

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

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

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J&K Budget 2025: CM presents Rs 1,12,310 crore annual financial statement in Assembly

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 07 (KNO)

With a focus on the "poorest of the poor", women and vulnerable social groups, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday presented a Rs 1.12 lakh crore budget for Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory in the Legislative Assembly for the financial year 2025-26. This was after a gap of seven years that J&K's budget was presented in its Assembly.

Budget figures

Presenting the budget, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, as per news agency said the total net budget estimates for the fiscal year 2025-26

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4



'Vows to make J&K self-reliant, reduce its dependence on Delhi'

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 07 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday described the budget presented in the legislative assembly as "historic," stating that it is the first time in the country that the concerns of every single legislator were taken into account during its formulation.

According to the news agency, correspondent, addressing the post-budget press conference, Omar said that his goal is to make Jammu and Kashmir economically self-reliant and reduce its dependence on Delhi for minor and meagre issues.

He acknowledged that achieving economic independence would require difficult decisions, which, though not painless, would ultimately serve the interests

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'Govt faces major gap between cost of power supply, revenue collection'

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

The government Friday said it was facing a major gap between the cost of power supply and revenue collection saying that it recovers only 35 percent of average cost per unit.

According to the news agency, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in his Budget 2025-26 speech said, "One of the key challenges we face is the gap between the cost of power supply and revenue collection."

Omar said, "While the average cost per unit is Rs 7, we recover only Rs 2.5 due to systemic inefficiencies, high losses, and low tariffs. To bridge this gap, our government is implementing 100 percent smart metering, strengthening billing and collection mechanisms, and modernizing the entire distribution network."

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'Announces Rs 3,773.93 crore budget for rural development, tourism growth in J&K'

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 07 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday announced Rs 3,773.93 crore for Jammu and Kashmir's rural sector under capital expenditure for the fiscal year 2025-26. This marks an increase of Rs 990.04 crore from the revised allocation of the previous year.

In his budget speech in the Assembly, Omar highlighted the importance of tourism, a vital sector that is deeply rooted in the region's culture and economy. In 2024 alone, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a record 2.36 crore tourist visits, solidifying its reputation as a premier destination.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the popularity of locations such as Gulmarg and the success of events like the Kashmir

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'My government resolute in working towards restoration of statehood'

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said that his government remains resolute in working towards restoration of statehood.

In his budget speech, Omar, as per news agency, said the restoration of full statehood is a deeply cherished aspiration of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The restoration of full statehood is a deeply cherished aspiration of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and our Government remains resolute in working towards its fulfilment," he said. Omar said his government is committed to holding elections to local bodies.

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Govt to engage 75 lakh youth in sports activities: CM Omar Abdullah

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

Stating that the government would engage 75 lakh youth in sports activities to foster a culture of fitness and excellence, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday announced multiple sports initiatives for Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister, according to the news agency informed the Legislative Assembly that the national centres of excellence for water sports will be established at Dal Lake in Srinagar and

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'Announces revival, support to press clubs in Srinagar, Jammu'

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said the government will take concrete steps to revive and support the Press Club in Jammu & Srinagar. Omar, as per news agency, announced that government will take concrete steps to revive and support the Press Club in Jammu & Srinagar.

"We will take concrete steps to revive and support the Press Club in Jammu & Srinagar, providing a dedicated space for

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'All DHs to have CT Scan facilities, allocation of Rs 110 cr in next FY'

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said that an allocation of Rs 110 crore will be made in the upcoming fiscal year to equip all district hospitals with CT scan facilities.

As per the news agency, this move aims to enhance diagnostic services across the region, ensuring timely and accurate medical interventions for residents. Notably, there are several district hospitals in J&K where CT scan facilities are yet to be made available

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LG Sinha inaugurates Tawi Festival organised by Hari Tara Charitable Trust at Jammu

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha inaugurated the 3rd edition of Tawi Festival organised by Hari Tara Charitable Trust (HTCT), at Amar Mahal Palace, Jammu.

The event also marked the beginning of Golden Jubilee celebration commemorating 50 years of Amar Mahal Museum and Library.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations to Dr. Karan Singh and everyone associated with the Hari Tara Charitable Trust for organizing the unique festival, and bringing together experts and practitioners from different fields to share and highlight new ideas in art, literature and history.

The Lieutenant Governor



nor highlighted the valuable contribution of artists and litterateurs in inspiring change in the society and enriching the global knowledge platforms.

The Lieutenant Governor said, "Art is the essential element for building an enlightened society and helping the growth of citizens with value system and creativity. Art and Culture is as important for a prosperous and peaceful

world as science and technology. Science and Technology has provided new facilities and redefined the way human society works and lives. But the modern instruments are incomplete without rich and vibrant tradition of art and culture.

We need to have a fine balance between Technology and Arts.

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Opposition terms J&K UT's maiden budget 'mere rhetoric'

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

Terming the maiden budget of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir presented by the Omar Abdullah-led dispensation as 'mere rhetoric', the opposition parties on Friday accused the government of failing to fulfil the promises it had made to the people.

Leader of Opposition in Legislative Assembly and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, Sunil Sharma as per the news agency said that the budget presented by the Chief Minister himself is nothing but a reflection of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's schemes. "In his 120 minute speech, the Chief Minister spoke about the Prime Minister's schemes for almost 118 minutes," the LOP said, adding, "The announce-

ments including 200 free electricity units, free 10 kg ration and marriage assistance support has been announced only for the AAY category. What about other poor sections of the society. Where will they go?," Sharma said, as per KNO.

He said that the government had made tall claims about addressing unemployment, but nothing has been kept for the jobless youth in this budget, adding that the daily wagers have been neglected, there has been no mention of any power amnesty scheme, contractors have been pushed to the wall despite getting the money from the Centre. "The government has done nothing for the OBCs, SC and ST," he said while terming the budget as "hollow claims."

Peoples Conference CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

J&K to get 2 new universities

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

In his budget speech, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday announced the setting up of National Law University and Skill & Entrepreneurship in Jammu & Kashmir.

Speaking in the Assembly, Omar, as per news agency, said that the gov-

ernment is committed to establishing a National Law University (NLU) in Jammu & Kashmir to drive legal education reforms and research.

"With world-class training aligned to contemporary standards, the NLU will empower future legal professionals and enhance justice delivery," he said.

He said Rs 50 crore

have been proposed in the budget for the "transformative initiative".

Omar said the Government proposes the establishment of the Jammu & Kashmir Skill and Entrepreneurship University (J&K SEU) to empower the youth of Jammu & Kashmir with Industry-relevant skills and

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ECI set to announce bye-polls for Budgam and Nagrota seats

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07 (KNO)

The Election Commission of India (ECI) is set to announce bye-polls for Budgam and Nagrota assembly segments, sources disclosed.

Sources told news agency that the poll body could announce the schedule for two seats

anytime from now. "It could be announced this week or early next week," they said.

While Omar Abdullah, who won Budgam and Ganderbal seats in the last year's election, decided to vacate the former on October 21, Nagrota seat fell vacant on October 31 due to the demise of Devinder Singh Rana.

The election for both the seats has to be completed by April 20 as a bye-election for filling any vacancy shall be held within a period of six months from the date of the occurrence of the vacancy.

It could be delayed beyond the six-month timeline only if the

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Govt to relocate GMC Handwara at alternate site: Sakeeka Ito

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeeka Ito, today said that the Government Medical College (GMC), Handwara will be constructed at an alternate site to address the healthcare needs of people of Kupwara district.

Replying to a question by Sajad Gani Lone, the Minister informed that unprecedented floods have been reported in the recent times on 29th March 2024, 16th and 28th April 2024 when the maximum flood level recorded was 0.6m, 3.8m and 4.0m respectively above Ground Level (GL) which is at the right bank of Nallah Pohru (the existing construction site for New GMC and Hostels for GMC Handwara), making it un-feasible for undertaking construction of such a prestigious facility. She informed that

a Committee was formed to check feasibility of the existing site after floods. "Committee headed by the Engineer-in-Chief, PW (R&B) Department reported that the present site is non-tenable due to the high risk of flooding, which would put students, faculty and infrastructure at risk", she stated.

The Minister further said, "Engineer-in-Chief, PW Department (Chairman of Committee) in subsequent meetings reiterated that the present site is not in a position to take forward the project and the proposed flood protection measures would not mitigate the risk of flooding, making it impossible to proceed with construction at the current site".

"Technical report of the Joint Committee headed by Engineer-in-Chief, PW Department has also reflected that the present site is not tenable", she



added.

The Minister also informed the house that the Government has constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir to resolve the issue of land for relocation of Government Medical College, Handwara.

"Based on the recommendations of the committee, the matter has now

been taken up with Agriculture Production Department for finalization of alternate sites for relocating GMC Handwara", she stated.

The Minister also informed that the project for New GMC Handwara was sanctioned under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Establishment of New Medical Colleges Attached with District /

Referral Hospitals (Phase III)".

She said the Ministry has extended the timelines for the project for one year upto March 2025 and now Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, has again been approached for extension of the timelines for completion of the Government Medical College, Handwara, (Phase III) for two years upto March 2027. The Minister assured the house that the Government is committed to upgrade the healthcare infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir. She added that the matter of new site has been taken up with the Agriculture Ministry and the land will be identified at such a location which will be accessible to all areas of Kupwara district. Sheikh Khurshheed raised supplementary questions on the issue.

Awareness programme on New Criminal Laws organised at border tehsil Kharah Balli

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

An awareness programme on New Criminal Laws was held at Tehsil Kharah Balli. The event, organised under the directions of District Magistrate Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya and the overall supervision of SDM Khour, Satish Sharma, aimed at educating the public about key legal reforms.

Addressing the gathering, Tehsildar Narinder Kumar, provided an insight into the history and evolution of criminal laws, highlighting key provisions introduced in the new legal framework. Senior Prosecution Officer Ashwani Kumar elaborated on the salient features of the new laws, explaining



their objectives and how they would enhance transparency and efficiency in the judicial process.

The program witnessed active participation from officials, including Mukesh Kumar, BDO Kharah Balli, Neeraj Choudhary, SHO and representatives from various departments. Local residents also attended in large numbers.

A highly interactive Question-and-Answer Session enabled participants

to seek clarifications and comprehend the practical implications of the new laws. The interactive nature of the session was well received, with attendees appreciating the administration's efforts in making legal knowledge accessible.

The initiative was widely lauded by the public, who emphasised the need for similar programs at the village level to ensure a broader reach.

Motor Vehicles Department Ramban intensifies action against traffic Violators

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, MARCH 7

The Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) Ramban has intensified the enforcement drive to rein in traffic violators and maintain safe driving on the roads.

In adherence with the directives of Deputy Commissioner Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, and as per the guidelines of Transport Commissioner Vishesh Paul Mahajan, the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Kuldeep Singh has issued show cause notices to habitual violators and offenders for the suspension of their route permits and driving licenses.

Over the past 15 days, the department has issued show cause notices to seven drivers for suspension of their driving licenses



es and six vehicle owners holding route permits for Banihal-Chamwal, for indulging in overcharging, overloading, and refusal to ply their vehicles as per the fare rates notified by the Transport Department. During this extensive enforcement drive,

the MVD team seized 20 vehicles and challaned 120 vehicles for operating without valid permits, fitness certificates, or for being unfit for public transportation. Alongside the enforcement actions, the ARTO Ramban and his team of Motor Vehicle

Inspectors (MVIs) held meetings with transport operators and drivers to create awareness about road safety. During these interactions, drivers were counseled on ensuring vehicle fitness, timely renewal of documents, and adhering to speed limits. Strict warnings were issued against overcharging, overloading, and over speeding, and transporters were directed to operate their vehicles as per the prescribed time schedule. ARTO Kuldeep Singh assured transport operators that their genuine grievances, if any, will be addressed on priority. However, he reiterated that such drives will continue across the district and no violations of traffic rules will be tolerated to ensure passenger safety across the district.

Cancer treatment, healthcare infra being upgraded: Health Minister

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeeka Ito, today informed the House that the Health infrastructure for cancer detection and treatment is being upgraded in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister was replying to a question by Tanvir Sadiq in the Legislative Assembly.

She said that as per Population Based Cancer Registry, 50551 cases in Kashmir Division and 13912 cases in Jammu Division were registered between 2018-2024. She said that 2 percent to 3 percent case increase is also being witnessed annually.

The Minister informed that the cancer patients in J&K are given the specialized treatment at SKIMS Srinagar and GMC, Jammu with availability of different facilities including radiation

oncology, Critical Care ICU, Nuero ICU, CVTS ICU, Pulmonary ICU and Paediatric ICU at SKIMS.

She said that the Government Medical College, Jammu is presently providing OPD Services, Chemotherapy, PET CT Scan. Brachytherapy, Radiology Tests, Digital Radiography and Colposcopy to the cancer patients.

The Minister said that the State Cancer Institute is functional at SKIMS Soura which was commissioned on December 05, 2020 and houses Day Care facility for Medical Oncology patients, Clinical Haematology and Radiation Oncology, Medical Oncology and Radiation Oncology for the in-patients.

She further said that the 3rd floor of State Cancer Institute, SKIMS is ready for shifting of bone marrow Transplant facility and

recruitment of manpower in this regard is under progress. She said that the dedicated Operation theatre for Cancer Patients is being operationalized at SKIMS Soura, which would be ready soon.

She further said that the work on three Operation Theatres and 10 bedded ICU in State Cancer Institute, Jammu is near completion and likely to be completed by the end of March, 2025.

She maintained that efforts are on to decentralize the Cancer care which has been already accomplished to a great extent by way of having Chemotherapy at District Day Centers.

The Minister further said that the Government has already taken an initiative of decentralising the cancer treatment by establishing cancer care in all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

BOSE rebuts news regarding poor supply of text books in schools

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

The JKBOSE has strongly countered a news reported in a section of media regarding shortage of prescribed text books in government schools, which have opened today after a long winter break.

In a statement issued here today in this regard, the Board has clarified that nearly 72% books have already been received and distributed among the zonal education heads across the Kashmir Valley.

Despite inclement weather over the last week, the Board has succeeded in distribution of 13.46 lakh books while the remaining 5.50 lakh books are in the transit, which will take another 4 to 5 days to reach the end-destination in Kashmir valley and winter zones of Jammu division.

Fix timelines for each project under SBM (U) Action Plan: CS

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, while reviewing the action plan framed under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) here today, impressed upon the concerned officers to fix timeline for each of the projects proposed under this plan.

The meeting besides Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD was attended by Chairman, JK Pollution Control Committee; DG, Rural Sanitation and MD, SBM- Urban along with other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary had component wise review of the actions proposed for management of waste anticipated to be generated till 2035. He said that the action plan thus framed is worth applicable so demands further thought process to delineate the timelines for its successful implementation.

He took note of the quantum of waste generated in each of the ULBs along with that of the capital cities. He called for having an end to end solution for effective treatment and management of each kind of the waste generated here.

Dulloo maintained that funds for such a crucial activity would never act as a stumbling block.



He observed that the proposed costs are well within the range to be arranged over next few years. He advised the Department to enhance their capacity simultaneously for fructifying these projects within the set deadlines.

He said that besides the facilities for treatment of legacy waste, solid waste, grey water, used water, plastic waste and Construction & Demolition (C&D) waste the department should take into account inclusion of integrated sewerage network to take such waste to the sites of their treatment and processing.

In addition, the Chief Secretary asked them to explore the option of taking up projects under AMRUT 2.0 wherever feasible as per its guidelines. He also suggested

to include projects under Capex where there is no other scheme to support the activity.

Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur, while speaking in the meeting, said this action plan is in consonance with the NGT directions besides a roadmap for scientific disposal of urban waste for the next 10 years.

She made out that the action plan had been framed after taking into account the decadal growth rate of the population and the waste expected to be generated by this population on daily basis. The remediation of legacy waste besides other aspects of processing, treatment and disposal had been considered while framing this updated plan, she added. MD, SBM (U), Devansh

Yadav, informed the meeting that it is expected that the population of the urban areas of the UT would reach to about 51.50 lakh till 2035 generating 2481 TPD. He also mentioned about segregation of each ULB and Cantonment Board as per the quantum of waste to be generated and facilities required for its management till 2035. He presented details of the existing facilities in Municipal Corporations, ULBs of Jammu/Kashmir and that of Cantonment Boards in both Jammu and Srinagar.

The meeting was also apprised of the facilities required for door to door collection and transportation of waste. Its processing in different municipalities of the UT and those proposed under clusters of towns together was divulged along with costs

for operation and maintenance of assets for all these years.

About the legacy waste, it was said that a total of 26,11,102 MT of waste has been reported by the municipal bodies. Out of the same, 3,91,604 MT had already been treated and rest of the 22,19,498 MT needs to be treated under this plan for which works stand awarded or tenders floated at most of the locations.

Different models for management of solid, liquid, ISWM, plastic and legacy waste were discussed in the meeting. It was added that tender has been floated for hiring of PDMC for preparation of detailed estimates for all the 75 ULBs and 4 responsive bids have been received for this purpose, as was informed in the meeting.

DC reviews implementation of District Environment Plan in Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, MARCH 7

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal on Friday chaired a meeting of the District Environment Committee to review the implementation of the District Environment Plan for 2024-25. The meeting focused on assessing progress, identifying challenges, and outlining future action plans for environmental conservation and improvement.

A comprehensive discussion was held on the environmental management, including: Air Pollution Control, Solid Waste Management Plan, Biomedical Waste Management, Plastic Waste Management, Collection, Segregation, and Treatment Plans, Control of Polluted Water Bodies, Domestic Sewerage Management, Mining Activity Management, Hazardous Waste and E-Waste Management, Water Quality Management.

While reviewing the solid waste management plan, the DC directed municipal authorities to ensure that waste disposal is conducted in a scientific and regulated manner. He also instructed the municipality to propose mechanical road sweeping for Poonch town and to identify suitable sites for



the disposal of construction waste.

Discussing air and water pollution control, he urged the Pollution Control Authority to install additional air quality monitoring systems in urban areas and to conduct weekly water sampling near the town.

