestinians from their homeland and their support for the two-state solution.

South Korean economy faces growing downside risks from global tariff war

AGENCIES
SEOUL, FEB 10

South Korea's economy is faced with increased downside risks due to an anticipated global trade war centred around the United States, while production remains modest amid a prolonged slump in the construction sector, a state-run economic think tank said on Monday.

"Recently, our economy has seen a modest growth in production while worsening external conditions have heightened downside risks," the Korea Development Institute (KDI) said in a monthly economic assessment report.

The KDI cited heightened concerns over the latest U.S. tariff policies, reports Yonhap news agency.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who began his second term last month, has announced plans to



impose steep tariffs on major trading partners in his efforts to address America's trade deficits and achieve other policy goals.

The think tank noted that South Korea's manufacturing sector has modestly improved, driven by strong semiconductor and automobile production, but the construction sector continues to decline.

"Domestic demand recovery, particularly in consumption and con-

struction investment, has been delayed, and the strong export growth is gradually slowing down, except in the semiconductor sector," the KDI said.

According to government data, South Korea's exports, one of its key economic growth engines, declined in January for the first time in 16 months.

The KDI also pointed to weakening retail consumption and rising delinquency rates among small business owners as addi-

tional concerns.

Meanwhile, sluggish growth in South Korea's industrial output is hampering the country's overall economic recovery amid increased uncertainties, which have been further exacerbated by domestic political instability.

"Our economy has recently seen a slowdown in industrial output growth delaying economic improvement, and heightened uncertainties have weakened economic sentiment," the KDI said in its monthly economic assessment report last month.

The think tank emphasised that economic sentiment has further deteriorated due to the domestic political situation, referring to President Yoon Suk Yeol's short-lived imposition of martial law on December 3 and his subsequent impeachment.

IMF SCANS PAKISTAN'S JUDICIAL, REGULATORY SYSTEM

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD, FEB 10

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was scrutinising the judicial and regulatory system of Pakistan as part of the ongoing \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to address governance and corruption vulnerabilities, according to the Ministry of Finance.

According to the Government of Pakistan, the IMF team will engage with financial, revenue, and election bodies in the country.

An assessment must be published in July sharing measures to address corruption and governance vulnerabilities, reports Dwan, quoting the Ministry of Finance.

Under the United Nations framework, Pakistan is required to publish the corruption report immediately after a review.

A technical mission of the IMF is in Pakistan for a week-long examination of six key governance-related sectors and institutions, the ministry stated.

In October, Pakistan committed to the IMF to strengthen institutional capacities to fight corruption,



support inclusive growth, and provide a level playing field for businesses and investments.

As a result, a structural benchmark had been set to publish by July 2025 a report on the Governance and Corruption Diagnostic Assessment (GCDA) to analyse critical governance and corruption vulnerabilities and identify priority structural reforms moving forward, the ministry said.

According to the media report, the mission would also be engaging with leading members of the superior judiciary besides the leadership of the financial, revenue, and election bodies to review their process.

The mission will examine six core state functions, including fiscal governance, central bank governance and operations, financial sector oversight, market regulation, rule of law, and anti-money laundering and counter-financing terror.

In 2024, The IMF approved \$7 billion to Pakistan under a 37-month loan program, with \$1 billion earmarked for immediate disbursement.

Pakistan has been dependent on IMF funds to meet its needs for decades and has struggled after years of financial mismanagement. It is currently its fifth-largest debtor and has taken 24 loans from the IMF since 1958.

Trump 'determined' to implement 'revolutionary' Gaza takeover plan: Israeli PM

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM, FEB 10

Israel is discussing US President Donald Trump's "revolutionary, creative vision" on the Gaza Strip, the one that Trump is "very determined to implement," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

Trump's plan "opens up many possibilities for us," Netanyahu told a cabinet meeting after his return from Washington to Israel, according to a statement released by Netanyahu's office.

"For an entire year, we have been told that the 'day after' (in Gaza) must involve the PLO (the Palestine Liberation Organization), the Palestinian Authority ... President Trump has presented a completely different vision, one that is much better for the State of Israel," Netanyahu said.

According to the statement, Netanyahu and Trump have agreed on achieving all of Israel's war objectives, including "eliminating" Hamas, releasing all Israeli hos-

tages, ensuring Gaza no longer poses a threat to Israel, and returning displaced Israeli residents, Xinhua news agency reported.

Another war objective of Israel is to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, Netanyahu added.

During a joint press conference in Washington with Netanyahu on Tuesday, Trump said the US plans to "take control of the Gaza Strip," move Palestinians to neighbouring countries, and redevelop the coastal enclave.

Lebanese army launches retaliatory strikes in response to attacks from Syria

AGENCIES
BEIRUT, FEB 10

The Lebanese army announced that it had launched retaliatory strikes in response to artillery fire from Syria.

In a statement posted on social media platform X, the army reported repeated shelling of Lebanese border regions on Sunday, and confirmed its units continued to respond accordingly, Xinhua news agency reported.

Exceptional security measures are being implemented along the border, including the



establishment of monitoring points, patrols, and temporary checkpoints, according to the statement.

The army emphasised that it is closely monitoring the situation and will

take appropriate measures as needed.

On Saturday, the Lebanese army's Guidance Directorate announced that military units had been deployed along the northern and eastern

borders to respond to fire from Syrian territory.

Meanwhile, the National News Agency (NNA) reported on Sunday that rockets launched from Syria landed in several villages in eastern Lebanon, and two Syrian drones were shot down over the border area.

Clashes between Lebanese clans and armed groups near Hermel, close to the Lebanese-Syrian border, have resulted in casualties over the past few days, according to the NNA.

Earlier the Lebanese army said that it had ordered troops deployed

along the Syrian border to retaliate against fire originating from Syrian territory.

