

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
- Joint and muscle pain
- Present vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool, urine or vomit

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

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Protecting Rights of Citizens Should Be Top Priority of J&K Police: Home Minister Amit Shah

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEB 18 (KNO)

Stating that the Jammu & Kashmir police should now prioritize safeguarding citizen rights, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday directed the Union Territory administration to ensure the full implementation of three new criminal laws by April 2025.

Shah, who chaired a high-level review meeting on the implementation of these laws in Jammu & Kashmir, noted that with the decline in terror activities and improvement in the security scenario in the region, the police should now prioritize safeguarding the rights of its citizens.

Shah, who reviewed the implementation of the laws in the presence of LG Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, asked the UT administration to ensure the full implementation of the three new criminal laws, made

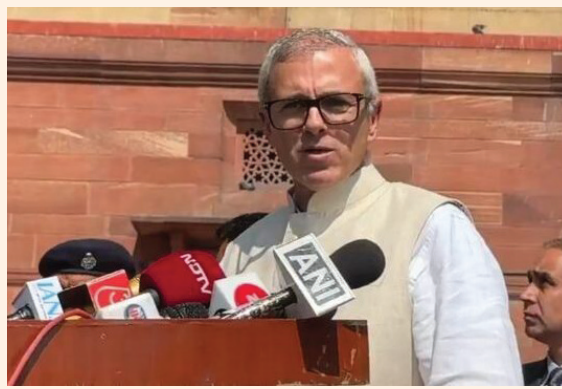
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We will have to make efforts to make people aware about new criminal laws: Omar

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEB 18 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that implementing three new criminal laws is not the mandate of the elected government in Jammu and Kashmir, but the dispensation led by will have to make efforts to create awareness among people about



them. Talking to reporters here after attending a meeting called by Home Minister Amit Shah to review the implementation of the new criminal laws, Omar, as per news agency, said, "As far as the elected government is concerned, it is not our responsibility to implement these

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Amid wet forecast, night cold continues

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 18

Amid forecast of rain and snow from Wednesday, the night cold continues to grip the Kashmir Valley, with all weather stations recording sub-zero temperatures on Tuesday, an official said.

Night temperatures across the valley dropped by 1-2°C, with Srinagar shivering at -0.8°C, which is 2.1°C below the seasonal average.

According to the Meteorological Centre in Srinagar, light to moderate rain and snowfall are expected at many places across Jammu and Kashmir on February 19 and



20, bringing a possibility of further temperature fluctuations.

There hasn't been any major snowfall in Kashmir thus winter and this has resulted in a deficit of rain and snowfall upto 70 to 75%.

The MeT office in Srinagar is hopeful that Western Disturbance from tomorrow will result in good snow and rainfall.

MeT said the precipitation is very likely to start during the late

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2 IEDs recovered, destroyed in South Kashmir

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 18 (KNO)

The security forces on Tuesday averted major tragedies after two Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) were recovered and destroyed in South Kashmir's Pulwama and Shopian districts on Tuesday.

An official told the news agency that an IED weighing around 7 kgs was found fitted in a pressure cooker by the security forces at Kathua, the state border town between Jammu-Kashmir and Punjab.

Soon, the area was cordoned and the bomb disposal squad was called and the IED was safely

defused, he said.

He said that later an IED fitted in a pressure cooker was also found at Pinglish Nagwadi following which security forces promptly cordoned off the area.

He said that the bomb disposal squad was called who destroyed it.

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425 bovine smugglers arrested, 3,434 animals rescued

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday released an official yearly data on crackdown against the bovine smuggling launched under Operation Kamdhenu.

As per the data of year-long crackdown across District Jammu from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024, police said that 425 smugglers were arrested, 3434 animals were released and 360 vehicles used in illegal transportation were also seized.

The bovine smuggling has been a longstanding challenge, with perpetrators frequently using unauthorized routes, forging transportation permits, and evading law enforcement by adopting new tactics, said the official.

It further said that to counter these evolving threats, Jammu Police enhanced its intelligence-sharing mechanisms, strengthened inter-district coordination and deployed special teams at vulnerable points.

"The collaboration with local communities also played a crucial role, as residents actively reported suspicious movements, enabling swift police action," the communiqué stated.

The actions reaffirm Jammu Police's commitment to enforcing the law and preventing unlawful activities that threaten public order, it read and said that the police

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Those playing with career of students will face action: Education Minister

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 18 (KNO)

Education Minister, Sakina Itoo Tuesday said that the government will take action against schools that are found playing the career of students.

Speaking to the reporters, Itoo as per the news agency said, "It is very unfortunate that some eligible students could not appear in annual regular board exams of 10th standard due to the lackadaisical approach at some levels."

The education minister said that the government had initiated an inquiry



into the matter. "Enquiry committee in this regard has been constituted and whosoever will be found guilty will face action. Playing with the career of students is unacceptable."

"We will try to do whatever is feasible for the eligible students who couldn't appear in

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MHA re-designates LG Advisor's post, Dr Pawan Kotwal becomes first Chief Secy of Ladakh

JI NEWS SERVICE
LEH, FEB 18 (KNO)

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has re-designated the post of Advisor to Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh as Chief Secretary of the Union Territory.

According to details available with the news agency, General Administration Department of Ladakh issued an "Office Memorandum" announcing the re-designation of the post of Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor as Chief Secretary, UT of Ladakh.

This decision, accord-



ing to the officials, follows the notification dated January 3, 2025, issued by the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), Government of India and has been approved by the Competent Authority in the Ministry of Home

Affairs.

Pertinently, an IAS officer of the 1994 batch (AGMUT cadre), Dr. Pawan Kotwal currently serves as the Advisor to Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh and will now assume the designation of Chief Secretary, UT of Ladakh, with no change in his duties and responsibilities.

"All official communications previously addressed to the Advisor to Lieutenant Governor shall now be directed to the Chief Secretary of Ladakh."

This decision marks a significant milestone

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2 Kashmiri youth arrested along with Rs 2 cr cash

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18 (KNO)

Police on Tuesday arrested two persons along with around two crores of cash on National Highway in Lakanpur area of Kathua, the state border town between Jammu-Kashmir and Punjab.

As per details available with the news agency, on a tip off, police laid a surprise check post at Lakanpur and intercepted a Hyundai Creta bearing registration number HR98J- 9889, heading towards Kashmir.

Police searched the vehicle and found a huge quantity of cash packed in polybags and placed

in the footrest area of the passenger seat.

The cash was seized and counted in the presence of the magistrate, which amounts over Rs 2 crore in denominations of Rs 500 notes.

Two Kashmir based youth were also arrested and taken to Lakanpur Police Station for further questioning.

"An investigation is underway to find out the reason behind carrying so much money. We are exploring all the angles including drugs, terror fund and tax evasion to find the sources of cash," a police officer said. The authorities have

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Sexual Assault Case

CJM Sopore sentences self-proclaimed faith healer to 14 years in prison, Rs 1 lakh fine

JI NEWS SERVICE
SOPORE, FEB 18 (KNO)

A day after convicting self-proclaimed faith healer Aijaz Ahmad Sheikh, the Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Sopore on Tuesday sentenced him to 14 years of rigorous imprisonment for sexually assaulting two victims.

As per the news agency, the verdict came after a nine-year-long trial, following the registration of an FIR in 2016 under Section 377 of the erstwhile Ranbir Penal Code (RPC) at Police Station Bomai.

The victim's father had alleged in his complaint that his son had been subjected to "unnatural sexual assault" by the accused.

Given the sensitivity of the matter the then Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sopore had constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) under the supervision of Ashish Mishra, who is now serving as Superintendent of Police (SP), to investigate the matter.

On Monday the CJM Sopore convicted Sheikh for offences against two

victims, referred to as PW3 and PW8. He was sentenced to seven years of rigorous imprisonment for each offence, with both sentences running consecutively, amounting to a total of 14 years.

"Additionally, a fine of Rs 50,000 was imposed for each offence, and in case of non-payment, he will serve an additional six months of simple imprisonment for each default," advocate Ayesha Zahgeer, who assisted the Public Prosecutor in the case, told KNO.

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Kathua double murder: Police probe 'terror angle'

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18 (KNO)

Jammu and Kashmir Police are probing a terror angle in the double murder case of two civilians, Shamsher and Roshan Lal, who were strangled to death in Billawar area of Kathua on February 16.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kathua, Shobhit Saxena, according to the news agency, stated that the investigation is underway to ascertain the cause of death of two persons whose bodies were found along the banks of a stream in village Batheri at Billawar two days ago.

"No, there is no break-

through yet as investigation is still underway. So far, we have registered a murder case and an intensive probe is being conducted," the SSP Kathua said.

On Monday, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, while sharing his grief, had asked the concerned officers to investigate the cause of death of the duo. He had said that he was in touch with the local MLA as well on this account. The Chief Minister had shared this info on the micro-blogging site X.

Meanwhile, a Police spokesman said that the Inspector General of Police Jammu Zone, Bhim Sen Tuti visited the forward

areas in Kathua district to assess the situation.

"Sniffer dogs were also called in for the probe on the third day of the incident. The IG was there along with DIG JKS, SSP Operations and Training and SP SOG Jammu along with other officials. We are looking into dump data of the area to get a breakthrough. Deceased were not fired upon. They were strangled and were not carrying mobile phones when they went to forests," he added.

Sources said that IGP Jammu also visited the place where Shamsher and Roshan Lal were found dead. KNO

Mehbooba slams inaction over Makhan Din's death, demands justice

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEB 18

Former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Mehbooba Mufti on Tuesday alleged that weeks after the tragic death of Makhan Din, a Gujjar youth, no action has been taken, with neither a judicial inquiry nor support or compensation provided to the bereaved family.

26-year-old Makhan Din, died by suicide in Kathua district, earlier this month after alleged police torture. His death along with the killing

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Skill Dev Prog on “Entrepreneurship Development through Mushroom Cultivation” begins in Shopian

JINNEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, FEBRUARY 18

Krishi Vigyan Kendra Shopian today inaugurated week long programme on “Entrepreneurship Development through Mushroom Cultivation” at Berthipora, Shopian.

The programme was attended by team of Scientists from KVK-Shopian, Dr. Zaffar Afroz Badri, Senior Scientist & Head, KVK-Shopian, Dr. Bilal Ahmad Pandit, Scientist Horticulture, Dr. Mir Shabir Ahmad Scientist Animal Sciences and participants from Berthipora villages of the district have actively participated in the programme.

The experts on the occasion urged youth to earn livelihood through these



programmes and asked them to become job providers instead of job seekers.

Further, they deliberated upon the use of integrated approach to improve the soil health and different ways and means to cut

down the input cost by adopting latest university recommended technologies for the betterment of the district.

A power point presentation on Scientific Methods of Button Mushroom Cultivation and its Economics

Button Mushroom can be a profitable enterprise wherein an entrepreneur can earn up to 40 to 60 thousands in a space of 10x10sq ft room by adopting scientific practices to take care of the crop in the leisure time.

- A way for prosperity of entrepreneurs for profitable enterprises in mushroom industry and other practices to harvest the better dividends, improve the socio-economic status of the farming community was presented by Course Coordinator.

Participants were informed that raising of

Fisheries Department organises awareness camp under PM-MKSSY scheme at Poonch

JINNEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 18

An awareness camp on Applications Mobilization Campaigns was organised today here at Regional District Offices by the Fisheries Department Poonch to promote initiatives under Pradhan Mantri-Matasya Kisan Samridhi Sah -Yojna (PM-MKSSY).

The central Sector Scheme launched by Government of India in 2023-24 shall continue till 2026-27. The scheme aims at on the spot registration of fishers, fish farmers, fish vendors at NFDP portal, submission of application for aquaculture insurance, submission of loan request through NFDP, Availing performance grants for enhancing value



chain efficiencies, availing incentives for Adoption & Expansion of Fish and Fish Product Safety & Quality Assurance Systems.

A large number of Fishermen, vendors and Fisheries Cooperative Society Poonch participated in the camp and availed benefits of registration under NFDP and evinced keen interest in Aquaculture Insurance and other value chain projects.

Addressing the fishers,

Fisheries Development Officer Bharat Bushan shared an overview of scheme, highlighting key initiatives such as registration on NFDP portal, submission of application for Aquaculture Insurance, availing performance grants for Value Chain and other components of the scheme and urged to avail benefits of the scheme. Further the Officer thanked the CSC operator for conducting the onspot registration of the Fishers.

MLA Hilal Akbar Lone conducts extensive tour of Sumbal Subdivision

JINNEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA FEBRUARY 18

The Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Sonawari Constituency Advocate Hilal Akbar Lone on Tuesday conducted an extensive tour of various areas of Sumbal Sub-division to assess the preparation ahead of irrigation season.

The MLA accompanied by Exen I&FC Sumbal, Mutayib Bashir, Exen MID Shadipora and other concerned visited various areas including MID Shadipora, Wasikhan, Prang, Asham, Madwan, Rakhi Hajin and other areas.

DC reviews civic amenities, infrastructure at Truck Terminal Doda

JINNEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Harvinder Singh conducted a comprehensive visit to the Truck Terminal near Akramabad to assess the existing infrastructure and services. During the visit, he issued string of directives to improve the terminal's functionality and enhance convenience for truck operators.

The DC instructed the concerned departments, including PWD (R&B), the Municipal Council and ARTO to undertake immediate restoration and repair of the terminal building. He emphasized the urgent need to restore water and power supply to the facility.

Additionally, the DC Doda directed the ARTO Doda to ensure that all trucks operating in the



area utilize the Truck Terminal for parking and related activities, aiming to streamline traffic flow in the town and enhance the terminal's operational efficiency.

The DC Doda called for coordinated efforts among all concerned departments to ensure the repair works are completed within a fixed timeframe.

The visit was accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Revenue Doda, Sunil Kumar Bhutyal, along with officers from PWD (R&B), ARTO Doda, Executive Officer of the Municipal Council Doda other officials and other Stakeholders.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner also participated in a plantation drive

organized by the Department of Social Forestry around the Truck Terminal. As part of the initiative, the DC Doda planted saplings outside the terminal to promote environmental conservation and beautification of the area.

The DC highlighted the importance of tree plantation in addressing environmental challenges and underscored the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in preserving and enhancing the district's green cover. He lauded the efforts of the Department of Social Forestry and participating departments in organizing the drive.

The event witnessed active participation from officers and officials from the PWD (R&B), ARTO Doda, Executive Officer MC Doda, and the Forestry team.

DC reviews progress of power infrastructure development projects in Poonch

JINNEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Poonch, Vikas Kundal, chaired a meeting today in the Meeting Hall of the DC Office complex to review the progress of ongoing works under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) in the district.

During the meeting, the concerned executing agency presented a detailed PowerPoint briefing on the current status of the RDSS projects. The scheme aims to strengthen the power distribution infrastructure in Poonch, with key components including the installation of 11,000 poles, laying of Low Tension Aerial Bunched Cables (LT ABC), and the addition of 500 new distribution transformers to augment and



replace outdated equipment. This initiative is expected to significantly reduce Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses in the district.

DC Vikas Kundal thoroughly inquired about various components such as material supply status, feeder wise current status

of work, feeder-wise erection status of major items like poles, conductors, LT AB cables, and the augmentation and replacement of transformers, along with other progress related to the scheme.

He instructed the concerned Junior Engineers (JEs) to conduct onsite checks for the installation

of poles and other major electricity items, emphasizing the importance of geo-tagged photos for maintaining records of the ongoing work. Furthermore, he directed a crackdown on electricity theft and the illegal bypassing of meters, stressing the need to impose penalties on defaulters under relevant laws.

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal also instructed the executing agency to ensure that all ongoing works under the scheme are completed within the established timelines, aiming for the overall improvement of the power scenario in Poonch.

The meeting was attended by SE JPDCL, EXEN JPDCL division Poonch, along with all AEEs and JEs.

DC Ganderbal reviews Drug Abuse control measures at NCORD meeting

JINNEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today convened a meeting of Narco Coordination Committee (NCORD) to assess the effectiveness of the district's anti-drug initiatives and reinforce efforts towards a drug-free environment.

At the outset, the DC 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.

Emphasizing the significance of a coordinated approach, the DC highlighted the need for a robust monitoring and evaluation system



to ensure the success of anti-drug measures. He stressed the importance of regular awareness campaigns, particularly targeting the youth, to educate them about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

During the discussion on measures taken to combat drug abuse, the meeting was informed that 100% of medical shops in the district have installed CCTV cameras, and over 82% have transitioned to computerized

billing systems. DC directed the concerned department to conduct regular prescription audits, especially in non-computerized medical shops, to prevent the sale of banned drugs.

Furthermore, the meeting was informed that 64 Panchayats have been declared 'Nasha Mukta,' and wild cannabis spread over 300 kanals of land was destroyed last year. Farmers were encouraged to cultivate alternative

crops on such land to discourage illegal cultivation.

The DC urged all departments to intensify their efforts against drug abuse and work collaboratively to address drug-related concerns effectively. The Police Department was instructed to maintain strict surveillance on drug peddlers, ensuring that all movable and immovable property of offenders is seized immediately.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Gulzar Ahmad, Dy.SP (HQ), SDM Kangan, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Tehsildars and other concerned officials.

DC Budgam approves electricity hotlines for several healthcare centres

JINNEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, FEBRUARY 18

In a move towards optimal utilization of available resources, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam Akshay Labroo today chaired District Mineral Fund (DMFT) meeting to deliberate on the judicious allocation of the District Mineral Funds for developmental schemes in district.

At the outset, District Mineral Officer (DMO) Budgam provided an overview of the available funds.

The meeting encompassed a detailed discussion on the utilization of funds for critical developmental projects in district.

Key proposals approved during the meeting included the provision and augmentation of 24 by 7 Elec-



tricity Hot Line system for SDH Kremshore, SDH Chattergam, SDH Pakherpora, PHC Ompora, PHC Soibugh, and PHC Khag.

