

## CM holds pre-budget meetings with key departments ahead of March 7 Budget presentation

**NIN NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 25: Setting the stage for the upcoming budget presentation on March 7, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a series of pre-budget meetings with several key government departments at the Civil Secretariat here to finalize proposals for the upcoming budget, which is scheduled to be presented on March 7. The meetings were held to understand the sector wise priorities and to align it with government's development agenda. The meetings would continue in the coming days with other departments also scheduled to brief the Chief Minister.



The meetings were attended by Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakeena Itoo, Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Javed Ahmad Dar and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary Jal Shakti Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief

Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance Santosh D Vaidya, along with Administrative Secretaries from the Power Development Department, Housing & Urban Development, Industries & Commerce, Tourism, Public Works Department (R&B), Health & Medical Educa-

tion, Rural Development. Director General Budget Mohammad Sultan Malik and Joint Director Budget Shafat Yahya also attended the meetings.

During the consultations, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah emphasized the need for a pragmatic and growth-oriented budget that ad-

dresses public aspirations and strengthens key sectors of the economy.

He reiterated the government's commitment to inclusive development, transparent governance and efficient utilization of public resources. The discussions delved into both Capital Expenditure (CapEx) and Revenue Expenditure (RevEx), with a focus on optimizing budgetary allocations for infrastructure development, social welfare programs, and service delivery improvements. Chief Minister Abdullah directed the departments to prioritize flagship projects, accelerate ongoing initiatives, and ensure timely implementation (Contd on Pg 2)

## LG Manoj Sinha Greets People On Mahashivratri, Herath



**NIN NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, Feb 25: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has extended his warmest greetings to the people on the occasion of Mahashivratri, which will be celebrated tomorrow on February 26. In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said: "On the auspicious occasion of (Contd on Pg 2)

## MP's GIS 2025 to play crucial role in achieving goal of India as developed nation: Amit Shah

AGENCIES

Bhopal: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the Global Investors Summit (GIS) organised by the Madhya Pradesh government will play a crucial role in accomplishing the dream of making India the third largest economy by 2027, and a developed nation by 2047. He was speaking at the concluding session of the two-day GIS here where Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) worth Rs 30.77 lakh crore were signed. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi had set the target before the youth and 130 crore people to make the country a developed nation by 2047 and make Bharat the third largest economy in the (Contd on Pg 2)



world by 2027. The two-day summit, I believe, will play a crucial role in accomplishing this mission," Shah said. The first requisite for industrialists to invest and expand their business is a stable and powerful government, he said, adding that Madhya Pradesh has such a government. "MP has a robust infrastructure, excellent eco-system, land, (Contd on Pg 2)

## Centre Extends Concessions, Incentives By 3 Years For Its Employees Working In Kashmir Valley

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: The Centre has extended the package of concession and incentives for its employees working in the Kashmir Valley by three years, according to a personnel ministry order. The Valley comprises 10 districts — Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam, Kupwara, Pulwama, Srinagar, Kulgam, Shopian, Ganderbal and Bandipora. It has been decided by the competent authority to extend the package of concessions/incentives to Central government employees working in (Contd on Pg 2)



the Kashmir Valley for a further period of three years with effect from August 1, 2024, the order issued by the ministry on Monday said. The package of incentives is uniformly applicable to all ministries, depart-

ments and public sector undertakings under the government of India, and they should ensure strict adherence to the rates prescribed in the package, it said. The employees posted in the (Contd on Pg 2)

## Chief Minister Omar Abdullah extends Herath (Mahashivratri) greetings to people of J&K

NIN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 25: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today extended his warmest greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Herath (Mahashivratri). In his message, the Chief Minister described the festival as a joyous occasion, symbolizing faith, devotion and a moment of spiritual renewal. He prayed for the sacred festival to bring peace, prosperity and divine blessings to every (Contd on Pg 2)

## India Will Always Advocate 'Zero Tolerance' For Terrorism: Jaishankar

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: There is a clear and urgent need for a new multilateral system that reflects contemporary global realities as past few years "exposed" the "stark inadequacies" of the existing structures, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said. In a virtual address at the 58th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, he also asserted that India will always advocate "zero tolerance" for terrorism and call out any ef-



fort to normalise it. Delving into geo-political turmoils in various geographies, Jaishankar said the world continues to grapple with conflicts and it is growing more fractured, uncer-

tain, and unstable in the face of emerging challenges. "There is a clear and urgent need for a multilateral system that reflects contemporary global realities, one that is better equipped to re-

spond to modern challenges, and, in essence, one that is fit for purpose," he said. "The past few years have exposed the stark inadequacies of existing multilateral structures. When the world needed them the most, they were found wanting," he said. Jaishankar said India has always played an active role in the global promotion and protection of human rights. "Our approach has been centered on building (Contd on Pg 2)

## We Hope That Statehood Will Come Back: Farooq Abdullah



**NIN NEWS SERVICE**  
Amritsar (Punjab), Feb 25: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah visited and offered prayers at (Contd on Pg 2)

the Golden Temple in Amritsar on Tuesday. Later, speaking to the reporters, he emphasised the unity of the country and (Contd on Pg 2)

spoke on the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. "It is very unfortunate. Bharat belongs to everyone. Be it Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Christian or Jain. And those who do not have any religion. The fire which has been set off is a political one. To win over the votes. It should not have happened. Bharat will be united as long as we remain united", Abdullah said. "If any Bharatiya has to face (Contd on Pg 2)