The army, in a statement, said it had acted on directives from Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, ordering military units along the northern and eastern borders to respond to sources of fire coming from Syrian territory and targeting Lebanese areas.

The statement added that units had begun responding with "appropriate weapons" following recent clashes that saw several Lebanese areas shelled and fired upon.

Bangladesh Election Commissioner vows to remain 'neutral' in elections

AGENCIES
DHAKA, FEB 10

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of Bangladesh, AMM Nasir Uddin, has said the commission does not intend to support or oppose any political party and vowed to remain neutral, local media reported.

"We, in the commission,

do not want to engage in politics. We do not want to stand for or against any political party," he said, adding, "We want to remain neutral."

He made these remarks while addressing the annual general meeting and prize distribution ceremony of the Reporters Forum for Election and Democracy (RFED) at Nir-

bachan Bhaban in the capital on Sunday, reports the country's leading newspaper, The Daily Star.

Nasir Uddin also stated that political control over the Election Commission was the main reason behind criticism of its role.

"This is the biggest reason why the Election Commission has been subjected to political control.



There may be hundreds

of reasons, but I believe political control over the EC is the most significant factor," he said.

The CEC reaffirmed the commission's commitment to conduct elections in a free, fair and credible manner.

The statement gives a glimmer of hope for the restoration of democracy in a conflict-ridden Ban-

gladesh. The unceremonious exit of Sheikh Hasina by a major political coup was a setback to democracy.

The mass violence in Bangladesh had not only dealt a blow to its fragile democracy but also undermined the potential of being a secular state.

Bangladesh is set for elections in late 2025 or

early 2026, which is being seen as the only viable solution to the existing crisis in the country.

However, the sudden ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the political fallout thereafter has made it challenging for the current caretaker dispensation under Muhammad Yunus to restore order to conduct

a fair election.

The political and security vacuum created in August has already given rise to several new actors like the student groups and radical Jamaat-e-Islam.

The recent destruction of Dhanmondi 32, the historic residence of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, is a clear statement on a fragile system in Bangladesh.

PLI scheme for electronics manufacturing has created over 1.37 lakh direct jobs: Govt

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

The production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for electronics manufacturing has succeeded in attracting a cumulative investment to the tune of Rs 10,213 crore till December 2024, leading to the creation of over 1.37 lakh direct jobs and boosting the country exports, according to information tabled in the Parliament.

Under the special incentive scheme, cumulative production of Rs 662,247 crore and additional employment of 1,37,189 (direct jobs) has been achieved, Union Minister of State for electronics and IT, Jitin Prasada, informed the Rajya Sabha.



"Due to the policies of the government for promotion of electronics manufacturing, India has become a mobile phone exporter now from a mobile importing country in 2014-15," the minister said in the written reply.

Driven by the PLI scheme, the production of mobile phones has increased from about 60 million mobile phones

in 2014-15 to about 330 million mobile phones in 2023-24. This is more than 5 times increase in number of mobile phones manufactured over the last 10 years.

In value terms, the production of mobile phones has increased from a mere Rs 19,000 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 422,000 crore in 2023-24 growing at a compound annual growth rate

(CAGR) of 41 per cent.

Further, since the inception of the PLI Scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing, mobile phone exports have increased from Rs 22,868 crore in 2020-21 to Rs 129,074 crore in 2023-24 growing at a CAGR of 78 per cent.

Further, whereas in 2015, 74 per cent of all mobile phones sold in India were imported, India has now reached a point where 99.2 per cent of the mobile handsets being used in India are made in India. The manufacturing of various electronic components/sub-assemblies for mobile phones such as batteries, chargers, PCBA, camera modules, display module, enclosures, USB

Cable, Ferrite, and Glass covers has also started in India, the minister stated.

"This clearly indicates that the complete ecosystem for mobile phone manufacturing is developing in the country. The existing component manufacturers are expanding their existing capacity and new players are also exploring India as a potential market," he pointed out.

The small domestic mobile phone manufacturers under the PLI scheme have also made a cumulative investment of Rs 787 crore, leading to cumulative production of Rs 34,111 crore and generating additional employment of 25,288 (direct jobs) till December 2024.

Indian metal stocks fall as Trump threatens new tariffs

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, FEB 10

Shares of domestic metal companies on Monday declined sharply after the US President Donald Trump announced to impose a 25 per cent tariff on all steel and aluminum imports.

This statement raised concerns about disruptions in the global metal market and led to selling pressure on steel stocks.

In response to these developments, stocks of Tata Steel, JSW Steel, and Hindalco Industries fell nearly 3 per cent, making them some of the worst performers on the Nifty 50 index.

Other companies like Vedanta, and Jindal Steel also dropped by 3-4

cent. The Nifty Metal index fell more than 2 per cent, resulting in top loser sector of the day.

Trump, while speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One on Sunday, said that the tariffs would apply to metal imports from all countries.

However, he did not specify when these duties would be implemented.

His announcement has created uncertainty in the market as investors are worried about supply and demand issues in the global metal industry.

The possibility of higher tariffs in the US poses a serious challenge for metal producers worldwide.

If implemented, the tariffs would make foreign steel and aluminum more

expensive in the US, reducing their competitiveness and impacting demand.

For exporters, this could mean lower profits as the cost of selling in the US increases.

Additionally, with limited access to the US market, global metal producers might face an oversupply of steel and aluminum, which could lead to a drop in prices and a decline in earnings.

In the early trade, the Sensex was trading at 77,575.91 with a decline of 284.28 points or 0.37 per cent, while the Nifty was down 87.95 points or 0.37 per cent at 23,472.00.

The Indian rupee also opened on a lower note by 53 paise to 87.95 against the US Dollar on Monday.