Regarding plastic waste management, the departments were tasked with prohibiting single-use polythene bags and issuing challans to violators. Officers were also asked to compile a list of single-use plastics and promote awareness among the public about the importance of reducing plastic

waste. "The environment protection plan is a vital step for the future generations," said DC Vikas Kundal. "We must all seize the opportunity to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable future. It is our responsibility to save our environment and enhance the biodiversity around us."

The meeting was attended by key stakeholders, including the Additional Deputy Commissioner Poonch, GM DIC, ACD, DFO, CMO, CEO, ACP, District Minerals Officer, EO Municipality, and other concerned officials.

GDC Ramgarh, FICCI FLO JKL ink MoU to launch Young Women Affinity Group, Digital Literacy Program

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

Government Degree College (GDC) Ramgarh today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with FICCI FLO Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh Chapter to empower young women through education and skill development.

The MoU was signed by the College Principal Dr. Geetanjali Andotra, and Chairperson FICCI FLO JKL Ruchika Gupta. As part of this collaboration, Young Women Affinity Group (YWAG) has been established at GDC Ramgarh, providing a dedicated platform for women students pursuing higher education. This initiative will offer students various opportunities, including participation in knowledge-building sessions, skill-enhancement



workshops, industry-oriented training programs, and networking events organized by FICCI FLO JKL.

In addition, the Digital Literacy Program in Financial Awareness, launched in partnership with NIIT Foundation, was introduced during

the event. Addressing the students, Ruchika Gupta emphasized the importance of financial literacy in today's digital world and how this program will empower students with essential financial management skills as they step into their professional journeys. She highlighted

the significance of the certification they will receive upon course completion and encouraged students to make the most of this learning opportunity. Gupta also extended her gratitude to Dr. Geetanjali Andotra for her unwavering support in launching this initiative.

Samba Administration celebrates Int'l Women's Day with great enthusiasm

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MARCH 7

The District Administration Samba, in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department, hosted a vibrant celebration to commemorate International Women's Day. The event featured an impressive lineup of activities highlighting women's achievements and entrepreneurship in the region.

Chairperson of JK SSB Indu Kanwal Chib, graced the occasion as the chief guest. Deputy Commissioner Samba, Rajesh Sharma, led the administration in putting together this meaningful celebration.

The program included a special performance by musician Sonali Dogra and captivating cultural performances by college students that showcased the



rich heritage of the region.

A highlight of the event was an interactive session with special invitees including the Chief Guest Indu Kanwal Chib, Principal GDC Ramgarh Dr. Geetanjali Andotra, Munsif Samba Himani Parihar, S.I Deepika Jalotra and Entrepreneur Preeti Kashyap. The event also featured a diverse exhibit featuring

stalls set up by women entrepreneurs, displaying their crafts, products and business ventures.

"This celebration reflects our commitment to women's empowerment and recognition of their invaluable contributions to our society and economy," said DC Rajesh Sharma during the event. The International

Women's Day celebration served as a platform to recognize women's achievements and promote gender equality in the district.

The celebrations were attended by ADDC Samba Ms. Champa Devi Thakur, SSP Virender Singh Manhas, ADC Samba Jagdish Singh and the entire district administration.

Poonch-Tangmarg road project to be taken up with MORTH afresh: Dy CM

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary today said that Poonch-Tangmarg road project will be taken up with Union Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways (MORTH) afresh.

The Deputy Chief Minister was replying to a question raised by Farooq Ahmad Shah and subsequent supplementaries raised by Aijaz Jan and Mohammad Akram Choudhary.

He said that the Poonch-Tangmarg road via Loran has not been sanctioned by the Government of India.

Addressing the concerns raised by the legislators regarding change in alignment of road, the



Deputy Chief Minister said that an inquiry will be conducted to resolve the road change issue. He also added that a committee will also be constituted to look into the matter which will be comprised of the concerned officers and authorities.

He further said that it

is an important road to connect the Pir-Panjal to Kashmir valley and will boost tourism besides creating employment avenues for the youth. He also added that the road has cultural and societal significance for the people of both the regions.

Ayush Directorate hosts awareness program on Rule 170 of Drugs & Cosmetics Act

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

The Directorate of Ayush J&K successfully organized an Awareness Program cum Interactive Session on Rule 170 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1945 here today, focusing on misleading advertisements and false claim related to Ayush medicines.

The session, held in the Meeting Hall of the Directorate of Ayush, Indra Chowk, was chaired by Director Ayush Dr. Nuzhat Bashir Shah.

The program aimed to sensitize stakeholders about the legal provisions governing Ayush drug advertisements, ensuring compliance with regulation nor to prevent misleading claims that may misguide the public and impact the credibility of the Ayush

sector.

Dr Nuzhat Bashir Shah advised the nominated Ayush Medical Officers to act as per Rule 170 and work in close coordination with the Assistant Drug Controllers of their respective districts to enhance regulatory oversight and compliance.

State Drug Controller Lotika Khajuria provided in-depth insights into Rule 170 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, elaborating on the legal framework and enforcement mechanics to curb false claim in Ayush drug promotion. She emphasized the need for strict adherence to the Act and urged stakeholders to ensure that advertisements align with the prescribed regulations.

Assistant Director Directorate Ayush Dr Rakesh Kumar Raina provided insights about the role of

nominated Ayush Medical Officers under Sub Rule 14 of Rule 170 of Drugs and Cosmetic Rules.

The event was attended by Dr Suresh Sharma Deputy Director Ayush, Jammu, District Ayush Officers, Nominated Ayush Medical Officers representatives from Ayush drug manufacturing units, and other stakeholders, both in person and virtually.

The interactive session provided clarity on compliance requirements and best practices for responsible drug promotion in the Ayush sector.

The Directorate of Ayush, J&K, reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the credibility and authenticity of Ayush medicines by strengthening the regulatory framework and fostering greater awareness among stakeholders.

DDC chairperson discusses proposed PMGSY phase-IV Projects for Udhampur



J1 NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, MARCH 07

A meeting to discuss newly proposed projects under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Phase-IV was held today under the chairmanship of District Development Council Chairperson Udhampur, Lal Chand, in his office chamber.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajinder Singh, DDC members, Executive Engineers PMGSY and PWD, along with other concerned officers.

Threadbare discussions were held on various aspects of the proposed projects, including their approval process and the comprehensive upgradation and consolidation plan for uncovered habitations identified in the 2011 census under PMGSY

Phase-IV. The DDC Chairperson emphasized the council's commitment to prioritizing projects that address local needs and aspirations. He expressed confidence that extending road connectivity to unconnected habitations would pave the way for sustainable growth and equitable development across the district.

Stressing the need for effective collaboration among all stakeholders, he urged departments to work in coordination to accelerate the implementation of these projects and ensure visible progress.

He further directed the concerned departments to expedite the preparation of DPRs at the earliest so that the identified unconnected habitations could be covered under the scheme without delay.

DC launches RRR Centre to champion Sustainable Waste Management in Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, MARCH 7

In a significant move towards environmental sustainability, Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal today inaugurated the 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (RRR) Centre', a pioneering initiative aimed at promoting circular economy principles and sustainable waste management.

The event was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik, senior officials, NGOs, sanitation workers, and respected members of civil society.

The newly established RRR Centre will serve as a vital hub for the collection, sorting, and distribution of waste materials, encouraging the segregation, reuse, and recycling of discarded household items such as plastics, electronic waste, clothes, and furniture. This initiative is designed to minimize landfill waste and reduce environmental hazards associated with improper waste disposal.

During the inauguration, the Deputy Com-



missioner highlighted the importance of adopting sustainable practices, stating, "The establishment of the RRR Centre is a progressive initiative towards waste management and resource conservation. By adopting sustainable practices, we can reduce environmental pollution, conserve natural resources, and create economic opportunities for waste workers and entrepreneurs involved in recycling industries."

The Municipal Council of Poonch is committed to empowering citizens to participate actively in this initiative. Plans are under-

way to launch awareness drives, school campaigns, and door-to-door waste collection programs, further engaging NGOs, local businesses, and educational institutions in waste reduction efforts.

With the successful launch of the RRR Centre, the Municipal Council reaffirms its dedication to creating cleaner cities and promoting sustainable waste management in Poonch. Citizens are encouraged to contribute by donating reusable items, segregating waste, and supporting recycling efforts to ensure the success of this vital initiative.

Rs. 9.82 cr spent on Mini Secretariat construction, Batamaloo: Sakeena Itoo



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

An amount Rs. 9.82 crore has been incurred, so far, on construction of the Mini Secretariat at Batamaloo.

This information was given by Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo, while replying on behalf of the Chief Minister in response to a question raised by Member Tariq Hameed Karra.

She further informed the House that the decision to execute the project was taken during a District Development Board meeting held on October 4, 2017, under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister of J&K (Chairman, District Development Board).

The project namely 'Construction of Mini Secretariat at Batamaloo', commenced in 2018 with a technically vetted cost of Rs. 48.23 crore. "An amount of Rs. 1 crore was released for the project, against which Rs. 82 lakh stands incurred," the Minister stated.

She further informed that during the current financial year, additional Rs. 9 crore have been incurred, bringing the total expenditure on the project to Rs. 9.82 crore so far. "It is pertinent to mention that the pile foundation work of the project has been completed," she added.

The Minister also

stated that the executing agency has now submitted a revised Detailed Project Report (DPR) amounting Rs. 80.26 crore, which is currently under consideration of the department.

NORTHERN RAILWAY			
E-Tender Notice			
DEN/HQ/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date- 26.03.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in			
Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System	
Open	Works	Single Packet System & Two Packet System	
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time	
04.03.2025	12.03.2025	26.03.2025 15:00 Hrs	
S.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender	
1.	320-2024-25-ADEN-2-FZR	Repair to Toilets, Water supply, Storage Tanks, Safety cages and Duty huts at various LCs in the jurisdiction of SSE/WW/JBD under ADEN-2/FZR.	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		79,99,448.93/-	1,60,000.00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		60 Days	10 Months
		Similar Nature Work :- "Any civil work other than track work".	
2.	321-2024-25-DEN-HQ-FZR	Supply, Installation, and commissioning of track based Electronic type rail gauge face lubricator 31 nos. (31x12x5yrs=1860 months) in the section of ADEN-1/FZR & ADEN-2/FZR under the jurisdiction of DEN-HQ/FZR for 5 years.	
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money
		4,13,96,503.20/-	3,57,000.00/-
		Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		90 Days	60 Months
		Special Technical Criteria :- "Only RDSO Approved/Development Vendors for Track based Lubricators can participate with this tender. Copy of approval certificate with validity date is to be submitted along with the tender".	
Note 1:- Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. No:- 320-2024-25-ADEN-2-FZR & 321-2024-25-DEN-HQ-FZR Date: 04.03.2025 732/2025			
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			

J&K Budget 2025: CM...

are Rs 1,12,310 crore, excluding the provision for ways and means of advances and overdraft.

"The expected revenue receipts are Rs 97,982 crore and capital receipts are Rs 14328 crore," he said.

Omar Abdullah, who became the first Chief Minister J&K Union Territory to present a budget, said the revenue expenditure is estimated to be Rs 79703 crore and capital expenditure to be Rs 32607 crore.

Giving details about break-up of budget funding, CM Omar said the Union Territory's own revenue and non-revenue tax is estimated to be around Rs 31905 crore.

"In addition to this, Rs 41000 crore is to flow as central assistance and Rs 13522 crore as centrally sponsored schemes/ Prime Minister's Development Programme Development Programme to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Omar said the tax/GDP ratio is projected at 7.5% for 2025-26. "Fiscal deficit for the year 2025-26 is estimated to be 3.0%. This is substantially lower than 5.5% in 2024-25 (RE)," he said.

He said the GDP for the year 2025-26 has been projected at Rs 2, 88,422 crore, which shows a growth of 9.5% over the previous year.

Focus and key announcements

In the budget, CM Omar has tried to reach out to the poorest of the poor categorized as Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), women and vulnerable social groups by announcing freebies and initiatives for them

Free electricity and ration

The CM announced 200 units of free electricity to all AAY population of Jammu & Kashmir through PM's Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

"To provide financial relief and energy security to the most vulnerable, I propose to provide 200 units of free electricity per month to all Antyodaya families in Jammu & Kashmir. Integrated with the PM Suryaghar Bijli Yojana, this initiative will enable the installation of grid-connected solar systems, generating the required power and eliminating electricity bills," he said.

He said an investment of RS 750 crore would be made in the scheme over five years. "This step will also reduce AT&C losses and promote sustainable energy," he said.

The CM also announced 10 kg free ration per person to all AAY beneficiaries starting April 1, 2025.

"I propose free ration of 10 kg per person to all AAY beneficiaries starting April 1, 2025, ensuring enhanced nutritional support for the most vulnerable," he said.

Enhancement of pension

The CM also proposed enhancement of pension of 10,07,324 for old-aged persons, widows, divorcees, and specially abled individuals.

As per revision proposed by the government, Rs 1250 per month for persons below 60 years of age, Rs 1500 per month for persons aged between 60 and below 80 years and Rs 2,000 per month for persons aged 80 years and above.

Women-specific initiatives

CM Omar announced enhancement of financial assistance under the Marriage Assistance Scheme from Rs 50,000 to Rs 75,000 for AAY category girls.

"This increase aims to provide greater financial relief to underprivileged families. Moving forward, we will streamline the scheme's implementation and ensure adequate budget allocation to broaden its reach and impact," he said.

The CM also announced that all women in J&K will be granted free ridership in government-owned public transport, including e-buses.

"I propose, starting 1st April, all women in Jammu & Kashmir will be granted free ridership in government-owned public transport, including e-buses," he said.

Zero stamp duty on gifting of properties to blood relatives

The CM also announced that there will be no stamp duty on properties gifted to blood relatives.

"I propose reducing the stamp duty on property gifted to blood relatives to zero, benefiting families by encouraging legal documentation and reducing inheritance disputes," he said, adding that currently, the stamp duty for such transactions varies from 3% to 7%, which discourages formal registration.

Strengthening disaster management

The CM announced that the Government is establishing a Rs 39 crore Disaster Mitigation Fund, the first dedicated fund for prevention, early warning systems, and preparedness. "Recognizing the rising threats of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and landslides, our Government is taking proactive measures to protect vulnerable communities and infrastructure. I propose a Rs 15 crore allocation for GLOF risk monitoring, early warning systems, and mitigation strategies," he said.

Awards for PDD officials

The CM also proposed to institute the Chief Minister's Awards to recognise and reward exemplary efforts by field functionaries in reducing Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses and conducting energy audits. KNO

'Vows to make...

of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Fulfillment of Manifesto Promises

Responding to opposition criticism about the non-fulfillment of manifesto promises, Omar asserted that the promises are being fulfilled one by one.

"But I have repeatedly said that people did not give us a five-week or five-month government; they gave us a five-year government. Now, don't ask me every day which promise has been fulfilled. Ask me after five years when the term is over. On that day, sit down and ask me what I have done in these five years. Then I will tell you. I don't have to give you a daily checklist of promises fulfilled. After five years, I will present my checklist to you and say, these were my promises, and these are my achievements," Omar said, as per KNO.

Free Electricity and Welfare Measures

Asked why free electricity was provided only to the AAY (Antyodaya) category and not the entire populace, the Chief Minister said, "For now, we will focus on the areas that need the most attention first. Moreover, if you look at it, we are providing much more free electricity than what is given in other states. If you see how much electricity we generate and how much revenue we collect, it is much higher than in other states. Despite this, we are committed to providing 200 units of free electricity to the most deserving people. We have started with AAY households, and as our financial condition

improves, we will expand this benefit further."

Regularization of Daily Wagers

On the issue of regularizing daily wagers in Jammu and Kashmir, Omar said the government would first ascertain their numbers in the initial phase before formulating a comprehensive policy for their regularization.

Return of Migrant Kashmiri Pandits

Regarding the return of migrant Kashmiri Pandits, Omar stated, "We have mentioned in the budget that we will improve their living conditions and complete the transit accommodation project for them. As for the issue of bringing them back, it depends on the budget and the situation. I have repeatedly said that Kashmiri Pandits did not leave Kashmir because of their financial condition; they left because their lives were in danger. Until we address this threat, we cannot expect them to return fully. Therefore, for now, it is our shared responsibility in the UT, along with the LG and the elected government, to create such conditions in Kashmir that Kashmiri Pandits who left can return voluntarily."

Omar Abdullah as Ambassador Against Obesity

Asked about his nomination as an ambassador by Prime Minister Modi to combat obesity, Omar said, "We can only talk and set examples. We want to set an example for others to follow. For instance, at my age, I can run 20 kilometers. So, what excuse do 20-22-year-olds have if they are medically fit but cannot maintain their weight? I am not trying to scare people or force them, but I am trying to set an example that most people can follow. That would be a good thing. First, I will ask my ministerial colleagues to start with me by running five kilometers, and then I will push the rest of Jammu and Kashmir to do the same."

Film Shooting Policy and Tourism Promotion

Omar also highlighted plans to strengthen the film shooting policy in Jammu and Kashmir. He noted that while promoting the region in Bollywood is not difficult, there is an entire film industry in South India where Jammu and Kashmir is not actively promoted.

"Our effort will be to encourage the film industries of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala to shoot in Jammu and Kashmir. This will have two benefits: one, the use of local resources for shooting, and two, attracting tourists from South India. Currently, most of our tourists come from Gujarat, West Bengal, and Maharashtra. We hope that through film shootings, we can divert South Indian tourists to Jammu and Kashmir," Omar said.

Budget Session Timing During Ramadan

Asked if the budget session could have been adjusted earlier or later due to the ongoing Ramadan, Omar replied, "Yes, we could have. I will definitely say that if I have to present the budget next year, I will not do it during Ramadan. I will adjust the budget session accordingly. Otherwise, I will request the Speaker to hold the session after 6:30 PM in the evening, but I will not present the budget while fasting during the day."

Cricket Stadiums and IPL Matches

The Chief Minister also revealed efforts to build international-level cricket stadiums in Jammu and Srinagar. "We will certainly try to host IPL matches here. A stadium has been proposed on the Katra side, and discussions are ongoing with the BCCI to build a similar international-standard stadium in Kashmir so that we can organize such matches on a good pitch and in a good stadium," Omar said, as per KNO.