## India's Space Economy To Increase Fivefold In Next Few Years: Dr Jitendra

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, Feb 25 : "India's Space economy is expected to increase more than fivefold from 8bn \$ to 44 \$ bn in next few years, making an important value addition to the country's overall economy towards 5 trillion goal". This was stated here today by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space and MoS Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr. Jiten-



dra Singh while addressing the "Business Conclave" organised by (Contd on Pg 2)

the Times Network at Hotel Taj here. The Minister highlighted the (Contd on Pg 2)

remarkable progress achieved by the Indian space sector, citing the increased space budget as a key factor driving this success. He noted that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the space budget has almost tripled—from 75,615 crore in 2013-14 to 213,416 crore in 2025-2026, reflecting the government's commitment to fostering growth in the space sector. Dr. Jitendra Singh pointed to 2014 as a pivotal turning point for India's space journey, Prime Minister Narendra Modi took an out-of-box (Contd on Pg 2)

## Kashmir Higher Reaches Receive Fresh Snowfall, Plains Lash By Rains



**NIN NEWS SERVICE**  
Srinagar, Feb 25: Amid forecasts of widespread rain and snowfall over the next four days, several higher reaches of Kashmir, including the famous ski resort of Gulmarg, received fresh snowfall on Tuesday while plains received rains, officials said. Some higher reaches of Kashmir valley and the ski resort of Gulmarg and Tangmarg in North Kashmir's Baramulla experienced a fresh snowfall this afternoon turning the destinations into a winter wonderland. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on Tuesday predicted that a fresh Western Disturbance (WD) is likely to bring moderate to widespread rain and snowfall across Jammu and Kashmir over the next four days. As of today evening, Srinagar and other low-lying areas continued to experience rain, impacting daily activities. The inclement weather is expected to persist. Under the influence of WD weather system, widespread moderate rain or snow and thunderstorm is expected in most places of Jammu and (Contd on Pg 2)

## Toll should not be collected when highway is in bad shape: J&K High Court

NIN NEWS SERVICE

Jammu: In a major relief to people traveling on the National Highway-44 (NH-44) from Punjab (Pathankot) to Jammu (Udhampur), the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court on Tuesday ordered that only 20 percent of the toll fee be collected at two plazas on the highway till the completion of the construction. The Bench of Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice MA Choudhary said that if the highway is in bad shape due to different nature of construction activities, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) or the concessionaire cannot collect toll tax from the commuters who use the highway. "This is based on the principle that tolls are (Contd on Pg 2)

collected to provide users with the benefit of well maintained infrastructure. If this highway is in a deteriorated condition and is uncomfortable to drive on, it is considered unfair for commuters to continue paying tolls, rather the same is violation of fair service. Certainly, the commuters and drivers must be feeling frustrated by the poor state of this particular highway they are paying to use. The basic premise is that tolls should be a form of compensation for road users in exchange for smooth, safe, and well-maintained highways," the Court said. The Court was dealing with a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking exemption of toll tax at the toll plazas - Lakhampur, Thandi Khui and Bann, located on the national (Contd on Pg 2)

highway from Pathankot to Udhampur, which is undergoing construction under the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway project. The plea was moved by Sugandha Sawhney, who appeared in person. The collection of toll tax at the Thandi Khui Toll Plaza had been closed since January 26 last year. The Court in the plea considered whether the tax ought to be exempted or reduced at the two other toll plazas when the construction under the project Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway is ongoing. The Court noted that the authorities themselves have admitted that NH-44 is undergoing construction and service roads/diversions have been provided for the movement of traffic, (Contd on Pg 2)

## Kashmiri Pandit activist demands worshipping rights at Hindu temple in PoK

NIN NEWS SERVICE

Prayagraj: All India Kashmiri Samaj president Ravindra Pandit on Tuesday criticised the central government for its "indifference" towards acquiring the rights to worship at the Sharda Peeth, an ancient Hindu temple located in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). Speaking at a press conference at the Sringeri Math in Daraganj here, Pandit said, "At present, under the India-Pakistan treaty, only those people from Kashmir can go to Sharda Peeth who have relatives there (in PoK). But as no Kashmiri (Hindu) has any relatives there, they can't go there." He said, "Last month when Union Home Minister (Contd on Pg 2)

## Top security officers discuss plan to crackdown on terror ecosystem in Chenab Valley

NIN NEWS SERVICE

Banihal: Top security officers met in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district on Tuesday and discussed an integrated plan to crackdown on the terror ecosystem in Chenab Valley which was rocked by several terror incidents last year, officials said. The government's plan to arm ex-servicemen, supplementing the existing Village Defence Guards, was also discussed during the joint security review meeting, which took place at Dharmund military garrison, they said. The officials said this initiative seeks to harness the expertise of the ex-servicemen, enabling them to actively combat terrorism and safeguard the communities. (Contd on Pg 2)