New Income Tax Bill to raise transparency in tax laws, say experts

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

The new Income Tax Bill is contemplated to raise the level of transparency in tax laws by adopting clear and unambiguous language in tax provisions which allows the taxpayers to easily understand their obligations and rights, industry experts said on Monday.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is expected to introduce the Income Tax Bill this week, which would go to the Parliament's Standing Committee on Finance for scrutiny.

With the commitment of the government to 'trust first, scrutinise later', the proposal for an introduction of new IT Bill has been a matter of current buzz. Various stakeholders are anticipating numerous changes as compared to erstwhile income-tax law.

"It is expected that the new IT Bill 2025 would



address the issue of complexity in determining tax residency of an individual in India. Currently, it involves multiple conditions for qualifying an individual as a tax resident," said Harsh Bhuta, Partner, Bhuta Shah & Co.

Currently, the income tax law comprises of humongous tax provisions. The new IT Bill is anticipated to address this issue by eliminating certain redundant as well as obsolete provisions and reducing its volume considerably.

According to experts,

the new IT Bill would not entail any new tax but concentrate on facilitating tax compliance in a better way.

It is also expected that announcements for income-tax reliefs or amendments to the income-tax law will now no longer be required to wait till budget proposals. The government can make the changes to relief by way of executive orders only.

Bhuta further stated that the focus of new IT Bill will be on reduced number of scrutiny in

case of gross non-compliance to ensure that undue harassment to honest taxpayers is curbed. Also, this will lead to reduction in litigation issues.

The new IT Bill is set to reduce the complex compliance burden by simplifying the compliance process making it easier and comprehensible for all taxpayers thereby ensuring savings in cost and time.

Experts said that the ongoing review of the Income-tax Act, 1961, seeks to modernise and simplify India's tax system in line with broader economic goals.

It aims to enhance the ease of doing business, reduce ambiguity in interpretations, improve tax administration and compliance. This will help increase India's tax-GDP ratio to global levels and support sustainable economic growth, said Sandeep Chaufla, Partner - Price Waterhouse and Co (PwC).

1 in 4 flights in South Korea delayed in 2024 due to air traffic congestion

AGENCIES
SEOUL, FEB 10

One in four flights operated by South Korean airlines last year experienced delays in flight departures or arrivals, government data showed on Monday.

According to the transport ministry data submitted to the office of Rep. Ahn Tae-jun of the main opposition Democratic Party, the average delay rate for domestic and international flights operated by 10 domestic airlines in 2024 stood at 25.7 per cent, reports Yonhap news agency.

According to ministry guidelines, a flight is considered delayed if it arrives or departs more than 15 minutes past its scheduled time. Of the 678,489 flights operated by South Korean airlines last year, 174,078 were recorded as delayed.

The ministry attributed last year's high delay rate to increased international flights leading to greater



airport congestion, as well as frequent turbulence and airspace restrictions on international flight paths.

Among international routes, Air Seoul had the highest delay rate of 46.6 per cent, followed by Eastar Jet with 38 per cent and Jin Air with 35.4 per-

cent. For domestic routes, T'way Air had the highest delay rate of 31.3 per cent, followed by Air Seoul.

Meanwhile, Korean Air, South Korea's leading air carrier, said on Monday it has been named the best airline of 2025 by Airline Ratings, a prestigious Australia-based aviation and

travel publication.

Korean Air was ranked No. 1 in a comprehensive evaluation of over 350 airlines worldwide based on various criteria, including safety, product ratings, passenger reviews, fleet age and environmental commitment.

Airline Ratings praised Korean Air's economy class experience, highlighting the spacious seat configurations in comparison to other airlines and attentive onboard service.

The evaluation also noted Korean Air's comprehensive amenities on its long-haul routes, along with enhanced dining and expansive in-flight entertainment options, according to the company.

"Korean Air's delivery of exceptional service across all cabin classes, from economy to premium, is backed by continuous investment in next-generation aircraft and fleet modernisation," Airline Ratings CEO Sharon Petersen said.

89 pc of Indian tech service enterprises begin GenAI proof-of-concept projects

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

At least 89 per cent of Indian technology service enterprises have initiated generative AI (GenAI) proof-of-concept (POC) projects, with 33 per cent already in production, according to a report on Monday.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is fundamentally reshaping India's software services industry, driving innovation, efficiency, and new business models, said EY India in its report. AI investments also continue to surge as 78 per cent of organisations have dedicated budgets and strategies for GenAI implementation. Technology services sector is poised to witness a 43-45 per cent productivity boost across more than 500 roles by 2030 and 44 per cent of those surveyed recognize AI's role in enhancing customer satisfaction while 28 per cent link it to revenue growth, the report noted.

"Enterprises are moving beyond experimentation to putting AI into production at scale. The rapid transition from POC to enterprise-wide adoption reflects the industry's confidence in AI's potential," said Abhinav Johri, Technology Consulting

Partner, EY India.

Scaling AI responsibly through robust infrastructure, governance, and talent development will be key to unlocking its full economic impact and strengthening India's competitive edge in the digital era, he added. The technology services sector is poised to witness a 43-45 per cent productivity boost across more than 500 roles by 2030. Roles in software development is expected to see approximately 60 per cent productivity improvement, while those in the BPO services and IT consulting could witness around 52 per cent and 47 per cent improvement, respectively.

Collectively, these three areas are anticipated to account for 50 per cent to 60 per cent of overall productivity enhancement in technology services.

Furthermore, organisations have prioritised specific areas for GenAI implementation -- around 56 per cent of companies focus on development, while 39 per cent emphasise operations, 28 per cent prioritise quality testing, whereas 22 per cent concentrate on designing and prototyping as well as integration and deployment each, the report mentioned.