Also, a buffer stock of 15 additional Transformers was approved in favour of KPDCB Budgam which shall improve the power

infrastructure in district and will also improve provision of electricity to the people by reducing the time taken to repair the damaged transformers.

The meeting also highlighted the need for upgradation of basic amenities, such as electricity and

toilet facilities in educational institutions and approved the same for Primary schools of Kuzwera, Bagh-e-Sail, and Gopalpora schools.

These initiatives are aimed at enhancing local & critical infrastructure and shall improve the overall quality of services.

DC also directed DMO for the meticulous and effective implementation of the approved plan for its timely implementation on ground.

The meeting was attended by CPO Budgam, CMO, CEO, ACD, DMO, DSWO, Executive Engineer R&B, KPDCB, PHE Budgam besides other members of the Committee.

DC Kulgam flags-off group of farmers on exposure tour

JINNEWS SERVICE
KULGAM FEBRUARY 18

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today flagged-off a

group of 50 progressive farmer entrepreneurs on exposure cum training programme for a period of six days under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADDP).

During the tour, farmers will visit Punjab Agriculture University Ludhiana for upgradation of skill & technical know-how regarding cultivation of year round mushroom and floriculture on commercial scale to generate employ-



ment opportunities among the unemployed youth.

Chief Agriculture Officer Ravinder Kumar, District Agriculture Officer, Agriculture Extension Officers and other concerned officers and officials were present on the occasion.

While interacting with the farmers, DC said that the objective of the tour is to make the farmers aware about the latest technical advancements & knowledge

and besides progressive farming practices being adopted in mushroom and Floriculture sectors.

District Agriculture Officer, on the occasion advised the progressive farmers to share and disseminate the knowledge gained during the tour among the farmers back home, so that they can also adopt the latest agriculture techniques to improve their farm yields and income in the said sectors.

DC Kupwara inaugurates Live Fish Vending Centre at Chowkibal

JINNEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 18

In a significant step towards boosting the Fisheries sector in Kupwara, Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, inaugurated a Live Fish Vending Centre at Chowkibal, Kupwara, under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).

The initiative aims to promote hygienic fish marketing, enhance income generation for fish farmers, and ensure the availability of fresh fish to consumers.

The Live Fish Vending Centre is expected to strengthen the local fisheries sector, create employment opportunities, and contribute to the Blue Revolution in the region.

Speaking at the event, DC Kupwara Ayushi Sudan emphasized the importance of fisheries as a key sector for economic



growth and food security.

She appreciated the efforts of the Department of Fisheries Kupwara in implementing the PMMSY & HADP schemes effectively and encouraged local

entrepreneurs to explore opportunities in the fisheries sector.

Dr. Salman Rauoof Chalkoo, Assistant Director Fisheries Kupwara, highlighted that the Live Fish

Vending Centre will ensure the availability of live and fresh fish to consumers, minimize post-harvest losses, and enhance the market value of fish produce.

He further reiterated the department's commitment to supporting fish farmers through various government schemes.

Local fish farmers and community members expressed their gratitude for the initiative, stating that it will help in improving livelihoods and increasing the reach of fresh fish in the market.

The Fisheries Department Kupwara assured continued support to local fish farmers and entrepreneurs, encouraging them to take advantage of government schemes for sustainable development in the sector.

DC Doda reviews Power Scenario, implementation of PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana

JINNEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 18

District Development Commissioner (DC), Harvinder Singh on Tuesday chaired a comprehensive meeting with officials from the Power Development Department (PDD) and other stakeholders to review the district's power scenario and assess the progress of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) and PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.

The meeting, held in his office chamber, focused on promoting awareness about the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana and its benefits.

The DC directed PDD officials to launch public awareness campaigns, particularly targeting government employees for scheme registration.

Additionally, he instructed the department to create engaging graphi-



cal messages to accelerate the registration process.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed the implementation of the RDSS initiative, directing the concerned officers and stakeholders to ensure the maximum installation of electric poles in required areas and the replacement of damaged electric poles under the scheme.

He also emphasized that all electric pole dumping should be carried out at proper locations and instructed officials to resolve any issues hindering the installation process.

The DC assessed key areas such as expenditure, fund allotments, payments to contractors, and grants from Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), District Development Council (DDC), and Block Development Council (BDC). He directed officials to submit a list of pending bills with the treasury for timely clearance and stressed the importance of resolving project-related bottlenecks to ensure efficient use of allocated funds.

The DC urged stakeholders executing the RDSS initiative to expedite the execution of electric pole

installation works across the district. He highlighted the importance of timely execution of both the RDSS and PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana to improve power distribution and promote renewable energy solutions in Doda.

Additionally, he instructed the officials to maintain cleanliness at all installation sites and ensure smooth execution without disruptions. The DC emphasized regular progress reporting and inter-departmental coordination to achieve targets effectively.

The meeting, attended by officials from JPDCL, STD Divisions, PGCIL (Doda/Kishtwar), and private contractors such as TKC Vijay Electricals, concluded with DC Harvinder Singh reaffirming the government's commitment to enhancing power infrastructure and promoting renewable energy in Doda district.

School Safety Programme: Disaster Management awareness imparted to Students at GDC Poonch

JINNEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 18

In a proactive effort to enhance community preparedness and safety, the District Administration Poonch, in collaboration with the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), organized a comprehensive day-long disaster rescue training program for students here in the Auditorium Hall of SKC Government Degree College.

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal was the chief guest. Other notable attendees included the host College Principal, Tehsildar Haveli, other officers, and a large number of enthusiastic students.

Experienced trainers from NDRF and SDRF conducted interactive sessions, demonstrating life-saving techniques, the operations of rescue equipment, and crucial actions to take during natural calamities and



emergency situations. Students were engaged in hands-on activities, allowing them to practice vital skills that could potentially save lives.

In his address, Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal emphasized the importance of familiarizing oneself with safety measures and the effective use of Disaster Management Kits. "It's crucial for young minds to be well-versed in disaster pre-

paredness. The knowledge and skills you gain today could make a significant difference in emergency situations," he stated.

The initiative aims not only to equip students with the necessary skills but also to foster a culture of safety and resilience within the community. Through such programs, the District Administration Poonch is committed to building a safer environment for all residents.

NAKSHA76 Pilot Programme Launched for Urban Habitations in Pattan

JINNEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, FEBRUARY 18

The National Geospatial Knowledge-Based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) was launched today at Government Degree College Pattan as part of a nationwide pilot initiative under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).

Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Pattan, Javed Reyaz Bedar, and Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, launched the event at Degree College Pattan.

Jammu and Kashmir is



among the regions selected for this initiative, with four Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) identified for the pilot project, including Pattan.

The programme aims to modernize land records using advanced geospatial technology, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and efficiency in urban land

management.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Javed Reyaz Bedar highlighted the significance of accurate land records in streamlining urban planning and ensuring transparency in governance.

DC Minga Sherpa, emphasized the administration's commitment

to leveraging technology for efficient land management, reducing disputes, and enhancing urban development through reliable geospatial data.

The event was attended by Sub-Divisional Magistrate Pattan, Gulzar Ahmad, Tehsildar Pattan, Executive Officer Municipal Committee Pattan and other Officers and officials from concerned departments besides local residents.

An Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign was also conducted to create awareness regarding the benefits of programme.

Over Rs 48 lakh disbursed among workers at Samba

JINNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, FEBRUARY 18

The District Administration Samba has disbursed Rs 48.38 Lakh (Forty Eight Lakh Thirty Eight Thousand and One hundred) under different schemes of J&K Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

As per Assistant Labour Commissioner, Himani Jerath the amount has been disbursed among 800 registered construction workers (Card holders) by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma under different schemes of J&K Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

DC Reasi reviews Shiv Khori Mela 2025 preparations at Ransoo

JINNEWS SERVICE
REASI, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik, who is also the Vice Chairman of Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board (SSKSB), today visited Ransoo to review preparations for the three-day Maha Shivratri Mela 2025, set to begin on February 25.

During her visit, the DC directed officials to establish multiple registration counters at different locations to facilitate devotees and improve crowd management. She also inspected the bus and taxi stands at Ransoo, ensuring a well-coordinated traffic plan to prevent congestion during the event.

To maintain hygiene and cleanliness, DC Malik instructed officials to install dustbins along the track and near langar areas. She emphasized the need to avoid plastic usage and urged langar organizers to ensure proper sanitation

while distributing food. Additionally, she directed authorities to deploy extra well-maintained public toilets near the track to accommodate the large number of visitors.

Adding to this Deputy Commissioner directed for stationing of Fire Services staff and trucks during the whole Mela. She directed XENS to ensure uninterrupted availability of basic amenities like electricity supply and water supply for the convenience of devotees. Deputy Commissioner also directed tourism Department to ensure proper publicity of event and Cultural items that will take place. She emphasised on proper illumination of town to enhance Ambience of the festival.

She emphasised on prioritising public safety and convenience during the event.

The DC stressed on proper security arrangements and the need for

additional manpower to ensure a safe and peaceful atmosphere during the mela. She also instructed the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to provide all necessary medical facilities, including ambulances, along the track and near the sacred cave, ensuring timely medical assistance for devotees if needed.

As part of her efforts to enhance the overall experience, DC Malik emphasized the beautification of Ransoo town by improving lighting and maintaining cleanliness. She directed officials to ensure a well-organized and welcoming environment, making the pilgrimage a seamless and spiritually enriching experience for thousands of devotees expected to attend the festival.

EO SSKSB Pardeep kumar, XEN PWD, XEN JPDCL, XEN PHE, Tehsildar Pouni, BDO Pouni, HR Manager accompanied the DC during the visit.

DC Srinagar chairs District Level Committee meeting of NCORD

JINNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 18

To review and strengthen ongoing measures to combat drug abuse and its peddling, a meeting of District level Committee on NCORD was today held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat here at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex.

The meeting deliberated on key issues, including stricter enforcement actions against drug peddlers, intensified awareness campaigns and enhanced treatment and rehabilitation facilities for those affected by substance abuse.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner took first hand appraisal from officers of all line departments and other stakeholders regarding the progress achieved in ongoing fight against the drug menace in order to curb the drug menace and tighten the noose against drug peddlers in Srinagar District.

Dr. Bilal stressed the importance of inter-departmental coordination and community involvement in tackling the menace of drug addiction. He emphasized the need for sustained awareness campaigns targeting vulnerable groups, particularly youth and directed the concerned officers to



intensify the awareness programmes in the district.

Highlighting the need for accessible and effective treatment facilities for individuals battling addiction, the DC stressed on up to mark facilities at drug de-addiction centres like IMHAANS, JVC and SMHS. He also called for early operationalization of the Drug De-addiction & Rehabilitation Centre at Sanant Nagar.

He underlined the importance of a holistic approach involving prevention as well as education, treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration of such individuals back into the society, at the same time strict enforcement measures as a strong deterrent.

He added that through a coordinated and multi-pronged approach which includes prevention, enforcement, treatment, rehabilitation and IEC strategies, the menace of drugs will be eliminated from Srinagar soon.

On the occasion, the DC stressed on conducting intensified mass awareness programs to particularly educate the youth against the detrimental effects of drug abuse.

Besides DySP Headquarter Srinagar, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Tehsildar Headquarter, the meeting was attended by the Officers of Excise Department, Drug Control Organization, Health, IMHANS, Rehabilitation Centers and other concerned departments.

DCDRC B'la Orders MetLife to Reinstate Policy or Refund Amount

JINNEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, FEBRUARY 18

The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, (DCDRC) Baramulla, has ruled in favor of a local complainant, Mohammad Abdullah Hakim, in a case against MetLife Insurance, directing the company to either renew his lapsed insurance policy or refund the deposited amount with interest.

The case, filed by the complainant on December 18, 2024, highlighted his inability to continue paying premiums due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite multiple approaches to MetLife for policy renewal or refund, no action was taken, leading to the consumer complaint.

The Commission, presided over by Peerzada Qousar Hussain (President) and Nyla Yaseen (Member), ruled that the

insurer was obligated under IRDA guidelines to provide grace periods and communicate revival options to policyholders, especially during the Covid-19 period.

It cited a National Consumer Commission ruling emphasizing insurers' responsibility to accept premiums and facilitate policy continuation during the pandemic.

In its verdict, the Commission directed MetLife Insurance to either renew the policy upon payment of pending premiums or refund the deposited amount. Additionally, a compensation of Rs 30,000 was awarded to the complainant for mental agony and harassment caused due to non-compliance with IRDA norms.

The company has been instructed to comply with the order within four weeks of receiving the copy of the judgment.

| NORTHERN RAILWAY | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| E-Auction Notice | | |
| The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/FS, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India, invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division: | | |
| Catalogue No. | Auction Start | Name of work |
| EAZR-SLR25-30 | 05.03.2025 at 11:00 Hrs. | Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 19226/F1, 15212/F1, 12412/F1, 14504/F1, 19416/F1, 19226/R1, 12414/R1, 15212/R1 & 19612/F1. |
| For other details and registration, please visit Railway website www.ireps.gov.in | | |
| No. 179-C/E-Auction/FZR/25 Dated: 17.02.2025 | | |
| | | 550/2025 |
| SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE | | |

GCOE pays tributes to Sardar Patel

JI NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

In a tribute to the 'Iron Man of India,' Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Govern-

ment College of Education, Canal Road, celebrated his 150th birth anniversary with great zeal and patriotism by organizing a Role-Playing Competition on Patriotic Heroes.

The event aimed to inspire students to learn about and embody the values of Indian freedom fighters. The event

was graced by the presence of the college Principal, Dr. Jyoti Parihar, who highlighted the significance of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's contributions to the unity and integrity of India. In her address, she encouraged students to follow the footsteps of such legendary figures to build a stronger nation.

FROM THE PAGE 1...

Protecting Rights...

under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, by April 2025.

The three criminal laws—Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and the Bharatiya Sakshaya Act—came into effect on July 1, 2024. These laws replaced the Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, and Evidence Act.

According to the news agency, Shah said that for the full implementation of the new laws, it is imperative to change the attitude of police personnel and the administration and create awareness about the new laws among citizens. "He said that optimum use of technology should be made to ensure speedy justice under the three new criminal laws," reads an official handout issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) after the meeting.

Shah added that there is an urgent need to use the provision of Trial in Absentia in the Union Territory. The Union Home Minister stressed the need to fix the responsibility of police officers to expedite the process of filing chargesheets. He said that every police station in Jammu and Kashmir should maximize the use of the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS). He also emphasized that 100% training of investigating officers regarding the provisions of the new laws should be ensured at the earliest.

The Home Minister said that decisions on provisions related to terrorism and organized crime should be taken only after thorough scrutiny at the level of Superintendent of Police. He added that strict monitoring is required to ensure that these provisions under the new laws are not misused.

Shah commended the Jammu and Kashmir administration and government for their satisfactory work towards the implementation of the new criminal laws despite difficult circumstances. He stated that the progress of implementation should be reviewed on a monthly, fortnightly, and weekly basis at the level of the Chief Minister, Chief Secretary, and Director General of Police, respectively.

The meeting was attended by the Union Home Secretary, Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Jammu and Kashmir, the Director General of the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD), the Director General of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), and other senior officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the UT administration. KNO

Amid wet forecast...

afternoon of Wednesday till the evening of Thursday.

The plains of Kashmir and Jammu may receive light to moderate rain/thunder with gusty winds at a few places.

Higher reaches of Chenab Valley and South Kashmir may receive moderate snowfall of 6 to 10 inches while higher reaches of north and central Kashmir may receive 4 to 8 inches, the MeT office said.

Light to moderate snowfall is also very likely at many places of the Union Territory of Ladakh with heavy snowfall over the Zojila Pass, Drass, Sanko and Panzila area, officials said.

During Past 24 hours the day temperature has risen by 4-5°C in many parts of Jammu and Kashmir with the highest temperature observed over Jammu 26.2°C.

The MeT office said the day temperature also rose 3-5°C in Kashmir Division with Srinagar recorded at 14.2°C and the frontier border district of Kupwara at 13.9°C was highest among other stations.

The minimum temperature recorded at the tourist resort of Pahalgam at -4.4°C, Ski resort of Gulmarg -6.0°C and Qazigund had a low of -1.6°C, the MeT office said.

We will have to make...

laws. Since these are new laws, people should be aware of them. For this, the elected government needs to do more," he said.

He said they will have to make efforts to create awareness about these laws in colleges, universities or other places.

The CM added that J&K has done better in implementation but there are few weak areas which need to be fixed.

Omar said there was no discussion on J&K's security situation during today's meeting.

"I had discussed security matters relating to J&K during my recent meeting with HM (Amit Shah) on Parliament premises," Omar said.

Omar expresses inability to comment on his exclusion from security reviews relating to the Union Territory.

"There is a difference between this meeting and those meetings. This meeting was about new laws and their implementation. If the decision has been made to exclude representatives elected by the people from security issues, what can we do? That is ok," he said.

On the reaction of Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner, Omar said, "The LoP has the right to dissent in the selection meeting. Opposition does not need to always agree with the government. The matter (relating to the constitution of the selection committee for picking the CEC and election commissioners) is sub-judice in the Supreme Court.". KNO

2 IEDs recovered...

The official said that investigation in both cases has been taken up and involved persons will face action. KNO

Those playing with...

Class-10 exams," Itoo said.

Besides, the education minister further said, "Textbooks of 70-80 percent have almost reached the district levels and before the culmination of winter break, 100 percent of books will reach the students."

Earlier, the government issued admit cards to all of the applicants following the hue and cry regarding denying of exam registration forms to 22 students of 10th standard. Education Minister had said that the academic year of the students is very precious and the government will not waste it at any cost. KNO

MHA re-designates...

in Ladakh's administrative evolution, making Dr. Pawan Kotwal the first Chief Secretary of the Union Territory.

A highly respected civil servant, Dr. Kotwal was born in Jammu & Kashmir in 1965 and holds a degree in Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS).