The meeting was presided over by General Officer Commanding, Counter Insurgency Force (Delta), Major General A P S Bal, and was among others attended by Inspector General of Police, Jammu zone, Bhim Sen Tuti, and Inspector General of CRPF R. Gopala Krishna Rao. Deputy Inspector General of Police, Doda, Kishitwar-Ramban region, Sector Commanders, Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs) of Doda, Ramban and Kishitwar and representatives of central and local intelligence agencies also attended the meeting, the officials said. They said the deliberation on various important issues, including the security (Contd on Pg 2)



## New Jersey Academy Pre-School celebrated its Annual Day function 2024-2025



Jammu, Feb 25: New Jersey Academy Pre-School celebrated its much-awaited Annual Day function with great enthusiasm and joy. The event saw the esteemed presence of Smt. Priya Sethi, Former Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, as the Chief Guest. The guest of honour was Sh. Tarun Sharma, Actor, Director, Model, Writer, and President of Nat Manch, who is

also a prominent social, sports, cultural, and political activist. The event was graced by the presence of other dignitaries, including Payal Gupta, Principal of New Jersey Academy, members of the Academy, as well as parents and students. The Annual Day function was a wonderful celebration of the academy's commitment to holistic development, show-

ing the talent and creativity of its young students. The ceremony was marked with various performances, speeches, and cultural activities, all reflecting the hard work and dedication of the students and staff. Smt. Priya Sethi and Sh. Tarun Sharma, in their addresses, commended the efforts of the academy in nurturing young minds and promoting a well-rounded education. The event was a resounding success, and it highlighted the academy's focus on providing an enriching educational experience to its students. The support and presence of the distinguished guests, along with the enthusiasm of the students and parents, made this Annual Day celebration a memorable occasion. The programme culminated with the National Anthem.

## Impressive Shobha Yatra organized on eve of MahaShivratri



Jammu, February 25: On the eve of MahaShivratri Festival an Impressive Shobha Yatra (Shiv Barat) was taken out in Jammu city. Shri Ranbireswar Ji Mandir Welfare Committee (SRMWC) with the active cooperation of Jammu and Kashmir Dharmarth Trust and Jammuities has organized this Shobha Yatra in Old Jammu City. Mahant of the Temple Rishi Ban (Chairman SRMWC) lead



this Shobha Yatra. At around 3.30 P.M this Shobha Yatra has started from Shri Ranbireswar Ji Temple and passed through all main Bazaars of the old city viz. Indira Chowk, Hari Market, Raghunath Ji Bazaar Chowk, Raghunath Ji Bazar, City Chowk, Old Hospital Road, Purani Mandi, Link Road, Jain Bazaar, Pacca Danga, Moti Bazaar, Parade Chowk and will finally culminated at Shri Ran-

bireshwar Ji Temple. Many social religious organizations viz. Dewan Mandir Natak Samaj Mandli, Hudh Mata Trisandhya Committee Jammu Branch, Nat Manch, Akhil Bhartiya Dharam Prachar Sewa Samiti, Asaram Babu Ashram Bhagwati Nagar, Jagdipak Suresh Memorial Society Jain Bazar, TrinetraDhari Shiv Shambhu Seva Dal Parade, Best Item Group, Manish Musical Group, Shishu

Kala Kendra Kanji House has participated in this Shobha Yatra and presented colourful Jhankies. Artists of Band parties sing Devotional songs and made atmosphere ShivMay. Trader organizations of old Jammu city has decorated their markets with gates, bunting, lights to welcome Shiv Barat. Distt. Admn. of Jammu has made all elaborate arrangements for the success of this Shobha Yatra. SRMWC members who took part in this Shobha Yatra were Onkar Sharma (Nandi Ji), President, Vishal Chopra (General Secretary), Rajkumar Gupta Sr. Vice President, Suneet Raina (Vice President), Amit Gupta, Advocate Jyoti Sarup Misra, Advocate Kapil Sharma, Mandeep Sharma, Anubhav Suri, Deepak Kumar, Dr. Sunny Gupta, Rajinder Gupta and others. Dignitaries who took part in the Shobha yatra and performed special puja were Yudhveer Sethi, MLA Viinay Gupta Distt. President BJP Jammu Suneet Raina Ex corporator Vivek Shekar SP City R.S. Langeh President JK Dharmarth Trust Ashok Sharma Secretary JK Dharmarth trust and others