Benefits of Artificial General Intelligence should be broadly distributed: Sam Altman

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

As AI begins to transform industries globally, ensuring that the benefits of AGI (Artificial General Intelligence) are broadly distributed is critical, according to OpenAI Co-founder and CEO Sam Altman.

The historical impact of technological progress suggests that most of the metrics we care about (health outcomes and economic prosperity, etc.) get better on average and over the long-term, but increasing equality does not seem technologically determined and getting this right may require new ideas, he emphasised in a new blog post.

"Our mission is to ensure that AGI benefits



all of humanity. AGI is a weakly defined term, but generally speaking, we mean it to be a system that can tackle increasingly complex problems, at human level, in many fields," he mentioned.

The world continues to see rapid progress with AI development.

Altman, who just visited India, elaborated on three observations about the economics of AI.

The intelligence of an AI model roughly equals the log of the resources used to train and run it. These resources are chiefly training compute, data, and inference compute.

"It appears that you can spend arbitrary amounts of money and get continuous and predictable gains; the scaling laws that predict this are accurate over many orders of magnitude," said the ChatGPT maker.

Second, the cost to use a given level of AI falls about 10x every 12 months, and lower prices lead to much more use.

"You can see this in the token cost from GPT-4 in early 2023 to GPT-4o in mid-2024, where the price per token dropped about 150x in that time period. Moore's law changed the world at 2x every 18 months; this is unbelievably stronger," said Altman.

Third, the socio-economic value of linearly

increasing intelligence is super-exponential in nature.

A consequence of this is that we see no reason for exponentially increasing investment to stop in the near future.

"If these three observations continue to hold true, the impacts on society will be significant," Altman added.

The company is now starting to roll out AI agents, which will eventually feel like virtual co-workers.

"We expect the impact of AGI to be uneven. Although some industries will change very little, scientific progress will likely be much faster than it is today; this impact of AGI may surpass everything else," Altman noted.

Gold prices at record high as investors seek safety amid trade war concerns

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Gold prices on Monday surged to new record highs in the domestic futures market as uncertainty over the US President Donald Trump's tariff policies increased demand for the yellow metal as a safe-haven investment.

According to the India Bullion and Jewellers

Association, the price of 24-carat gold was Rs 8,537 per gram, while 22-carat gold was Rs 8,332 per gram.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures for April 4 expiry touched an all-time high of Rs 85,384 per 10 grams in early trade.

The same contract was trading 0.51 per cent higher at Rs 85,325 per 10 grams.

In the international market, gold prices also remained near record levels due to growing fears of a global trade war. Last week, spot gold reached a new peak of \$2,886.62 per ounce.

The uncertainty surrounding Trump's latest trade decisions has pushed investors towards gold, which is traditionally considered a safe investment during times

of economic and geopolitical instability.

Trump plans to impose a 25 per cent tariff on all steel and aluminum imports into the US.

He was expected to make a formal announcement later on Monday (US time). Trump may introduce additional tariffs on several countries.

The trade policies have raised concerns about inflation in the US, which

could prevent the Federal Reserve from cutting interest rates in the near future.

Meanwhile, the gold reserves in India went up by \$1.242 billion to \$70.893 billion in the previous week, according to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data. The apex bank said that the Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were also up by \$29 million to \$17.889 billion.

GoMechanic to invest Rs 100 crore in two years

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Multi-brand auto service firm GoMechanic on Monday said it will invest Rs 100 crore in the next two years to launch two-wheeler servicing in India.

"With two-wheelers comprising over 75% of India's total vehicle sales, this strategic expansion aims to bring affordable, high-quality, and stan-

dardised servicing to millions of riders nationwide," the company said in a media release.

GoMechanic said that its two-wheeler service rollout will be executed in two phases. It said that the first phase has already been rolled out in metropolitan hubs like Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida, Ghaziabad, Mumbai, Thane, and Pune. The second phase includes expansion into

Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad, and other cities.

"Two-wheelers are the backbone of Indian mobility, yet servicing remains unorganised. With 2Wheels by GoMechanic, we bring structure, efficiency, and trust to the market. Our goal is to make bike servicing as seamless as booking a cab—affordable, reliable, and just a few clicks away.

Indian team urges people to join 'Donate Organs, Save Lives' campaign ahead of Ahmedabad ODI

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Ahead of the third ODI against England at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Wednesday, the Indian team players including former captain Virat Kohli urged people to join the 'Donate Organs, Save Lives' campaign and pledge for organ donation.

On Monday, ICC Chairman Jay Shah announced the launch of the initiative on the final ODI of the ongoing three-match series against England.

"On the occasion of the 3rd ODI between India and England in Ahmedabad on February 12th, we are proud to launch an awareness initiative - "Donate



Organs, Save Lives". Sport has the power to inspire, unite, and create lasting impact beyond the field. Through this initiative, we urge everyone to take a step towards giving the greatest gift of all - the gift of life. One pledge, one decision, can save multiple lives. Let's come together and make a difference!,"

Shah wrote on X. The BCCI also shared the video of Indian players appealing to the countrymen to join the initiative. "Score the ultimate century, your organs can help others live beyond your lifetime. Register as a donor and make every life count," said Virat Kohli in a video posted by BCCI on

its social media accounts. "Be the captain of life. Just like a captain leads the team to victory, you can lead someone to life by pledging to donate your organs," India vice-captain Shubman Gill remarked.

"One donor can save up to eight lives. Pledge today and hit a six for humanity," added Shreyas Iyer.

"Play the ultimate winning shot. Your decision to donate to donate your organs can be the match-winning moment in someone's life. Be a hero off the field too," said KL Rahul.

"Be the captain of kindness," said all-rounder Axar Patel. "Pledge to donate and inspire others to follow."