Tourism and Visit Count Methodology

Responding to questions about tourist arrivals in Jammu and Kashmir and the figures projected by various media houses, Omar clarified the difference between the number of people and the number of visits.

"I want to explain this. We have slightly changed the way we count. Now, we don't count people; we count visits. For example, if you are married and have children, say one daughter, and you are three people. If you go to Srinagar for a holiday, that counts as three visits. If you go from Srinagar to Gulmarg, that's three more visits. If you go from Gulmarg to Sonamarg, that's another three visits. If you go from Sonamarg to Pahalgam, that's three more visits. Only then do we arrive at the number we give you. That's why I didn't say that so many people came; I said so many visits happened. We count visits destination-wise, just like the Government of India's tourism figures are counted. So, we are not saying that four crore people came here. We are saying that so many visits happened to so many sites," Omar explained. KNO

'Govt faces major...

He further said that such measures will enhance efficiency, reduce commercial losses, and improve revenue realization.

Pertinently, the government announced that for the Power Sector an allocation of about Rs 2021.37 crore has been made under capital expenditure for the year 2025-26 which is Rs 762.80 crore more than the revised allocation of 2024-25.

Omar further said, "Our goal is to bring down Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses from 41 percent to 25 percent by 2025-26, ensuring a financially sustainable power sector."

On the occasion, the CM proposes free 200 units of electricity for AAY families.

"To provide financial relief and energy security to the most vulnerable, I propose to provide 200 units of free electricity per month to all Antyodaya families in Jammu & Kashmir," he said.

The CM further said that integration with the PM Surya Ghar Bijli Yojana will enable the installation of grid-connected solar systems, generating the required power and eliminating electricity bills,"

"With an investment of Rs 750 crore spread over five years, this step will also reduce AT&C losses and promote sustainable energy. I urge this august House to support this transformative move towards a greener, more inclusive, and self-reliant Jammu & Kashmir," he said.

In the meantime Omar further said that the high AT&C losses has resulted in huge outstanding liabilities for power purchase.

"High AT&C losses resulted in huge outstanding liabilities for power purchase, for which Rs 28,000 crore were borrowed in the last few years, raising public debt from 48 percent of GSDP in FY 2015-16 to 52 percent in 2023-24," the CM said.

He said that in order to mitigate the issue, the government was reducing high-cost debt, optimizing liabilities, and calibrating the repayment schedules for long-term

fiscal stability. KNO

'Announces Rs 3,773.93...

Marathon, which attracted 1,800 global participants.

"The tourism sector has been granted industry status and is poised for strong growth," Abdullah said. He outlined plans for the development of new master plans for tourist hotspots including Gulmarg, Pahalgam and Sonamarg, alongside efforts to enhance infrastructure and amenities in underdeveloped areas. He said initiatives like the SPREAD (Sustainable Promotion of Emerging Alternate Destinations) programme are aimed at diversifying tourist attractions to alleviate strain on overcrowded sites.

Abdullah also announced plans to promote water sports across J&K's picturesque water bodies, including kayaking and canoeing at Manasbal and introduced upgrades to winter sports infrastructure at Gulmarg and Sonamarg. "Sonamarg has become an all-weather destination," he said, adding that the region has a potential to host international winter sports events.

Moreover, the budget allocation for tourism has been raised to Rs 390.20 crore, representing an increase of Rs 121.77 crore compared to 2024-25. This boost in funding is expected to catalyse infrastructure enhancements, sustainability initiatives, and new tourism projects, thereby reinforcing the region's global standing.

The industrial development section of the CM's address highlighted efforts to stimulate entrepreneurship and boost the local economy. An allocation of Rs 50 crore has been proposed to support mentorship and incubation for emerging entrepreneurs, with the goal of transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a dynamic hub for startups.

"Local procurement through the GeM portal has surged, with purchases from local suppliers reaching Rs 1,527.74 crore," Omar said, adding that the government is committed to supporting local businesses. He also announced the implementation of a new policy to provide price preferences for local MSMEs in public procurement, aiming to level the playing field amidst rising competition.

To enhance the handicraft sector, the Chief Minister announced initiatives to promote 'Brand J&K', including the development of PM Unity Malls for artisans and the expansion of the Karkhandar Scheme. With employment support for over 4.22 lakh individuals, many from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Abdullah said the government is dedicated to preserving and promoting J&K's rich cultural heritage.

Omar said Srinagar's recognition as a 'World Crafts City' and inclusion in UNESCO's Creative City Network is a proud achievement. "To empower artisans, PM Unity Malls will be developed in Srinagar and Jammu for direct market access, the Karkhandar Scheme will be expanded, and universal coverage under the Artisan Credit Card (ACC) will be ensured," he said.

The key policies, including the J&K Public Procurement, Logistic and Export Policies will be introduced to strengthen the business ecosystem and boost global market access, he added. KNO

'My government resolute...

"My government is committed to strengthening grassroots democracy by empowering Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies, which play a crucial role in local governance and development. Our Government is committed to holding elections to these bodies, reinforcing our commitment to accountable, inclusive, and decentralized governance for the holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He said this Budget is more than just a financial statement.

"It is a roadmap for a new and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir, reflecting the aspirations of our people and laying a strong foundation for economic growth, social progress, and sustainable development," he said.

He said the budget emphasizes inclusive growth, fiscal prudence, and strategic investments in infrastructure, agriculture, industry, healthcare, education, and digital governance.

"We are focused on bridging regional disparities, empowering youth and women, and fostering a business-friendly environment to attract investment and innovation," he said, adding that the budget truly reflects the aspirations of our people.

"We engaged with elected representatives, industry leaders, and key stakeholders, incorporating their insights to create a people-centric roadmap for a better quality of life for all," he said. KNO

Govt to engage...

Basohli in Jammu.

"A Gymnastics Academy will be set up at Gindun Rajbagh and Khel Gaon, Nagrota to provide specialized coaching for budding gymnasts," he said, adding, "To nurture young cricketing talent, four Cricket Academies will be established with a budgetary allocation of Rs 28 crore. Additionally, the government will construct two new Youth Hostels—one each in Jammu and Kashmir divisions—with a provision of Rs 10 crore."

Furthermore, Omar said that the high-performance training centers will be developed in all districts in a phased manner to enhance athlete training and performance at the grassroots level. KNO

'Announces revival...

journalists to engage, collaborate, and contribute meaningfully to public discourse," he said.

He said a free, independent, and responsible press is the cornerstone of a vibrant democracy.

"Our Government is unwavering in its commitment to upholding press freedom and ensuring that journalists operate in a secure and transparent environment," he said.

He said the media plays a vital role in shaping public opinion, strengthening democratic institutions, and keeping citizens informed.

"In this spirit, we are committed to strengthening press infrastructure, facilitating greater access to information, and protecting the rights of journalists," he said. KNO

'All DHs to have CT...

and with such facilities at district level, patients will feel a sigh of relief.

The government on Friday allocated Rs 86 crore for the construction of 250-bed Maternity and Child Care Hospital in Anantnag.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announced that Rs 86 crore have been allocated for the construction of 250-bed Maternity and Child Care Hospital in Janglatmandi Anantnag.

It is pertinent to mention here that MCCH Anantnag is currently functioning from a dilapidated building with choked space that was declared unsafe by the fire and emergency department in 2014.

Located in the congested Sherbagh locality, the hospital has been forced to place beds in corridors to accommodate the influx of patients.

The hospital's infrastructure, which is already thin, includes just two labour wards, four surgical wards, and an operation theatre to serve the growing number of patients. Hospital staff said that multiple patients often share single beds, which leads to overcrowding, noise and congestion.

A proposal for the construction of a 200-bedded maternity and childcare hospital on the premises of the GMC Anantnag-associated Janglatmandi Hospital was already submitted in December last year.

Currently, the hospital manages over 50,000 patients in its OPD and around 10,000 indoor patients every month.

Officials said that new infrastructure for the MCCH is essential as it will provide tertiary-level comprehensive maternal and child care services in South Kashmir. KNO

LG Sinha inaugurates...

The role of new inventions of science and technology in making our civilization alive is incomparable. Therefore, I believe that society needs artists and spiritualists along with scientists".

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated the commitment of the government, under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, to work with the resolve of 'Vikas Bhi Virasat Bhi'.

He further emphasized the important role of artists and intelligentsia in promoting education based on local culture, moral values and traditional knowledge.

"Society's economic development is powered by art and culture. For sustainable development we need more creative leaders. Our efforts to connect the young generation with our culture and values should be further deepened," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also shared the dedicated measures taken by the government to promote rich diversity and uniqueness of artistic, cultural and linguistic heritage of Jammu Kashmir.

Dr. Karan Singh, former Union Minister and Chairman, Hari Tara Charitable Trust; Trustees and members of the Trust and various dignitaries including Sh Vikramaditya Singh, Sh Ajatshatru Singh, Dr Jyotsna Singh, Ms Ritu Singh, Sh Martand Singh; senior officials of Police and Civil administration and renowned artists were present.

J&K to get 2...

entrepreneurial Opportunities.

"Our Government proposes the establishment of the Jammu & Kashmir Skill and Entrepreneurship University (J&K SEU). This institution will provide cutting-edge training in technology, healthcare, tourism, renewable energy, and traditional crafts while fostering innovation, startup incubation, and industry partnerships," he said.

He said the Government is committed to constructing a state-of-the-art Legislative Complex in Jammu to replace the century-old facility at the Civil Secretariat.

"With an estimated cost of Rs 208 crore, Rs 72 crore has already been utilized. I propose an allocation of Rs 50 crore in this budget for its timely completion, creating a modern, technology-driven environment for efficient and transparent lawmaking," Omar said. KNO

ECI set to announce...

Election Commission of India (ECI) in consultation with the central government certifies that it is difficult to hold the bye-election within the said period. KNO

Opposition terms...

Peoples Conference (PC) Chairman and MLA Handwara, Sajad Gani Lone, while reacting to the Chief Minister's speech wrote on X: "The budget speech was on expected lines a disappointment. Same old style of parroting Centrally Sponsored Schemes with Hindi nomenclature. Vast gulf between electoral political innuendos and economic arithmetics of Budget. Glorified and endorsed the BJP Naya Kashmir discourse and statistics, that have been berated by NC in the last decade. All of a sudden every government statistic of the past 5 years is the gospel truth and the incumbent government seems eager to jump into the frame and take credit for those statistics which until the other day they told all of us --were either fudged or fiction."

"I was expecting a politically viable & economically vibrant budget rather than an annual statement of outlay & expenditure. Even 200 units of electricity promised is for AAY only and linked to the Centrally Sponsored Roof Top scheme which has appx 65% central share with a cap of 3 KV. Too many strings attached," he wrote and added that "Linking social welfare payments to DA means we have to pray for a miraculous zero inflation for real increase," he added.

"This budget is bereft of anything visible which will impact the lives of common man positively. Petrol and diesel prices set to increase by 1/Lt and 2/Lt respectively due to reduction in rebate on petrol and diesel," he wrote.

"Nothing for employment Nothing for daily Wagers Nothing for contractual employees Nothing for minimum wages Shifting of police budget was mentioned as if it was an achievement. The soul of statehood which we believe was stolen from us, was relegated to yet another statistic. If the LG address was a political relegation of aspirations, this budget is a statistical relegation of aspirations," Lone wrote further.

"And hang on-- here is some good news. The PM, The HM and the Union Finance Minister were praised more than once. Saga of love letter continues. This love letter to BJP part II," he wrote.

Drive against encroachments on irrigation canals a regular exercise: Javed Rana

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana, today informed the House that the department undertakes coordinated action with the District Administration to remove encroachments from irrigation canals in Bijbehara.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by MLA, Basheer Ahmad Veeri.

The Minister stated that anti-encroachment drive is a continuous process and a total of 39 notices have been served to the general public during the year 2024-25. It further informed that 700 trees have been removed from the Nandi canal.

Regarding desilting and



dredging, the Minister said that it is a routine process which is being conducted before onset of the irrigation season under the Convergence programme.

He further informed the House that the Irrigation network in the Srigufwara

Bijbehara Constituency relies on the Nandi and Dubji Canals. These canals have leakages and embankment breaches, which are immediately acted upon and encroachments are removed as and when reported.

DC reviews implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission in Kishtwar District

JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, MARCH 7

In a bid to review the ongoing progress of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) under Swachh Survekshan 2024, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rajesh Kumar Shavan convened a multi-departmental meeting.

During the meeting, the DC issued a series of directives aimed at improving sanitation services and ensuring better implementation across the district.

He instructed the EO Municipality to ensure the proper functionality of toilets, enhance sanitation awareness, and implement night shifts for sanitation workers.

The DC emphasized the importance of providing necessary equipment to sanitary workers and



raising awareness among shopkeepers and sanitation staff in the town. Furthermore, the DC stressed the importance of solid waste management in collaboration with the Rural Development Department (RDD).

He also directed the Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) and Block Development Officers (BDOs) to ensure the functionality of toilets in

all blocks of the district. The DC also stressed on maintenance of the Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs) in all blocks, ensuring these facilities are fully operational with all essential amenities.

The meeting was attended by ACD Phulail Singh, EO Municipality Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal, BDO Sanjeev Kotwal and other senior officers and staff members.

100-Day TB elimination Campaign

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 07

State and District TB Control Society Jammu, in collaboration with ELFA International and under the guidance of Mission Director National Health Mission J&K Nazim Zai Khan has initiated a dedicated effort to improve the health and recovery of TB patients.

As a part of the initiative, ELFA International provided 100 nutritional baskets to TB Patients under Nikshay Poshan Yojana during the 100-Day TB elimination Campaign.

The event was held in the presence of Director Health Services Jammu Dr Rakesh Magotra, CEO ELFA International Nawaab Mehraan Khan, Vice president ELFA International Iftikhaar Ahmed Mir, Chief Medical Officer Jammu Dr Harbaksh Singh, Program Manager NTEP J&K Dr Vijay Kumar, Logistic Officer ELFA Mohammad Zuain Wani, State TB Officer Jammu Dr Jyoti Jolly, District TB Officer Jammu Dr Anu Saloch and Project Co-ordinator ELFA International Ms. Komal Salthia.

The initiative aims to strengthen TB care services by ensuring better nutrition and support for Patients contributing to the larger goal of TB Elimination in Jammu (J&K) by 2025. The vision for which was envisaged by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

Women's Day celebrated by NABARD, JKRLM at Banihal



JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, MARCH 7

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), in collaboration with the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), celebrated International Women's Day here today under the aegis of the District Administration Ramban.

The event witnessed the participation of District Manager NABARD, Aarshi Sharma, NRLM BPM Banihal, Irahad, SBI Branch Manager, Vinayak, and JKB Manager Ishrat.

During the program, women Self-Help Group (SHG) members were briefed on various government-sponsored subsidy schemes aimed

at empowering women entrepreneurs and strengthening rural livelihoods. As a mark of recognition and encouragement, ten women achievers were felicitated at the event with prizes for their outstanding contributions in various fields.

Additionally, an interactive session was held, where queries from SHG members were addressed, ensuring better access to financial and entrepreneurial opportunities for women in the region. The celebration highlighted the efforts of NABARD and JKRLM in fostering women's empowerment through financial literacy and self-reliance, paving the way for sustainable development in Ramban.

DG Rural Sanitation inspects Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin assets

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU MARCH 07

Director General Rural Sanitation Jammu & Kashmir Anoo Malhotra conducted a field visit to inspect the progress and functionality of key assets created under the Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin (SBM-G). The visit was supported by officials from the Directorate of Rural Sanitation, Block Development Officers (BDOs), the Sahaa team, and the Project Management Unit (PMU).

The visit began with a review of sanitation initiatives, on-ground implementation and impact of the SBM-G. Later she inspected the GOBARdhan Plant and the Plastic Waste Management Unit at Phallian Mandal and Suchetgarh. Malhotra underscored several crucial aspects for ensuring the effectiveness of these programs. She directed that a designated person be assigned for the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) of both the GOBARdhan plant and the Plastic Waste Management Unit. She further stressed the need for greater community involvement in the GOBARdhan initiative to ensure its long-term success and sustainability.

In addition, Malhotra



placed significant emphasis on enhancing the overall waste management systems in rural areas. She urged the implementation of door-to-door waste collection, the proper use of segregation sheds, and the establishment of community soakage and compost pits to facilitate better waste processing. Moreover, she highlighted the importance of Community Sanitary Complexes to provide rural populations with accessible sanitation facilities.

Regarding the Plastic Waste Management Unit, Malhotra expressed her concerns about its current status and directed officials to ensure its functionality at the earliest. She also emphasized the need to generate revenue from the unit to ensure its

operational sustainability and contribute to the local economy. Speaking on the occasion, Malhotra said, "The Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin is a cornerstone of our efforts to improve rural sanitation. To achieve long-lasting change, it is essential that we focus on both effective waste management and community participation. We need to ensure that these projects are well-maintained, functional, and beneficial for the communities they serve."

The visit highlights the government's commitment to ensuring the success and sustainability of the Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin in Jammu & Kashmir, with a focus on community-driven solutions and improved waste management practices.

Plantation drive carried out at official residence of Chief Justice

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

In a simple yet impressive function, the Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority (J&K LSA) today organized a plantation drive at the official residence of Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority) along with Shahzad Azeem, Registrar General, M. K. Sharma, Principal Secretary to CJ, Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and Mayank Gupta, Joint Registrar (Judicial/Protocol), Jammuplanted fruit-bearing saplings at the Chief Justice's Banglov, Jammu.

The saplings were provided by Dr. K. C. Sharma, a renowned surgeon and philanthropist, who has been instrumental in developing the Summer Zone Apple variety. This unique variety, which can thrive in high temperatures of up to 48°C, has been successfully cultivated across multiple states, including J&K, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. It has the potential to revolutionize fruit cultivation by ensuring fruit production within just 13 months of plantation, even in warmer regions.