## YCET Conducts Placement Drive for Students

Jammu, Feb 25: A placement drive by KK Constructions & Builders and Tech. Mahindra was conducted for the students of Yogananda College of Engineering & Technology (YCET). KK Constructions & Builders, a company of Engineers and team of fully dedicated experts specialized in Civil Structures, interiors, plumbing/electrical works, housing complexes, institutional projects, development work including infrastructure with roads and bridges, industrial structures. The company's philosophy is based on innovation, quality and team work which make them in leading position. Tech. Mahindra is an Indian multinational information technology services and consulting company that offers technology consulting and digital solutions to global enterprises across industries, enabling transformative scale at unparalleled speed. The Placement Cell of YCET played a pivotal role in organizing such event, which witnessed active participation from representatives of the participating company. The college's focus on career counseling and industry-ori-



ented skill development was evident, enabling students to excel during the placement process. The representatives from the company and Yogananda College of Engineering and Technology were involved to properly drive the placement process. The students at YCET put in a lot of preparation towards the placement drive. The placement started with the Pre placement talk followed by Group Discussion and ended up with Personal interview. In the first round 32 students were screened out, during the second

round 14 students were shortlisted out of which finally 8 students got selected. Four students namely Aniket Rathore, Umar Fareed Jaral, Aryan Raina, Vinay Kumar Basson were from Civil Engineering whereas four students namely Vikrant Singh Aithmian, Sakshi Manhas, Komal Kumari, Sarthak Sharma were from Computer Science and Engineering. The Session began with the welcome address given by Er. Rajnish Magotra, (HoD, Civil Engineering Department). He said that company's are

world to us because they provide professional path to our students. The bouquet was presented to Mr. Dheeraj Sharma Head HR KK Construction & Builders followed by Mr. Sanskar Aggarwal senior Executive HR, Mr. Ajeet Jain Executive HR, Ms Swati Singh Executive HR, Ms Seema Gupta Executive HR by Er. Dinesh Gupta (Dean Academics). Before the commencement of Placement Drive Mr. Dheeraj Sharma gave pre placement talk during which he highlighted the projects undertaken by company at various locations, the working pattern of the company and job profile. Jamwal Group of Educational Institutions (JGEI), Jammu Chairman Er. Vidhi S. Singh Jamwal, Vice-Chairman Th. Shiv Dev Singh Jamwal, Managing Director Er. Renu Bangroo, Director, YCET, Dr.(Prof.) Mukesh Kumar Rana, Dean Academics YCET, Dinesh Gupta and Chief Coordinator, YCET, B.R Verma congratulated the selected students. Vote of thanks was given by Er. Rajnish Magotra, (HoD, Civil Engineering Department)

## Samsung Transforms Smartphone Service Centres with Premium Design and Exceptional Customer Service

Jammu, 25 Feb 2025: Samsung, India's largest consumer electronics brand, is set to elevate its smartphone customer service experience with a comprehensive redesign of its service centres. This initiative aims to establish a seamless service-to-sales journey, reinforcing Samsung's commitment to superior after-sales support with a strong focus on premium customer care. Designed to deliver an integrated omni-channel experience, the remodelled service centres incorporate advanced digitalised processes to cater to evolving expectations of Samsung's young and dynamic customer base. They not only boast a diverse product portfolio but also lead the way in technological innovation with advanced diagnostic tools that detect issues with pin-point accuracy. The upgraded centres break

away from traditional layouts, introducing plush, sofa-style seating equipped with inbuilt wireless charging stations to create a lounge-like ambience. Reimagined accessory walls showcase Samsung's extensive range of wearables, while ultra-large digital screens feature the latest product innovations, offering visitors an immersive experience. "Over the decades, we have expanded a robust network of service centres to support our existing customer base which is concurrent to the needs of our sales partners. As consumer expectations evolve every day, we wanted to transform these spaces by infusing youthful and efficient design elements to make them more appealing, while keeping traditional customer needs in mind. At the heart of this is Samsung's commitment to providing a premium ex-

perience to its customers," said Sunil Cutinha, VP, Customer Satisfaction, Samsung India. To enhance customer interactions, dedicated kiosks will enable visitors to connect with product support specialists, explore new product launches, and stay updated on exclusive offers and discounts. An online appointment booking system will allow customers to schedule their visits in advance, ensuring a hassle-free experience with minimal wait times. Samsung currently operates more than 3,000 service touch points across India including physical service centres, resident engineers and collection points. The roll-out of the service centre redesign will be implemented in phases across key cities, ensuring an elevated customer experience nationwide.

## Central University of Jammu Holds Annual Meeting of Advisory Committee for DBT-Supported M.Sc Biotechnology Program

Jammu, 25th February 2025: The Centre for Molecular Biology (CMB) at Central University of Jammu, established in 2016, recently hosted its annual meeting of the Advisory Committee for the DBT Government of India-supported M.Sc. Biotechnology program. This meeting was chaired by Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Central University of Jammu. The M.Sc Biotechnology program, introduced by the Department of

Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, commenced in 2020 and has been running successfully with financial support until the academic year 2026-2027. Admission to this program is based on the Graduate Aptitude Test (GAT-B) conducted annually by the National Testing Agency (NTA), and each selected student is granted a monthly fellowship of Rs 5000 for the entire two-year duration.



The meeting was attended by distinguished members, including Prof. Amitabha Bhandopadhyay from the Department of Bioengineering, IIT Kanpur; Prof. Salgotra from the Department of Biotechnology, SKUAST Jammu; Sh. Anil Suri, President of the Industrial Organization, Bari Brahmna, Jammu; and all faculty members of CMB. The session witnessed an insightful presentation of the annual report by Prof. Mushtaq Ahmed, Project Investigator, who

shared key updates on the program's progress. In his report, Prof. Ahmed highlighted that DBT had extended the program until the academic session 2025-2027, following a positive evaluation of its performance over the past five years. Prof. Sanjeev Jain, while chairing the meeting, expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the dedicated faculty of CMB in successfully running the program and in ensuring its continued growth and success.