"Lead by example. A single decision can be a

winning shot for many," added Hardik Pandya.

"Hit a six for humanity. One donor can save up to eight lives. Be the all-rounder world needs," asserted Ravindra Jadeja.

"Don't let lives bowled. Thousands wait for an organ transplant. Be the game changer and give them a second innings," said pacer Arshdeep Singh.

Washington Sundar, Varun Chakaravathy and Rishabh Pant also featured in the video and supported the campaign.

Currently, India lead the series 2-0 after winning the first two ODIs in Nagpur and Cuttack to bolster their preparations for the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy.

WPL 2025: Delhi Capitals will be one of the favourites to win the title, says Aakash Chopra

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Former India men's cricketer Aakash Chopra believes the Delhi Capitals are one of the favourites to win WPL 2025, saying that despite the trophy eluding them twice, their consistency in playing will make them go one step further this time. DC have been table-toppers in league stages of WPL 2023 and 2024, but have ended up runners-up on both occasions, including at their home ground Arun Jaitley Stadium. DC will open their WPL 2025 campaign against Mumbai Indians in Vadodara on February 15.

"Success is always defined by trophies, but in the first two seasons of the TATA WPL, Delhi Capitals have truly stood out with their style of play and consistency. I know they haven't won a title yet, but they came very close last season. Given their performances, they will definitely be one of the favourites this year as well," said Chopra on Disney+ Hotstar on Monday.



DC's opening pair will once again be captain Meg Lanning and young Shafali Verma, but Chopra sounded not too optimistic about them clicking as a pair in WPL 2025.

Meg has played cricket sporadically since her international retirement, while Shafali has been out of the Indian team set-up after a poor ODI series against New Zealand last year.

It meant Shafali was back to playing domestic cricket, and finished as

the leading run-getter in the Senior Women's One-Day Challenger Trophy, amassing 414 runs in five matches at an average of 82.80 and a strike rate of 145.26, including hitting one hundred and three fifties.

She was also the highest run-scorer in Senior Women's One Day Trophy via 527 runs at an average of 75.29 and a strike-rate of 152.31. "Since Meg Lanning's retirement from international cricket, she hasn't been in her best form. Meanwhile, Shafali Verma has also lost her spot in the Indian squad."

2024 runner up Germany arrives in Bhubaneswar ahead of FIH Pro League matches

AGENCIES
BHUBANESWAR, FEB 10

The Germany Women's Hockey Team arrived at Biju Patnaik International Airport, Bhubaneswar, on Monday ahead of their FIH Hockey Pro League 2024/25 fixtures in India. Led by Co-Captains Linnea Wiedemann and Sarah Strauss, Germany will take on Spain on 15 and 16 February before facing hosts India on 21 and 22 February.

Germany finished runners-up in last season's Pro League behind the Netherlands, but they have struggled for form this year. With only two draws from four matches, they currently sit seventh in the standings with three



points. Having conceded 13 goals already, they will be looking to tighten their defense ahead of the crucial upcoming games.

Speaking upon arrival, co-captain Wiedemann said, "The Kalinga Stadium always has an incredible atmosphere, and we are looking forward to playing here. We know

facing India in front of their home crowd will be tough, but we will focus on our performance and give our best."

Echoing her teammate's thoughts, co-captain Strauss added, "I feel great coming back to Bhubaneswar. We played here three years ago, and it was a wonderful experience.

Some experienced players have returned from their post-Olympics break, giving us a fresh squad. We are focusing on team cohesion and looking to secure valuable points."

Currently, China lead the chart with 16 points in eight matches followed by Netherlands, Australia, Belgium and Argentina, respectively to complete the top 5.

The Indian women's team will begin their FIH Hockey Pro League 2024/25 campaign against England on February 15.

Odisha also hosted the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 and the Rourkela and Bhubaneswar legs of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Bihar looks to retain title as Sub-Junior National Rugby Sevens C'ship begins on Tuesday

AGENCIES
GWALIOR, FEB 10

Defending champions Bihar will be looking to retain their title at the Sub-Junior National Rugby Sevens Championships, which kicks off on Tuesday here at Lakshmbai National Institute of Physical Education (LNPE) with a total participation of 21 teams in the U15 girls' category.

This event marks a significant milestone for Indian Rugby, with the introduction of contact rugby for the Sub-Junior cohort of players (U15). This transition from touch rugby to contact rugby is consistent with the federation's ambition to strengthen the Indian national age-grade teams, as they lock horns



against teams at the Asian frontier.

The tournament will be held across two days - February 11 and 12, where 21 participating states with 252 participating players shall vie for the coveted trophy.

Maharashtra and Rajasthan ranked second and third respectively, shall be looking to closely contest at the championship and beat Bihar to finally win the gold.

"Like any national sports federation, the future of Rugby in our county is

pegged against the number of youngsters who pick the game as their preferred sport. A sizeable proportion of our players who now represent the Indian National team, began their journey at age-grade events, such as the Sub-Junior National Championships. Ergo, the upcoming U-15 National Championships remain vital for Rugby India.

"We are also delighted to be hosting these championships at the Lakshmbai National Institute of Physi-

cal Education (LNPE), in Gwalior.

Many thanks to LNPE for their support and generosity in hosting these championships," said Rahul Bose, Indian Rugby Football Union president.

Complete Pools:
Pool A: Bihar, Assam, and Delhi

Pool B: Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Goa

Pool C: Rajasthan, Haryana, and Manipur

Pool D: Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh

Pool E: Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Uttarakhand

Pool F: Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Chandigarh

Pool G: Kerala, Jammu & Kashmir, and Punjab

PGTI begins 2025 season with TATA Steel PGTI Players Championship 2025

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, FEB 10

The TATA Steel PGTI Players Championship 2025 on Monday announced the season's maiden championship to be held at Tollygunge Club here from February 11-14. The tournament offered a prize purse of Rs 1 crore with the Pro-Am event played on February 15. The 4-day championship will have participation of 124 players including 121 professionals and three amateurs.