Over the course of his career, Dr Kotwal has held various key positions across Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh including Divisional Commissioner of Jammu, Deputy Commissioner in multiple Districts of J&K and Principal Secretary in Departments such as Health & Medical Education, Revenue, Forest. Ecology & Environment and Planning Development & Monitoring Department as well as Commissioner/Secretary and Administrative Secretary in various other Departments. He has also served as Financial Commissioner in the Revenue Department, as Inspector General of Registration and as Secretary to the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir. KNO

2 Kashmiri youth...

registered a case and are proceeding with their investigation into the incident. KNO

425 bovine smugglers...

teams from respective police stations worked tirelessly to intercept smugglers and dismantled their networks.

"These police units, equipped with actionable intelligence and rigorous patrolling measures, carried out surprise checkpoints, highway surveillance, and night-long monitoring* to prevent the illegal transport of bovines," it said.

"The magnitude of operations underscores the zero-tolerance policy of Jammu Police towards criminal activities. Several high-profile smugglers were apprehended during the year, and strict legal actions under relevant sections of the law were initiated against them," it said.

"With a robust framework of intelligence-led policing and enhanced patrolling strategies, Jammu Police remains steadfast in its mission to completely eradicate this menace and in the coming days, the crackdown against bovine smuggling will further intensify with increased night patrols, stricter highway monitoring, and rapid-response teams deployed at critical junctions," it stated.

Jammu Police however, have urged the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the nearest police station as the cooperation of citizens is vital in maintaining law and order and peace across the region.

CJM Sopore sentences...

She said that the court also directed that out of the fine amount, Rs 5,000 for each victim would be deposited as a fine, while Rs 45,000 each would be paid as compensation to the victims. However, the court clarified that this compensation does not prevent the victims from pursuing further civil or other remedies granted the convicted individual.

Earlier on Monday, the court had directed the Superintendent of Police Sopore, to immediately facilitate the registration of separate FIRs concerning other victims, ensuring that each victim's claims be adjudicated separately.

Additionally, the court had requested the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) to provide immediate legal aid to these victims to safeguard their access to justice.

"A compliance report must be filed within 90 days, detailing the steps taken for separate FIR registrations and investigations," the court had said. KNO

Mehbooba slams...

of a truck driver Wasim Mir who shot dead in Army firing in Baramulla district after he allegedly ignored repeated warnings to stop had sparked outrage with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah urging the Union government to ensure a transparent and time-bound investigation into two incidents.

On Tuesday Peoples Democratic Party chief Mehbooba slammed inaction over Makhan Din's death.

"Weeks have passed since the tragic death of Makhan Din, yet no action has been taken. No order for a judicial enquiry or even any form of support or compensation for the bereaved family," she said in a post on X.

"The most concerning part is that SHO Bilawar who allegedly drove the victim to suicide is still at large. The issue simply doesn't end here - many innocent individuals like Makhan Din remain arrested on false charges of militancy by the same officer and could face the same tragic fate unless action is taken. We urge DGP JK Police to intervene and ensure justice for the family and also prevent such tragic cases in the future," she added.

Samba Premier T-20 Cup Kicks Off



JI NEWS SERVICE

SAMBA, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner Samba Rajesh Sharma, today inaugurated the Samba Premier T20 Cup at Rani Suchet Singh Stadium, marking the beginning of an exciting cricketing event aimed at youth engagement and social transformation.

Organized by the District Administration Samba in collaboration with the Excise Department, the tournament features 16 teams and more than 200 young cricketers from across the district.

DC Rajesh Sharma kicked off the event by

tossing for the inaugural match and interacting with the players.

"This tournament is more than just a game; it's a step towards channeling youth energy into positive pursuits. Sports foster discipline, teamwork, and a healthy lifestyle, helping us build a stronger community," said the DC.

As part of the district's initiative to combat drug abuse and promote sports culture, the tournament sets a precedent for future events encouraging youth participation.

The inauguration was attended by ADC Jagdish Singh, along with other district officers.

Power Shutdown

JI NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 18

According to CE KPDCL that in order to facilitate PHE Department to carry out works at Dalband Nishat and the replacement of 33kV CTs along with other related works at Brein Nishat, the power supply to receiving stations including Brein and Nisha besides feeding areas Brein, Tulip Garden, Pahloo, Taj- Vivanta, handampora, Ishbar, Nishat Pathan Bagh shall remain affected on February 22 from 11:00AM to 3:00PM.

In view of reconductor-ing of 33kV Khanyar-Rainawari line from 0.15 ACSR to 0.2 ACSR, the power supply to receiving stations including Khanyar, Kathidarwaza, Rainawari and feeding areas including Miskeen Bagh, Roza-bal, Maqdoom Sb, Hazaribagh, Jogilanker, JLNH Hospital, Kondabal, Hasanabad, Saida Kadal, Dal Kawpora Naidyar, Mental Hospital, Central Jail, Kathidarwaza, Local, Dal areas shall remain affected on February 22 & 25 from 10:00AM to 5:00PM.

In view of emergency stabilization work by STD Sopore, the power supply to receiving stations including Watlab, Tujjar, Dooru and respective feeding areas shall remain affected on February 22 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

Also, in view of shifting of utilities by BEACON-NH, the power supply to receiving stations including Palhalan, Hamray and feeding areas including Hanjiwera, Pattan, Palhalan, Hamray & adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 20 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

In view of emergency stabilization work, the power supply to receiving stations including Baramull-I, Kanlibagh and feeding areas including Baramulla main town, DC office, Kanlibagh, Sangri & adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 23 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

In order to carry out stabilization/ improvement works, the power supply to receiving stations including Panzigam, Ajar and feeding areas including District Police Line, Town, Arin, Panzigam, Ajar and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 20 & 25 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

The power supply to receiving stations including Nursoo, Naidhal, Ajas and feeding areas including Nursoo, Naidhal, Ajas,

Garoor, Papchan, Nishat, Argam and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 20 & 25 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

To carry out jumpering of 33 KV Kalantra tap work by STD Sopore, the power supply to receiving stations including Sangrama, Wagoora, Kreeri, Ichloo and respective feeding areas shall remain affected on February 19 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

To carry out erection of ST Pole and shifting of 33 KV Budgam Kremshore Line permanently through underground cable at Razvain, the power supply to receiving stations including Kremshore, Khansahib, Raithan and Brenwar and feeding areas including Old Kremshore, Arigam, Nunner, Shamsabad, Dreygam, Arampora, Shinipora, Yarikha Essential, Khansahib, Raithan, Bugroo, Brenwar and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 20 from 10:00AM to 5:00PM.

The power supply to receiving stations including Ichgam, Choon, Kanir and Hanjura and feeding areas including Ichgam, Ichkoot, Choon, Budbagh, Razvain, Kanir, Hushur, Wagam, Barwah, Zuhama, Hanjoora, Dadompore and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 20 from 10:00AM to 5:00PM.

In view of upgradation of 33 KV Wanpoh SICOP line from 0.1 ACSR to 0.2 ACSR, the power supply to receiving stations including Shamsipora, SICOP, Zirpara, Veeri, Cheniwader, Shuhul Flour Mill and feeding areas including Veer, Srigufwara, Zirpara, Shamsipara, Bijbehara-SICOP and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 25 & 27 from 10AM to 5:00PM.

In order to carry augmentation/ stabilization of 33 KV Awantipora Line, the power supply to receiving stations including Awantipora-I, Awantipora-II, IUST, AIIMS, Rice Mills, LIS and feeding areas including Malangpora, Padgampora, Beighpora, Barsoo and Awantipora shall remain affected on February 22 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

The power supply to receiving stations including Noorpora, Dadsara, Tral-1st, Tral-2nd and Chawa and feeding areas including Tral Town, Dadsara, Chawa, Noorpora, Mandoora, Bathnoor, Diver and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 22 from 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

IICT holds Draw of Lots, selects 100 weavers for free modern carpet looms

JI NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 18

The Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT), Srinagar, today organised 'Draw of Lots' for selection of 100 active registered carpet weavers for distribution of free Modified Modern Steel Carpet Looms.

A large number of applicant weavers from various districts assembled in IICT premises at Bagh-e-Ali Mardan Khan, here, for participation in the Draw of Lots, after which 100 beneficiaries were selected by the Designated Committee in a fair and transparent manner.

Sharing details, Director IICT Zubair Ahmad, stated that these looms, which have been sanctioned by the Ministry of Textiles, GoI, at a cost of 43.70 lakh under its 'Wool Processing Scheme' for the current financial year, shall be distributed amongst the selected beneficiaries at a function to be notified separately.

Highlighting the salient features, Director IICT stated that the prototype of the modern carpet looms was developed after intense research of 02 years, followed by mandatory testing. "The new loom has inbuilt detachable seating arrangement with back support, with working width of 6 ft. suitable for carpet weavers, who generally have small workplaces," he explained.

He further stated that the new loom can be shifted and installed at any other place, unlike the traditional wooden looms which were largely immovable. "These looms can stand their own weight and carry a better aesthetic appeal," he concluded.

Naksha Pilot scheme launched in Katra Town to facilitate Advanced Urban Land Management

JI NEWS SERVICE

REASI, FEBRUARY 18

The historic town of Katra today witnessed the formal inauguration of the ambitious NAKSHA Pilot Scheme, a groundbreaking initiative designed to enhance urban land management through cutting-edge technology.

The launch event was graced by the esteemed presence of Baldev Raj Sharma, MLA of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi (SMVD), who served as the Chief Guest and emphasized the transformative potential of the scheme in his keynote address.

The event saw the participation of key government functionaries including Tej Krishan Bhat, Commissioner of Survey and Land Records Jammu and Kashmir; the Director Geo-Spatial J&K Inam Amil; ADC Reasi Rakesh Kumar; and SDM Katra Piyush Dhotra. Their collective presence reinforced the collaborative efforts of various government bodies in ensuring the successful implementation and scalability of the NAKSHA Pilot Scheme.

In his address, MLA Baldev Raj Sharma highlighted the scheme's vision to integrate advanced technology with urban governance, promoting a more structured and efficient approach to land management. He commended the synchronized efforts of both central and state agencies, acknowledging the scheme's potential to serve as a model for other urban centers across the country.

Providing further insight into the initiative, T.K. Bhat, Commissioner of Survey and Land Records, elaborated on the technical facets of the NAKSHA Pilot Scheme. He underscored the critical role of drone technology and digital mapping in accurately documenting and managing urban land records, ensuring greater transparency and efficiency in urban planning.

The Director Geo-Spatial J&K also shed light on the potential applications of data collected under the scheme, emphasizing its significant role in informed decision-making for urban development strategies.

A key highlight of the event was a live demonstration of drone technology, where attendees witnessed real-time data collection and mapping capabilities in action. This demonstration provided a first-hand look at how cutting-edge technology can revolutionize land management processes.

The NAKSHA Pilot Scheme marks a major step forward in leveraging technology for modernized governance and urban planning. By enhancing transparency and efficiency in land management, the initiative promises substantial benefits for the residents of Katra and stands as a pioneering model for replication in other urban localities. Tehsildar Katra Jatinder Singh, EO Katra Rajat Abrol and other officials were also present.

Salotri Villagers thank DC Poonch for resolving Water shortage problem

JI NEWS SERVICE

POONCH, FEBRUARY 18

The villagers of Salotri have expressed their heartfelt gratitude to District Development Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, for resolving their long-standing problem of water shortage by developing a water lift scheme in the area.

The newly installed water lift scheme will benefit the residents of village salotri near LOC, significantly improving their access to clean water.

Previously, the residents relied on natural spring water for the past decade, a situation that led to considerable hardship for the community.

The villagers have expressed gratitude for the efforts made by the Deputy Commissioner, which have brought much-needed relief and improved living conditions in Salotri.

DDC Shopian reviews implementation of PMJKV scheme in district



JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, FEB 18

District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta convened a meeting to review the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJKV) here, today.

The meeting deliberated on initiatives aimed at the socio-economic development of minority communities, with directives issued to ensure timely initiation and effective implementation of key projects.

DC reviewed the number of projects for which Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) have been

prepared and emphasized the need for expeditious implementation in sectors of Social Welfare, Health, Agriculture allied and skill development.

He directed the concerned departments to submit all DPRs and ensure their approval immediately so that they can be further approved by the District Level Committee.

In the dairy sector, the DC emphasized for the implementation of milk processing projects under public-Private partnership model within the PMJKV framework.

Regarding Handicrafts as the Nodal Department

for skill development, DDC suggested establishing integrated infrastructure comprising training centres alongside dedicated selling facilities.

PMJKV aims to develop minority concentration areas by improving infrastructure and basic amenities by reducing gaps in socio-economic parameters between minority concentration areas and the rest of the country with special focus on women development.

The meeting was among others attended by the ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, CAHO, Xen R&B, CMO, DSWO, DSHO and other concerned.

DC Kupwara chairs Multi Departmental DLTF Meeting

JI NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 18

The Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired the Multi Departmental - District Level Task Force (DLTF) meeting to review various measures for curbing illegal mining activities across different mining blocks of district Kupwara.

SSP Handwara, Mush-taq Ahmad; ADC Kupwara, Mohd Rouf Rehman; Dy. SP Kupwara, District Mineral Officer, Executive Engineers of I&FC, DFOs, AD Fisheries and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner stressed upon the officers to work with added dedication and utmost coordination for monitoring and strictly restricting the illegal mining activities across the district.

She said that it is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders to make efforts towards the protection of the environment by preventing illegal and unlawful mining and directed the officers to conduct joint visits to the mining sites to monitor the mining activities.



DMO was directed to ensure that the CCTV Cameras are installed across river beds by the block owners.

It was given out in the meeting that a Control Room under the supervision of District Mining Officer will be established

which shall be responsible for monitoring the feed of these CCTVs.

It was also given out that the block owners shall follow the guidelines strictly which include installation of cameras, pegging and other conditions.

The meeting also discussed various other measures including Constitution of Tehsil Level and Sub Level Committees to intensify the regulation of the mining activities.

District Admin Kupwara Launches Watershed Yatra to Promote Awareness on Watershed Development

JI NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 18

District Administration Kupwara today launched the Watershed Yatra, a nationwide outreach campaign aimed to encourage people's participation (Janbhagidari) and raise awareness about watershed development activities under the Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana 2.0 (WED-PMKSY).

In this connection a Mega Event was organized by the District Administration Kupwara in sports stadium Magam Handwara.

The Watershed Yatra is a nationwide outreach campaign designed to inform and engage local communities about the importance of watershed management and its role in sustainable agriculture, water conservation, and ecosystem preservation. The campaign is centered around Janbhagidari (people's participation), aiming to empower local communities to actively contribute to the success of watershed development initiatives.

The event saw participation of MLA Langate, Khurshid Ahmad Sheikh; DDC Member Nutnussa, Zahoor Ahmad; DDC Rajwar, Mir Suliman; Assistant Commissioner Panchayats Kupwara, Mudassar Ahmad, besides,



senior officials from administration, farmers and community members attended the programme.

During the event, key highlights of the PMKSY 2.0 were discussed, along with the benefits of watershed development, such as improved soil health, increased water availability for irrigation, and enhanced agricultural productivity.

The Watershed Yatra will travel to various locations across the district, creating a platform for interactions between farmers, experts, and local authorities to discuss challenges and solutions related to water management and sustainable

farming practices.

The Representatives and Officers emphasized the importance of active community participation and collaboration for the success of watershed programs, which are pivotal in mitigating the adverse effects of climate change, improving agricultural resilience, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of water resources.

Meanwhile, Certificates of Appreciation were distributed among the functionaries of Watershed Management.

A plantation drive was also conducted at the venue in which MLA Langate and DDC members took part.

Director Animal Husbandry Jammu reviews progress of ongoing projects under CAPEX, HADP and NABARD

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

To review the progress of the projects taken up under capital expenditure (capex), HADP and NABARD for current financial year, the Director Animal Husbandry Jammu, Dr. Davinder Kumar today chaired a meeting here at Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Talab Tillo. The meeting was attended by senior level officials of the Animal Husbandry and Public Works Department (R&B).

Emphasizing on the utilization of allocated funds in a time bound manner,

the Director underlined the importance of creation of quality assets to boost the rural development and farmers' income.

The Director took district-wise review of the expenditures made under various projects and urged the officers to work towards ensuring efficiency at ground level so that the benefits of Government schemes/projects reach intended beneficiaries.

The Director further discussed the progress of works assigned to other departments and stressed on proper coordination amongst Animal

Husbandry and other involved departments for hassle free and timely completion of works.

During the meeting the chair was apprised that works are going on at brisk pace in each district and most of the targets are expected to be completed within the stipulated timeframe.

CEO- Livestock Development Board Jammu, Dy. Director (central), District officers, Planning & Statistics officer, officers from division-level HADP cell, officers from PWD(R&B), Extension officer besides officials from technical section were also present in the meeting.

DC reviews implementation of JKREGP, other Self-Employment Schemes in Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, chaired a meeting today at the DC Office Complex to evaluate the progress achieved in the implementation of the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP) alongside other self-employment schemes, including PMEGP, MUMKIN and Tejaswini.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner inquired about the number of



people benefited by these self-employment initiatives in the District, highlighting the critical need to maximize coverage by the implementing departments. He urged officials to bring maximum number of unemployed youth of the District under the umbrella of these government schemes, designed to promote employment opportunities.

Additionally, the DC

called on bankers to ensure the prompt processing of applications, facilitating aspiring unemployed youths in establishing their income-generating units with minimal obstacles.

The meeting was attended by key officials, including the General Manager of DIC Poonch, the Deputy Director of Employment, District Officer KVIB, the Lead District Manager, and other relevant officers.

DC B'la Felicitates Teachers, Volunteers at Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation Celebration at Pattan

JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, attended the 16th anniversary celebration of the Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of India in Pattan today, where he honored teachers and volunteers for their exceptional contributions to education in remote areas.

The Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation, supported by Seva Bharti J&K, operates 180 education centers across Baramulla, bringing free education to children in far-flung areas with limited access to learning. The event also featured cultural performances by students, highlighting the rich heritage and talent of the region.

Speaking on the occasion, DC Baramulla praised the combined efforts of Ekal Vidyalaya and Seva Bharti J&K in



making education accessible at the grassroots level.

He stressed the importance of education in shaping a brighter future for society and reaffirmed the administration's commitment to supporting initiatives that improve literacy and empower youth.

He also assured that the administration will

continue to strengthen educational outreach, ensuring that every child gets access to quality education.

The celebration saw active participation from students, educators, and community members, reflecting the shared commitment to enhancing the education sector in Baramulla.

One day Divisional level Orientation Workshop on PCPNDT Act organised at DHSJ



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

A Divisional level orientation workshop on Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex selection) Act, 1994 was today organised here in the conference hall of Directorate of Health Services Jammu.

The workshop was inaugurated by Director Health Services Jammu Dr Rakesh Magotra by Lighting ceremonial lamp alongside Deputy Director Schemes Dr. Poonam Sethi, Deputy Director Dentistry Dr. Sanjay Sharma, State Nodal Officer Dr. Harjeet Rai, State Malariologist Dr. D.J. Raina and in the presence of Deputy Director Planning Dr. Monika Upadhaya, STO Dr. Jyoti Jolly, CoS Dr. Ritesh Khullar, AD Schemes Dr. Ila Gupta, Dr. Kiran Kailu, DNO Dr. Jatinder Kour.

The workshop was organised by Nodal Officer PCPNDT/ AD HEB Dr. Simmi Verma and assisted by Shivali Gupta Law Officer from Directorate. The workshop was attended by Chief Medical Officers/ District Representatives and their accompanying Officials from all Districts of Jammu Division and Officers from the Directorate. The welcome address was delivered by Dr. Mridula Singh who also anchored the training programme.

DHS Dr. Rakesh Magotra, in his speech, advised the participants to overcome the challenges related to PCPNDT and take account of shortcomings.

The DHS directed all to adopt more proactive approach in implementing the Act and monitor all clinics in their respective districts and improve the sex ratio.

He hailed the efforts of Nodal Officer PC&PNDT for organizing the workshop. The DD Schemes by highlighted the present status of sex ratio of all Districts of Jammu Division and elaborated the provisions of the Act.

Dr. Harjeet Rai, State Nodal Officer, advised all present in the workshop to focus on sex ratio of their respective districts. The training started with a small clip on women Empowerment. The guest faculty, Assistant Law Officer, Health and Medical Education Department, Gulbadin highlighted on General Ideas/ Overviews of PC & PNDT which was very impressive and educating.

Assistant Law Remembrancer, Family Welfare Department Masroor Hassan spoke on Legal issues of PC&PNDT Act. Ms. Shivali Gupta Law Officer from this Directorate demystified regarding the PC&PNDT Act, Complaints, Court Trials and Procedural Issues which was well appreciated by all present. Another film clip on Saving the Girl Child was also screened.

An interactive session of queries and discussions with all participants was a major part of the workshop where all participated with enthusiasm. The workshop concluded with a Valedictory session where the participants were distributed Certificates and Mementoes. Vote of thanks was given by Divisional Nodal Officer PC&PNDT Dr. Simmi Verma.

DC Doda inspects Material Recovery Facility



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Harvinder Singh, today visited the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) of Municipal Committee here at Akramabad and ensure efficient functioning.

During the visit, the DC closely examined the working of machines at the facility and interacted with the Executive Officer, Municipal Council (MC) as well as representatives from various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in waste management initiatives.

DC Harvinder Singh held discussions with the Municipal Council teams and NGO representatives to understand the challenges faced in waste processing and explore ways to improve the facility's efficiency. He emphasized the importance of waste segregation, recycling, and proper disposal to maintain a clean and sustainable environment in the district.

The DC Doda also lauded the efforts of the Municipal Council and NGOs in promoting waste management practices and assured them of full administrative support in strengthening these initiatives.

EDITORIAL

Strengthening Law and Order in Jammu & Kashmir

The recent directive by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to the Jammu & Kashmir administration underscores a crucial shift in the region's law enforcement priorities. With the decline in terror activities and an overall improvement in the security landscape, the focus must now transition towards ensuring the protection of citizens' rights. This directive aligns with the larger framework of governance that aims to integrate Jammu & Kashmir more closely into India's legal and administrative mainstream.

A key aspect of this transition is the full implementation of the three newly enacted criminal laws—the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Act—by April 2025. These laws, which replace the Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, and Evidence Act, mark a significant overhaul of the country's criminal justice system. The Union Home Minister's emphasis on the efficient implementation of these statutes reflects the government's commitment to modernizing law enforcement and ensuring justice delivery remains swift and transparent.

For these laws to be successfully implemented, there is an urgent need to reform the mindset of police personnel and administrative officials. Shah's call for increased awareness and training programs among law enforcement officers is crucial. The success of any legal framework depends not just on legislation but also on the preparedness of those tasked with its enforcement. The directive to achieve 100% training for investigating officers in the new laws is a welcome step, ensuring that law enforcement operates efficiently and justly.

Another important measure discussed in the review meeting was the use of technology to expedite justice. The directive to maximize the use of the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) and the implementation of the 'Trial in Absentia' provision demonstrates the government's resolve to enhance the efficiency of the criminal justice system. Equally important is the insistence on fixing accountability among police officers, particularly in the prompt filing of chargesheets.

However, as the new laws introduce provisions related to terrorism and organized crime, Shah's cautionary note regarding their potential misuse is well-founded. Ensuring that such provisions are only invoked after thorough scrutiny at the level of the Superintendent of Police is a necessary safeguard against arbitrary or excessive use. The emphasis on systematic reviews at multiple administrative levels—the Chief Minister, Chief Secretary, and Director General of Police—ensures a robust monitoring mechanism, further reinforcing accountability and transparency in law enforcement.

The administration in Jammu & Kashmir has been commended for its efforts in implementing these reforms despite the unique challenges the region faces. However, this is only the beginning. The administration must ensure that these changes translate into tangible benefits for the common citizen. The ultimate measure of success will be how well these laws contribute to a fair, efficient, and citizen-centric justice system.

The rise of religious realty: How India's infrastructure push is transforming spiritual tourism

MAYANK JAISWAL

The Indian economy has witnessed a significant push towards infrastructure, real estate and tourism, especially spiritual tourism especially in the 2025-26 Union Budget. The government's focus on urban redevelopment, affordable housing, and tourism-friendly policies has positioned India as a global hotspot for real estate and hospitality investments. Among the most prominent emerging trends is the rise of religious realty—an intersection of real estate, hospitality, and spiritual tourism, where projects are developed to cater to the growing number of pilgrims and faith-driven travellers.

With disposable incomes on the rise due to tax relief measures—such as no income tax up to Rs 12 lakh under the new tax regime—India's middle class is set to invest more in homeownership and travel. Additionally, the introduction of the Rs 15,000 crore SWAMIH Fund 2 for affordable and mid-income housing will fast-track stalled projects, ensuring homebuyers see the fruition of their investments. Simultaneously, India's hospitality sector is poised for an exponen-

tial rise, with 50 top-tier tourist destinations being developed with state partnerships, reinforcing the nation's status as a must-visit destination for both spiritual and leisure travellers.

The Rise of Religious Realty: A New Era in Development

India's spiritual destinations have long been major attractions for domestic and international tourists. However, what was once a fragmented market with limited infrastructure is now being transformed into a sophisticated segment within the hospitality and real estate industries. The religious tourism boom has led to a surge in demand for premium hotels, commercial complexes, and mixed-use developments that cater to both pilgrims and high-end travellers. The Solitaire Group has been at the forefront of this evolution. Recognising the immense potential in religious realty, it has strategically invested in prime pilgrimage destinations such as Ayodhya, Varanasi, Prayagraj, and Haridwar.

Its flagship development in Ayodhya—a luxury Taj hotel in partnership with the Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL)—exemplifies its commitment to redefining



spiritual tourism. The 300-key Taj Ayodhya, spanning 7.2 acres, will feature high-end villas, luxury accommodations, wellness facilities, and state-of-the-art banqueting spaces to cater to both pilgrims and travellers seeking opulent experiences.

Unlocking the Potential of Tier II and III Cities

The narrative of real estate growth in India is no longer limited to metro cities. Government-backed infrastructure projects, improved regional connectivity under the modified UDAN scheme, and growing investor interest are propelling the development of Tier II and III cities.

Cities with religious and cultural significance are seeing an influx of premium residential and commercial projects, as demand for quality real estate soars. The Solitaire Group has been a pioneer in this domain. Its developments in Prayagraj, including the city's first and largest township, are a testament to its vision of creating world-class urban spaces beyond metro hubs.

Through strategic land acquisitions and partnerships, the Group aims to bridge the infrastructure gap in smaller cities and deliver projects that enhance both living standards and economic prosperity.

Hospitality Meets Spiritual Tourism

India's push for religious and spiritual tourism has been backed by key government initiatives, including hotels in pilgrimage hubs being added to the Infrastructure Harmonised Master List (HML), ensuring easier access to low-cost financing, streamlined e-visa services and visa fee waivers for select international tourists to encourage global arrivals, and MUDRA loans for homestays to support budget travel and rural tourism.

This structured approach to hospitality growth has enabled developers like the Solitaire

Group to envision and execute projects that cater to a diverse range of travellers. The focus remains on integrating world-class amenities into heritage-rich locations while maintaining the cultural and spiritual essence of these sites.

Building a Legacy of Excellence

Since its inception in 2005, the Solitaire Group has established itself as a leading player in real estate and hospitality. From residential developments in emerging urban centres to luxury hotels in religious destinations, its portfolio reflects its commitment to innovation, sustainability, and excellence. With the Indian government's ambitious push for infrastructure, tourism, and real estate reforms, the opportunities in religious realty are boundless. Indian leading players would continue this transformative journey, crafting spaces that offer both spiritual fulfilment and contemporary luxury. The focus is on delivering exceptional living experiences and fostering economic growth in the communities that are being served.

(The author is the founder and CEO of Solitaire Group. Views expressed are personal)

Raising Gen Alpha and Gen Beta

SHAINY SHARMA

The 21st century has introduced new challenges and opportunities in parenting. As we raise Generation Alpha (born 2012-2024) and Generation Beta (born 2025-2039), it is crucial to adapt parenting strategies to their digital upbringing, rapid technological advancements and changing societal norms.

Ensuring these children grow up healthy, happy, and disciplined requires a balance of traditional values and modern approaches. There is no denying that, unlike previous generations, Generation Alpha and Generation Beta are growing up with easy access to technology, which affects their lifestyle habits.

It is of utmost impor-

tance that parents/guardians take proactive steps to ensure their children's well-being such as providing balanced nutrition such as a diet rich in proteins, vitamins, and fibres while limiting processed foods and sugary snacks; reducing screen time and promoting physical activities such as cycling, swimming, and team sports to improve fitness and social skills; setting screen-free bedtime routines to ensure quality sleep, which is crucial for the cognitive and emotional development and encouraging children to spend time offline by engaging in hands-on activities like painting, gardening and DIY projects.

Not only these, but in an era of social media influence and fast-paced lifestyles, parents/guardians need to support



their children by creating a strong emotional connection; encouraging resilience and a growth mindset; guiding them in reducing digital overload, and engaging them in mindful activities such as yoga, meditation, journaling, or simple relaxation exercises to help

them cope with stress. Above all, what matters the most is the art of discipline. With instant gratification becoming a norm in the digital age, parents/guardians must realise that these generations will grow up in an AI-driven world, requiring skills beyond academics. Par-

ents/Guardians can help prepare them by encouraging critical thinking and creativity and providing problem-solving challenges, STEM activities, and artistic outlets along with proper guidance on responsible internet usage, cybersecurity, and online ethics followed by developing social skills in a hybrid world. Raising healthy, happy, and disciplined Gen Alpha and Gen Beta children requires a thoughtful blend of love, guidance, and adaptability.

Parents/Guardians must embrace new-age parenting by integrating digital awareness with traditional values while fostering emotional resilience and self-discipline. By prioritising wellbeing, education and strong moral foundations, one can ensure these generations grow

into responsible, fulfilled, and future-ready individuals.

Also, by providing proper nutrition, encouraging physical and mental well-being, fostering social skills, and setting positive examples, parents/guardians can create an environment where children thrive for it is aptly said that a happy and healthy child is not just the result of luck but of consistent efforts, care, and understanding from those who nurture them. By promoting healthy habits, setting strong moral foundations, and nurturing adaptability, parents can equip their children for a fast-evolving world. Ultimately, a happy and well-rounded child is shaped not by chance, but by consistent love, guidance, and understanding.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Unlocking nature's secrets: A journey through India's forests

BKP SINHA AND ARVIND JHA

Nature, in its boundless complexity, holds countless wonders and mysteries. A walk through the forest offers a unique opportunity to engage deeply with the natural world, observing its intricate details and uncovering its hidden stories. Every tree, rock, and animal track contributes to the landscape's rich history, revealing the dynamic processes that have shaped it over time. The towering trees, with their rings cataloguing centuries of climatic shifts and environmental changes, stand as silent witnesses to the passage of time. A noticeable absence of middle-aged trees, for example, often points to a past forest fire. These fires, while natural and sometimes devastating, selectively eliminate

younger trees while leaving behind older, more resilient ones. India, with its diverse ecosystems ranging from coastal regions to mountain valleys, offers a unique opportunity to observe the intricate relationships between flora, fauna, and their environment. Even the soil beneath our feet, a mosaic of organic matter, testifies to the endless cycle of life and decay that sustains the ecosystem. The contours of the land, the steepness of slopes, the presence of valleys and ridges - these are not mere accidents of geography. They are the fingerprints of geological forces, millennia in the making. The Himalayas, Western Ghats, and Vindhya ranges are iconic examples of such geological artistry, showcasing the dynamic processes that have shaped the nation's landscape and influenced

its biodiversity. The forest is a timeless classroom, where nature's lessons unfold with every step. But to truly unlock these secrets, requires more than a casual glance; it demands a mindful approach and willingness to slow down and truly engage with our surroundings. As you walk through the forest, you'll notice the forest floor is covered with a thick layer of leaves, twigs, and decomposing organic matter.

This layer, known as the leaf litter, plays a crucial role in nutrient cycling and provides a habitat for many small creatures. The type and distribution of vegetation provide insights into the region's climate, soil conditions, and water availability. Lush rainforests, like those in the Western Ghats and Northeast India, thrive in areas with abundant rainfall. These

verdant ecosystems boast a rich variety of plant species, from towering trees to intricate understory plants, each adapted to thrive in the humid, water-rich environment. This dense vegetation supports a wide range of wildlife, contributing to the region's biodiversity and ecological stability.

In contrast, the arid deserts of Rajasthan present a landscape where life has remarkably adapted to survive with minimal water. Vegetation here is sparse, but highly specialized, with species like cacti, acacias, and thorny bushes dominating the terrain. These species are equipped with unique adaptations, such as water-storing tissues and deep root systems, allowing them to conserve and access water efficiently and ensuring their survival in such harsh conditions.

The intimate relationship

between plants and their environment becomes even more evident when observing specific species in particular areas. For instance, in floodplains, trees such as sycamore, Gular, and ash Gurjan thrive in fertile, wet conditions where water and nutrients accumulate. On the other hand, the hardy Casuarina is well-suited to coastal environments, where the salty conditions pose a challenge for many other species, including Karanj (Pongamia). Similarly, along riverbanks, trees like Jamun and Arjun flourish in the constantly wet conditions, highlighting how plant life reflects the local ecosystem. Just as plant life reflects environmental conditions, rock formations provide a window into the geological history and processes that have shaped the land. Sedimentary rocks, often

rich in marine fossils such as shells, corals, and fish, indicate that the region was once submerged underwater.

These rocks may also display ripple marks or mud cracks, further supporting the presence of ancient water bodies. For example, the fossil-rich Shivalik Hills provide a glimpse into prehistoric times, showcasing the variety of life forms that once thrived in the area. The types of sediment and their layering can also offer insights into past climate conditions, such as periods of drought or heavy rainfall. For instance, fine-grained sediments suggest calm, shallow waters, while coarser sediments point to more turbulent conditions.

Igneous rocks, formed from cooled magma, reveal the area's volcanic history, while metamorphic rocks provide evidence of the

intense transformations that occur deep within the Earth. Understanding the geology beneath the surface, which shapes the land, is equally important, and soil reveals much about this. For example, limestone regions, where rock weathering creates caves and stone pillars, typically have alkaline soils high in calcium. Conversely, granite-dominated areas, where rock breakdown leads to acidic soils, often develop wetlands due to poor drainage.

Soil colour offers further clues: Dark brown soil, rich in organic matter, supports diverse ecosystems; grey soil suggests wetter conditions; yellowish soil may indicate nutrient depletion. Dramatic shifts in soil colour often point to human influence. For example, in Karnataka and Odisha, vibrant red and

ochre hues reflect historical iron ore mining.

In Rajasthan and Gujarat, white caps on the soil signal high salt levels from over-irrigation. Physical signs in the landscape—such as fissures or cracks in the soil—can indicate instability, caused by factors like erosion, seismic activity, or human intervention.

In hilly regions like the Western Ghats or Himalayas, slipping or bending tree bark may signal shifting ground, a clear indicator of potential soil movement. Recognizing these signs is crucial for the safety of campers and hikers. Water bodies, including rivers, lakes, and wetlands, are vital components of India's ecosystems and are deeply intertwined with the land's geology. Major rivers such as Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Godavari are true lifelines for the nation.