## MD, NHM, J&K inaugurated 2 Days Training Programme of National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme.

Srinagar, 25th Feb; Shri Nazim Zai Khan, IAS, Mission Director, NHM, J&K today inaugurated 2 Days Capacity/Training Programme of Medical Officers/District Coordinators of National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme (NVHCP) in collaboration with NVHCP Division, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India at Conference Hall, NHM Office, Old Secretariat Srinagar. The two (02) days capacity Building/ Training Programme is being imparted by Dr. Sandhya Kabra, Deputy Commissioner, NVHCP, Division, MoH&FW, GoI, Dr. Partha Rakshit, Joint Director, NVHCP, MoH&FW, GoI, Dr Robin Marwal, Assistant



Director, NVHCP, MoH&FW, GoI and others. The Training programme is being attended by Medical Officers posted at GMCs, DHs, CHCs / District Nodal Coordinators of NVHCP from all the Districts of the Kashmir Division along with the State Programme Management Unit, NVHCP, SHS, NHM, J&K. Speaking

on the occasion, MD, NHM, J&K gave a brief description about the severity of viral hepatitis and how it has become a major Public Health challenge which needs to be redressed at all levels. The MD also gave a brief description about the Seroprevalence of Hepatitis B&C in the UT of J&K and showed his concern as J&K

is having a high Hepatitis-C Seroprevalence/Seropositivity i.e. 34.89% in IDUs (Injected drug users) as compared to National Average (33.41%). The MD stressed upon the medical fraternity to tackle this grave public health challenge of such huge magnitude with utmost dedication and generate mass awareness among the high risk categories like blood/organ donors/recipients, patients on haemodialysis, Pregnant Women, prisoners, Injection drug users (IDUs) etc. Mission Director said that the training is important for building capacity of the service delivery points for effective implementation of the NVHCP to ensure standardized, uniform quality of ser-

vice delivery by different cadres of staff in the health system, using standardized training modules and facilitator guides. The training/capacity building is focussing on various components of NVHCP viz; Operational framework of NVHCP; Integration with other programs for optimising resource; Diagnosis & Treatment; Data Management/ MIS Portal; Record Keeping; Viral Load Testing through machines existing in the health system; Supply Chain Management etc. Similar kind of Capacity Building/Training Programme shall be organised in Jammu Division in next month in collaboration with Central Division of National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme, MoH&FW, GoI.

## Addressing a meeting of Block Khour at Village Dhon Chack in Chamb Assembly

Jammu February, 25th- Addressing a meeting of Block Khour at Village Dhon Chack in Chamb Assembly Segment of District Jammu Rural A. Mr Ragbhir Singh Manhas District President Jammu Rural "A" said Omar Abdullah Government is committed to development and progress of the Border areas. The meeting was organized by Mr Mohinder Singh Block President Khour and his teams. In the meeting local leaders emphasized the need of giving priority to the Border youth in employment and for improvement for living conditions of the Border areas. Mr Ragbhir Singh Manhas said that the problems brought in the meeting shall be put before the concerned quarters in the government so that living conditions of the border areas could improve and he also endorsed the demand of the



Border far giving special employment package. Others who spoke on this occasion included: Mr Madan Lal Block President Akhnoor, Mr Manga Sharma Block President Samoa, Mr Devinder Singh Block President Mathwar, Mr Bishan Dass Block Pres-

ident Bhagat Block President Mandal, Mr Devi Dyal Jogi Block Secretary Khour, Mrs Kuldeep Khour District President Jammu Rural A Women Wing, Vishawjeet Singh District Vice President Jammu Rural A YNC, Mr Veer Ji Bhat Secretary Minority Cell and others.

## DC Budgam reviews progress on upgradation, renovation works of Behisht-e-Zehra Park

BUDGAM, FEBRUARY 25: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam Akshay Labroo today took stock of beautification, renovation and redevelopment works being executed on the Behisht-e-Zehra park Budgam.

During the visit, the DC reviewed progress of infrastructure upgradation including walkway reconstruction using paver blocks & interlock tiles; seating platforms with tea & coffee resting blocks finished with granite; installation of decorative metal lights outside park, structural steel railings for walkway sides and other developmental works aimed at enhancing the aesthetic and public utility of park.



On the occasion, DC directed R&B department Budgam to ensure that the work is executed as per specification, and instructed the site engineers to monitor the works properly to bring out quality results. DC while expressing pleasure regarding the ongoing works at the park stated that

the work on enhancing, renovating, and beautifying of park is progressing well. Chief planning officer budgam Irfan Giri, Executive Engineer R&B division Budgam, Officials from the R&B Department, and other concerned departments accompanied the DC during the visit.

## Dr. Farooq Abdullah appoints Sardar Tejinder Pal Singh Aman as Provincial President Jammu Province of JKNC Youth Wing.