The strong field at the event boasts of leading Indian professionals SSP Chawrasia and Rahul Gangjee, both local favourites, as well as Rashid Khan, Chikkarangappa, Yuwraj Sandhu, Karandeep Kochhar, defending champion Manu Gandas, Om Prakash Chouhan and Udayan Mane, to name a few.

The foreign players competing are Bangladeshis Jamal Hossain, Badal Hossain, Md Jakiruzzaman Jakir, Md Somrat Sikdar, Md Muaj, Md Razu, Md Solayeman and Md

Sajib Ali, Sri Lankans N Thangaraja and K Prabakaran, Italians Michele Ortolani and Federico Zucchetti, Czech Republic's Stepan Danek, Americans Koichiro Sato and Dominic Piccirillo and Nepal's Subash Tamang.

Besides SSP Chawrasia, the other Kolkata-based professionals in the field are Shankar Das, Mohammad Sanju, Divyanshu Bajaj, Indrajit Bhalotia, Feroz Ali Mollah and Karan Verma. The three Kolkata-based amateurs participating are Varish Mohta, Suveer Kapoor and Anshul Mishra. Tollygunj Club golf captain Harmandar Bindra said, "We at Tollygunge Club are proud to once again host and be the presenting partners for the prestigious PGTI Players Championship 2025. This event marks the season opener, and for the past four years, Tollygunge Club has proudly presented the Players Championship and provided a platform where seasoned professionals, aspiring talents, and promising rookies showcase their skills."

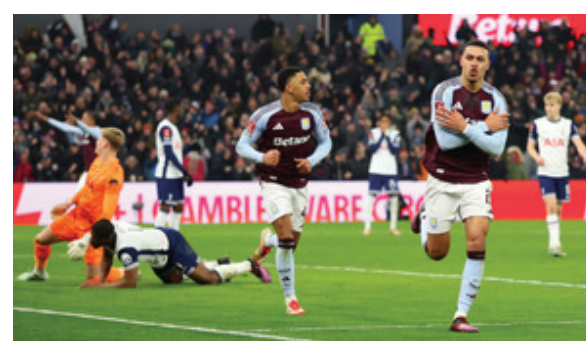
ROGERS CREDITS UNAI EMERY FOR ASTON VILLA'S FA CUP TRIUMPH OVER SPURS

AGENCIES
BIRMINGHAM, FEB 10

Morgan Rogers lauded Aston Villa's performance at Villa Park on Sunday, as Unai Emery's side booked their place in the fifth round of the FA Cup with a 2-1 win over Tottenham Hotspur.

Villa hit the front with just 58 seconds on the clock with Rogers teeing up Jacob Ramsey to thrash his effort through goalkeeper Antonin Kinsky. The midfielder would add the second for the hosts just after the hour mark, to wrap up victory.

Rogers cited the start his side made to the game



as a key component in the victory, after Emery "hit a reset button" earlier in the week.

"This week, the manager hit a reset button in terms of new players in. It's from now until the end of the season, that last big push. That started

with today, and that start. I thought we were outstanding, especially that first half.

"We took it to them, with the intensity, the aggression, everything about the way we were was really good.

"(We) Probably could

have done with another goal, but in terms of that energy, it was really good, and it really set us on the right foot. It got the crowd involved as well, and that's the most important thing when we're here. I thought we started really well," said Rogers to VillaTV.

With four of Villa's five January recruits in action against the North London outfit, Rogers praised the impression each of the new signings have made in their short time with the club thus far.

He hopes the competition in the squad continues to raise the team's level, as they aim for a successful

end to the season.

"It helps with the quality of signings we brought in this week," Rogers added. "They've given everyone a massive lift, just with the calibre and quality they possess, and the levels we're trying to reach, that's massive for us and where we want to go.

"The squad now is looking really strong, and hopefully now we can get a few of the injured players back.

"For me, it's a massive buzz. This week has just been that bit different. We were looking forward to this game and we wanted to put in a performance, and we did," he added.

England were sloppy & lacklustre, need to sharpen up in a number of areas, says Prior

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, FEB 10

Former England wicket-keeper Matt Prior termed the Jos Buttler-led side as "sloppy" and "lacklustre" after suffering an ODI series defeat to India in Cuttack, adding that they need to sharpen up in a number of areas ahead of the Champions Trophy.

Electing to bat first at the Barabati Stadium on Sunday, Joe Root and Ben Duckett smashed 69 and 65 respectively while Liam Livingstone applied finishing touches with his 41 as England posted a mammoth 304 in 49.5 overs. But they lost their



last seven wickets for 85 runs, after being primed to make well above their posted total.

Though England batted for longer periods and got past 300, it wasn't enough for them to stop

India from winning the game, with captain Rohit Sharma's masterly 119, his 32nd ODI century leading their charge to chase down 305 with 33 balls to spare.

England had previously lost the T20I series 1-4 to

India, and face the ignominy of a series sweep if India wins the dead rubber ODI to be played at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

"For me, you could tell they haven't played 50-over cricket for a long time. There were just sloppy mistakes. It was just a bit lacklustre. For England, the talent is there, the ability is there, but they just need to sharpen up in a number of areas. We know how talented the squad is and the team is, but you've got to go out and execute your plans on the field," said Prior on TNT Sport.

Former England fast bowler Steven Finn highlighted that how India showed the ability to seize big moments and clinch the ODI series with a game to spare. "If India see a chink in your armour, especially bringing all their big guns back in, they are going to take advantage of it."