Dr. Sharma's research has led to the successful plantation of these apples



in various prestigious locations, including Vaishno Devi University, Rashtrapati Bhavan, Raj Bhavan, UT of J&K and military establishments. His contributions to Indian horticulture have been widely recognized, and his efforts have played a crucial role in making India self-reliant in apple production beyond traditional cold-climate regions.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Justice appreciated the efforts of J&K Legal Services Authority in promoting eco-friendly initiatives and emphasized the importance of afforestation and sustainable agricultural practices. He also lauded Dr. K. C. Sharma for his dedication to horticultural research and his commitment to environmental conservation.

On this occasion, Dr. Sharma also presented books authored by him, one of which depicts the problems and solutions of the Ladakh region. His literary contributions reflect his deep understanding of environmental and agricultural challenges, further reinforcing the need for innovative solutions to ensure sustainable development.

In addition, many saplings were also planted at the High Court Guest House at VIP-1, Ved Mandir Enclave, Jammu, further extending the green initiative.

J&K Legal Services Authority remains committed to furthering its environmental initiatives and will continue to organize similar plantation drives across the Union Territory.

DC reviews functioning of Cooperative Department in Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, MARCH 7

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal chaired a crucial meeting today to assess the operations of the Cooperative Department in the district.

The meeting addressed several vital topics, including the establishment of new cooperative societies in underserved areas, the world's largest grain storage initiatives, and the organization of awareness camps and training sessions as part of the International Year of Cooperatives. Additional discussions focused on micro food processing units, Reconciliation PACs, and the status of elections for cooperative societies.

This meeting served as an essential platform for stakeholders to strategize on the formation and enhancement of new cooperative societies. The emphasis was placed on



building a robust network of cooperatives to stimulate economic growth, promote self-sufficiency, and ensure equitable development within Poonch district.

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal directed the acceleration of pending construction work on cooperative super bazaars to benefit the local community promptly. He further directed the HOD to organize a mega event in Poonch to celebrate the International Year of Cooperatives, highlighting

the significance of cooperative development.

In his remarks, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to support farmers' producer organizations to enhance agricultural productivity and improve the welfare of farmers in the region.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to expedite all cooperative development initiatives and ensure effective coordination among departments for the successful implementation of cooperative schemes.

50 hectares saffron land rejuvenated under National Mission on Saffron in Kishtwar: Agriculture Minister

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

9 Organic Clusters for promotion of organic farming, alternate agricultural cultivation Minister for Agriculture, Javed Ahmad Dar, today said that under National Mission on Saffron, 19989.03 Marla (50 Ha) area has been rejuvenated in Kishtwar district.

The Minister, while replying to a question raised by Sunil Kumar Sharma in the Legislative Assembly, said that the financial and technical

assistance has been given to farmers under various component.

The Minister said that for rejuvenation of 19989.03 Marla (50 Ha) area, 5465 beneficiaries were given financial assistance for Saffron corms and Rs 1265 per marla involving the total subsidy of Rs 252.86 lakh was given to farmers.

He said that Rs 30 lakh subsidy was given to 100 beneficiaries for vermi compost units, while as Rs 24 lakh subsidy was provided to 48 benefi-

ciaries for Power Tillers/Weeders.

The Minister said that as many as ten Farmer Training Camps were organized under National Mission on Saffron and about 250 farmers have been trained for two day with an expenditure of Rs 750/- per head.

The Minister informed the house that 03 FPOs have been formulated and are working in saffron processing, packaging and marketing through various e-Marketing Platform as well as through various

buyer-seller meets in different parts of the country.

He said that for promotion of the Organic Farming, total 09 Organic Clusters have been established under Parampragat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Alternate Agriculture.

The Minister said that the clusters included Organic Cluster Pochhal B2, Organic Cluster Galhar, Organic Cluster Garh, Organic Cluster Ligri, Organic Cluster Hamindrawn, Organic Cluster Tiyari, Organic

Cluster Ishtiyari, Organic Cluster Karthaie and Organic Cluster Ladder.

He said that each organic cluster comprising 50 Farmers with 20 Hectare area and under these clusters, 450 farmers have been registered on Participatory Guarantee Scheme (PGS) Portal and have been provided Organic Inputs in an area of 180 Ha. He said that awareness camps have also been conducted in these clusters for the promotion of organic farming.

EDITORIAL

A Budget of Hope and Inclusion for J&K

After a seven-year hiatus, the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly witnessed the presentation of its annual budget, a significant political and economic event. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's Rs 1.12 lakh crore budget for the fiscal year 2025-26 places a sharp focus on the "poorest of the poor," women, and vulnerable social groups. This budget signals a renewed commitment to social welfare and economic stability in the Union Territory.

The budget outlines total net estimates of Rs 1,12,310 crore, with expected revenue receipts of Rs 97,982 crore and capital receipts of Rs 14,328 crore. Importantly, the revenue expenditure stands at Rs 79,703 crore, while capital expenditure is estimated at Rs 32,607 crore. A promising sign of fiscal discipline is the projected tax-to-GDP ratio of 7.5% and a reduction in the fiscal deficit to 3.0% from 5.5% in the previous year. Additionally, the GDP growth projection of 9.5% underscores the government's confidence in an upward economic trajectory.

At the heart of this budget is an array of welfare measures aimed at marginalized communities. The Chief Minister's announcement of 200 units of free electricity under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana for Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries is a landmark decision. By investing Rs 750 crore over five years, this scheme not only provides relief to the economically weaker sections but also promotes sustainable energy.

Similarly, the provision of 10 kg of free ration per person to AAY beneficiaries from April 1, 2025, strengthens food security for the most disadvantaged. This measure, coupled with the enhancement of pensions for over 10 lakh old-aged persons, widows, divorcees, and specially-abled individuals, highlights a well-rounded approach to social welfare.

A notable aspect of this budget is the emphasis on empowering women. The increase in financial assistance under the Marriage Assistance Scheme from Rs 50,000 to Rs 75,000 for AAY category girls is a welcome step towards easing financial burdens on underprivileged families. Moreover, the decision to grant free ridership to women in government-owned public transport reflects a progressive approach towards gender inclusivity and economic independence.

The abolition of stamp duty on property gifts to blood relatives will encourage legal documentation and minimize inheritance disputes. This progressive tax reform is likely to foster better financial security within families.

On the disaster management front, the Rs 39 crore Disaster Mitigation Fund, along with Rs 15 crore allocated for Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) risk monitoring, is a proactive step in addressing climate-related challenges. Given J&K's vulnerability to natural disasters, these investments are critical for safeguarding lives and infrastructure.

In a bid to promote efficiency in the power sector, CM Omar Abdullah has proposed the Chief Minister's Awards for Power Development Department (PDD) officials to recognize efforts in reducing Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses. This initiative incentivizes accountability and efficiency in governance.

This budget reflects a strategic mix of welfare, infrastructure growth, and fiscal prudence. By prioritizing the underprivileged and focusing on economic resilience, CM Omar Abdullah has set the stage for an inclusive and progressive financial year. The challenge ahead lies in the effective implementation of these schemes to ensure that their benefits reach the intended beneficiaries. If executed efficiently, this budget has the potential to transform J&K into a model of inclusive development and sustainable governance.

Women of Jammu and Kashmir: Catalysts for Nation-Building

SINDHIYA GUPTA

On International Women's Day, it is essential to recognize and empower the women of Jammu and Kashmir, whose resilience, talent, and determination can significantly contribute to nation-building. Despite facing historical challenges, women in the region continue to break barriers and emerge as leaders in various fields. Their participation in economic development, governance, social reforms, and technological advancements can be a driving force in shaping a progressive and prosperous India.

Women's inclusion in the economy is crucial for sustainable development. Encouraging women-led startups in sectors such as handicrafts, agriculture, and tourism can create

employment opportunities, while government-backed microfinance schemes and self-help groups can empower women to become financially independent. Digital platforms and e-commerce can help local women artisans expand their businesses globally, further integrating them into the national and international economy.

Beyond economic growth, governance and policy-making are areas where women can make a significant impact. Greater participation in panchayats, municipal bodies, and legislative assemblies will ensure policies that focus on education, healthcare, and women's safety. Leadership programs and capacity-building initiatives can nurture women as policymakers and decision-makers, leading to more inclusive governance

structures that address pressing social and economic concerns.

Education is the foundation of empowerment, and investing in quality education and vocational training for women in Jammu and Kashmir can unlock their potential. Encouraging STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education can prepare young women for high-demand careers, while scholarships and mentorship programs for girls from rural and conflict-affected areas can bridge the gender gap in education. Vocational training in modern industries like IT, healthcare, and renewable energy can create new employment avenues, ensuring that women are equipped with the skills necessary to succeed in today's evolving job market.

Healthcare is another

crucial area where improvements can have a long-term impact on nation-building. Expanding maternal healthcare services, mental health support, and awareness programs on nutrition, reproductive health, and hygiene can lead to healthier communities. Telemedicine services can provide healthcare access to remote areas, and mental health support for women affected by conflict and socio-economic challenges is essential for their overall well-being and societal integration.

Women also play a vital role in driving social change and community development. By actively participating in NGOs, advocacy groups, and community initiatives, they can preserve cultural heritage, promote peace, and address social challenges. Strengthening

women-led social movements for environmental sustainability, education, and gender equality can create more inclusive societies. Empowering women journalists and media professionals can help bring attention to critical social issues, while including women in peacebuilding efforts and conflict resolution initiatives can foster long-term stability in the region.

Technology and innovation present new opportunities for women in Jammu and Kashmir to contribute to national development.

By fostering digital literacy and providing access to online learning, women can become leaders in innovation and research. Training in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and digital marketing can open new employment opportunities, while Smart City initiatives can

include women in urban planning and technological advancements. Online platforms can enable knowledge-sharing, networking, and access to global markets, further integrating them into the global economy.

Women in Jammu and Kashmir are integral to India's growth and development. By investing in education, economic participation, leadership, and technology, the region can harness the full potential of its women. As we celebrate International Women's Day, it is imperative to create an inclusive and supportive environment where women can thrive and contribute to nation-building in meaningful ways.

Sindhya Gupta is a Media Analyst based in Jammu & Kashmir and she can be reached at connect.sindhya@gmail.com

Technocrat turned artist Shivani's message on Int'l Women's Day

Passion is a force that drives us and when we are passionate about something we are motivated to follow our dream with full dedication. It is important that you fulfil your ambitions and heart's desires before it's too late and you regret saying, "We should have at least once strived for it." If you have dreams, gather the courage to pursue them, leave no stone unturned and make it turn into reality. Just believe in yourself, take that one step and everyone around will start believing in you and the love for your passion."

Shivani Koul Bhatt a self-taught artist who was born, brought up in a beautiful Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and has developed her own technique of creating Canvas full of life.

She has done B.Tech from Jammu University and M Tech from Kurukshetra University. At a very young age, she got obsessed by surrounding nature and quickly found the use of brush for an insatiable quest.

As an artist, she deals in realism to representational, sur-



realism, abstract and sometimes traditional. She has participated in more than National and International Art Exhibitions. For her creations and dedication, she has been honoured at different platforms by Eminent Personalities. You would love to experience the textured and thumb-based artistic techniques as the highlight of her works. Her artworks represent moments in her journey and her art is inspired by a parade of coloured flecks that we term "Celebration of Life".

She shares that the day you decide to follow your passion, it strengthens you personally and emotionally and believe me things would turn better because when people around you see that you respect and love your passion, they will fall in love with it with same enthusiasm. Just do a self-introspection and see what you can do. Whether your passion is writing, painting, love for cooking or anything else, what matters are, you can master it with the right kind of mind-set, time management and hard work."

When no solution is the only solution

VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

One of the bigger challenges in life is to find an answer to a question dealing with life itself. The glib belief is that every problem has a solution. A wisecrack has rightly commented that every problem has a solution but the solution creates a problem of its own. If it were a simple, straightforward dimension, such as that, there would be nothing to worry about because problems and solutions would be in a dyadic relationship.

The problem arises when a problem is not solvable because two sides want a solution on their terms or indeed have no solution at all. This need not necessarily be an act of mischief, but it may be a simple case of jealousy/envy or indeed a bitter competitiveness that brooks no solution at all. The first exposure to such an intractable jungle-like situation today is that the

two parties concerned themselves do not see a solution worth pursuing. This may be because of many reasons, one of them being that the person concerned may genuinely believe he has an upper hand and that he is not going to lose that advantage. Very often, this gets intertwined with ego, worth, or dislike.

If there are stakeholders beyond this, of a variety which see an advantage in the contending parties being maintained as contending parties, or there is a personal dislike between the two people concerned, then also a solution becomes well-nigh impossible. Thus, it is that certain problems have subsisted beyond generations and led to devastating wars which ultimately wiped out both parties, and there was nothing for the winner to take away at all.

The story of the Mahabharata is a telltale story of the winners ultimately having nothing to gain, at least for the



generation in play. In more recent times, World War I and World War II did not produce any obvious winners, and the world went back to a full circle. The better-known cases of history have similar dots on a lesser scale and indeed, this can be true also in personal lives.

The long and short of it is, it takes more than a 'win' to become a winner. At a differ-

ent scale altogether, personal dislikes and prejudices can be so large that one adopts an attitude where one concludes that, irrespective of the nuances, one will simply not work towards a solution. Here again, the resolution of the conflict becomes difficult. Hence, it is a fortunate situation where both sides want a situation of solution and therefore are open to it. This is so often a given in

this set of circumstances that to pray for it would be to hope for the near impossible.

To expect divine grace to sort out the situation may be the only route forward. Other factors prevent a meaningful resolution of a conflict, one being a gender dimension and another as sibling rivalry. Be that as it may, it is necessary to recognise that no conflict can be eternal either. While it

is true that generations have transferred the conflict from one to another, the nature of the conflict itself became an impediment to solutions, and if nothing else, the ego factor may become a primary determinant of the way forward.

Under such circumstances, the generational transformation of the rivals involved alters the nature of the solution that is feasible.

Indeed, no solution is feasible unless it is doable and sustainable. People often align together because of their own needs and then find arguments to sustain their position. In many cases, logic gives way to simple impulses and a non-thinking solution takes hold of the operationally powerful. The operationally powerful impose their solution, and the predictable happens.

The flawed solution is subverted by the party whose basic need for advantage flowing out of the conflict was not met. Under such circumstanc-

es, it may be useful to suspend the conflict and learn to live with it rather than solve the problem. Avoiding a problem or indeed learning to live with it may at times be a solution. This can follow many routes including not letting the problem escalate.

The enigmatic context is that very often, as the needs of the combatants change, the search for solutions also becomes elusive. This is because one has no use for "the solutions".

The times have changed, and the solutions are passive because there is nothing left to enjoy in becoming a winner. It is therefore important to realise, in many cases, that a solution is only a solution if it makes winners of all concerned. However, that may be another matter altogether.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

India slams UK govt over 'license accorded' to Khalistani elements after EAM's security breach

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAR 7

India today slammed the UK government for its inaction on Khalistani elements who heckled External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during his London visit, and said it "brings out the license accorded" to the separatists.

In a stern statement, the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at the weekly media briefing:

"We have conveyed our deep concern to the UK authorities about the breach of security arrangements by UK-based separatist and extremist elements during EAM's visit.

"There is a larger context to the incident. It brings out both the license accorded to such forces, as well as indifference to their intimidation, threats, and other actions aimed at impeding our legitimate diplomatic activities in the UK.



"While we have noted the statement issued by the UK Foreign Office on the matter, our view of its sincerity would depend on the action taken against culprits on this and previous occasions," he said.

India's strong statement comes a day after it issued a condemnation of the breach of security during EAM's London visit when a group of Khalistani separatists heckled him and tried to block his car.

On Wednesday evening, EAM Jaishankar was heckled by a group of Khalistani supporters

who were shouting anti-India slogans when the minister was going for a programme in London.

As the External Affairs Minister left the venue, one among the pro-Khalistani elements dashed in front of his car and tore the national flag of India, according to visuals on social media.

The issue was raised in the British parliament yesterday by Conservative MP Bob Blackman who lambasted the government of UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer over the lack of security provided to the EAM.

"This is an affront to

democracy, it's an affront to our friends and allies in India; and we need to make sure that it doesn't happen again," Blackman said.

Earlier, in January this year, India had protested the disruption of the screening of Kangana Ranaut's film 'Emergency' in several halls in the UK by Khalistani elements. The film is based on the Emergency imposed by the former PM in 1975.

The MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal had said then that "Freedom of speech and expression cannot be applied selectively, and those obstructing it must be held accountable."

He expressed hope that the UK side would take appropriate action against those responsible.

In March 2023, relations between the two sides had deteriorated over the UK government's inaction on the Khalistani issue.

India had summoned

the senior-most UK diplomat in New Delhi then to convey its strong protest after some Khalistani elements removed the Indian flag from outside the Indian High Commission in London and attempted to replace it with a Khalistani flag.

India had then also demanded an explanation for the complete absence of British security that allowed the Khalistani elements to enter the Indian High Commission premises. India had demanded that the perpetrators be arrested and prosecuted and stringent measures be put in place to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

Later that year, India "disengaged" from the FTA trade talks over UK's failure to condemn pro-Khalistani activists who vandalised the Indian High Commission.

India and the UK last week re-launched the trade talks under the Keir Starmer regime.

Karnataka Budget 2025-26: Total Borrowings rise to Rs 1.16 lakh crore

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, MAR 7

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday presented the state budget for 2025-26, announcing that total borrowings for the fiscal year stand at Rs 1.16 lakh crore—Rs 11,000 crore higher than the previous year.

The fiscal deficit for 2025-26 is pegged at Rs 90,428 crore, making up 2.95 percent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). Meanwhile, the revenue deficit is estimated at Rs 19,262 crore, or 0.63 percent of GSDP. By the end of the financial year, Karnataka's total liabilities are projected to reach Rs 7,64,655 crore, constituting 24.91 percent of GSDP.

"By keeping fiscal deficit and total outstanding liabilities within the limits mandated under the Karnataka Fiscal Responsibility Act, we have maintained fiscal discipline in the financial year 2025-26," the CM noted.

The budget estimates total receipts at Rs 4,08,647 crore, with revenue receipts amounting to Rs 2,92,477 crore. This includes the state's own tax revenue of Rs 2,08,100 crore, non-tax revenue of Rs 16,500 crore, and receipts from the Government of India totalling Rs 67,877 crore.