Jammu February 25th: Dr. Farooq Abdullah, President of the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) former Chief Minister, appointed Sardar Tejinder Pal Singh Aman as the Provincial President Jammu Province of JKNC Youth Wing in a programme held at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu. Tejinder Pal has assumed the chair in presence of Dr Farooq Abdullah, Deputy Chief Minister Mr Surinder Choudhary, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra former minister and Additional General Secretary Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President JKNC Jammu; Ajaz Jan MLA, Altaf Kaloo MLA and other senior party leaders.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Farooq Abdullah emphasized the vital role of youth in shaping the future of Jammu & Kashmir. He said, "The youth are the backbone of our party and the driving force behind a pro-



gressive and peaceful J&K. I am confident that Sardar Tejinder Pal Singh Aman will uphold the values of the National Conference and work towards empowering young voices in the region." Dr. Farooq Abdullah appreciated the role of Mr Ajaz Jan MLA to mobilize the youth in Jammu region now his engagements in the constituency may

not be able to work in Jammu Province for the youth as such Sardar Tejinder Singh Aman who is District President Jammu Urban YNC is elevated as Provincial President Jammu Province YNC. He hoped that he will delivered the services for the interest of the youth and mobilize at gross root level. Surinder Choudhary Deputy Chief

Minister, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra former minister and Additional General Secretary Jammu and Rattan Lal Gupta, they congratulating Aman on his new role, stated, "JKNC has always believed in giving young and dynamic leaders a platform to serve the people.

MLA Ajaz Jan also extended his best wishes, remarking, "The Youth Wing of JKNC plays a crucial role in mobilizing the younger generation towards constructive political participation. Tejinder Pal Singh Aman's dedication and experience make him the right choice to lead this important responsibility."

After assuming charge, Tejinder Pal Singh Aman expressed his gratitude to the party leadership for reposing faith in him. He assured that he would work tirelessly to strengthen the party at the grassroots level and engage the youth in meaningful political and developmental activities.

## DJMC IUST hosts spl session on Public Service Broadcasting in digital era

Awantipora, February 25: The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), organised a special session on 'Role and Challenges of Public Service Broadcasters in the Era of New Digital Platforms' on Tuesday. The lecture was delivered by Shabir Ahmad Dar, an Indian Information Service officer and Assistant Director (News) at Doordarshan, Srinagar.

During his interaction with students, scholars of DJMC and other departments, Dar discussed the role of Public Service Broadcasting and Prasar Bharti in India. Highlighting the milestones achieved by Doordarshan in Kashmir, he emphasised how content fosters a sense of community in the region.



Encouraging students to prioritize accuracy amid the rise of misinformation, he shared the challenges of verifying information. At Doordarshan, "Ignoring the race to break the news first, we wait for information to be verified but do not disseminate

false information," he asserted. Discussing various challenges including the growing competition from digital platforms, he informed that Prasar Bharti is adapting by tailoring content to meet audience needs, and enhancing its presence

on social media and streaming platforms. "We are investing in digital technologies, which also gives job opportunities to local talent."

Mr. Dar further shared insights into the current trends in journalism, urging students to consider pursuing competitive exams like the UPSC for better prospects. He encouraged students, particularly those in their final year, that be receptive to changes and develop new skills and seize the opportunities. He also shared his personal journey, including his experiences with various organisations before joining Doordarshan and also answered students' queries. Head DJMC, Dr Rabia Noor, delivered the welcome address, while Senior Assistant Professor, DJMC, Dr Monisa Qadiri, proposed the vote of thanks.

## Mr. Varun Bali Declared Qualified for the Award of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Katra, Feb 25: Mr. Varun Bali (s/o Mr. Rakesh Kumar and Mrs. Chanchal Sharma), a Research Scholar at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), has been declared qualified for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Physics. He pursued his research on the topic "Morphological, Thermal, and Spectroscopic Studies of Some Biological Samples" under the supervision of Dr. Vivek Kumar Singh, Associate Professor, Department of Physics, Lucknow University, and co-supervision of Prof. Yugal Khajuria, Professor, School of Physics, SMVDU. During his Ph.D., Mr. Varun pub-



lished his research work in highly reputed SCIE-indexed international journals and presented his papers at numerous national and international conferences. Professor (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Honorable Vice-Chancellor of SMVDU, Dr. S. K. Wanchoo, Dean, Faculty of Sciences, Dr. Ram Prakash,

Head, School of Physics, and other committee members congratulated him on his achievement. Expressing his gratitude, Mr. Varun Bali thanked the Honorable Vice-Chancellor of SMVDU for providing the necessary facilities and support. He also extended his appreciation to the faculty and staff of the School of Physics, as well as the university administration, for their guidance, cooperation, and assistance throughout his research journey. The entire SMVDU fraternity extends its heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Varun Bali and wishes him success in his future academic and professional endeavors.

## Bharti Airtel partners Ericsson 5G Core technology to drive 5G evolution



Jammu, February 25, 2025: Bharti Airtel and Ericsson (NASDAQ: ERIC) have strengthened their long-standing partnership through a new collaboration to deploy Ericsson's secure, high-performing 5G Core network offerings to the benefit of Airtel's millions of customers and enterprises across India. The collaboration will enable Airtel to seamlessly transition to a commercially live, full-scale 5G Standalone network over time, bringing the high-end capa-

bilities of 5G to their customers. Randeep Sekhon, CTO, Bharti Airtel, says: "Ericsson's enduring partnership with Airtel has entered an exciting new phase, marked by the deployment of Ericsson's 5G Core solutions to support Airtel's transition to 5G Standalone. This rollout will play a pivotal role in Airtel's long-term 5G strategy, boosting network capacity and enabling the delivery of innovative, differentiated services to customers."