"England did have them on the ropes in that first nine overs, but a sign of a good team is one that does exactly what India did. A couple of crucial moments in the game, where they needed to take their opportunity to pile through the door, they did."

Rugby: Feyi-Waboso & Furbank could return during Six Nations

AGENCIES
LONDON, FEB 10

Injured duo Immanuel Feyi-Waboso and George Furbank could return to boost England's back-three options before the end of the Six Nations.

Wing Feyi-Waboso, who was shortlisted for World Rugby's breakthrough player of 2024 after scoring five tries in his first eight England appearances, has opted not to have surgery on the shoulder he dislocated before Christmas, the BBC reported.

"There's a possibility he'll be back before the end of the Six Nations and I'd love him to be back," Borthwick said of the 22-year-old Exeter star.

"The timescales are a little bit unclear and it depends how things progress, but he's going well so far." Feyi-Waboso will be assessed by England's medical staff when the squad reconvenes later this week.

Meanwhile full-back Furbank is recovering from fracturing his arm in Northampton's Champions Cup win over the Bulls in

December.

"He is going well," said Borthwick of Furbank. "He had another X-ray on his arm last week and we are waiting on the specialist to give his view on that.

"Hopefully he might be available at the end of the tournament but we are still waiting for the specialist's report."

England will attempt to end Scotland's four-match winning streak in rugby's oldest international fixture when the two teams meet at Twickenham on 22 February.

3-month long district-wide anti-drugs campaign launched in Jammu

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 10

A massive three month long Information, Education and Communication campaign against drug addiction and abuse was launched across the district today.

Under the overall leadership of District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya, the campaign commenced with 40 panchayat-level events, marking the first phase of an extensive outreach plan that will continue over the next three months, covering every panchayat in the district.

A variety of activities, including nukkad natak, video testimonies, short films and rallies, are being incorporated to enhance audio-visual engagement with the masses.



The initiative is a collaborative effort involving multiple departments, including Health, Education, Social Welfare and Police, along with other stakeholders, ensuring a holistic approach to awareness and prevention. Additional Dis-

trict Magistrate Anusya Jamwal, designated as the Nodal Officer, coordinated today's events and will continue overseeing their execution in the upcoming phases.

A key highlight of the campaign was the motivational lectures by former

addicts, who would be sharing their personal struggles and experiences, warning the public about the devastating impact of drug abuse on both personal and social lives.

With a total of 305 events planned, awareness drives will be held weekly at pre-decided venues, targeting the general public. The campaign aims to engage the public at the grassroots level, fostering dialogue and spreading critical awareness about drug prevention and rehabilitation.

The district administration has urged citizens to participate actively and support the initiative.

Dir Law Enforcement J&K reviews fertilizer scenario in Kashmir division

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 10

To review the overall scenario of TSO/HMO in Kashmir Division, the Director Law enforcement J&K Balbir Singh today chaired a meeting of heads & responsible persons of TSO/HMO companies who are carrying out their business in Kashmir division.

While addressing the meeting, Singh said that enforcement wing is committed to safeguard the interests of farming community of the region.

He exhorted upon the stakeholders including representatives of TSO/HMO companies to put in all the efforts and ensure that only the quality inputs including TSO/HMO reaches farming community.

He highlighted the



importance of transparency and accountability in the system to ensure smooth and timely distribution of tree spray oil to the growers and farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, Joint Director Agriculture Kashmir Sartaj

Ahmad Shah highlighted the significance of TSO/HMO and other agricultural inputs. He reiterated the importance of collaborative efforts between the stakeholders to ensure the availability of quality inputs to the farming com-

munity of the region through proper sale outlets at appropriate time.

He impressed upon the concerned officers to make sincere efforts for online service delivery to the farmers.

Shah said that while functioning in the field, The concerned officers must ensure that all the provisions of insecticides act, fertilizer control order are implemented in letter and spirit.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Director Law Enforcement, Plant Protection Officer Kashmir, District Law Enforcement Officer North, District Law Enforcement Officer South, enforcement inspectors and other concerned officers of the Department.

2-day seminar on Scientific Beekeeping commences at Reasi

JI NEWS SERVICE
REASI, FEBRUARY 10

A two-day district-level seminar on Scientific Beekeeping and National Honey Mission commenced today in village Bhaga, District Reasi.

The seminar was inaugurated by DDC Chairman Saraf Singh Nag, in the presence of MLA Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Constituency Baldev Raj Sharma and ADDC Sukhdev Singh Samyal.

In his inaugural address, the DDC Chairman appreciated the Agriculture Department for organizing the seminar and urged farmers to embrace diversification in agriculture.

MLA Baldev Raj Sharma urged the farmers to avail government schemes to improve their financial



well-being.

Speaking at the event, ADDC Sukhdev Singh Samyal stressed the importance of organic farming, encouraging farmers to shift towards chemical-free agricultural practices for healthier and more

sustainable crop production.

The seminar also featured an insightful presentation by experts from KVK Reasi and SKUAST-J, Dr. Banarsi and Dr. Devinder Sharma, who discussed the role of bee-

keeping in income generation, entrepreneurship, and advanced apiculture practices. They also provided an overview of the beekeeping industry in Jammu.

Earlier, Chief Agriculture Officer Harbans Singh, highlighted the vast potential of beekeeping in the district and the government schemes aimed at supporting apiculture. He encouraged farmers to take advantage of the 80% subsidy under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) to enhance their beekeeping practices, making it a sustainable and profitable livelihood. He also emphasized the need to adopt scientific beekeeping techniques over traditional methods to boost production and profitability.

Awareness prog on World Unani Day 2025 held at Anantnag

JI NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, FEBRUARY 10

Department of AYUSH, District Anantnag, today organized an awareness programme at the Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag-affiliated hospital in Janglatmandi to commemorate World Unani Day 2025. The event honored the legacy of Hakeem Ajmal Khan, a stalwart of Unani medicine, and underscored the significance of this traditional healing system in contemporary healthcare.