Additionally, gross borrowings of Rs 1,16,000 crore and non-debt capital receipts of Rs 170 crore



have been factored into the financial outlook. The total estimated expenditure for 2025-26 stands at Rs 4,09,549 crore, comprising revenue expenditure of Rs 3,11,739 crore, capital expenditure of Rs 71,336 crore, and loan repayment of Rs 26,474 crore. Karnataka, which ranks second in GST revenue collection nationwide, has set a revenue target of Rs 1,20,000 crore for the Commercial Tax Department in FY26. The state expects to generate Rs 40,000 crore from State Excise, up from Rs 36,500 crore in 2024-25. Additionally, the government aims to collect Rs 28,000 crore in property registration tax, marking an increase from Rs 24,000 crore last year. The Motor Vehicle Tax revenue target for FY26 has been set at Rs 15,000 crore, up from Rs 12,500 crore in the previous year.

Royalty collections for 2025-26 are estimated at Rs 9,000 crore, while revenue from the Mines and Geology Department is projected at Rs 7,250 crore for 2024-25.

"By prioritising key sectors such as infrastructure, irrigation, and social welfare, we are laying the foundation for long-term prosperity. As we move forward, this budget will not only foster growth but also secure a strong fiscal health of the state," the CM said.

Despite the surge in borrowings, infrastructure development in the state has been minimal, raising concerns about fund utilisation. Experts note that while the fiscal deficit remains within manageable limits, the absence of substantial capital expenditure could hamper long-term economic growth. Critics argue that unless infrastructure investment is prioritised, the increasing debt burden may fail to yield tangible benefits for Karnataka's economy. While presenting the budget to the house, Siddaramaiah quoted 12th-century reformer Basavanna on social equity. He emphasised that the budget focuses on sustainable economic growth while ensuring financial consolidation.

"By prioritising key sectors such as infrastructure, irrigation, and social welfare, we are laying the foundation for long-term prosperity. As we move forward, this budget will not only foster growth but also secure a strong fiscal health of the state," the CM said.

SC grants interim bail to UP MLA Abbas Ansari with stringent conditions

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAR 7

The Supreme Court on Friday granted interim bail to Uttar Pradesh MLA Abbas Ansari in a case registered under the Uttar Pradesh Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act, 1986.

The Court imposed stringent conditions on his movement and public statements.

A Bench comprising Justice Surya Kant and Justice N Kottiswar Singh noted that while Ansari is facing multiple cases, he has secured bail in all except the present one.

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Ansari, argued that the allegations in this case mirrored those of an earlier FIR, which had been quashed for lack of application of mind. He contended that the police had already gathered all necessary evidence, questioning the need for further incarceration. "I have been in jail for seven months due to one case or another. The allegations in the previous FIR were identical and were quashed. The same accusations are being used to keep me inside," Sibal argued.

Opposing the bail plea, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) K.M. Nataraj, appearing for the Uttar Pradesh government, cited Ansari's criminal history and influence, asserting that he threatened witnesses. "He is an influential person who can threaten witnesses. We need to examine key witnesses before granting bail," the ASG submitted.

However, the Bench observed that the pending witnesses were police officials rather than private individuals and questioned the prosecution on the prolonged detention.

The Court granted interim bail subject to the following conditions that Ansari must remain at his official accommodation in Lucknow. He can visit his constituency only with prior permission from the district police administration and district court.

Modi govt committed to promote all regional languages, including Tamil : Amit Shah

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, MAR 7

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the BJP-led Government at the Centre headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was strongly committed to promote all the regional languages, including Tamil.

He was addressing the 56th Raising Day event of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Regional Training Centre, which he renamed it after Rajaditya Cholan Regional Training Centre (RTC) in memory of the Chola prince, who died in a battle there centuries ago, at Thakkolam in Ranipet district of Tamil Nadu. Stressing on the importance of preserving the rich cultural heritage of Tamil Nadu, he highlighted the efforts of the Prime Minister to honour the state's linguistic and cultural legacy.

In an apparent counter to the ruling dmK's oft-repeated charge that the Government headed by Mr Modi had done nothing for promoting Tamil language and development and that enough funds were not



allocated, Mr Amit Shah said Tamil Nadu's heritage significantly contributes to the broader Indian cultural fabric and the rich culture of the State has greatly bolstered India's diverse heritage.

The central government values and promotes every state's language," Mr Amit Shah said, adding "the Prime Minister has prioritised Tamil and its heritage, taking concrete steps to incorporate state languages into educational and professional spheres." Pointing out that the government has introduced several initiatives like inclusion of regional languages, such as Tamil, in critical examinations for the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), the Union Home Minister said prior to Mr Modi's tenure, candi-

dates could not take CAPF exams in their mother tongue, be it Tamil, Bengali or Kannada.

"Now, under the guidance and leadership of Mr Modi, candidates can write the CAPF exams and other exams in their regional languages, ensuring that no candidate is disadvantaged by language barriers," he asserted.

In this context, Mr Amit Shah urged Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin to introduce medicine and engineering courses in Tamil, a point which he had made it earlier, while attending a function in Chennai.

Offering these programs in the Tamil language will greatly benefit local students and make higher education more accessible, he noted.

"I have been advocating for the introduction of medicine and engineering courses in Tamil for the past two years, but no action has been taken so far", Mr Amit Shah said.

"I urge the Chief Minister to take necessary steps at least now and introduce medical and engineering courses in Tamil", he added.

To drive home his point, Mr Amit Shah said similar initiatives have already been implemented nationwide, allowing students to pursue courses in fields like medicine and engineering in their native languages, which helps in bridging educational gaps while ensuring greater inclusivity for students across India. Reiterating the ambitious goals set by Mr Modi, including transforming India into the world's third-largest economy by 2027 and establishing it as a fully developed nation by 2047, the Union Home Minister congratulated the CISF's pivotal role in safeguarding the national interests, which directly contributes to the realisation of these objectives.

PM Modi inaugurates and launches projects worth Rs 2580 crore in Silvassa

AGENCIES
SILVASSA, MAR 7

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday inaugurated and laid the foundation of various development works worth over Rs 2580 crore in Silvassa.

Located in Western India, Silvassa is the headquarters of the Dadra and Nagar Haveli district in the Union territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated the 450-bedded NAMO Hospital (Phase I), built at the cost of over Rs 460 crore, which will significantly strengthen healthcare services in the Union Territory.

Delimitation row : Stalin writes to present, former CMs of various States to join JAC



AGENCIES
CHENNAI, MAR 7

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Friday wrote to various State Chief Ministers and former CMs regarding the proposed delimitation exercise by the Union Government based on population and sought their formal consent and to nominate one senior representative from their party to the Joint Action Committee (JAC) to be formed to carry forward the battle and to create an awareness among the people. In a Demi-Official letter to them, Mr Stalin said in line with the resolution adopted at an All Party Meeting on March 5 chaired by him to discuss the issue resolving to for the JAC, he requested their formal consent to join the JAC comprising of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka in the South to West Bengal and Odisha in the east, Punjab in the North and second nomination of one senior representative from your party who can serve on the JAC and help coordinate this unified strategy. Reaching out to them with two requests, Mr Stalin said first "Your formal consent to join the JAC comprising of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka in the South to West Bengal and Odisha in the east, Punjab in the North and second nomination of one senior representative from your party who can serve on the JAC and help coordinate this unified strategy".

Mr Stalin said As an initial step towards unified action, he proposed to convene an inaugural meeting in Chennai on March 22, to chart the collective course forward. "This moment demands leadership and collaboration, rising above political differences and standing up for our collective good", he added. "What is at stake is not any abstract principle - it is our States' ability to secure rightful resources for development, to influence crucial policies on education and healthcare and to ensure our economic priorities receive due attention in the national agenda", the Chief Minister said.

10 missing Indian construction workers rescued in Israel

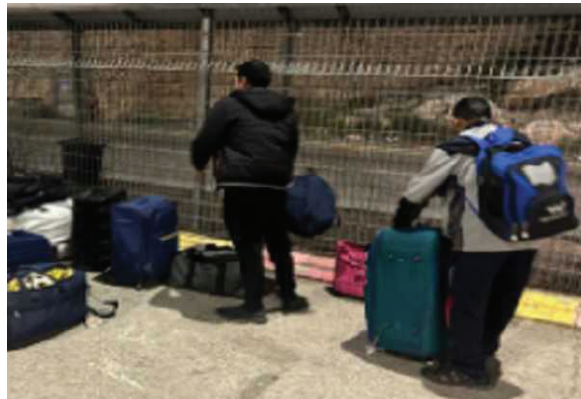
AGENCIES
TEL AVIV/NEW DELHI, MAR 7

Ten missing Indian construction workers were rescued after being trapped in the Palestinian Authority of al-Zaayem for a month.

Israel's Population and Immigration Authority announced that the 10 Indian workers were rescued on Wednesday night.

The workers had been lured to the al-Zaayem town with promises of work.

However, upon their arrival, their passports were stolen. The thieves sought to use the stolen passports to enter Israel. And without their passports, the workers could not return to Israel, an



Israeli website reported. The workers were trapped for about a month before their rescue.

The IDF had previously identified the fraudulent use of the stolen passports and returned them to their rightful owners.

Following the rescue, the workers were moved

to a safe location.

The Indian Embassy said on X that the matter is under investigation.

"Israeli authorities traced 10 missing Indian construction workers to West Bank & have brought them back to Israel.

"While the matter is still under investigation, the

Embassy is in touch with the Israeli authorities & have requested to ensure their safety & well-being."

Earlier this month, a 47-year-old man from Kerala was shot dead at the Israel-Jordan border while attempting to enter Israel illegally on February 10. He had come to Jordan on a three-month tourist visa.

The Indian national, identified as Ani Thomas Gabriel, was from Thiruvananthapuram's Thumba. He died of a bullet wound to the head, according to reports.

Another person from Kerala, Edison, a relative of Gabriel, was shot in his leg, and was sent back to India after getting treatment at a Jordanian hos-

pital.

According to reports, Gabriel and Edison were part of a four-member group attempting to cross the border from Jordan into Israel with the help of an agent. All four had arrived in Jordan on a three-month visit visa.

The group was intercepted by the Jordanian army at the border, but as they attempted to escape, the army opened fire at them.

In November 2023, Israel's construction sector had asked the government to allow companies to hire up to 100,000 workers from India to replace 90,000 Palestinians who lost their work permits since the start of the war.

Rahul Sahai terms Omar Abdullah's Budget as balanced, progressive

J NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 8

Rahul Sahai, Chairman of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Jammu Chapter, has lauded the budget presented by Hon'ble Chief Minister Jenab Omar Abdullah, calling it a well-balanced and growth-oriented financial plan that will accelerate the prosperity of Jammu & Kashmir. Sahai who attended the hon'ble Cm's budget presentation in J&K assembly in the gallery in a statement said "The budget reflects a strong commitment to industrial growth, tourism development, youth empowerment, and infrastructure expansion while ensuring inclusive economic progress".

Rahul Sahai appreciated the government's vision in promoting tourism by announcing key projects

such as the development of Ranjit Sagar Lake, the construction of a water park at Sidhra, the expansion of Jamboozoo, and the establishment of a state-of-the-art Convention Centre at Sidhra. These initiatives will enhance J&K's tourism potential, Specially Jammu's tourism circuit and create employment opportunities for the youth.

Sahai while welcoming a major boost to the MSME sector said that the budget proposes a Rs 50 crore allocation for an incubation centre, price preference for J&K-based MSMEs on the GEM portal, and expansion of the CGTMSE scheme under the RAMP initiative, which will significantly benefit small businesses. The proposal to develop a PM Unity Mall in Jammu for crafts and handicrafts is a welcome step that will empower local artisans and promote

"Brand J&K" on a national and global level.

The budget also takes a strong stance on industrial development, with a Rs 625 crore allocation to support new industries and infrastructure expansion in 64 industrial estates, with 46 more under development. The focus on streamlining SGST reimbursements, turnover incentives, and promoting sectors such as IT, renewable energy, and biotechnology will further strengthen the investment climate in the region. Mr. Sahai particularly welcomed the decision to constitute an Advisory Committee on Industry and Tourism, ensuring continuous dialogue between the government and stakeholders.

Education and skill development have been given due priority, with an ambitious plan to upgrade 40 high schools, establish 100 smart schools,



and launch a Rs 5 crore apprenticeship program to bridge the industry-academia gap. The proposal to establish a Skill and Entrepreneurship University is a commendable step toward fostering innovation and self-employment among the youth.

The healthcare sector has received a significant boost, with a doubling of the medical budget, the introduction of a Hi-Tech AI-based SEHAT App for tele-medical services, and

an allocation for 100 AI-powered X-ray machines to combat TB. The government's commitment to expedite work on the Homeopathy Medical College in Kathua, expand MBBS seats, and introduce a Healthcare Investment Policy reflects a holistic approach to strengthening healthcare services.

The sports sector has also been given a strong thrust, with the establishment of Khelo India Centres in Jammu and Srinagar, the creation of a National Training Centre for water sports in Basoli, and dedicated efforts to promote football across J&K. The government's focus on upgrading 247 playfields and 19 sports buildings will provide world-class sporting facilities for youth development.

In a move towards social welfare and inclusivity, the budget has

introduced free transport for women in government buses, including e-buses, and increased the girl marriage incentive from Rs 50,000 to Rs 75,000, a commendable step for women empowerment. The announcement of a new hydropower policy to reduce J&K's revenue deficit, the reduction of stamp duty on property transfers within blood relatives is a commendable decision, and an allocation of Rs 100 crore for the leather industry in Kashmir are pragmatic decisions that will spur economic activity and generate employment.

Rahul Sahai also welcomed the decision to allocate Rs 625 crore for industrial development and appreciated the government's commitment to sustainable development by declaring 2025 as the "J&K Green Mission Year." He further lauded

initiatives such as the PM Rural Home Scheme, a new mining surveillance system, and Rs 10 crore for the construction of new helipads to improve connectivity.

"This budget lays a strong foundation for Jammu & Kashmir's economic transformation, ensuring industrial growth, infrastructure development, and social welfare. The focus on MSMEs, tourism, healthcare, education, and sports reflects a comprehensive approach to inclusive development. I appreciate the government's efforts in making policy interventions that will significantly enhance the ease of doing business in J&K. The Indian Chamber of Commerce Jammu looks forward to working closely with the government to implement these initiatives for the benefit of the people of J&K," said Rahul Sahai.

J&K Police, Army conduct mock drill at Railway station Budgam

J NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07

To evaluate emergency response mechanisms and readiness in handling critical situations, Police with Army and other forces conducted a comprehensive mock drill exercise at Railway stations of Budgam and Muzhuma on Friday.

The mock drill was conducted under the supervision of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Budgam, Nikhil Borkar besides several officers were also present on the occasion.

A team of specialist officers of Budgam Police, CAPF, RPF, Fire, and emergency service also participated in the mock drill exercise, Police said

Cleanliness Drive held at GCW Udhampur under SAP

J NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR MARCH 07

To raise awareness on Swachhata among the students, the Swachhata Action Plan (SAP) Club, Department of Computer Application and NSS Unit of Government College for Women (GCW) Udhampur in collaboration with Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education (MGNCRE), Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource and Development, Government of India organized a cleanliness drive in the college campus here today.

The programme was organized under the able guidance and support of Prof. (Dr.) Nalini Pathania, Principal of the College, with the aim to inspire collective commitment towards cleanliness and environmental responsibility.



Earlier, the programme began with an enlightening speech by Prof. Rachna Bharti, Convener of SAP Club. Prof. Bharti emphasized on collective responsibility for improving the overall quality of life and preserving the environment. She highlighted the importance of such initiatives in making the campus more pleasant and beautiful. Prof. Sunil Magotra, Co-convener of SAP Club, effectively instructed the students.

Principal-in-charge Dr. Indu Khajuria congratulated the team for their

efforts and emphasized that cleanliness is not just a one-time activity but a habit that we all should adopt in our daily lives.

The cleanliness drive saw the enthusiastic participation of around 107 students, along with committee members and faculty from the Computer Department, including Dr. Rudrika Kalsotra, Ms. Akshi, and Mr. Parshotam Ji. The drive covered key areas of the campus, starting from the administrative block, moving through the Science block, new Geography block, Ground,

and concluding near the Canteen area.

For increased awareness, instructional posters were strategically placed at various locations around the college, accompanied by a feedback and suggestion link accessible via a barcode on the posters. Prof. Manju Bala played a crucial role in coordinating the students and ensuring the proper placement of these posters and effectively spreading the message.

Dr. Mool Raj, Head Department of Urdu, commended the team

for their dedication to the cleanliness drive on campus. He emphasized that maintaining a clean environment is essential for fostering a healthy and conducive learning atmosphere, and encouraged everyone to actively participate in such initiatives.

Dr. Om Parkash and Prof. Yash Kumar were instrumental in organizing the drive, with special support provided by N.S.S Program Officers Dr. Ajay Kumar and Prof. Shama Rani, along with N.S.S volunteers. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Prof. Pooja Bharti, expressing gratitude to all participants and supporters.

The initiative not only reinforced the importance of cleanliness but also fostered a sense of community and shared responsibility among the students and staff. - "A drive towards clean India"

Indian Army organizes Mixed Martial Arts, Self-Defense Training Program for Girls at GGPS, Ambaran, Akhnoor

J NEWS SERVICE
AKHNOOR: 07 MAR 2025

In a commendable initiative under Op Sadbhavana, the Indian Army has launched a 30-day Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) & Self-Defense Training Program at the Government Girls Primary School, Ambaran, Akhnoor. This specially designed program aims to empower young school girls with vital self-defense skills, enhance their fitness, and instil unshakable confidence. Focused on the principles of Women Empowerment and safety, the program covers various martial arts disciplines, including Karate, Jiu-Jitsu, Boxing, and other self-defense techniques. Under the guidance of professional trainers and with the full



support of the Indian Army, the participating students are receiving hands-on, practical training to prepare them for real-world scenarios.