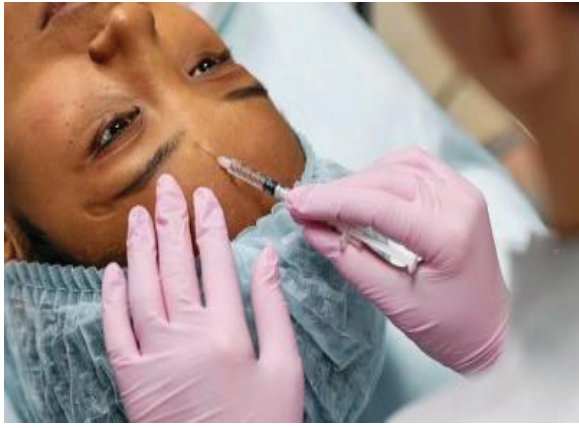
1 in 6 US parents support teenagers getting laser hair removal, chemical skin peels: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Every sixth parent in the US is in support of their teenage children indulging in non-surgical cosmetic procedures such as laser hair removal, chemical skin peels, teeth whitening and dermal fillers, according to nationwide study published on Monday.

The study led by the University of Michigan Health CS Mott Children's Hospital, based on a national poll showed that more than 16 per cent parents believe that teenagers should be allowed to receive these types of aesthetic treatments for any reason as long as they have approval from their guardians.

But, half of parents only support teenagers getting non-surgical cosmetic procedures if there's a valid reason. While 50 per cent said the reason should not be "being bullied about appearance", less than 40 per cent say improving



mental health is a good reason.

"Parents were conflicted about the circumstances under which non-surgical cosmetic procedures are appropriate for teenagers," said Mott Poll Co-Director and Mott pediatrician Susan Woolford.

"Interestingly, similar proportions of parents rated the validity of teenagers wanting to look good for a special occasion on par with wanting the procedures due to mental health or bullying," Woolford added.

The nationally representative poll is based on responses from 989 parents of children ages 13-17 surveyed in August 2024. The increased popularity of these procedures may be associated with social media content that exposed teenagers to idealise images of faces and bodies, Woolford said.

"Teenagers are susceptible to feeling insecure about their appearance when compared to digitally altered pictures depicting an appearance that is probably unattainable

naturally," she said. "This problem is exacerbated by the pressure to post pictures of themselves to garner validation."

However, it's important for parents to find ways to help teenagers understand the distortions presented in the media while also exploring their reasons for wanting to change their appearance, she said.

"If a teenager asks for a non-surgical cosmetic procedure, parents should consider the emotional and mental health implications," she said.

Further, the poll showed that parent opinions of the age at which youth should be able to obtain such services also varied. More than half selected 18 years of age or older, 27 per cent said ages 16-17 was old enough and 17 per cent said 15 or younger was also fine.

But, nearly a third of parents think teenagers should be prohibited from these procedures under any circumstances.

Study finds new subtypes of fat cells in human body

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM

A new international study has for the first time identified unique subpopulations of fat cells.

Researchers from Israel's Ben Gurion University (BGU) noted that the study could pave the way for personalised medicine in obesity, Xinhua news agency reported.

The study, part of the international Human Cell Atlas project, mapped fat cell populations in various human fat tissues, focusing on subcutaneous and visceral fat.

Using technologies mapping RNA molecules, the team attached unique "barcodes" to RNA from individual cells, allowing them to identify distinct cell types within fat tissue.

The research, published in the journal Nature Genetics, revealed the previously uncharacterized subtypes, including



fat cells involved in regulating inflammation, blood vessel formation, extracellular protein deposition, and fibrosis. In addition, one of the unique types of fat cells, identified for the first time in this research,

appeared only in the intra-abdominal tissue.

Over the past 30 years, the understanding of fat tissue has evolved from merely an energy storage site to recognised for producing proteins that regu-

late appetite, eating, and energy expenditure, such as leptin, which influences brain control centers.

While most fat cells in subcutaneous and visceral fat were similar, subtle differences were found in their intercellular communication. Visceral fat cells were more engaged in pro-inflammatory processes, interacting with immune cells, whereas subcutaneous fat cells focused on anti-inflammatory processes. The team also discovered that the prevalence of these unique fat cells was related to the metabolic complications of obesity, with their relative proportion in the tissue higher the more severe the insulin resistance. According to the researchers, if unique fat cells predict personal risk for obesity complications or treatment response, the findings could significantly advance personalised obesity treatments.

Swimming in lakes with still waters can cause bacterial pneumonia: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Swimming in some lakes with still water can lead to infection with Legionella -- a bacterium that can cause pneumonia -- said a team of researchers on Tuesday calling out on people who engage in open water swimming to be aware of the risk.

Also referred to as legionnaires' disease, infection with legionella causes severe lung inflammation that is characterised by fever, chills, malaise, chest pain, cough, fatigue, respiratory symptoms, and sometimes diarrhoea.

"Legionella infection represents a public health hazard owing to its ability to spread through exposure to natural water bodies and human-made water reservoirs," said Dr. Ashley Bryson, an internal medicine resident at the University of Manitoba.

In an article, published



in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, the experts explained that legionella bacteria thrive in the warm, stagnant water in plumbing systems, air conditioners, public spas, and even lakes and rivers.

Age older than 50 years, smoking history, chronic cardiovascular or kidney

disease, diabetes, and a compromised immune system are the main risk factors for Legionnaires' disease.

"Clinicians should consider legionnaires' disease in patients with pneumonia that does not improve despite the use of broad-spectrum antibiotics, especially if the pneumo-

nia is severe, occurring in immunocompromised patients or patients with recent travel history, or when only antimicrobials without activity against atypical pathogens have been administered," the researchers advised.

They noted that testing for legionnaires' disease should be performed when patients do not perform well to outpatient antibiotic treatment for community-acquired pneumonia; those with severe pneumonia, in particular cases requiring intensive care.

People with weak immune systems; those with travel history within 14 days of symptom onset; those with hospital admission with hospital-acquired pneumonia must also be tested for legionnaires' disease.

Symptoms typically present 2-14 days from exposure but can persist for weeks.

Maternal paracetamol use may raise ADHD risk in kids by age 10: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Children, especially females, born to women who took acetaminophen (paracetamol) during pregnancy may be at a higher risk of developing childhood attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) by the time they age 10, claimed a study.

The study, published in the journal Nature Mental Health, showed that children whose mothers had biomarkers of acetaminophen present in their plasma had a 3.15 times higher likelihood of an ADHD diagnosis.

The findings showed that the link was stronger among females than males. Girls of APAP-exposed mothers showed a 6.16 times higher likelihood of ADHD. However, the association was found to be weaker and nonsignificant in males.

Paracetamol is widely used during pregnancy,



accounting for an estimated 70 per cent of pregnant individuals in the US, Europe, and Asia.

Even though paracetamol has been classified as a low-risk medication by regulatory agencies such as the US Food and Drug Administration and the European Medicines Agency, evidence is mounting to suggest that it can potentially increase the risk of adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes, including ADHD and autism spectrum disorder.

For the new study, researchers from the

University of Washington, US, analysed plasma biomarkers of acetaminophen (APAP) exposure in a cohort of 307 African American mother-child pairs.

Detection of APAP in second-trimester maternal blood samples correlated with increased odds of ADHD diagnosis in children by age 8-10, they said in the paper. In the study, APAP metabolites were detected in 20.2 per cent of maternal plasma samples.

Placental gene expression analysis of a subset of

174 participants indicated sex-specific transcriptional changes. In females, APAP exposure was associated with upregulation of immune-related pathways, including increased expression of immunoglobulin heavy constant gamma 1 (IGHG1).

Increased IGHG1 expression was statistically linked to ADHD diagnoses, with mediation analysis suggesting that APAP's effect on ADHD was partly mediated through this gene's placental expression, the researchers said.

The findings align with prior epidemiological studies and experimental animal research linking prenatal APAP exposure to neurodevelopmental disruptions.

The current study eliminated the bias concerns raised in previous studies where APAP use was self-reported by using objective biomarker measurements, they said, while calling for further studies.

Indian graduates show strong aptitude for AI, ML roles: Report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Indian graduates are demonstrating a strong aptitude for roles in the fields of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), according to a report on Tuesday.

The report by talent assessment firm Mercer Mettl showed that Indian graduates had a 46.1 per cent employability rate in the fields of AI and ML -- the highest among all technical roles.

The report, encompassing data from more than 2700 campuses and over 1 million learners, reveals a complex landscape of both promising adaptability and persistent skill gaps.

It also found that 50 per cent of graduates in India possess soft skills needed for AI/GenAI collaboration, but they needed improvement in creativity



(44.3 per cent employability).

Communication skills (55.1 per cent), critical thinking (54.6 per cent), and leadership skills (54.2 per cent) were found to be strong areas. With a 46 per cent employability rate, learning agility is vital for navigating the evolving tech landscape.

Further, the report showed that Tier 1 college graduates are the lead in employability (48.4 per cent), followed by Tier 2 (46.1 per cent) and Tier 3

(43.4 per cent) institutions, but the potential exists across all tiers, especially in specialised tech areas. Tier 2 college graduates were found to excel in UI/UX developer roles (58.3 per cent employability).

Delhi showed the highest employability (53.4 per cent), followed by Himachal Pradesh and Punjab (51.1 per cent). Uttarakhand and Jharkhand also performed well (50 per cent and 49.6 per cent respectively).

Notably, the report

found equal employability for male and female graduates in AI and ML sectors as well as in data science, but disparities were seen in software testing.

"In 2025, the employability rate for Indian graduates stands at 42.6 per cent, reflecting a slight decline from 44.3 per cent in 2023, primarily due to evolving industry expectations. However, there has been significant progress in employability for technical roles as colleges and students increasingly focus on developing skills that meet market demands," said Siddhartha Gupta, President of Mercer India.

"On the other hand, the development of certain non-technical and soft skills presents a more complex learning curve, often requiring additional time to cultivate. This data clearly underscores these trends," he added.

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir
Jal Shakti (Irrigation & Flood Control) Department
Mechanical Irrigation Division, Jammu
Email/Fax : ifcj.xenmidjmu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT OF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
e-NIT No. MID/J/e-NIT/2024-25/141 Dated: 17/02/2025

Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Canal Road, Jammu, on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K UT, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from registered and reputed Firms **Annual Repair/periodic maintenance of foot valves of LIS Suhagani and LIS Rattanpur paras along with allied works falling under the jurisdiction of MISD-1 Jammu.** The bidding process shall be completed online in two covers viz. **Cover 'I'** - Tender fee and Earnest Money Deposit, fulfillment of prequalification criteria, technical specifications and acceptance of terms and conditions of the tender and **Cover 'II'** - Financial Bid in the prescribed BOQ.

| S. No. | Name of Work | Qty. | Earnest Money | Cost of tender document | Period of completion | Validity of Rates | Name of Division |
|--------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1. | Annual Repair/periodic maintenance of foot valves of LIS Suhagani and LIS Rattanpur paras along with allied works falling under the jurisdiction of MISD-1 Jammu. | Complete job as per Scope of Work | 2% of the quoted value | Rs200.00 | 10 Days | 180 Days from date of Submission of bid. | Mechanical Irrigation Division, Jammu. |

1. The tender documents can be viewed and downloaded from the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> from: **17/02/25 (06:00PM)**
2. Submission of online bids: **17/02/25(06:00 PM) to 27/02/25 (02:00 P.M).**
3. Opening of Cover I online bids: **28/02/25 (2:00 PM)**

-sd-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Jammu

DIP/J-10263/24
DATE: 18-2-25

6 killed as bus falls into drain in Faridkot

AGENCIES

FARIDKOT (PUNJAB), FEB 18 (UND)

At least six people, including a child, were killed and 25 others injured when a bus collided with a truck and fell into a drain in Punjab's Faridkot district on Tuesday morning, police said.

Two of the injured are in critical condition.

Faridkot Senior Superintendent of Police Pragna Jain said that six people, including a child, were killed when the bus fell into a ditch after colliding due to deep fog on the drain.

He said 25 people have been sent to the hospital for treatment. Two of them are in critical condition. It is being told that locals immediately reached the spot to rescue the passengers till the rescue team arrived. The campaign continues.

4 militants arrested in Manipur: Police

AGENCIES

IMPHAL, FEB 18 (UND)

The Manipur police has arrested four cadres of different underground outfits and seized a large number of arms, ammunitions, and explosives from various areas of the strife-torn state within the last 24 hours, officials said here on Tuesday.

He said that security forces arrested one Lamkhogin Dimngel of Kangchup at Chura-chandpur district with 24 gm brown sugar, Rs 34 lakh and other documents.

In another incident security forces arrested one Manglemjao, Self Style Chairman of KCP (KK Nganba) and another active cadre identified as Manglemba from Langol Ningthou, Lamphel, Imphal West on Monday. En otro incidente, la policia arrestó a un cuadro activo de RPF/PLA, identificado COMO B. Sharma de Imphal East. In another operation held at Kangpokpi district police recovered one Automatic Rifle, Mechanism Rifle, Barrel Bolt Action Rifle, 32 Pistol .22 Pistol, Mortar (Pumpi), Mortar Bomb Handsets, sniper ammunition and other war like materials.

India, Qatar elevate ties to Strategic Partnership after talks between PM Modi, Qatar Amir

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 18 (UND)

India and Qatar decided to elevate their ties to a Strategic Partnership with focus on trade, energy, investments and innovation, following talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Qatar Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani in Hyderabad House here today.

The MEA spokesperson said in a post on X that the two leaders held wide-ranging talks.

"Further cementing the deep & traditional rela-



tionship.

"PM @narendramodi & HH Sheikh @TamimbinHamad AlThani, Amir

of the State of Qatar held wide-ranging talks at Hyderabad House today.

"Both leaders decided

to elevate India-Qatar relations to a Strategic Partnership with focus on trade, energy, investments, innovation, technology, food security, culture & people-to-people ties. They also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest."

Ahead of the talks, Prime Minister Modi welcomed the Qatar Amir to Hyderabad House for the bilateral talks.

In the morning, the Qatar Amir was accorded a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Midnight selection of new CEC is disrespectful, discourteous: Rahul slams govt

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 18 (UND)

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday slammed the government's "midnight decision" to select Gyanesh Kumar as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and called it "disrespectful and discourteous".

On his social media handle X, Rahul Gandhi said, "By violating the Supreme Court order and removing the Chief Justice of India from the committee, the (Narendra) Modi Government has exacerbated the concerns of hundreds of millions of voters



over the integrity of our electoral process".

He further said that he had presented his "dissent note" to Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah during the meeting of the committee to select the next Election Commissioner.

In the dissent note, Gandhi stated, "The most fundamental aspect of an independent Election Commission free from executive interference is the process of choosing the Election Commissioner and Chief Election Commissioner".

Tripura court remanded 7 job seekers to jail for proxy and cheating in exam

AGENCIES

AGARTALA, FEB 18 (UND)

A local court on Tuesday sent altogether seven persons to 12 days of judicial custody for impersonating job seekers and adopting unfair means in the recruitment exam in Tripura (Central) University for the post of Lower Division Clerk (LDC) and Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) on Sunday.

Accused were included one from Bihar, two from Rajasthan, two from Haryana, and two from West Bengal. Police initially detained them from the exam hall based on the complaints from the university authority and later after prima facie charges were established all of them were arrested.

Officer-in-Charge of Amtali

Police Station of the city Himadri Sarkar said two accused persons identified as Pankaj Kumar hails from Bihar and Ram Bir Meena from Rajasthan were found writing exams on behalf of others while Mrinmoy Biswas, Liton Biswas, Mitun Mondal, Rajbir Singh, and Rahul Kumar were found cheating using electronic devices.

"During routine verification of candidates and their admit cards, invigilators notice abnormalities in their behaviour. In closer monitoring, all of them were caught by a group of teachers and later, they were handed over to police. But we took little time to ascertain the crime and detail of their network before arresting them formally," Sarkar said.

SC grants interim protection to YouTuber Ranveer Allahabadi

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 18 (UND)

The Supreme Court on Tuesday granted interim protection from arrest to YouTuber Ranveer Allahabadi in connection with multiple FIRs filed in Mumbai, Guwahati, and Jaipur over alleged obscene remarks made by him during an episode of the online show India's Got Latent.

A bench comprising Justice Surya Kant and Justice N Kotiswar Singh issued the interim order while seeking a response from the authorities on Allahabadi's petition challenging the multiple FIRs.

The court also directed that no further FIRs be registered concerning the same YouTube show. However, the relief is con-

ditional upon Allahabadi - popularly known as Beer Biceps - cooperating with the investigation. Additionally, the bench granted him the liberty to seek police protection in case of threats.

The court ordered that Allahabadi and his associates must refrain from airing any shows until further orders. He has been instructed to surrender his passport as part of the conditions of relief.

Despite granting interim relief, the apex judiciary Supreme Court harshly criticised Allahabadi's language, calling it "dirty" and "perverted."

Justice Kant confronted Allahabadi's counsel, Advocate Abhinav Chandrachud, questioning, "Are you defending this kind of language?" In response,



Chandrachud admitted that he found the remarks "disgusting" but argued that the issue at hand was whether they amounted to a criminal offence. He cited the Apoorva Arora judgment, which held that profanity alone does not constitute obscenity.

However, Justice Kant remained unconvinced,

stating, "If this is not obscenity, then what is? Does the Apoorva Arora judgment give a licence to say anything?"

The bench also engaged in a discussion over the multiple FIRs lodged against Allahabadi. When Chandrachud argued that multiple FIRs for the same offence were legally unten-

able, citing the TT Antony case, Justice Kant countered that the nature of the complaints differed, with one FIR specifically concerning alleged derogatory remarks about Arunachal Pradesh.

The court expressed serious disapproval of the YouTuber's statements, stating, "There is something very dirty in his mind, which has been vomited in this programme... He is insulting his parents. Why should courts favour him?"

Chandrachud also informed the bench that Allahabadi had been receiving death threats, prompting Justice Kant to remark, "If you seek cheap publicity by making such remarks, others may seek cheap publicity by making threats."