Andres Vicente, Head of Market Area Southeast Asia, Oceania and India, Ericsson, says: "As a global 5G leader, Ericsson is committed to providing Bharti Airtel its latest technology solutions. This deployment is a significant step towards making Bharti Airtel's network 5G Standalone ready and future proof. Ericsson's dual-mode 5G core enables monetization through network slicing-based services and network API exposure, unleashing new, innovative use cases for consumers and enterprises." As part of this agreement, Ericsson will deploy its Signaling Controller solution within Bharti Airtel's network. Furthermore, Ericsson's 5G Standalone-enabled Charging and Policy solution will be introduced. These new capabilities represent a strategic enhancement to Bharti Airtel's 5G monetization efforts, enabling the development of new business models.

## Two-Day Pahari Literary and Cultural Conference Concludes

Jammu, 25th of Feb 2025. The two-day Pahari Literary cum Cultural Conference organized by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages concluded with a unanimous resolution to document the ethos of the Pahari language in audio-visual and book formats, ensuring its preservation and promotion for future generations.

The event was graced by Muzaffar Ali Khan, MLA Thanamandi Rajouri, as the chief guest. The presidium included Rashid Bhat, SSP, Shoukat Kazmi, former Secretary, Pahari Board, eminent Pahari writer Jamat Ali Shaheen, and Harvinder Kour, Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages. In her address, Harvinder Kour emphasized that the primary objective of the conference was to provide a platform for Pahari writers



and artists to showcase their talent while connecting the new generation with the legendary figures who dedicated their lives to the promotion and propagation of the Pahari language. She also announced the establishment of a Gajri/Pahari Centre in Poonch, which will focus on the promotion of both languages. Delivering his presidential address, Muzaffar Ali Khan highlighted the extensive presence of the Pahari lan-

guage across the Jammu region, particularly in the twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri. He urged JKAACL to establish cultural centers in each area of these districts to cater to their unique cultural and literary needs. Other distinguished speakers, including Jamat Ali Shaheen, Shoukat Kazmi, and Rashid Bhat, also addressed the gathering, sharing their insights on the growth and preservation of the Pahari language and cul-

ture. The session was conducted by Altaf Ahmad Jujua, while Ayub Mir, Editor-cum-Cultural Officer, JKAACL, presented the vote of thanks.

Following the formal sessions, a mesmerizing music program was held featuring performances by Master Kartar Chand, Muzzamil Shah, Parvez Malik, and other renowned artists, adding a vibrant touch to the event. The fourth session of the

conference focused on literature, where Gazanfer Khokhar, Sardar Ratten Singh Kanwal, Iqbal Shawl, and Sheikh Azad Ahmed presented compelling short stories. Additionally, Adv. Altaf Hussain Janjua, Saleem Ali Bukhari, and Javed Haqani presented research papers, enriching the intellectual discourse of the conference. The session was presided over by Sheikh Azad Ahmed Azad, with Prof. Abdul Rashid Manhas and Mohd Ayub Nayeem Mir as the guests of honour. Sadeeq Ahmed Sadeeqi skillfully conducted the proceedings.

The two-day conference proved to be a significant step towards fostering the Pahari language, literature, and cultural heritage, reaffirming the commitment of scholars, artists, and institutions to its preservation and promotion.

## NSS Unit of Dogra Degree College Organizes Health Talk on Menstrual Health and Adolescent Education

Bari Brahmana, Samba On the 6th day of the ongoing NSS Winter Camp, the NSS Unit of Dogra Degree College organized an enlightening health talk focusing on menstrual health and adolescent education. The session was held at the Anganwadi Center, where volunteers and local women gathered to participate in the informative event. Dr. Geetanjali Rajput, Medical Officer at Smailpur, delivered an engaging lecture, addressing crucial aspects of menstrual health and providing essential knowledge about adolescent well-being. The talk aimed to raise awareness and educate the attendees on important health topics that impact young girls and women.

As part of the event, a pledge was taken by all participants to avoid intoxicants, emphasizing the importance of living a healthy and responsible life.

In addition, renowned Ayurvedic expert, Dr. Ravi Dutta Sharma, shared valuable insights on the role



of Ayurveda in maintaining health and well-being. His session provided attendees with practical knowledge of natural remedies and holistic practices. As a gesture of goodwill, Dr. Sharma distributed free Ayurvedic medicines to students and local women, further supporting their health and well-being. The health talk, which is a key com-

ponent of the NSS Winter Camp, highlighted the importance of spreading awareness on health issues and fostering a sense of community and responsibility among the participants. The talk was coordinated by Ms. Simran Thakur, NSS Program Officer, who ensured the smooth execution of the event and

encouraged students to take part in similar health awareness initiatives. Around 30 NSS Volunteers from Dogra Degree College actively participated in the event, engaging in discussions and learning about mensural health and well-being.