The programme witnessed the participation of esteemed medical professionals, Unani practitioners, and scholars who deliberated on the relevance of Unani medicine in modern times.

In his address, Dr. Ali Mohammad Reshi, District



AYUSH Officer Anantnag, highlighted the pivotal role of Unani medicine in holistic healthcare. He spoke about the achievements of the AYUSH department in the district and reiterated the government's commit-

ment to fostering research and integration of Unani practices into mainstream healthcare.

The event's Chief Guest, Dr. Rafi Ahmad Jan from GMC Anantnag, along with other distinguished

experts, addressed the gathering, shedding light on the various dimensions of Unani medicine.

They emphasized the need to popularize this ancient system across the district to ensure its benefits reach a wider audience.

A dedicated technical session was also conducted, where experts demonstrated different Unani treatments for managing and preventing diseases. Attendees were educated about the holistic principles of Unani medicine, which emphasize natural healing and balance within the body.

The awareness programme concluded with a call to action for greater research, awareness campaigns, and policy support to further strengthen the Unani system of medicine in the region.

JKEDI hosts workshop on Semiconductor Design Led ESDM

JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, FEBRUARY 10

Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) hosted a one-day workshop themed "Semiconductor Design Led ESDM: Exploring the world of Semiconductors & AI: J&K" here on Monday.

The workshop served as a crucial platform for industry experts, academicians, and innovators to discuss the future of semiconductor technology in India with an overall objective to propel Jammu & Kashmir into the digital age. The event was a testament to the vision and leadership of Director JKEDI, Rajinder Kumar Sharma, whose unwavering commitment to entrepreneurship and innovation has positioned the institute as a center for cutting-edge technological discourse.

The workshop featured esteemed speakers, including Dr. M.J. Zarabi, Founder of R&Z Technologies and former CMD of SCL Mohali.

Former Chairman BOG at NIT Srinagar, Dr. Zarabi shared his valuable insights on the semicon-



ductor industry and its growth prospects in India.

Other notable speakers included Prof. (Dr) B. L. Raina, Founder of R&Z Technologies, an eminent academician with experience at UNC (USA), TIFR (India) spoke on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its applications, and Susheel Jalali, COO of R&Z Technologies, who discussed semiconductor-led AI applications and the benefits of using RISC-V, an open-source instruction set architecture.

With India's semiconductor market projected to reach \$63 billion by 2026, workshops like these play a pivotal role in fostering research, innovation, and skill development.

Speaking at the event, the Director JKEDI emphasized the significance of semiconductor technology

in shaping India's digital future. "At JKEDI, we are committed to nurturing an environment that fosters innovation and entrepreneurship. The semiconductor industry holds immense potential for our youth, and it is imperative to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to be at the forefront of this technological revolution. This workshop is a step towards building a strong semiconductor ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir."

The speakers and attendees lauded the Director JKEDI for his proactive approach in promoting entrepreneurship and technological advancement in the region. His leadership has been instrumental in making JKEDI a hub for innovation, aligning with India's

broader vision of becoming a global semiconductor powerhouse.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from distinguished guests, industry professionals, academicians, and faculty members. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from 120 Engineering students from various Universities and colleges viz SMVDU-Katra, MIET-Jammu, GCET-Jammu, MBS College-Jammu etc and startups who attended physically, while over 100 participants joined virtually which include students and guests from SKUAST-Kashmir and NIT Srinagar.

The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to the esteemed speakers and participants who contributed to the insightful discussions.

DC Kupwara chairs NCORD meeting

JI NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 10

To review the progress made to curb the drug abuse in Kupwara district, a meeting of District Level Committee of Narco Coordination (NCORD) was held today under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan here today.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal from concerned members of NCORD Committee regarding the present scenario of drug related occurrences, various issues related to menace of drug addiction, its control and rehabilitation and areas of concern.

The DC reviewed the implementation of the measures taken and progress achieved to eliminate drug abuse and its peddling in the district.

Deputy Commissioner took feedback from the members of the Committee who presented the latest report related to action taken against drug-addiction and drug trafficking in the District.

DC also emphasized the officers including Enforcement agencies for identification and close vigil of



entry points, hot spots of drugs, public places and abandoned buildings.

Similarly, DC also laid thrust on further intensifying IEC campaigns (seminars, rallies and other programmes on the harmful effects of drug menace) at Schools and Colleges levels to sensitize students and common masses about ill-effects of drugs and close coordination between Health, Education and other line departments.

She reviewed the functioning of Drug De-addiction Centre Kupwara and Addiction Treatment Facility Centre (ATFC) Handwara and stressed for upscaling of the thera-

peutic management and proper counseling of the drug addicts which can help the addicts to come out of the menace.

Shr emphasized the need for providing self employment opportunities to the drug victims who have been recovered so that they can live a dignified life in the society. The DSWO was directed to provide IEC material among the departments for mass awareness about the ill effects of drugs.

Tehsildars were directed to provide a list of abandoned buildings in their respective jurisdictions which will be patrolled by the Police to check any activity of drug use.

DC said in order to combat this rising societal problem, multi-pronged Rehabilitation, Counseling and Guidance policy is indispensable to be implemented on ground to monitor drug abuse and take remedial measures to curb the menace so that sufferings of the drug-affected persons is mitigated.

The meeting among others was attended by ADC Kupwara, Mohammed Rouf Rehman, CMO Kupwara, Medical Superintendent DH Handwara, Dy. SPs of Kupwara/Handwara; Dy. CEO, Assistant Drug controller, Tehsildars, besides other concerned Officers.