The initiative not only equips the girls with physical skills but also fosters mental resilience, discipline, and teamwork. This program reflects the Indian Army's continuous commitment to community welfare and the holistic development of the region's youth, especially in empowering young girls

to face challenges with courage. Speaking on the occasion, Indian Army officials emphasized, "Empowering our young girls with self-defense skills is crucial in today's world. Through Op Sadbhavana, we are proud to contribute to their safety, self-reliance, and overall well-being." The Indian Army remains dedicated to such progressive community programs, reinforcing peace, development, and empowerment in the region.

Congress on "Back to Roots" Mission: Chhajju Ram will be remembered for honesty, simplicity: Karra

J NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Congress today organized an impressive function at PCC HQ, Jammu to remember former PCC President, Ex-Minister, Ex-Member Constituent Assembly Bhagat Chhajju Ram Ji on his 118th Birth Anniversary.

PCC President Tariq Hameed Karra charied the function while AICC General Secretary and CLP leader Shri G.A. Mir, Working President PCC Raman Bhalla, veteran leader former minister Sdr. Gurmukh Singh, Minister Smt. Suman Bhagat, Th. Balwan Singh, Ravinder Sharma, Ved Mahajan, Th. Balbir Singh, Rajnesh Sharma, Hari Singh Chib, Th. Manmohan Singh, Naresh Gupta, Dina Nath Bhagat, Krishan Chander Bhagat, Sdr. Gurdarshan Singh, Sham Lal Bhagat, T.S.Tony, Bhushan Dogra, Adv. Parveen Bhagat-Grandson of Bhagat Ji, Ashok Bhagat, Narinder Sharma, Suresh Dogra, Amrit Bali and several other prominent leaders were present on the occasion.

Paying rich tributes to the veteran leader, PCC President Tariq Hameed Karra recalled his services to the society and the party for a long time.

He is remembered today because of his honesty, integrity, values in politics and qualities of leadership. He was very popular amongst masses of all sections of society. He took care of his down trodden class of people and uplifted the weaker sections. He was MLA, MLC and minister for long time and worked for the welfare of common man. He served as President of J&K Pradesh Congress in 1970 to 1972 and the party was strengthened under his leadership.

PCC Chief said that despite being in power and in prime positions for a long time and having served as minister in the cabinet of different Chief Ministers office time, he had no house or wealth but his real wealth is the respect he commands even today amongst the common masses.

He said that the Congress has launched a programme to remember our forefathers and the veteran leaders of the party under the campaign "Back to Roots" Bzaurgoon Ka Samman whereby all veteran leaders shall be remembered and honoured who have contributed in the state and to the party.

AICC General Secretary and CLP leader Shri Ghulam Ahmed Mir paid



rich tributes to the veteran leader and recalled his service to the society and party with honesty, integrity and loyalty. He said Bhagat Chhajju Ram Ji was very popular among masses of all sections and was always available to the people.

He was a symbol of simplicity honesty and was down to earth. He was a dedicated and devoted leader of the party and always raised the problems of poor people especially weaker sections. Leaders like Bhagat Chhajju Ram live in hearts of people for their qualities of leadership and values of politics.

Veteran leader Sdr. Gurmukh Singh, he as associate of Bhagat Chhajju Ram Ji, remembered his contributions and qualities of leadership. He said Bhagat sahib was known as "Riyasati Gandhi" for his simplicity and honesty and commitment to the princi-

ples laid down in the public life by Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. He lauded the efforts of PCC for remembering such veteran leaders who contributed a lot in public life.

Working President Raman Bhalla paid floral tributes to Bhagat Sahib, and termed him a man of masses who was not only popular amongst his community but amongst all class of people. He was liked by all and was always available to the common man for help.

He said that Bhagat Chhajju Ram is remembered amongst the people with great respect which speaks of his popularity and qualities of leadership. He suggested that party should organize more functions amongst his people in the areas he represented for long time.

Th. Balwan Singh, a former legislator who was associate of Bhagat Sahab

in 1983 Assembly, recalled his qualities of leadership, especially to carry along the younger leadership of the time with him.

Former Minister Smt. Suman Bhagat, the daughter-in-law of Bhagat Chhajju Ram said that he encouraged her in politics which shows his commitment to women empowerment. He was always amongst the people till last. His grandson Advocate Parveen Bhagat also threw light about his simplicity, honesty and qualities of leadership.

Those who paid tributes to him include S/ Shri Dawarka Choudhary, Ch. Hussian Ali Wafa, H.S.Metha, Vijay Shastri, Rajveer Singh, Kapil Singh, Madan Chalotra, Ajay Lakhotra, Teja Singh, Jagdeep Singh, Sonu Dogra, Varinder Singh, Sat Pal Sapolia, Rajesh Sharma, Ricky Dalotra, Rajiv Saraf, Dewan Chand, Parveen Akhter, Anuradha Sharma, Michale Wazir, R.P. Mangotra, Th. Romal Singh, Sohiti Sharma, Jung Bhadur Sharma, Jatinder Bhagat, Gurmeet Singh, Parshotam Singh, Balwan Singh, Pardeep Bhagat, Som Nath Shamra, Rajinder Manhas, Rangeel Singh, Ashok Bhagat, Rinku, Latish Sharma, I.P Singh and others.

Massive investments, fair employment policies of Modi Govt boost economic growth: Suri

J NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Executive Member Raman Suri has lauded the BJP-led government at the Centre, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for its relentless efforts in reducing unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). He attributed this positive transformation to massive investments, transparent employment policies, and economic reforms that have revitalized various sectors.

Highlighting the findings of the latest Economic Survey Report, Suri emphasized that J&K is witnessing an era of unprecedented economic growth. He noted that the unemployment rate, which stood at 6.7% in 2019-20, has now declined to 6.1% in 2023-24, demonstrating a significant improvement in job opportunities across the region.

"The government's policies have created an environment where both the private and government sectors are flourishing. The rise in the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) to 64.3% and the Worker Population Ratio



(WPR) to 60.4% in 2023-24 is proof that employment opportunities are expanding," said Suri.

He further highlighted that 40,778 self-employment units have been established, generating jobs for nearly 1.16 lakh youth, and that 35.28 lakh unorganized workers have been registered on the e-Shram portal in the current financial year.

Suri expressed his satisfaction over the fact that women and youth in J&K are now opting for self-employment instead of solely relying on government jobs. "The government's economic policies are empowering people, leading to a self-reliant society," he stated.

The BJP leader also praised the Union gov-

ernment for boosting the per capita income in J&K, which has now surpassed Rs 1.5 lakh, outpacing neighboring states such as Punjab, Delhi, and Himachal Pradesh. He further highlighted the remarkable progress in the agriculture sector, with food production growing by over 7%, signifying self-sufficiency in the region.

"The Modi government's vision for Viksit Bharat is clearly visible in Jammu and Kashmir. Be it education, healthcare, tourism, industry, or communication, every sector is witnessing remarkable growth. These efforts will continue to ensure a prosperous future for the people of J&K," Raman Suri said.

Youth Talent Search celebrates Women's Day

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 8

Youth Talent Search, a Forum of prestigious Schools of Jammu celebrated Women's Day and Award Ceremony with great pomp and show at Polytechnic college, Bikram Chowk here today.

The programme commenced with the somber tradition of lighting the Lamp to evoke the blessings of the Goddess Saraswati. Ms. Prabha Jain, chairperson of New Era Environment High School in her Welcome Note extended a warm welcome to all the esteemed guests who graced the occasion. Ms. Indu Kanwal Chib, (Chair person, JKSSB) was the Chief Guest on the Occasion.

Keeping up the traditions Mrs Vasudha (MD Elite public high school Mrs Mala Sharma (Chairperson Elite public high school)



Mrs Anku Charak (Vice Principal Humanity Public School) Mrs Anita Ambardar (Principal Playway House School) Mrs Usha Jamwal (Principal BHMP) welcomed the guests with flower bouquets.

The event was also graced by the eminent personality, Ms. Shagun Manchanda (District Mission Coordinator, Mission Shakti Social Welfare Department) as the guest of honour.

Principals, teachers and students from the reputed schools like JK

Montessorie School, New Era Environmental high School, Alexander memorial school, Bikram memorial school, S.D Tarapuri school, Elite Public high School, Humanity Public School, Playway House, BHMP school, Lawrence public school participated in the function.

The participating teachers from the schools showcased their talent and put up scintillating dance performances, folk songs & skits. The multitalented teachers enthralled the audience and kept them spellbound throughout the function.

The Annual Report of YTS was read out by Mrs. Esther William, Principal Alexander Memorial School.

The honorable Chief Guest Mrs Indu Chib appreciated the YTS for providing a platform to the budding young minds to display their hidden talent. She expressed her satisfaction with the measures adopted by the skilled teachers for guiding the young children and equipping them to face the challenges of life and achieving excellence in diverse fields of their interests. She wished Good Luck to the teachers and the lead-

ers of YTS to scale greater heights in the Venture. She said youth talent search is doing a commendable job that it should be highlighted at the national level.

Rolling trophy in the memory of late Mrs Geeta Dixit was presented by Mr Ashok Dixit to Mrs Anku Charak, Vice Principal, Humanity public school.

Lifetime achievement award was presented to Mrs Rajni Gupta (Director JKMS) Ms. Neeru puri, principal S.D. Tarapuri, Mrs Usha Jamwal, principal BHMP Mrs Shivani Joshi, principal Lawrence school Sidhra for their contributions in the field of education.

In the end, the Vote of thanks was presented by Mrs. Rajni Gupta coordinator Youth talent search and Director JK Montessorie school talab Tillo. The function culminated with the singing of the National Anthem.

Indian Army organizes Awareness Lecture on Women Empowerment at Salani Poonch



JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH: 07 MAR 2025

The Indian Army organized an insightful lecture on women empowerment at Govt. Higher Secondary School, Salani, Poonch, aimed at raising awareness about various women empowerment schemes in rural Jammu and Kashmir. The session emphasized that the empowerment of women is crucial for building a better future. When women are empow-

ered, society as a whole is empowered, paving the way for progress and prosperity. The lecture highlighted several government initiatives aimed at achieving this goal, including the National Policy of Education, the National Commission for Women, Balika Samridhi Yojana, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the National Programme for Education of Girls at the Elementary Level, the Swayam, Sidha Women Empowerment Pro-

gramme. A special focus was also placed on encouraging women's participation in the Armed Forces and CAPF via various schemes. The girls in attendance expressed their appreciation for the Indian Army's efforts to educate them about these vital programs, recognizing that knowledge gained will significantly improve their outlook on life and contribute to a higher standard of living in the long run.

Rattan lauds CM Omar Abdullah's visionary, historical people friendly balanced Budget

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Advocate Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), today praised the Rs 1.12 lakh-crore budget presented by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, describing it as a visionary and historical financial plan that aligns with the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"This budget is a testament to our government's commitment to fulfilling the promises outlined in our party's manifesto," said Gupta. "It comprehensively addresses the needs of various segments of society, including farmers, industrialists, women, youth, traders, and the

common man."

In a press release issued here today, the senior NC leader said that the budget allocates Rs 815 crore to promote a two-crop pattern, expand horticulture, enhance wool processing, and develop the leather tanning industry, initiatives expected to generate approximately 2.88 lakh jobs, significantly boosting the agricultural sector. Additionally, Rs 390.20 crore is dedicated to enhancing tourism infrastructure, including increasing home stays, promoting water sports, developing Sonmarg as a winter sports destination, constructing a new water park in Sidhra, and positioning Basholi as an adventure tourism hub.

The Provincial President also welcomed the



decision of Omar Govt for providing 200 units of free electricity and increase 10 Kg ration per person per month from 5 Kg for AAY families in Jammu and Kashmir, aiming to reducing the financial burden on AAY families and ensuring access to essential services enhancement of financial assistance from Rs 50000 to Rs 75000 for the marriage of daughter of a poor family. He also welcomed the move of Omar Govt to empower women by announcing free travel for women on government-operated public transport,

including e-buses, starting April 1, 2025, aiming to promote women's mobility and empowerment across the region. Infrastructure development is also a priority, with plans to construct 500 new Pan-chayat Ghars to strengthen local governance and infrastructure, ensuring that grassroots democratic institutions are well-supported. Furthermore, a new film policy has been introduced to establish Jammu and Kashmir as a prime destination for film production and eco-tourism, potentially creating new employment opportunities and boosting the local economy, he added. Establishment of National Law University, skill and entrepreneurs university. Increase in old age Pension etc. Rattan Lal Gupta

emphasized that these initiatives reflect the Omar government's dedication to equitable development and the empowerment of all citizens. He reiterated the JKNC's commitment to restoring the region's dignity and constitutional rights, ensuring a prosperous and secure future for its people. Free stamp duty for the gift deed of blood relations and resolving the burning issue of unemployment by initiating the employment process by giving jobs to youth.

"The Omar Abdullah-led government remains resolute in its mission to restore the respect, dignity, and constitutional rights of Jammu and Kashmir, ensuring a prosperous and secure future for its people," he added.

Grand Maha Shivratri bhandara organized at Jammu University Campus

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7



The students and scholars of Jammu University, under the chairmanship of Dr. Vikas Sharma, Coordinator Jammu District and Zonal Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), organized a grand Shivratri Bhandara at Nag Mandir near Boys Hostel, Jammu University, here today. Which was inaugurated by Jenab Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, who was chief guest and presided over by Former Minister and Zonal President JKNC Babu Rampaul.

Ex-MLA Qazi Jalal-Ud-Din, and Provincial Joint Secretary JKNC, Ankush Abrol were the guests of honor.

The religious and community event witnessed the presence of prominent political figures, students, and scholars, marking a significant occasion of spiritual and social harmony.

Addressing the gathering, Jenab Nasir Aslam wani lauded the efforts of the students and organizers for fostering communal harmony

and upholding the rich cultural traditions of the region. He highlighted the importance of such gatherings in strengthening societal bonds and promoting interfaith unity. He especially lauded Dr Vikas Sharma, who leads the organizing committee every year on the occasion of Maha Shivratri. Celebration of such festivals joining hands together brings mutual love, bonding and respect for one another, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Babu Rampaul emphasized the role of youth in preserving cultural heritage and promoting values of service and togetherness. He appreciated the active participation of the student community in organizing the bhandara, which, he stated, was a testament to their commitment to

social welfare and tradition. Besides, few journalists were also honoured on this occasion and Vikshay Vashist was delivered the welcome address; Gourav Partap Singh, University President NSF was delivering the vote of thanks.

A large number of students, scholars, and devotees gathered at the venue to take part in the spiritual celebrations.

Other prominent present on the occasion include Mr Davinder Sharma, Abhishek Uppal, Lovesh Bharat, Ishtyaq ahmed, Ankush Sharma, Muneeb ul islam, Nisharat Ali, Pankaj Sharma, Sourav Thakur, Sahil Kermi, Rahul Gupta, Cheetan Singh, Babu, Gourav Bhagat, Nikhal parihaar, Veer, Vikas sharma, Sahil sharma, Ankush babu and others.

IIM Jammu hosts ISYEP and IIT Jammu E-SDP Participants for an Educational Visit



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 8

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu, under the leadership of Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, hosted participants from the Inter State Youth Exchange Program (ISYEP), organized under Nehru Yuva Sangathan, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Government of India, along with participants from the IIT Jammu Advanced Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (E-SDP) for an educational visit. The initiative aimed to provide participants with insights into management education, career opportunities, and the entrepreneurial ecosystem at IIM Jammu. The ISYEP participants represented five districts of Haryana-

Mahendragarh, Rewari, Gurugram, Sonapat, and Hajar-bringing together a diverse group of young minds eager to explore opportunities in management education and entrepreneurship. A total of 25 ISYEP participants in the first half, followed by 25 participants from IIT Jammu's E-SDP program, embarked on a comprehensive campus tour, beginning at the Grand Reception Area. They explored key landmarks such as the Clock Tower, Courtyard, Nalanda Library, Smart Classrooms, Mandapam Auditorium, and the Vedanta MDP Block, gaining first hand exposure to IIM Jammu's world-class infrastructure and academic excellence.

There was an interactive career counselling

session, where participants received valuable insights into future career opportunities, admission pathways to IIMs and IITs, and strategic career planning. The session witnessed enthusiastic engagement, with students actively participating and posing insightful questions about their aspirations and academic prospects. A special session on Entrepreneurship offerings at DST ITBI IIM Jammu was conducted by Chief Innovation Officer, IIM Jammu for participants from the IIT Jammu Advanced Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (E-SDP) and Chief Innovation Officer, Srinagar for the participants from the Inter State Youth Exchange Program (ISYEP), organized under Nehru Yuva

Sangathan, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Government of India. The session provided participants with key insights into the startup ecosystem, innovation, and entrepreneurship, encouraging them to explore opportunities in the evolving business landscape. By engaging with young minds through such initiatives, IIM Jammu reaffirms its commitment to nurturing future leaders and entrepreneurs. The institute continues to play a pivotal role in fostering skill development, innovation, and career aspirations among youth across India. The visit was coordinated and executed by the PR team and the Centre for Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Skill Development, IIM Jammu.

PDP slams J&K budget, calls 200-Unit free power promise an election gimmick

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 07

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Friday criticized the Jammu and Kashmir budget for 2025-26, accusing the National Conference (NC) of failing to deliver on its election promise of providing 200 units of free electricity to every household. The PDP said the government had assured 200 units of free electricity for every household, creating hopes among the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"However, the budget announcement proves that their promise was nothing more than an election gimmick," PDP said in its first reaction to the Budget.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in his budget speech announced 200 units of free electricity for Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families.

The Opposition PDP said by limiting this benefit only to AAY ration card holders, the government has effectively excluded the vast majority of the population.

Fitness Walk held at CU Jammu as part of Women's Day Celebration

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Women's day which is celebrated globally to educate society on the remarkable women's rights movement while celebrating the cultural, political, and socio-economical achievements of women and girls was observed in the university campus of Central University of Jammu by organising a Fitness Rally on 7 March, 2025.