Indian economy likely grew at 6.4 pc in Q3, estimates ICRA

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, FEB 18 (UND)

India's gross domestic product (GDP) likely grew at a relatively accelerated pace of 6.4% in the October-December quarter (Q3) of the current financial year 2024-25 from seven-quarter low of 5.4% in the previous quarter on the back of enhanced government spending, research and rating firm ICRA said in a report on Tuesday.

Further, the growth in the gross value added (GVA) is estimated to record a relatively broad-based improvement to 6.6% in Q3 from 5.6% in Q2 FY2025, driven by the industrial, services and agricultural sectors.

"On a sombre note, the GDP and GVA growth in Q3 FY2025 is foreseen to continue to trail the NSO's initial growth estimates for Q1 FY2025 (+6.7% and +6.8%, respectively), which had seen some sectors affected by the Parliamentary elections, the Model Code of Conduct, and also the heat wave in some states," ICRA said.

National Statistical Office (NSO) will release the official GDP growth estimate for Q3FY25 on February 28, 2025.

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, Head-Research & Outreach, ICRA said that India's economic performance in Q3FY25 benefitted from a sharp ramp-up in aggregate government spending (Centre and state) on capital

and revenue expenditure, high growth in services exports, a turnaround in merchandise exports and healthy output of major kharif crops among others.

"Some consumer-focused sectors saw a pick-up during the festive season, even as urban consumer sentiment dipped slightly, and other sectors such as mining and electricity saw an improvement after weather-related challenges in the previous quarter. Overall, while we expect the pace of GDP and the GVA expansion to rise in Q3 FY2025 relative to the seven-quarter low prints for the previous quarter, marking an upturn, the performance may remain inferior to the NSO's initial estimates for Q1 FY2025," she said.

SP is against cultural heritage of UP: Yogi

AGENCIES

LUCKNOW, FEB 18 (UND)

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday launched a strong attack on the Samajwadi Party (SP) leaders, accusing them of double standards on the opening day of the Uttar Pradesh budget session.

The CM said that while SP leaders send their children to English-medium schools, they oppose government efforts to improve education for the general public, instead pushing for Urdu. He alleged that the SP aims to lead the country toward fundamentalism, a move which will not be tolerated.

Welcoming the inclusion of local dialects such as Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Braj and Bundelkhandi in proceedings of the Assembly, he emphasised the gov-



ernment's commitment to preserving and promoting these languages, recognising them as daughters of Hindi.

Yogi said, "Our government is setting up separate academies for these languages to ensure their growth. They are daughters of Hindi and deserve their rightful respect. This House is not just for scholars, every section of society must have its voice

heard."

Accusing the SP members of opposing Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Braj, and Bundelkhandi, he said they are, in essence, against UP's cultural heritage. He asserted that they have dual character and double standards.

Emphasising the richness of Braj Bhasha, the CM highlighted that Saint Surdas composed his divine verses in this lan-

guage, while Saint Tulsidas composed the Ramcharitmanas in Awadhi, which became a spiritual guide not only for North India but also for NRIs in times of crisis.

Lashing out at those opposing Bhojpuri, Awadhi, and Braj, he said that such resistance reflects an opposition to India's cultural heritage and traditions. "It is unfortunate that at a time when these languages are receiving the respect they deserve, some people are protesting against it," he said.

Taking a dig at the SP, Yogi said that opposing every good initiative has become the party's nature. "You oppose every positive step taken in the interest of the state and the country. This attitude will not work," he said.

Ensure smooth Ramzan arrangements without any hiccups: Minister Prabhakar

AGENCIES

HYDERABAD, FEB 18 (UND)

Telangana Transport and Hyderabad In-charge Minister Ponnam Prabhakar asked the officials on Tuesday to ensure smooth Ramzan arrangements without any hiccups.

He held a review meeting at the Dr B R Ambedkar Secretariat, here to discuss preparations for the upcoming month of Ramzan, which begins on March 2.

The meeting focused

on various arrangements for the month of Ramzan. GHMC Commissioner Ilambarti highlighted special measures being taken for cleanliness throughout the city, with dedicated sanitation teams being deployed at mosques and Eidgahs.

He assured that street lights would be repaired, temporary lights would be installed, and road repairs would be completed. Special focus is being placed on Mecca Masjid, Royal Mosque, and Miralam Eidgah, with

all work being executed on a priority basis.

The GHMC entomology team has also been conducting fogging to prevent mosquitoes at night. Plastic covers are being distributed at mosques, and a control room has been set up, with special officers appointed for coordination across all departments.

Water Works MD Ashok Reddy mentioned that water packets have been made available at mosques and Eidgahs, with special tankers



deployed to meet the drinking water needs.

Drainage repairs along routes leading to mosques are also underway. Electricity officials announced that mobile transformers would be installed to meet the increased demand for power during the summer months, and emergency staff would be available 24/7 at mosques during Eid.

The R&B department confirmed that they were ready to set up tents at mosques and install barricades for crowd man-

agement. Dairy officials assured that milk supplies would meet the demands of the community during Ramzan. JAD officials confirmed that instructions had been issued to Muslim employees to complete their duties by 1600 hours.

MLAs and MLCs urged police officers to manage traffic efficiently to avoid disruptions during Ramzan and allow street vendors to operate until midnight. They emphasized the importance of smooth traffic manage-

ment during the festival. Minister Ponnam Prabhakar instructed medical officials to implement special measures to ensure health and safety, including setting up health camps at Eidgahs and mosques.

He also directed that medical personnel be available at all times. Additionally, Civil Supply officials were instructed to ensure timely distribution of rations to Muslim residents to facilitate smooth celebrations during Ramzan.

Union Minister's admission of lack of coordination reinforces need for Statehood: Rattan Lal

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Adv. Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President, J&K National Conference, has strongly reacted to the statement made by Union Minister for Parliamentary and Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, where he admitted that a lack of coordination between the J&K Administration and the Ministry of Minority Affairs has resulted in insufficient funding for welfare schemes.

Interacting with the delegation of District Jammu Urban JKNC SC Cell headed by Mr Ramesh Lal Motton District President, the senior NC leader said the Union Minister's remarks are a clear admission of lack of Coordination between J&K administration and the ministry of

minority affairs caused by the current dual power system in J&K, which has proven to be ineffective in addressing the real and burning issues faced by the people. "The absence of a fully empowered elected government has led to administrative failures, where funds meant for the welfare of minorities and marginalized sections are either underutilized or wasted," he stated.

Rattan Lal Gupta further added that J&K cannot be run through a bureaucratic setup dictated by New Delhi and a fragmented local administration. "This dual power structure must end, and a full-fledged state government must be restored. Only a democratic setup can ensure that policies are implemented effectively and funds



reach the people without bureaucratic hurdles," he asserted.

Highlighting the ongoing struggles of the people, the senior NC leader pointed out that basic amenities remain a distant dream for many, unemployment is soaring, and security concerns persist. "On one hand, the Government at the Centre claims progress, but the ground reality tells a different story—where people facing severe prob-

lems due to dual power system in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He further added that the security situation in J&K remains grim, with innocent civilians still falling victim to terrorism. "On one hand, the administration claims normalcy, yet people continue to live in fear. The absence of a full-fledged State has left the region directionless," he said.

Rattan Lal Gupta fur-

ther emphasized that the National Conference (NC) Government headed by the dynamic Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah has always been competent in handling the affairs of J&K and ensuring the welfare of its people. "The people of J&K have witnessed how NC has effectively governed in the past, addressing public grievances and ensuring holistic development. It is time to restore that governance model by reinstating full statehood," he stated.

The Provincial President urged the Central Government to immediately restore full-fledged statehood and allow the democratic process to function in J&K, ensuring that governance is by the people, of the people, and for the people. "J&K deserves leadership that under-

stands its aspirations, not a system that operates remotely and inefficiently," he added.

Those who were present included: Sheikh Bashir Ahmad Provincial Secretary Jammu, Bimla Luthra former MLA, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Abid Magrey District President Ramban, S. Gurnam Singh Block President Jammu West, Joginder Kaur District Vice President Jammu Urban, Women Wing, Jaseen Malik District President Samba YNC, Ajay Kumar Block Secretary Jammu East, Jai Singh, Pooja Thakur, Sapna Gill Block President Women Wing Jammu East, Sanjeev Kumar, Satpaul, Surinder, Nasib Singh and others.

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 18

The Traffic Police, NHW under the supervision of SSP (Traffic) NHW Ramban Rohit Baskotra, conducted a week long special drive against the Trucks/Buses fitted with Pressure Horns.

During the special drive, which started on Feb 12, 2025, about 200 Trucks/Buses were challaned and fine to the tune of Rs. 2.00 lakh (Two lac.) was imposed on the Traffic violators.

The general public and drivers have appreciated the role of Traffic Police, NHW Ramban to curb the menace of Pressure Horns fitted in the vehicles, which is also a great hazardous to common society,

especially the students and old aged people. The Truck/Bus operators have been further advised to remove the Pressure Horns immediately fitted in their vehicles and follow the Traffic rules strictly.

Since, the mission of Traffic Police is to save the precious human lives and reduce the accidents on road. The Truck/Bus operators have been advised to clean their vehicles properly before their journey.

Besides above, the SSP (Traffic) NHW Ramban has also complimented the Traffic Staff involved in the mission and they have been also directed to continue with high degree of sense, responsibility and enthusiasm in future.

Farooq Ganderbali rejoins BJP after 20 years

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

There is a clear wave in favour of BJP in entire length and breadth of Kashmir, which is visible on ground as more and more people are joining the party with each passing day. Even our old activists, who had left the party in the past, too are coming back.

Sat Sharma CA, President, Jammu and Kashmir BJP, said this while welcoming back Farooq Ganderbali, a prominent political and nationalist activist from Kashmir, into the party fold.

BJP General Secretary (organisation) Ashok Koul, former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, party MLA Yudhvir Sethi and Arvind Gupta, Tilak Raj Gupta, NEM Priya Sethi, senior leaders Mushtaq Noorabadi and Avtar Krishan Bhat, also



accompanied Sat Sharma, to welcome Gandebali.

Sat Sharma, on this occasion, said that Farooq Ganderbali had served BJP as BJYM Kashmir President from 1998 to 2003. Later, he contested the assembly election from Ganderbal in 2008 as independent candidate against Omar Abdullah.

His rejoining BJP after 20 years marks a renewed wave of support for the party in Kashmir, which reaffirms his commitment to the party's vision

of development, stability, and peace in the region.

Sat further said that his return to BJP comes at a time when a large number of people in Kashmir are stepping forward to align with the party, signaling their trust in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the party's policies for Jammu and Kashmir.

In other programmes, Sat Sharma, along with other leaders, felicitated a renowned dogra sculptor, Ravinder Singh Jamwal,

who had prepared bust of Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay.

They also felicitated Prof. (Dr.) Kulbhushan Mohtra, BJP senior leader, for getting state award for his literary work.

Ashok Kumar, party vistarak, was also given a warm send off as he has been deputed to Andhra Pradesh to serve the organisation.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included Prem Gupta, Vidya Motan, Naresh Singh, Rajesh

Gupta, Veenu Khanna, Balbir Ram Rattan, Rajinder Sharma, Purnima Sharma, Rakesh Mahajan, Rajni Sethi, Parmod Kapahi, Sanjay Baru, Praduman Singh, Sunil Prajapati, Brahmajot, Munish Khajuria, Neha Mahajan, Hans Raj Loria, Raveesh Mengi, Asha Gupta, Jaideep Sambyal, Ravinder Singh birpuria, Anu Gupta, Puneet Gupta, Paramjeet Pummi, Ankuhs Gupta, Jeet Angral, Sanjay Bakshi, and others.

Movement Kalki's protest enters in 121st Day, submits memo to VHP President

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

The ongoing protest by Movement Kalki to demand the status of 'National Mother' for cows and to strengthen cow protection laws continued on its 121st day at Amphala Chowk, Jammu. On this occasion, a memorandum was submitted to Rajesh Gupta, the newly appointed President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) for Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh, and he was congratulated on his new role.

In the memorandum, Movement Kalki put forward the following demands:

Cows should be granted the status of 'National



jeev Dubey, and Deepak Singh, was present on this occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Rajesh Gupta assured that Vishwa Hindu Parishad

fully supports Movement Kalki's campaign. He emphasized that this movement is a significant effort to awaken society, and the time has come for all Sanatanis to unite and advance this sacred cause in defense of truth.

Movement Kalki's struggle will continue until cows are officially recognized as 'National Mother' and strict cow protection laws are enacted.

Jai Gau Mata! Jai Sanatan!

Goshalas (cow shelters) should be established across the country. Strict laws should be enacted against cow slaughter, and illegal cattle trafficking should be completely stopped.

A 'Sanatan Board' should be formed for the protection and promotion of Sanatan Dharma. The Movement Kalki delegation, including Advisor Pritam Sharma, Dr. Sudesh Kumar, San-

Hamari Riyasat, Hamara Haq

Even SC order on early restoration of statehood not being implemented by centre: Karra

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 18

As the Congress statehood movement gained momentum, the JKPC Chief Shri Tariq Hameed Karra has today hit out at the centre blaming it of flouting even Supreme Court directions for early restoration of statehood to J&K and if the demand is not conceded early, the Congress shall not hesitate to take to streets.

Addressing an impressive workers rally at Doda Dak Bungalow today, Shri Karra said that centre had committed before supreme Court to grant statehood "Very soon" apart from on the floor of parliament over five years ago but neither "Very soon" is being understood nor the appropriate time, being quoted time and again by centre & bjp leaders is understood by the people, since statehood not restored so far.

This is cruel joke with the people as well as democracy & constitution by BJP led centre. More than four months after elected government, the required powers and promised statehood not being restored.

Working President



s Tara Chand, Raman Bhalla, Lal Singh, Ex MP Ravinder Sharma, Chief Spokesperson, Ex MLC Naresh Gupta, DCC President Sheikh Mujeeb, Ex MLA Ashok Dogra, Ex MLC Sham Lal Bhagat contesting candidates Sheikh Riyaz, Prof Parddeep Bhagat, Nadeem Niaz, Sanjeev Panda, Vijay Sharma Seva DL, Javed Lone, Rashid Malik, Anju Jral, Ranjit Manhas, Jatin Vashisht, Ricky Dalotra, several DDCs, BDCs, Block

Presidents, Sarpanches were among the speakers. As the enthusiastic People raised strong slogans # Hamari Riyasat Hamara Haq, & Karra Saheb Aage Bado, hum Tumhare sath hain", extending full support to the statehood movement, the Jkpc Chief Karra responded by stating that Congress shall not hesitate to launch a strong agitation, taking to streets, if the demand is not met shortly.

Day in & day out centre claims normalcy but does not want to qualify what is appropriate time & what is time frame for restoration of statehood as bjp want to rule by proxy through LG, even after loosing mandate to rule.

Karra said that Congress achieved bigger goal of keeping bjp out by entering into coalition with NC, in which several senior leaders had to sacrifice their seats likewise coalition partner too.

Quoting example of Delhi elections, where some party had unilaterally announced to go solo & not the Congress.

Those who think can defeat bjp alone without Congress are committing a mistake in the present circumstances when bjp has the managed support of several institutions & amassed huge wealth for elections. He also cited the recent controversy over the law for appointment of CEC & election commissioners while holding Constitution in his hand like Rahul Gandhi.

Karra also raised the issue of restrictions being imposed upon Congress movement, as Centre & LG adm got unnerved by the massive support to our mission buy Congress is undeterred being peace loving and believes in democracy.

He assured the workers to revamp the organization at all levels to give representation to grass root & dedicated workers.

Meanwhile Chief Spokesperson Mr Ravinder Sharma has questioned the necessary restrictions on the request for outdoor Congress convention in Kishtwar tomorrow.

Arvind releases devotional song 'Tera Darbar Bholenath'



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Senior BJP leader and MLA Jammu West, Arvind Gupta today released the devotional video song 'Tera Darbar Bholenath' in a special event organized by Nirbhay Bharat Foundation (NBF). The bhajan, melodiously sung by Bharat Raj Sharma, pays tribute to Lord Shiva and is now available for devotees on Bharat Raj Sharma Music's YouTube channel.

The launch event witnessed the presence of prominent personalities, including Tarun Uppal (Chairperson, NBF), Manik Uppal (Chairperson, SWH), Tarsem Sharma, Divyansh Baba, and Danish Sharma, who graced the occasion as special guests. The gathering was filled with spiritual fervor, with attendees appreciating the devotional depth and soul-stirring

composition of the bhajan. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Arvind Gupta lauded the efforts of the artists and the production team including Sharma, N B Naresh, RJ Rajput, Kranti Rajput, Mulkh Raj Sharma, Sunil Sharma, Raju Sharma, and K P Singh, for their efforts in creating the album and encouraged them to continue their good work. He emphasized that devotional music has a unique power to connect individuals with their faith and cultural heritage. "This bhajan beautifully captures the essence of devotion to Lord Shiva and will undoubtedly touch the hearts of listeners," he remarked.

Arvind also highlighted the immense talent present in Jammu and Kashmir and urged the Union Territory administration to create more platforms and opportunities for emerg-

ing artists. "Our youth possess extraordinary artistic abilities, and it is imperative that we nurture and encourage them. Initiatives like these play a crucial role in preserving and promoting our rich cultural traditions," he added. Tarun Uppal, Chairperson of NBF, expressed his gratitude to MLA Arvind Gupta for supporting the initiative and underscored the foundation's commitment to promoting spiritual and cultural endeavors. He encouraged the audience to support and appreciate local talent by engaging with such devotional offerings.

With the release of 'Tera Darbar Bholenath', devotees now have another soul-soothing bhajan to enhance their spiritual experiences, reaffirming the significance of divine music in everyday life.

Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers honoured as Most Trusted Jewellery Brand of J&K

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

In a moment of pride and recognition, Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers Pvt. Ltd., a renowned name in the jewellery industry of Jammu & Kashmir, has been honoured as the Most Trusted Jewellery Brand of the region, during the third edition of the BIG Impact Awards. The prestigious award was conferred by the Chief Minister of J&K, Omar Abdullah Ji, acknowledging the brand's unwavering commitment to quality, craftsmanship, and customer trust.

The award was received by Shivam Suri, Managing Director of Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, in a grand ceremony attended by prominent dignitaries, business leaders, and

esteemed guests. This recognition solidifies the brand's legacy, built over decades of excellence and customer satisfaction.

Speaking on the occasion, Ankur Suri, who is also the Managing Director of Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, expressed his gratitude and reaffirmed the brand's commitment to delivering the finest jewellery to its patrons. "This award is a testament to the trust and love our customers have placed in us. At Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, we have always believed in upholding the highest standards of purity, innovation, and craftsmanship. We will continue to serve our customers with exquisite jewellery designs that celebrate their



cherished moments."

Carrying a legacy of three generations, Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers has established itself as a premier jewellery house, offering an extensive range of exquisite gold, diamond, and precious gemstone collections. The brand is synonymous with quality, authenticity, and timeless designs that cater to tradi-

tional and contemporary tastes alike.

Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers, a renowned family-based jeweler in Jammu and Kashmir, has been serving the people with trust and quality for over six decades. Founded in 1958 by Lala Mukh Raj Saraf in Lakhdata Bazaar, the esteemed and heritage jeweler continues to carry forward its legacy of excellence through three generations: Lala Mukh Raj Saraf, his son Ashok Kumar Suri, and presently Ankur Suri.

The store, known as J&K's Finest Wedding Jewellery Store, is the first choice for customers seeking high-quality bridal and heritage jewellery. Their master artisans blend traditional craftsmanship with

modern aesthetics, creating unique masterpieces that resonate with elegance and grace.

Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers extends heartfelt gratitude to its loyal customers for their unwavering support and trust. As they continue their journey, the brand remains committed to excellence, innovation, and customer satisfaction, further strengthening its reputation as the Most Trusted Jewellery Brand of Jammu & Kashmir.

With four strategically located outlets in Jammu, including two in Lakhdata Bazaar, one in Channi Himmat, and another in Gandhi Nagar, Mulkh Raj Ashok Kumar Jewellers is synonymous with offering high-quality, certified jewellery.

Shiv Sena demands to remove Pakistan's name from India's team jersey

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit has strongly protested against the name of Pakistan written on the jersey of the Indian cricket team for the Champions Trophy competition.

While talking to journalists at the party's state central office, Sahni said that the Government of India and BCCI should have strongly protested against the alleged Indian flag not being hoisted in the stadium in the video released by host Pakistan regarding the ICC Champions Trophy which is going to start on February 19. But on the contrary, BCCI has printed Pakistan on the jersey issued for the players.

Sahni said that for the past several years, Paki-



stan has been continuing its nefarious and cowardly acts by infiltrating terrorists in Jammu-Kashmir, attacking innocent people and security forces and violating the ceasefire.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, concerned about the security of Jammu-Kashmir, is holding continuous meetings. But BCCI's sudden love

for Pakistan has hurt the national sentiments of crores of countrymen. Sahni has demanded the Modi government at the Centre to take strict action and remove the name of Pakistan from the uniform of the Indian cricket team with immediate effect. On this occasion Gen Secretary Vikas Bakshi was also present.

Indian Army organizes Motivational Lecture by Gallantry Awardees at Sial Sui, Rajouri



J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI: 18 FEB 2025

The Indian Army organized a Motivational lecture at Government Middle School, Sial Sui. This initiative aimed to inspire and empower the youth and local residents by showcasing real-life examples of courage, resilience, and leadership qualities. The awardee shared first-hand experiences of sacrifices and the

spirit of valour that Indian Army exhibited during war and operations, which motivated and reminded the youth and locals of the accounts of dedication and courage. Indian Army encouraged all locals to hoist the national flag in every household symbolizing unity and patriotism.

A sense of patriotism was felt in the environment while the lecture was being delivered by the Veteran. Such lectures by the

War Heroes have positive impact on young generation and motivates them to join Indian Army and become responsible citizens of our country. The program was very well received, appreciated and attended by 45 students and 05 teachers of Government Middle School, Sial Sui. The event fostered a sense of unity and patriotism, with all sections of society committed to supporting security forces.

Indian Army conducts Stitching, Tailoring Course, distributes Sewing Machine for Women at Marha, Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE
POONCH: 18 FEB 2025

Conduct of Stitching and Tailoring Course and Distribution of Sewing Machines is being organised by Indian Army at Marha with effect from 17 February 2025 to 18 March 2025 under Operation Sadbhavana, with an aim to enhance the socio-economic fabric of the region by equipping local women with valuable skills and opportunities. In a continuous and inspiring effort to promote skill development and empower the women of Marha and nearby areas, Indian Army is currently conducting a Stitching and Tailoring Course and Distribution of Sewing Machines as part of Operation Sadbhavana. Eighteen enthusiastic and determined ladies from



the local community are currently participating in this transformative course.

They are embarking on a journey of creativity and self-reliance, guided by an expert instructor who is imparting valuable knowledge and techniques in the art of stitching and tailoring. Each participant's

progress is a testament to the dedication and perseverance of these remarkable women. As a token of recognition, certificates for participation and Sewing Machines will be awarded to all participants on closing day. Operation Sadbhavana, with its mission to foster goodwill, develop-

ment, and positive change in the region, continues to be a beacon of hope for the people of Marha and nearby areas. Indian Army remains committed to empowering local communities through such initiatives, believing that a stronger, more self-reliant society is a testament to

a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

The event also serves as a platform to strengthen the bond between the Army and the people of this region. It showcases Indian Army's commitment towards service to the nation. This gesture and effort by the Army was highly appreciated by AWAM. This endeavor by Army to reach out to the population residing in remote areas, where civil administration has limited accessibility, will go a long way in developing and strengthening trust between JAWAN and AWAM. The event also served as a platform to strengthen the bond between Army and the people of this region. It showcased Army's commitment towards service to the nation.

Sunil Verma-led delegation meets Minister Sakina Itoo

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

A delegation led by Sunil Verma, District President J&K National Conference (NC), Udhampur, met Health and Education Minister Sakina Itoo at the Civil Secretariat in Jammu today and submitted a memorandum highlighting critical issues plaguing the education and health sectors in the region.

During the meeting, Sunil Verma apprised the minister of the challenges faced by headmasters, teachers, and students due to administrative inefficiencies and staff shortages. He strongly emphasized the urgent need to fill vacancies for teachers, headmasters, Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs), and principals across various educational institutions, stating that the lack of faculty was severely hampering the quality of education.

The NC leader further pointed out the disparity in the pupil-teacher ratio, where some schools are grappling with severe teacher shortages despite high student enrollments, whereas others have an excess staff presence without optimal utilization. Additionally, the delegation raised serious con-



cerns over a large number of schools with zero enrollments that have remained operational for over four to five years without justification. They urged the government to either close such institutions or redeploy the teaching staff to areas where their presence is critically needed.

Turning attention to the health sector, Sunil Verma highlighted the dire situation in Panchod Panchayat, Latti, where a non-functional health center has left the local population struggling for basic medical facilities. He stressed the immediate need to operationalize the center and deploy dedi-

cated healthcare officials to cater to the healthcare needs of the people.

Reiterating the NC's commitment to the welfare of the people, Sunil Verma asserted that the Omar Abdullah-led government remains steadfast in ensuring that the education and healthcare sectors are strengthened for the greater good of the region.

Minister Sakina Itoo gave a patient hearing to the delegation's concerns and assured them that the government would take necessary measures to address the highlighted issues at the earliest.

IGNOU Regional Centre Jammu organizes admission awareness camp for police personnel



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) Regional Centre Jammu today organized an admission awareness/promotional camp at Jammu and Kashmir Police HQ. DPL, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu. Dr. Sandeep Gupta, Regional Director, IGNOU RC Jammu and Dr. Vikram Singh, Assistant Regional Director were the resource persons from the Regional Centre Jammu. Sh. Irshad Hussain Rather, SP, HQ, Jammu and Sh. Rajinder Singh, Dy. SP, DAR, DPL, Jammu and a number of Police personnel of the rank of SP, Dy.SP, Inspector, Sub-Inspector, ASI, SGt, Head Constable and Constable attended the awareness programme in person.

Dr. Sandeep Gupta apprised the gathering about the special skill oriented programmes that IGNOU is offering in the current admission cycle in the field of Disaster Management, Information Security, Cyber Security, Anti Human Trafficking, Human Rights and many others programmes relevant to the belt force.

The police personnel were sensitized about the flexibility that IGNOU offers to the students with regard to eligibility criteria, easy mode of applying for admission online, attending counselling/practical sessions online, submission of assignments online, applying for exams online, opting Examination Centre as per their choice and place of posting, prompt response to student grievances, etc.

Many of the police personnel expressed their willingness to seek admission in certain selective programmes through IGNOU through the distance mode alongside their regular duties which will be beneficial for them for their future prospects and will not hinder their line of duty.

Dr. Sandeep Gupta also informed that the University has extended the last date for fresh admission as well as re-registration for the ongoing January 2025 admission cycle till 28th of February, 2025 in respect of all notified programmes offered in ODL as well as Online modes and that the desirous learners who wish to seek admission must avail this opportunity of extended date and apply online well before the last date.

IGP Jammu Zone reviews security at key locations in Reasi and Ramban



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Jammu Zone, Sh. Bhim Sen Tuti, IPS, conducted a comprehensive security review at key strategic locations, including Railway stations Katra, Reasi and Sangaldhan and Kori Bridge. He was accompanied by DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range, Sh. Rayees Mohammad Bhat, IPS; DIG Doda-Kishtwar-Ramban Range, Sh. Shridhar Patil, IPS; SSP Railways Katra, Sh. Sanjay Kumar Kotwal, IPS; SSP Ramban, Sh. Kulbir Singh; SSP Reasi, Sh. Paramvir Singh; along with other senior police officers.

The visit focused on assessing the existing security measures, law enforcement deployment, surveillance systems, anti-sabotage preparedness to counter any potential threats. The IGP interacted with officers and personnel on the ground, reviewing

security protocols, surveillance systems, and coordination mechanisms among different agencies.

At the Railway stations and the Chenab Railway Bridge in Kori, Reasi the IGP reviewed the security arrangements for passengers and the vital infrastructure. He directed officers to enhance security measures and to coordinate effectively with Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel.

Emphasizing the importance of proactive policing and intelligence gathering, the IGP directed officials to enhance vigilance, strengthen security checks, and ensure seamless coordination between police, railway authorities, and other security forces. "Continuous monitoring and enhanced security measures will remain a priority to ensure the safety of passengers, residents, and critical infrastructure", added the IGP.

Indian Army conducts Lecture on Road Safety for Awam at Targain, Rajouri

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI: 18 FEB 2025

In order to strengthen the bond between Army and AWAM and to generate awareness about Road Safety and prevention of road accidents among students, an awareness programme on Road Safety and Preventive measures was organised by Indian Army at Government High School, Targain on 18 Feb 2025. A total number of around 40 locals (including 16 men, 08 women and 16 children) witnessed the said awareness programme. The aim of the lecture was to urge citizens to follow traffic rules.

The lecture aimed to educate citizens on the importance of following traffic rules and encourage safe driving habits. Students were sensitised about the dangers of reck-



less driving, overloading, riding without helmets and ignoring traffic rules, which often lead to serious injuries and fatalities. Emphasis was laid on basic road safety measures, such as the significance of wearing seat belts and helmets, avoiding distractions while driving and obeying speed limits. Real life example and interactive discussions helped students understand the

risks associated with negligence on the road, making the session both engaging and informative.

The interactive session received a positive response with students showing great enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. Many expressed their interest in having more such awareness sessions in the future, reinforcing the importance of road safety in daily life.

SLCA J&K organizes Master Volunteers Training for Budgam

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

JKSPYM State Level Coordinating Agency J&K (SLCA J&K) organized today a one-day certificate training for Master-Volunteers of Budgam district under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) in collaboration with NISD, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India and district administration Budgam at Meeting Hall, District Social Welfare Office, Budgam, Kashmir. DSWO Budgam, Mr. Ubaid Ul Khazir was also present on the occasion. 50 Master-volunteers from district Budgam attended the training program.

Ubaid Ul Khazir in his keynote address, emphasized the urgency of tackling substance abuse, describing it as a severe issue affecting the youth in Jammu and Kashmir UT. He encouraged the master volunteers to make the most of the training, equipping themselves with the skills



and knowledge to combat this growing challenge.

The program began with a welcome address, followed by an introduction to the State Level Coordinating Agency, J&K and JKSPYM organisation and motive of the program by Ms. Pallavi Singh, Program Director, JKSPYM SLCA. The training comprised of following sessions covering key topics "Overview of District-Level Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan"; "Understanding drugs, drug addiction, signs & symptoms, Myths & Facts about substance abuse"; "Roles and Responsibilities of Master-Volunteers/ NMBA Leaders under

NMBA"; "Basic Communication and Counselling skills".

Resource persons from SLCA delivered comprehensive presentations on drug abuse trends in India, followed by vibrant discussions, interactive sessions, and group activities. The event concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony, honoring the commitment of the trained master volunteers to the cause.

This training program aimed to empower master volunteers with the tools to address substance abuse and foster a healthier, drug-free environment in Budgam district.

JMC Commissioner holds meeting with Swachhata Ambassadors, Champions

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation Dr. Devansh Yadav conducted meeting with the Swachhata Ambassadors, Influencers, Champions & Volunteers today on 18/02/2025 in the Conference Hall of Jammu Municipal Corporation for interaction with them in extending their supports to the various initiatives taken by the Jammu Municipal Corporation for maintaining sanitation in the city and reaching to the public through social media handles. The feedback and views from them were also taken in the meeting. The Swachh Survekshan 2024 conducted by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Development & Urban Affairs, Government of India is scheduled to be held very shortly in the Jammu Municipal Corporation. It is the responsibility of every citizen to make cleanliness of their surroundings. In order to redress the grievances pertaining to sanitation in a time bound



manner recently an initiative viz "Garbage Hotspot Challenge" has been taken by the Jammu Municipal Corporation wherein the citizens have to spot the garbage vulnerable area and report it on <http://myjammu.in>. The grievances shall be disposed off within 24 hours of the report. The Ambassadors, Influencers, Champions & Volunteers were asked to provide their comments / views regarding the unique initiative of JMC and share on their social media handles such as X account, Instagram & Facebook through collaboration with Jammu Municipal Corporation for

wider publicity of the initiative among the public. They were also asked to share the feedback link <https://sbmurban.org/feedback> among their followers for maximum participation by the public in the feedback component of the Swachh Survekshan 2024. Certificates of appreciation were also distributed among the winners of UT Level Painting competition held on waste segregation on the eve of Republic Day 2025. The meeting was attended by Joint Commissioner (H&S) Mr. Abdul Star, Health officer Dr. Vinod Sharma and other officials of JMC.

CPI(M) J&K holds 13th State Conference, Calls for Restoration of Statehood

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU FEB 18

Communist Party of India (Marxist), J&K held its two day 13th State Conference at Jammu on 17th-18th February.

While greeting the senior party leaders, Comrades Prakash Prakash Karat and Dr. Ashok Dhawale in the conference, hundreds of party activists with red flags in their hands raised revolutionary slogans with fervor and enthusiasm.

Inaugurating the open session of the 13th State Conference of the Party, Comrade Prakash Karat, Co-ordinator and Polit Bureau member of CPI(M) vehemently criticized Modi-led government for dismantling the historic state of Jammu and Kashmir into two separate Union Territories of JKUT and Ladakh on 5th August, 2019 was an unconstitutional move by the government which amounts to the betrayal of the assurances regarding protection of aspirations and identity given by the then national leadership to the people of J&K in 1947.

"Abolishing one state on 5th August, 2019 among the existing 28 states was a direct assault on the constitution and federal structure of the country"

he asserted. CPI(M) vehemently opposed this move and organised nation wide protests across the country to show its solidarity with the people of J&K and it is the collective responsibility of the secular and democratic forces in the country to support and fight for the restoration of Statehood to J&K, he added.

Prakash Karat criticized the Hindutva forces led by communal and divisive RSS-BJP combine in assaulting the secular ethos of the country day in and day out which is detrimental to the larger national interest. He also opposed the Modi government in curtailing the normal and legitimate funding to non-BJP governments like Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu etc. which affects the developmental activities in these states.

Comrade Dr. Ashok Dhawale, President All India Kisan Sabha and member Polit Bureau opposed the anti-people and anti-working class policies of the government to benefit its corporate friends to the hilt.

He applauded the struggle of Sanyukt Kisan Morcha against the land laws of Modi-led government and forced the government after its continuous struggle for one year and 15 days to roll back the

laws. He emphasized that trade unions, working class forces, youth of the country should come on one platform to oppose the pro-corporate policies adopted by this government to benefit few families at the cost of crores of working people.

M.Y. Tarigami, senior leader and Member, J&K Legislative Assembly denounced the blatant and brazen assault on the constitutional rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir by arrogantly abrogating Articles 370 and 35-A in August 2019. As it was not enough, this arrogant dispensation bifurcated the historic state formed by Dogra rulers into two separate Union Territories of JKUT and Ladakh which amounts to sheer humiliation of people's aspirations. He continued that it was Maharaja Hari Singh who promulgated the notifications in 1927 and 1932, banning the outsiders from J&K to purchase land and apply for jobs in the state. This was continued in the form of 35-A in the Constitution of India to protect these rights for the people of J&K which was dismantled by the BJP government.

The legacy of the national freedom movement and its leadership shaped the future of the country based

on democratic, secular and federal structure in the form of the Constitution of India, he said. The protection of the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir were enshrined in the form of Article 370 in the Constitution of India and abrogation of its provisions have gravely disheartened the people.