Organised under the aegis of Directorate of Physical Education, the rally witnessed overwhelming participation of women faculty, staff, students and researchers to observe the clarion call of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi ji to fight obesity and to have balanced physical activity, fitness regime to build a healthy nation.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sanjeev Jain flagged off the rally in the presence of Registrar, Prof. Yashwant Singh, Deans of



various schools and heads. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Vandana Sharma, Director, underscored how CU Jammu campus exemplifies gender parity and women-led development under the visionary leadership of Prof. Jain. The Vice Chancellor congratulated the participants of the fitness rally and said that as a staunch votary of accelerating gender parity he ensures gender equality and gender equity. The enthusiastic participants of the fitness rally deliberated

over the history of women's day and discussed how women's role in nation building has been exemplary. This day marked a call to action for highlighting the ongoing efforts for continued advocacy and action worldwide. Registrar, Prof. Yashwant Singh, the Assistant Director, Dr. Sudhakar, Dr. Kiran and team from Sports Authority of India, Mr. Touseef Ahmed and Mr. Parteeek Kumar also participated in the event.

IIM Jammu Inaugurates Epyrean 2025 – A Celestial Odyssey

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu under the leadership of Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu inaugurated its flagship cultural festival, Epyrean 2025 - A Celestial Odyssey, at its Jagti Campus. The three-day festival, running from 7th to 9th March 2025, promises a spectacular celebration of music, dance, fashion, and artistic expression, uniting students and artists from across the country in a vibrant cultural extravaganza.

The star-studded lineup for Epyrean 2025 features some of the most celebrated names in the entertainment industry, including Playback Singer Jubin Nautiyal, Music Composer and Performer Rauhan Malik, and electrifying sets by DJ Carnivore & DJ HOLY C. Alongside these exhilarating performances, the festival showcases a diverse range of competitions and activities, including Battle of Bands, Street Battles, a Gaming Arena, a Fashion Show, Cultural Performances, and a variety of food stalls and experiences.

Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, highlighted that Epyrean 2025 is more than just a cultural festival; it is a confluence of talent, creativity, and passion. He emphasized



IIM Jammu's commitment to fostering holistic development and nurturing the cultural vibrancy of its students. He expressed that with a dynamic lineup of performances and competitions, Epyrean 2025 is set to be an unforgettable experience for everyone.

The inaugural event commenced with a traditional lamp lighting ceremony, marking the grand opening of the much-anticipated festival.

Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean Academics, IIM Jammu, emphasized the spirit of creativity and discipline, highlighting that the event embodies fun and creativity at its best. He noted that the grand beginning sets the tone for an even grander festival and encouraged everyone to enjoy every moment while maintaining discipline and upholding the institute's name. He extended his best wishes to all participants.

Cmdr. Kesavan Baskaran, CAO, IIM Jammu, encouraged students to embrace the festival's energy while upholding the values of IIM Jammu. He emphasized that the institute belongs to the students and urged them to interact with their peers, enjoy the event to the fullest, and maintain discipline. He extended his best wishes for an exciting and memorable Epyrean 2025.

The event also featured performances by State Awardee Suraj Singh, Shri Romalo Ram (Padmashri), Dogri Folk Singer and Ms. Sars Bharti, Dogri Singer along with their group.

As the countdown to the main events begins, anticipation is at an all-time high for Epyrean 2025 - A Celestial Odyssey. With a dynamic fusion of culture, passion, and entertainment, the festival is set to be the biggest cultural spectacle of the year at IIM Jammu.

Indian Army conducts Medical Outreach at Gursai, Poonch

J I NEWS SERVICE
POONCH: 07 MAR 2025

As part of its continuous efforts to provide support to remote communities, Indian Army carried out a comprehensive Medical Patrol in the Gursai region of Poonch, focusing on the Gujjar and Bakarwal populations. This initiative brought critical medical assistance to areas otherwise cut off from essential healthcare services. This outreach is an integral part of the Indian Army's broader mission to improve the quality of life for communities in remote and underserved areas. By focusing on the needs of these isolated villages, the Indian Army ensures that even the most marginalized populations have access to basic healthcare, reinforcing its unwavering commitment to their well-being, irrespective of their geographic location. The primary goal of the medical patrol was to offer immediate medical care, which included routine health check-ups, treatment for common ailments, and the distribution of vital



medications. Additionally, the Indian Army's team of medical professionals provided crucial preventive healthcare services, including immunizations and awareness programs on hygiene, nutrition, and disease prevention. The impact of this medical outreach has been profound, as local communities often face substantial challenges in accessing healthcare due to geographic and logistical barriers. This initiative has not only helped alleviate immediate health con-

cerns but has also played a pivotal role in reducing healthcare disparities, contributing to improved health outcomes for the local population. The response from the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities has been overwhelmingly positive. Beyond its medical benefits, the initiative has fostered greater trust and cooperation between the Indian Army and local residents, strengthening the bond between the two and reinforcing a shared sense of solidarity.

Indian Army conducts Basic Computer Course for Young Girls at Sunail, Akhnoor



J I NEWS SERVICE
AKHNOOR: 07 MAR 2025

Continuing its commitment to community development and empowerment under Op Sadbhavana, the Indian Army successfully conducted a Basic Computer Course for 20 young girls from village Sunail in the Akhnoor sector. The initiative aimed at enhancing digital literacy and providing essential computer skills to the youth, empowering them for better educational and career opportunities. The comprehensive training programme covered fundamental computer operations, internet usage, and basic software applications. Upon successful completion, the participants were

awarded certificates under the National Computer Literacy Programme (NCLP), marking a significant step towards bridging the digital divide in remote areas. This initiative is a part of the Indian Army's sustained efforts to promote education, skill development and self-reliance among the local population in Jammu & Kashmir. The villagers expressed their gratitude for the Army's continuous support in uplifting the youth and fostering a brighter, self-sufficient future. The Indian Army remains steadfast in its resolve to contribute to nation-building projects, ensuring that the benefits of technology and education reach every corner of the region.

Blood Donation Camp for Thalassemia Patients organized at SMVDU

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 8

NCC and NSS units of SMVDU, Katra, in collaboration with the J&K Thalassemia Welfare Society, successfully organized a blood donation camp at the SMVDU campus. This event united community members in support of a life-saving cause. The camp was organised by Dr. Varun Dutta, NCC Coordinator, SMVDU and Dr. Rajiv Kumar, NSS Coordinator, and supported by Dr. Pallav Sharma from the Medical Aid Centre, SMVDU. The initiative witnessed an impressive turnout. Dr. Rasmi from GMC, Jammu, oversaw and provided essential support at a blood donation camp. Sixty students and staff members from the University generously donated blood during the camp, showcasing acts of kindness and solidarity. This altruistic gesture holds the potential to significantly impact the lives of numerous individuals combating Thalassemia, a genetic blood disorder. Furthermore, LG Electron-



ics, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, supported this Mega Blood Donation Drive in collaboration with Saksham Bharti Foundation and J&K Thalassemia Welfare Society. The event was spearheaded by Mr. Mukteesh Sharma and Mr. Tejas Thussu from LG Electronics, along with Sudhir Sethi from J&K Thalassemia Welfare Society. Er. Sudhir Sethi, President of J&K Thalassemia Welfare Society, Jammu, emphasized the vital role of regular blood donation camps for Thalassemia patients, highlighting the growing need for blood due to frequent transfusions

required by many patients. He urged the community to actively participate in mitigating the sufferings of Thalassemia children and preventing the birth of such children through genetic counseling and proper antenatal advice. Vice Chancellor, SMVDU, Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, commended the organizing team's efforts, emphasizing that blood donation is not merely an act of kindness but a lifeline for those in need. He underscored the profound impact of collective action, illustrating how each donation represents a ray of hope for individuals bravely facing Thalassemia.

HDFC Bank, Indian Army & CSC Academy expand Project NAMAN to 26 new locations to support Army Veterans and their families

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, India Army and CSC e-Governance have renewed the MoU to expand Project NAMAN - A Tribute to Veterans to 26 Directorate of Indian Army Veterans (DIAV) locations. Project NAMAN is designed to provide support and services to Army Veterans, their families and next of kins.

These CSC Centres, which will be operated by Army Veterans or their families or next of kins are dedicated to offer pension related services, Government to Citizen (G2C) services and Business to Consumer (B2C) services at their doorsteps within defence establishments itself. A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was renewed between HDFC Bank Limited (under Parivartan programme), Indian Army's Directorate of Indian Army Veterans (DIAV) and CSC Academy.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Satyen Modi, Executive Vice President and Business Head, Alternate Banking Channels & Partnerships - HDFC Bank, Mr. Pravin Chandekar, CEO-CSC Academy and Brigadier, Directorate of Indian Army Veterans in the presence of Ms. Smita Bhagat, Group Head - HDFC Bank, Mr. Sanjay Rakesh, Chairman - CSC Academy, Lieutenant General, DG (DC&W) - Indian Army and esteemed dignitaries from the Indian Army, HDFC Bank

and other senior officials.

In the second phase, the project will be expanded to 26 DIAV locations across Rajasthan, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Jammu &

Kashmir, Meghalaya, Bihar, Odisha and New Delhi. The first phase of the project was flagged off in September 2023 with the establishment of Common Service Centres (CSCs) at 14 DIAV locations. HDFC Bank under its

Parivartan programme, supports in building economic inclusiveness for defence service veterans and their next of kin. Similar to the 14 DIAV locations, the new centres will also provide skill development and train-

ing across financial products and services, helping the veterans and their next of kin to be financially independent. The individuals managing the CSCs will be paid a monthly monetary grant for initial 12 months.



Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
Office of the Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) J&K
Phone No: 0191-2586218 (Jammu), 0194-2468116 (Srinagar)
(Email id: relief-comm@jk.gov.in)

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for information of all the migrants that to ease process of their enrolment in Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana-Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY-AB), this office in consultation with the State Health Agency, J&K and District Administration, Jammu, has authorized below mentioned Common Service Centres (CSCs) for availing services under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana-Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY-AB):

S No	Area	Name of CSC	Name of CSC Operator	Contact No
1	TalabTillo/Bohri	Indrakshi Consultancy Services	Ashok Kumar Tickoo	9596665000
2	Durga Nagar	Sehuliyat Center	Kunal Dogra	7889353492
3	Gandhi Nagar	Satguru Common Services Centre	Neelam Devi	7051379385
4	Muthi	Gupta Communication	Arush Gupta	9797663139
5	Jagti/ Nagrota	Sunny Tech	Raju Shah	9697374799

All eligible migrants are informed to avail this opportunity to secure healthcare coverage under PMJAY-AB. Further, for any information/clarification regarding Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana-Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY-AB), may contact on below mentioned numbers:

- 9484320655
- 9484320657

The status of Ayushman Cards issued can also be checked on <https://beneficiary.nha.gov.in>.

No: RRCM/Estt/2025/656
Dt: 06.03.2025

Sd/
(Dr. Arvind Karwani), JKAS
Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M)
J&K.

DIP/J-10807/24
Date: 7-3-25

Six booked in Budgam for misuse of social media to glorify terrorism: Police

J I NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 7

Jammu and Kashmir police on Friday booked six individuals in Budgam district of central Kashmir for creating fake accounts and allegedly sharing content that glorified terrorism.

Police said the action was taken to prevent the misuse of social media platforms which had the potential to disturb public peace and incite disrup-

tive activities. Police identified the six individuals as Hilal Ahmad Dar of Sholipora, Owais Ahmad Khan of Soibugh Daharmuna, Suhail Ahmad Sheikh of Batpora, Umar Shafi Sofi of Ompora, Mohammad Amir Khan, of Ichkoot and Shahid Mir, of Sheikhpura Chatterhama, Budgam.

"These individuals were found using fake social media accounts to propagate misleading and unlawful content. Legal

action has been initiated against them as per the preventive detention laws," police said. Budgam Police has strongly urged all social media users to act responsibly and refrain from posting or sharing illegal, misleading, or disruptive content.

"Strict legal action under relevant sections of law will be taken against anyone found violating social media guidelines," police said.

Notice

My name and my father has been wrongly written as Sunil Lama S/o Pasang Lama instead of Sunil Kumar S/o Pashan Lamma in JK BANK Passbook account no. 0116040150000619. Now I am applying for correction of the same. Objection, if any, may be conveyed to concerned authorities within 7 days.

Sunil Kumar
S/o Pashan Lamma
R/o 49 Marakhari
Jammu City, P.O.
Gangyal Distt Jammu

PDF Chairman Hakeem Yaseen slams CM Omar Abdullah's budget as misleading, deceptive

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 7

People's Democratic Front (PDF) chairman Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen on Friday strongly criticized Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for what he termed as a "misleading and deceptive" budget that has ignored the majority of Jammu and Kashmir's population.

In a statement issued to the media, Yaseen said that the Rs 1.12 lakh crore budget presented by CM Omar Abdullah for the fiscal year 2025-26 has completely neglected the key concerns of the common people. He said Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) is betraying public trust by offering selective relief that does not address the broader economic hardships faced by the people of the region.

"It is unfortunate that the ruling government has chosen to deceive the people of Jammu and



Kashmir once again. The budget lacks a holistic approach and fails to provide relief to a significant portion of the population," Yaseen said.

Criticizing the government's focus on AAY families alone, he added, "Providing relief to only AAY beneficiaries while ignoring the rest of the population is nothing but an attempt to mislead the people. This is a classic case of selective appeasement that does not address the deep-rooted economic distress faced by the majority," the senior PDF leader said.

Yaseen also lambasted the government's announcement of 200 units of free electricity for AAY families, calling

it an inadequate measure. "This so-called relief is nothing but eyewash. We demand that the government completely waive off the electricity bills for all households up to 200 units, irrespective of category. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have suffered enough due to the economic downturn and high living costs," he said.

Furthermore, PDF leader said that government is making grand announcements without concrete financial backing. "Where are the resources to implement these schemes effectively?"

"The government has made promises, but we have seen in the past how many of these remain on paper. The people need real solutions, not empty rhetoric."

Expressing disappointment over the lack of support for the working class and small businesses, Yaseen said, "There is no substantial relief for traders, farmers, and daily

wage workers who are struggling due to inflation and unemployment. The budget is heavily dependent on central assistance, yet fails to introduce strong measures to boost the local economy and create sustainable employment."

The PDF chairman also criticized the government's failure to address key infrastructure concerns and lack of clarity on major development projects.

"Announcing universities and legal institutions is one thing, but what about the crumbling roads, power crisis, and failing healthcare system? This budget does not address the fundamental development issues that the people face every day."

Yaseen said that people must not be fooled by grandstanding. We will continue to raise our voice against these misleading policies and fight for a fair and just economic policy that benefits all, he added.

SMVDU hosts Two Day Online Workshop on Design Thinking

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 8

The Two-Day Workshop on Design Thinking, Critical Thinking, and Innovation Design successfully concluded at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU). Held online, the workshop aimed to equip participants with vital skills in problem-solving, creativity, and innovation. The workshop was coordinated by Dr. Mir Irfan Ul Haq, Associate Professor, SME and Prof. Ankush Anand (Coordinator, Bachelor of Design) and jointly organized by the Institute Innovation Council (IIC), SMVDU, and the SMVDU Technology Business Incubation Center (TBIC), the workshop attracted over 80+ participants, including students, entrepreneurs, designers, and aspiring innovators from across India such as UIET Kathua, JMI New Delhi, Central University of Rajasthan, IUST

Awantipora, Jammu University, Delhi Technological University, and Galgotia University. The workshop featured a distinguished panel of resource persons who delivered enriching sessions throughout the two-day event. Dr. Sumer Singh, Department of Design, IIT Delhi, Dr. Dinesh Singh, Mechanical Engineering Department, NIT Srinagar, Mr. Abhilash Kumar Braroo, Associate Project Manager, JKEDI, Dr. Deepshika, Department of Design, JMI, New Delhi, Dr. Taruna Singh, Department of Design, DTU, New Delhi and Mr. Nandeesh M, Lead UX Designer and Design Thinking Expert, SAP Labs India. The event provided a comprehensive approach to integrating Design Thinking, Critical Thinking, and Innovation Design methodologies, giving attendees valuable insights into applying these concepts to real-world challenges. Prof.

Ashutosh Vashistha President Institute Innovation Council (IIC) SMVDU, Dr. Sanjay Mohan Sharma, CEO SMVDU TBIC, Prof. A.K Das, Dean R&D and Dr. Sanjeev Anand (Assoc. Dean R&D) in their address to participants informed that SMVDU is committed to continuing such initiatives, ensuring that future innovators and leaders are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the ever-evolving world of design and technology and thanked Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, SMVDU for his support and appreciation for organizing such events and his academic leadership. Pertinently SMVDU has started a four year program on Bachelor of Design and is the only university in J&K UT to offer the program. Ms. Tanshiqa Bhati from the Bachelor of Design carried out the proceedings of the program.

SMVDU, conducts One-Week (online) Short Term Course on "Factory of Future: Present and Future Perspectives"
JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 8

One-Week (online) Short Term Course on "Factory of Future: Present and Future Perspectives" (Funded by PM-USHA Scheme, Govt. of India) is organized by School of Mechanical Engineering. This course is funded under the PM-USHA Scheme, a flagship initiative designed to promote skill development and foster innovation in cutting-edge technologies. In this session various experts from academia and industry such as Prof. Niraj Sinha, IIT Kanpur; Prof. Velagapudi Vasu, NIT Warangal; Mr. Jitendra Kumar, Sr. Manager, BHEL Bhopal; Prof. Sunil Jha, IIT Delhi; Prof. Manupati Vijaya Kumar, IIM Mumbai; Prof. Somashekhar S. Hiremath, IIT Madras have delivered a talk on STP. Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, SMVDU grace the occasion as patron who gave emphasize on the requirement of AI in manufacturing sectors.

GCW Udhampur organizes Symposium on 'Role of Women in Building Society'

JI NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR MARCH 7

The Department of Urdu, Government College for Women (GCW), Udhampur under the aegis of IQAC organized a Symposium on the theme "MUASHRE KI TAAMEER MEIN KHAWATEEN KA KIRDAR" (Role of Women in Building Society) at College Campus here on today.

The program was organized under the able guidance of the Principal Dr. Nalini Pathania and under the supervision of HOD Urdu Dr. Mool Raj.

The objective of the symposium was to discuss the role of women in building society, identify challenges faced by women in their pursuit of societal development and strategies for promoting women's empowerment.

I/C Principal of the College, Dr. Indhu Khajuria was the Chief Guest on the occasion, in her speech congratulate Department of Urdu for organizing such events. She highlighted



the various contributions women make, including their roles as caregivers, nurturers, and pillars of support for their families and communities.

Earlier, the programme began with the formal welcome address by Dr. Mool Raj, HOD Urdu. In his address he discussed the challenges faced by women, including gender-based violence, discrimination, and stereotyping. Dr. Raj emphasized the need for promoting education, providing economic opportunities, ensuring healthcare, and addressing violence to empower women.

A total of 10 students from various semesters

participated in the competition. The participants were from different Linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The competition was judged by a panel of 02 experts including, Dr. Om Prakash (Asst. Prof. Sanskrit and Dr. Mool Raj (HoD Urdu).

The judges evaluated the participants based on their content, delivery and overall impact. Sakshi Thakur (6th Sem) bagged first position, Sadia Akhter (4th Sem) stood second and Saniya Akhter (6th Sem), Nazia Akhter (4th Sem) secured third position respectively.

The proceedings of the event were carried out by

Dr. Sareer Ahmad Bhat (Lecturer Urdu). Dr. Bhat concluded by emphasizing the importance of recognizing and celebrating the achievements of women and working towards empowering them to reach their full potential.

The symposium on the role of women in building society was informative, thought-provoking, and inspiring. It highlighted the significance of women's contributions to societal development and emphasized the need for empowering women to reach their full potential. The event provided a platform for discussing the critical role of women in building society and identifying strategies for promoting women's empowerment.

The programme concluded with the vote of thanks by Dr. Sareer Ahmad Bhat. He extended his gratitude to the teaching, non-teaching staff, students and dignitaries for their contribution to the success of the event.

Indian Army conducts Basic Computer Course for Young Girls at Sunail, Akhnoor



JI NEWS SERVICE
AKHNOOR: 07 MAR 2025

Continuing its commitment to community development and empowerment under Op Sadbhavana, the Indian Army successfully conducted a Basic Computer Course for 20 young girls from village Sunail in the Akhnoor sector. The initiative aimed at enhancing digital literacy and providing essential computer skills to the youth, empowering them for better educational and career opportunities. The comprehensive training programme covered fundamental computer operations, internet usage, and basic software applications. Upon successful completion, the participants were

awarded certificates under the National Computer Literacy Programme (NCLP), marking a significant step towards bridging the digital divide in remote areas. This initiative is a part of the Indian Army's sustained efforts to promote education, skill development and self-reliance among the local population in Jammu & Kashmir. The villagers expressed their gratitude for the Army's continuous support in uplifting the youth and fostering a brighter, self-sufficient future. The Indian Army remains steadfast in its resolve to contribute to nation-building through such welfare projects, ensuring that the benefits of technology and education reach every corner of the region.

Seven-Day Special NSS Camp at CSU concludes



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

The seven-day special camp of the National Service Scheme (NSS) concluded successfully at Central Sanskrit University, Shri Ranbir Campus, Kot Bhalwal.

The chief guest, Ms. Anshu Sharma (SOTTO, Government Super Speciality Hospital, Jammu), delivered an awareness lecture on organ and tissue transplantation. She emphasized the significance of organ donation and dispelled common misconceptions related to it.

Associate Director of the campus, Prof. Satish Kumar Kapoor, delivered an inspirational speech, encouraging the youth to actively participate in social ser-

vice and highlighting the importance of NSS initiatives.

NSS Program Officer, Mr. Maninder Singh, presented the report on the seven-day special camp. Technical support for the event was provided by Ms. Tirupati Bala, Mr. Akhil Sharma, and Ms. Neha Chaudhary.

Program Coordinator, Dr. Gopal Verma, expressed gratitude to all participants, faculty members, and staff who contributed to making the seven-day camp meaningful and impactful. The event was attended by NSS volunteers and faculty members of the campus.

The program was hosted by Ms. Kalpana Sharma, a student from the Shiksha Shastra Department.

Rekha Mahajan highlights Modi Govt's commitment to affordable, high-quality medicines

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 7

On the occasion of Jan Aushadhi Diwas, senior BJP leader Rekha Mahajan underscored the Modi government's unwavering commitment to ensuring high-quality, affordable medicines for all citizens, aligning with the vision of building a healthier and fitter India.

In this regard, Rekha Mahajan visited a Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) Kendra and purchased packs of Janushadhi Suvidha' oxo-biodegradable sanitary napkins, available at a nominal price of Rs 1 per pad, with an aim to raise awareness among women about affordable menstrual hygiene products. She also interacted with beneficiaries, highlighting the pivotal role of such initiatives in providing quality generic medicines at affordable prices.



Emphasizing the transformative impact of PMBJP, Rekha Mahajan stated that the scheme has revolutionized India's healthcare system with its mantra of "Achi Bhi, Sasti Bhi," ensuring the availability of high-quality, affordable medicines. This initiative addresses the critical need for accessible healthcare, particularly for marginalized and economically disadvantaged communities. By offering generic medicines at prices 50-90% lower than branded alternatives, the scheme has significantly reduced

out-of-pocket healthcare expenses for countless families. Expressing satisfaction with the availability and affordability of essential medicines, she remarked, "The Modi government's dedication to healthcare is evident through initiatives like the PMBJP. By making high-quality medicines accessible to all, we are taking substantial steps toward a healthier India."

Rekha Mahajan highlighted the remarkable growth of PMBJP, noting that over 15,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras have been established across the

country as of January 31, 2025. Notably, more than 35% of these centers are operated by women entrepreneurs, reflecting the scheme's empowerment dimension. The widespread network ensures that affordable medicines reach even the remotest corners of India, embodying the government's commitment to universal healthcare.

Rekha Mahajan also asked the women folk to actively participate in the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) by opening and operating Jan Aushadhi Kendras. She highlighted that over 35% of these centers are already managed by women entrepreneurs, reflecting the scheme's empowerment potential. She emphasized that such involvement not only promotes affordable healthcare but also fosters women's entrepreneurship and economic independence.

GDC Thathri organizes Awareness Lecture on "Viksit Bharat"



JI NEWS SERVICE
THATHRI, FEB 7

The NSS Unit of Government Degree College (GDC) Thathri organized an awareness lecture on Viksit Bharat under the guidance of Principal Dr. Javed Iqbal. The event aimed to educate students about India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047 and inspire them to contribute actively to nation-building. The lecture highlighted the importance of education, innovation, sustainability, and social responsibility in achieving this ambitious goal. Faculty members, NSS volunteers, and students

participated enthusiastically, engaging in meaningful discussions about the nation's growth trajectory. The session covered key aspects of Viksit Bharat, including government policies, the role of youth in driving progress, and focus areas such as self-reliance, science and technology, environmental sustainability, and research. An interactive segment allowed students to share their perspectives and seek guidance on career opportunities and government schemes. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by the faculty, who appreciated the insightful discussions and encouraged students to play an active role in shaping a prosperous and self-reliant India by 2047. Let me know if you'd like me to tweak anything!

NC reneged on pre-poll promises, Jammu division disappointed with budget: Shiv Sena

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 7

Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit today expressed its reaction on the Jammu and Kashmir Budget 2025-26, accused the NC of running away from election promises and disappointing the temporary employees, daily wagers as well as the

people of Jammu division. In a press release issued from the party's state central office, state chief Manish Sahni said that free travel in e-bus for women and increase in marriage amount is a welcome step. But not giving any relief on the demands of temporary employees and daily wagers is disappointing.

Notice

My name has been wrongly written as Qaiser Ahmed instead of Qaiser Ahmed Dar in my Aadhar Card bearing no. 2250 4368 6685. Now I am applying for correction of the same. Objection, if any, may be conveyed to concerned authorities within 7 days

Qaiser Ahmad Dar
S/o Gh Nabi Dar
R/o Gopalpora Kalan Po Mattan Tehsil Mattar
District Anantnag Jammu and Kashmir,
Pin Code 192125

Distt admin Ganderbal holds public outreach program at Tulbagh Sherpathri

J1 NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, MARCH 07

In a continued effort to enhance public engagement and address local issues at the grassroots level, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today convened a public outreach program at Tulbagh Sherpathri.

The program was also attended by the District Development Council (DDC) Vice-Chairperson, Bilal Ahmad, along with other senior officials, to listen to public grievances and ensure effective governance.

During the event, residents of Block Sherpathri actively participated, voicing their concerns and developmental needs, including proper garbage disposal, construction of a playground in Hatbara, desilting of Qazi Canal, repair of streetlights, installation of distribution transformers, cutting of poplar trees at Middle School Sehpora, establishment of fire service station, bank



branch at Shallabugh, and construction of bridge at Rabitar.

The locals sought the intervention of the Deputy Commissioner for the timely resolution of these issues.

Addressing the gathering, the DC reaffirmed the administration's commitment to reaching out to remote areas and ensuring responsive and inclusive governance. He assured the locals that all genuine concerns raised during the program would be duly examined, and necessary steps would be taken for their redressal.

Regarding waste management, the Block Development

Officer (BDO) Sherpathri informed that garbage collection has been outsourced, and the contractor has already begun waste collection in Shallabugh village.

Additionally, the Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) was asked to prepare a comprehensive desilting plan in consultation with the irrigation department for inclusion in the new development plan.

The outreach program was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Gulzar Ahmad; Program Officer ICDS, GM DIC, CPO, ACD, ACP, and other district and sectoral officers.

SED launches Mega enrollment drive in Shopian



J1 NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, MARCH 07

A Mega Enrollment drive has been launched in District Shopian, kicking off from Government Higher Secondary School Narapora and High School Zampathri today.

Joint Director (EE) Kashmir, M Mushtaq, and Chief Education Officer Shopian, Bashir Ahmad, along with Cluster Heads, ZEOs led the initiative, resulting in hundreds of new enrollments in government schools across Narpora

and Keller clusters. During the event, Joint Director praised the Officers for their preparations and emphasized on the availability of qualified staff, infrastructure, and different schemes in government schools.

He also stressed on the need for student retention and attendance in the district's upper belt, and advised the schools heads to take strenuous measures for enhancing enrollment and retention of students in the Schools. The CEO Shopian

highlighted the focus on accessible free quality education, teaching staff accountability, and achieving academic excellence. He thanked parents and participants, reaffirming the commitment of obtaining optimal results in government run schools.

As a token of appreciation, newly enrolled students received gifts from the officers during the course of the drive.

The enrollment drives will be held at different clusters in coming days in the District Shopian.

ARTO Pulwama conducts enforcement drive



J1 NEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA, MARCH 07

Enforcement Squad of ARTO office Pulwama conducted a rigorous enforcement drive at Litter-Pulwama route specially focusing on overloading of passengers and over charging by passenger vehicles.

Strict instructions were issued to the sumo stand presidents to ensure adherence to the prescribed passenger limits and reasonable fare regulations.

In addition, more than 80 vehicles were checked for various offences like overloading of vehicles, vehicle fitness and other violations under MV Act and Rules framed thereunder. About 22 Vehicles were e-challaned for different violations and Rs. 50,500 is expected to be recovered from them.

Officials reiterated that such drives will continue, sending a strong message to traffic violators that non-compliance will not be tolerated.

Ministry of MSME delivers 17k toolkits to artisans under PM Vishwakarma scheme in J&K

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MARCH 7

Jammu and Kashmir stands at the top position in the entire country with the highest number of toolkits 17000 (approx) delivered directly to the homes of artisans under the PM Vishwakarma scheme.

This achievement demonstrates the commitment of the Union Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in reaching out to the grassroots level and providing tangible benefits to artisans who are traditionally underserved.

The Union Ministry of MSME has been proactively working towards the promotion of artisans under traditional trades such as sculptor, fisher net maker, hammer and toolkit maker, boat maker etc under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme. These trades have seen relatively very low participation in

the scheme, particularly in regions like Jammu and Kashmir. The Ministry's efforts aim to uplift these trades and ensure that the artisans are equipped with the necessary tools, financial support, and knowledge to continue their craft sustainably.

Assistant Director, MSME, Saheel Alaqband highlighted the efforts undertaken by the Branch MSME DFO Srinagar under Ministry of MSME in Kashmir region in raising awareness and encouraging participation in the scheme.

Speaking about the initiatives, Alaqband mentioned that recently this office, in collaboration with district administrations in Ganderbal, Baramulla, and Pulwama, conducted awareness programs targeting these low-participation trades.

The awareness programs aimed not only to educate artisans about

the PM Vishwakarma Scheme but also provided a platform for on-the-spot registration for artisans involved in the mentioned trades in few programs. These efforts were meticulously carried out in coordination with the district administrations to ensure maximum outreach and impact.

In addition to the awareness programs, the field office organized awareness camps at the workplaces of the artisans, further bridging the gap between government initiatives and artisans' needs.

Recently, a specific awareness program was conducted in Srinagar for sculptors, aiming to familiarize them with the scheme and its benefits. The goal was to ensure that sculptors were fully informed about the available support and that they could take advantage of the scheme to sustain and expand their businesses.

7th Jan Aushadhi Diwas celebrated at District Hospital Bandipora

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, MARCH 7

District Hospital Bandipora celebrated Jan Aushadhi Diwas with enthusiasm, highlighting the importance of affordable and quality medicines for the public.

The event marked the success of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra, which has been providing low-cost medicines to residents.

Medical Superintendent DH Bandipora emphasized the benefits of the scheme and urged people to take full advantage of the initiative. He reiterated the government's commitment to making quality healthcare accessible to all, particularly those from economically weaker sections.

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Yojana aims to promote the use of generic medicines, making healthcare more affordable while maintaining high



standards of quality. The initiative has been widely appreciated for reducing the financial burden on patients.

The efforts of the health department to provide

affordable healthcare options were welcomed by the residents, who expressed their appreciation for the Kendra's role in improving access to essential medicines.

Schools reopen in Kashmir Valley after Winter Vacations

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MARCH 7

Following re-opening of schools after months long winter break, Director School Education Kashmir (DSEK), Dr. G. N. Itoo today participated in morning prayer during the morning assembly of Government Model Higher Secondary School Kokernag in a remote area of Anantnag district and shared the joy of school opening with the children.

On the occasion, the Director School Education Kashmir spoke to the children in their mother tongue and inquired about various activities during the winter vacations. DSEK addressed the teachers and asked them to equip the children with moral education, become role models for them, and to keep the surrounding environment clean besides protecting water bodies. Dr. Itoo urged the teachers to provide awareness to the children about the harmful effects of drugs especially on Wednesdays in view of the current challenges of the society and to play their full role in character building of the children. He emphasized that children should use mobile phones properly so that they do not have negative effects on their minds.

DC Srinagar chairs meeting of District Level Advisory Committee on Food Safety

J1 NEWS SERVICE
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A meeting of District Level Advisory Committee (DLAC) on Food Safety and Healthy Diets was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here to review the measures in place to ensure quality food to people in the District.

At the outset, DC took a comprehensive review of the functioning and achievements of the Food Safety Department with regard to public health.

The meeting held a detailed deliberation on the crucial issues related to food safety standards and hygiene being followed by

the Food Business Operators in the District.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner, who is also the Chairman of DLAC was apprised about the current status of food safety measures in place in Srinagar District and various proactive measures undertaken by the Food Safety Department to ensure the provision of safe and healthy food for the public.

Underlining the importance of maintaining high standards of food safety for the well-being of the public, the DC issued instructions to Officers to ensure availability of quality and hygienic food in the market. He emphasized the need for inspection squads to monitor and curb the sale of unhealthy

and expired food products, especially those targeted at children, besides to give focused attention towards curbing sale of misbranded food items.

The DC exhorted upon the Srinagar Food Safety Team to strengthen and upgrade the laboratories for conducting tests of food items. He assured all possible support from District Administration for the purpose to ensure quality and hygienic food items to the people.

Dr Bilal stressed on intensifying market checking across the District and laid emphasis on increasing the volume of lifting the food samples by adopting scientific procedures for study and sharing the findings with the Administration for the safety of



human lives. He instructed for taking strict action under law against the FBOs involved in violation of the Food Safety Act.

The DC also stressed further strengthening the Complaint Redressal Mechanism in Srinagar District to encourage the genuine complaints of the consumers and taking timely action against the violators to control the most vital and concerned area relat-

ed to the public health.

In addition, the DC directed the Officers to conduct awareness programs involving all stakeholders to educate the public on the importance of safe food and maintaining a healthy diet. He asked them to ensure effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006, Rules and Regulations framed there under by the Food Safety

and Standards Authority of India.

The DC also stressed on conducting special drives for enforcement of bakery items, milk, edible oil, spices, meat, poultry products and other daily consumables in the City markets.

With regard to FOSTAC, the DC asked for building a culture of self-compliance through systematic training and capacity building of food businesses under the food safety and certification system.

The meeting also discussed the Eat Right Challenge a flagship program of FSSAI and other schemes under this flagship programme like RUCO, Surveillance & Enforcement drives, Licensing & Registration drives, FOSCORIS

inspections, Special Camps for consumer Awareness, FosTac Trainings, Hygiene Rating, Hub Certification, Eat Right School & Campuses. While implementation of COTPA was also deliberated.

Earlier, Assistant Commissioner Food Safety Srinagar Yamin ul Nabi, who is also the Member Secretary of the Committee, gave a detailed presentation about the functioning and achievements of the Department.

The meeting was informed that for the purpose of implementation of Food Regulatory Laws, about 1400 inspections were conducted, while 1967 legal as well surveillance samples were lifted during the same period. In addition, various cases

have been filed before the competent courts and an amount of Rs 177000/- has been imposed as fine on violators.

The meeting was informed that a dedicated toll free number 104 is working for registering complaints of the consumers to address the same in a time bound manner.

The meeting was attended Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Syed Ahmad Kataria; General Manager DIC, Assistant Commissioner Food Safety, Chief Education Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, AD FCS&CA, other concerned Officers and representatives of Bakers Association, Spice Association, Hoteliers, Industrial estate Khonmoh.