He emphasised that the rate of unemployment in J&K is alarming which needs to be addressed on war footing basis. He asserted for release of political prisoners and media persons and rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants in valley.

He appealed the secular and democratic forces of the country to unitedly come forward in the fight for restoration of constitutional rights and statehood to J&K.

Resolutions of Democratic rights and civil liberties, restoration of statehood, unemployment, National Education Policy, Rehabilitation of Kashmiri Migrants, Land Laws, Trade union rights, Agriculture and Horticulture were unanimously adopted in the conference.

Two day conference concluded by electing state committee comprising of 23 members with Mohd. Abass Rather as Secretary State Committee.

DC Kishtwar approves rates for 3 Land Acquisition Cases

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner (DC) (District Collector) Rajesh Kumar Shavan today held a meeting with the Collectors to approve and set rates for land acquired for the Land Compensation Rates.

A total of 03 land acquisition cases related to various schemes under Kishtwar Collectorate were cleared.

The approved schemes included the Machipal to Chamoti Link Road, Bugrana to Kalchanda Link Road, Bugrana to Kalchanda II Link Road.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Pawan Kotwal, Sub-Divisional Magistrate Paddar Dr. Amit Kumar, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Marwah, Dr. Mohd. Ashraf, SDM Chatroo, Nayeem Ur Rehman.

Irrigation department warns public against dumping of waste in Ranbir Canal

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

The irrigation Department has warned public against dumping trash and waste material in Ranbir Canal.

"It has come to our attention that some individuals are dumping garbage into the canal. These action result into severe environmental damage, obstruct water flow and impact agriculture activities. The public is hereby warned against the illegal dumping of garbage into the canal," a public Notice issued today stated.

"Any person if found violating this directive will face strict legal action and the accused will be punished in accordance with the provisions of Jammu & Kashmir Water Resources (Regulation & Management) Act 2010," the department added.

The Department has urged the public to cooperate in protecting the irrigation system and to maintain a clean and healthy environment.

Lift facility started in DC Office Jammu

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya inaugurated lift facility in the district headquarters today. At the inauguration, the DC said that the facility will provide smooth access to the specially-abled persons visiting the the DC Office Complex, thereby making the office more accessible and inclusive for all.

It is pertinent to mention that the office has already installed ramps and special tracks to facilitate the visually challenged visitors.

Notice

I, Falak Ashraf Mir (Old Name) W/o Asif Iqbal R/o Chandak, Teh Haveli, Distt. Poonch has changed my name from Falak Ashraf Mir (Old name) to Falak Ashraf (new name). I do hereby assume from this date the name Falak Ashraf (new name).

Indian Army conducts Lecture on Joining Rashtriya Indian Military College and Sainik School at Pir Topa, Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE
POONCH: 18 FEB 2025

Keeping in view the Indian Army's core objective of maintaining cordial relations with local citizens through AWAM, Indian Army organised a "Lecture on Joining Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) and Sainik School" for spreading awareness amongst the school students for choosing the right education pathway that can shape their future at village Pir Topa on 18 February 2025. The aim of the event was to create awareness amongst students about the importance and significance of literacy and various initiatives by the Government for education and to understand the various degree options available



to make informed decisions.

During this event, a representative of Indian Army gave a lecture on the subject matter for school students at village Pir Topa. He also conveyed to the locals that tremendous potential in terms of talented and academically bright students is available in the region, however, due to lack of proper guidance, they fail to harness their full potential. Keeping

same in perspective, the interaction was carried out to tap the raw potential from these students and to urge them to join Armed Forces through Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) and Sainik School, other Educational Institutions and through Pre Commissioning Training Academies.

Modalities on guidance, coaching and assistance for the students and awareness for joining Armed Forces was

also discussed during the interaction. A total strength of 95 including (47 Childrens, 33 Gents and 15 Ladies) attended the event. The attendees appreciated the initiatives taken by the Army for awareness amongst the school students. This endeavor by Indian Army to reach out to the population residing in remote areas, where civil administration has limited accessibility, will go a long way in developing and strengthening trust between JAWAN and AWAM. The event also served as a platform to strengthen the bond between the Army and the people of this region. It showcased Army's commitment towards service to the nation.

International Champion Rakesh Kumar to inspire Athletes in Srinagar

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEB 18

Self-confidence paves the way to success, and Rakesh Kumar, an international strength lifting champion from Jammu & Kashmir, is a shining example. Having secured dual gold medals in Strength Lifting and Inclined Bench Press at the 7th International Strength Lifting Championship (2019), he continues to inspire aspiring athletes.

In recognition of his achievements, the Srinagar Strength Lifting Association has invited him as a Special Guest for the upcoming Kashmir Division Strength Lifting Championship, scheduled to be held in Srinagar from February 25-26. This was announced by the Gen-



eral Secretary of the J&K Strength Lifting Association.

Strength Lifting, widely

known as the "Iron Game", has a deep-rooted history in Kashmir, and this championship aims to uphold

its legacy. Anis Choudhary, Vice President of the J&K Strength Lifting Association, stated that the event will also honor senior athletes who have dedicated their lives to promoting sports, especially strength-based competitions.

He further urged the public to attend the championship and support the athletes, encouraging them to showcase their talent and bring pride to the region.

This championship is set to be one of the finest, celebrating strength, dedication, and sportsmanship while uniting past and present generations of athletes.

SCERT J&K Divisional Office Jammu launches 5-Day Training Programme for In-Service Teachers under NISHTHA initiative for inclusive education

J1 NEWS SERVICE
DODA, FEBRUARY 18

The State Council of Educational Research and Training SCERT Divisional Office Jammu in collaboration with the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) Doda, has officially launched a five-day training programme for in-service teachers.

The programme, which commenced today, will continue through February 22, 2025, with a focus on promoting equitable and inclusive education as recommended in NEP 2020 in schools across the district.

The training began with a briefing by Suheel Raja, a teacher from the District Resource Group (DRG), who introduced the training schedule and outlined the sessions planned for the week.

Following the introduction, Dharmender Kumar, Principal of DIET Doda, delivered the keynote address. In his speech, he encouraged the participants to apply the key insights from the training in their respective schools and stressed the importance of 100% attendance. He also highlighted the necessity of translating the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 into actionable practices at the grassroots level.

This training programme is part of the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA), which is designed to strengthen teachers' capacity to implement inclusive education practices.

The overarching goal is to ensure that all students, including those with special



needs, have access to equal and high-quality learning opportunities.

The opening session was attended by Parshotam Singh, Academic Officer from SCERT Divisional Office Jammu, along with resource persons

and teacher participants from various schools in the region. The training sessions, led by experts in special education and pedagogy, cover a broad spectrum of topics, including differentiated instruction, classroom strategies

for inclusive settings, addressing the diverse needs of learners, and understanding legal frameworks such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act.

In his address, Parshotam Singh emphasized the importance of inclusive education in building an equitable and accessible learning environment for all students. "This training programme reflects our ongoing commitment to enhance the capabilities of teachers and ensuring that no child is left behind, regardless of their abilities," he said.

The programme aims to promote a holistic approach to teaching that accommodates the diverse needs of students while fostering a supportive, inclusive school culture.

By the end of the training, participants will have acquired practical skills and strategies to integrate inclusive practices into their daily teaching routines.

The training is being held at both the DIET Doda campus and Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Girls Doda, providing an opportunity for educators to exchange ideas and collaborate. The programme is expected to play a key role in strengthening the education system at the grassroots level.

Through the NISHTHA initiative, SCERT JK Divisional Office Jammu and DIETs aim to bring about sustainable improvements in teaching methodologies, ultimately enhancing the quality of education for students across Jammu and Kashmir.

DC Kupwara Inaugurates Critical Care Ambulance Services at Quality Health Care Hospital Bramri

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 18

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today inaugurated critical care ambulance services at Quality Healthcare Hospital, Bramri to strengthen emergency medical response in the region.

Equipped with advanced life-support systems, including ventilators, cardiac monitors, and oxygen supply, the ambulance will provide timely and specialized care for critically ill and trauma patients, bridging the gap between primary healthcare centers and tertiary hospitals.

Speaking at the event, DC Kupwara Ayushi Sudan emphasized the importance of efficient emergency medi-

cal services, particularly in remote areas, and highlighted the need for well-equipped ambulances and trained personnel.

Principal GMC Handwara, CMO Kupwara, and SSP Kupwara commended the initiative, noting the initiative's potential to improve healthcare accessibility.

Managing Director of the hospital, Dr. Ab Majeed Wani, on the occasion, assured that the ambulance service would operate 24/7 to ensure prompt medical assistance.

Later, DC Kupwara inspected the ambulance and interacted with medical staff, reinforcing the administration's commitment to enhance emergency healthcare infrastructure in the district.

DC reviews heritage site restoration and Phase-III Project identification in Udhampur

J1 NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 18

A meeting of the District Level Coordination-cum-Implementation Committee for the revival, restoration, preservation and maintenance of architectural and heritage sites was today held here under the chairpersonship of Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai.

The meeting focused on identifying heritage projects for execution under Phase-III and reviewing the progress of previously approved heritage sites in the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajinder Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Prem



Singh, DFO Udhampur, Assistant Commissioner Development, Dr Ranjeet Singh Kotwal and other senior officers.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on various aspects of heritage site development, including the provision of essential amenities such as toilets, drinking water and lighting facilities.

The committee also reviewed plans for the restoration, preservation and renovation of existing

structures, as well as the cleaning and rejuvenation of water bodies and other related works.

DC directed the concerned officers to expedite the process and ensure timely completion of the projects. She instructed them to conduct site visits and prepare the DPRs within a week's time. She emphasized the need to accelerate the ongoing civil works at these heritage sites to enhance their historical and cultural significance.

Asian Water bird census to be conducted across 25 Wetlands in Kashmir

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 18

The Department of Wildlife Protection, in collaboration with the Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA), is set to conduct the Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) 2025 on February 19.

This annual initiative plays a crucial role in estimating the population of migratory birds visiting Kashmir's wetlands and assessing the ecological health of these vital habitats.

Ahead of the census, an orientation program was conducted on Today, at IMPA, where volunteers received specialized training in bird identification, population estimation techniques, and data collection methods.

The session saw participation from scholars from SKUAST, students from various colleges, and mem-

bers of prominent NGOs such as Wildlife Conservation Fund, SRDE, Wildlife SOS, WRCF, and SEEDS.

Also, officials from the Forest Territorial Department, Forest Protection Force, Wildlife Department, and WUCMA, along with experienced bird-watchers and conservationists, took part in the training.

Speaking at the event, Rashid Yahya Naqash, Regional Wildlife Warden elaborated on the migratory patterns of birds arriving in Kashmir's wetlands between November and March.

He highlighted the Central Asian Flyway, a significant migration route used by birds traveling from Russia, Siberia, Europe, and China, and stressed the importance of Kashmir's wetlands as crucial stopover points.

Tawheed Ahmad Deva, Regional Wildlife Warden,

Kashmir, emphasized that the census is a key scientific exercise, as bird migration serves as an essential indicator of wetland health.

He also noted that over the past two years, more than 12 lakh migratory birds have been recorded in Kashmir's wetlands, reaffirming their global ecological importance.

Altaf Hussain, Wildlife Warden, Wetlands Kashmir, and Coordinator of Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA), expressed satisfaction that most of Kashmir's major wetlands currently hold sufficient water levels to sustain migratory birds.

He highlighted that interventions such as the construction of regulatory gates at Hokersar, in collaboration with the Irrigation and Flood Control Department, have significantly improved water retention in the Hokersar wetland.

He further noted that Hokersar's water levels are now higher than they have been in the past decade, ensuring a more stable and suitable habitat for migratory birds.

The Asian Waterbird Census 2025 will cover 25 key wetlands, including four Ramsar sites—Hokersar, Haigam, Shallabugh, and Wular Lake—each serving as a critical habitat for thousands of migratory birds.

The census will be carried out under strict supervision by trained personnel from the Wildlife Department, WUCMA, Forest Protection Force, and the Forest Department.

Teams of experts and volunteers will systematically record bird species, count populations, and document behavioral patterns to ensure accurate data collection.

Following the field survey, avian experts

will analyze the collected data, compiling a comprehensive report on species diversity, population trends, and overall wetland health.

This report will be instrumental in shaping future conservation policies and wetland management strategies.

Owais Farooq Mir, Coordinator, Wular Conservation Authority, expressed gratitude to all participants, emphasizing that the census is directly linked to the long-term preservation of Kashmir's wetlands, which play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance and supporting biodiversity.

As the Asian Waterbird Census 2025 unfolds, conservationists and wildlife officials remain committed to protecting these vital ecosystems and ensuring the continued survival of migratory bird populations.

Jal Jeevan Mission achieving steady progress in J&K

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

Jammu and Kashmir has made significant strides in improving access to clean water in the rural households through "Jal Jeevan Mission" with many far flung and hilly areas getting tap water supply for the first time in history.

The latest example of this achievement under the mission is Lanker Pombay village of Panchayat Khaloor in Kulgam district, comprising about 80 households. This habitation was not having any sustainable water supply scheme and inhabitants were finding it very hard to meet their water needs. The locals would mainly depend on hand pumps and water tankers supplied by the department, for meeting their daily domestic water needs on bare minimum basis.

With the launch of Jal Jeevan Mission, a water supply scheme with dug-well as source worth Rs. 187.68 lakh, was conceived for this habitation for providing potable water supplies as per prescribed standards. The land for construction of 0.60 Lakh Gallons RCC SR was provided by the villagers unhindered. The people centric and inclusive approach adopted in

conceiving this water supply scheme rekindled their hope and the public reposed faith in the department for having a sustainable water supply system.

Now, this scheme with a rising main length of 2000 m, distribution pipe network of about 6000 m and Reinforced Cement Concrete Service Reservoir, stands completed and the water supply through household level tap connections is being provided to this habitation.

Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide every rural household with a Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) within their premises, capable of delivering a minimum of 55 liters of water per capita per day while adhering to set quality standards. More than 3200 water supply schemes have been taken up across the UT at an estimated cost of about Rs. 13000 crore, against which Rs. 7000 crore (approx.) have been expended, so far, with completion of about 1400 schemes and the remaining schemes being at advanced stages of completion.

To ensure transparency and accountability in implementation of the Mission, a robust monitoring mechanism under the overall supervision of Mission Director, Jal

Jeevan Mission with various units like UT level experts/consultants, District Project Management Units (DPMUs), Third Party Monitoring Inspection Agencies (TPIAs) and Pani Samiti's besides District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM) headed by respective District Development Commissioners (DDCs) have been established in addition to regular monitoring by the field engineers and technicians. The local communities have also actively participated in planning, implementation and monitoring of the mission activities at the village level.

To ensure cost-effectiveness and efficiency in project completion within established timelines, proven and successful solutions from regions like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Ladakh are being replicated in the region. These solutions included utilization of HDPE pipe distribution systems in specific locations and incorporation of GRP water storage tanks.

With the accelerated pace of implementation over the past years, J&K remains steadfast in its commitment towards ensuring drinking water security for all its rural residents for the next three decades.

STD intensifies inspections against sale suppression, fake invoicing, GST violations across Jammu division



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

State Taxes Department (STD), Jammu and Kashmir has intensified its drive against menace of sale suppression and launched massive inspection drive across Jammu division to check GST violations.

Based on inputs generated by various AI tools including Business Intelligence And Fraud Analytics (BIFA), E-way Bills Portal and other components of enforcement wings, the inspections were carried under the guidance of Commissioner State Taxes J&K, P K Bhat and under the

supervision of Additional Commissioner (Enforcement and Administration) Jammu, Namrita Dogra.

Led by State Tax Officers, specially constituted teams visited various business units in Rajouri, Kishtwar and Kathua simultaneously to investigate violations under GST Law by verifying documents, physical stock position, bill books etc.

While giving details on these drives, Additional Commissioner (Enforcement and Administration) Jammu, Namrita Dogra said, "The inspections are part of enforcement activity. 13 teams have been constituted to carry out inspections across

the division". She added that teams specifically targeted dealers who were found engaged in sale suppression and fake invoicing.

The State Taxes Department urged the dealers to follow the fair-trade practices and avoid indulging in tax evasion activities or fraudulent practices involving fake ITC.

Furthermore, the department also appealed all taxpayers to practice invoice-based business and report their actual sales and pay the necessary amount of GST in their monthly/quarterly returns to avoid enforcement actions and penalties.

Director JKEDI asks officers to strengthen loan recovery process

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

Director Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Rajinder Sharma on Tuesday chaired a review meeting of all district centres of the institute here at Bari Brahmana.

During the review meeting, the Director reviewed the overall functioning of the district centres and different program verticals of the institute, especially the progress made regarding recovery of loans under different self-employment schemes and the Entrepreneurship Awareness Programmes (EAPs) conducted in various districts of for the months of a December 2024 and January 2025 across the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by the concerned Range Officers, District Nodal Officers of JKEDI, In-charges of the concerned sections and program verticals.

The Director gave a thorough analysis of the recovery of loans granted to beneficiaries under different self-employment schemes and highlighted the progress achieved in

all the districts of J&K. He said the overall review of the recovery and repayment status underscores the institute's dedication to transparency, accountability and sustainable growth.

He pressed upon all the District Nodal Officers to follow a dynamic approach to deal with the defaulters and realise the government money disbursed as soft loans under different schemes, and follow the due process especially the issuance of demand notices well in advance.

"Recovery of the public money is paramount. All district officers and their staff must strengthen the efforts to recover the money from the wilful defaulters and follow a due process in doing so," the Director told the officers.

The DNOs were briefed about the importance of the Entrepreneurship Awareness Programmes (EAPs) and the conduct of the same in Government Degree Colleges (GDCs), ITIs and the Polytechnic colleges across the UT so that mass awareness is created regarding the initiatives of the government towards entrepreneurship development in J&K.