As a part of the ongoing Seven Days long NSS Winter Camp, inauguration Drive was also organized on 21st of February 2025 in the adopted village of Meen Sarkar followed by awareness about solid waste management on the 22nd of February in Govt. School Meen-sarkar. Cleanliness drive around the pond in village on the 23rd of February and awareness rally about the various Government schemes on the 24th of February. The events of the week-long camp are part of the NSS Unit's ongoing efforts to raise awareness and contribute to a cleaner, greener, healthy and sustainable future for the village dwellers.

## GDC Thanamandi organizes awareness program on the Importance of Constitution

Thanamandi, Feb 25: The Department of Political Science, Government Degree College (GDC) Thanamandi organized an awareness program on importance of the Constitution as part of celebration of 75th year of adoption of Indian Constitution here today.

On this occasion an insightful talk and thought-provoking discussion on the topic "Imagine a Country Without a Constitution." organized under the patronage of College Principal Prof. (Dr.) Farooq Ahmed. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation by students, who actively participated and had engaging discussions on the given theme. Dr. Mohd Zabir, HoD during the discussion on the given theme, emphasized that without a constitution, there would be no rule of law, fundamental rights could not be exercised, and political instability along with social discrimination would prevail. He elaborated on how the constitution acts as the backbone of a democratic society, ensuring justice, equality, and governance for all citizens.

Dr. Mudasar Gori, in his presidential remarks, compared a country without a constitution to a family without a head, illustrating the chaos and disorder that would

arise in the absence of a structured legal system. He also provided a historical perspective, discussing colonialism and the exploitation of the Indian people before independence. He explained how the lack of a constitutional framework under British rule led to oppression and injustice, highlighting the crucial role of the Indian Constitution in securing the rights and dignity of its citizens post-independence. The discussion was highly interactive with students actively sharing their perspectives and raising questions on constitutional governance. The event provided a platform for them to reflect on the importance of constitutional principles in maintaining stability, justice, and democracy. The session concluded with a formal vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Ansir Sheikh, who appreciated the efforts of the speakers and the enthusiastic participation of students. Organizing such an insightful and educational event, fostering awareness among students about the fundamental role of the constitution in nation-building. The event was a great success, reinforcing the significance of constitutional democracy and encouraging students to critically analyze the impact of governance structures on society.

# Amar Singh Club Srinagar Hosts An Impactful Program On 'Digital Addiction – The Invisible Pandemic' To Raise Awareness

Srinagar: To address growing concerns over excessive internet use and smartphone dependency, Amar Singh Club Srinagar organized a thought-provoking program titled "Digital Addiction – An Invisible Pandemic." The event shed light on the harmful effects of excessive screen time, social media overuse, video gaming, e-shopping, and smartphone addiction, particularly among children and youth. The program was organized by the Secretary of Amar Singh Club Srinagar, Nasir Hamid Khan and was presided over by renowned Supreme Court lawyer and Senior Counsel Advocate Zaffar A. Shah. Several distinguished guests and experts from the education

sector participated, sharing valuable insights on the issue. The discussions focused on the psychological and social consequences of digital addiction, with experts emphasizing the need for parental awareness, school interventions and responsible digital habits. The speakers underscored that while technology is a vital tool in modern life, its excessive use can lead to anxiety, depression, and academic decline, particularly among students. Senior Counsel Adv. Zaffar A. Shah stated, "Digital addiction is emerging as one of the biggest challenges of our time, impacting not just academic growth but also the physical and mental well-being of children. Education

today cannot be limited to textbooks alone; we must integrate sports, outdoor activities, and real-world learning experiences to counter the over-dependence on screens. Parents, schools, civil society and the government must create safe spaces where children can engage in physical activities, as an active lifestyle is crucial for their development. If we do not take immediate action, the consequences will be far-reaching, affecting future generations' ability to think, create and engage with the real world." Advocate Shah also stressed the role of parents in regulating children's screen time. He urged families to prioritize real-world interactions,



promote outdoor activities and monitor digital consumption to ensure children use technology for educational purposes rather than excessive gaming, social media, and entertainment. Prof. Gul Mohammad Wani remarked, "The days are long gone when education was only about preparing

students for exams. In this digital era, where technology has advanced to unprecedented levels, we must rethink how we educate with innovation and creativity. The real challenge lies in guiding our younger generation, especially children, without falling into escapism. Unfortunately, we

are not doing enough—not in schools, not in universities and even parents are caught up in their own busy lives." Prof. Wani emphasized that digital addiction has significantly reduced the habit of book reading, which is a serious concern. He called for immediate measures at all education levels to counter this addiction and implement precautionary steps. G.N. Var, PSAJK State President, commended the Amar Singh Club management for organizing such a crucial discussion and debate, emphasizing that conversations like these are necessary to bring meaningful change to society. He highlighted the role of PSAJK Women's Wing President Sheikh

Ishrat Tanki, under whose leadership 82 women-led schools across urban and rural areas of J&K continue to provide quality education to low-income families, with some students receiving free education. Var pointed out that teachers hold immense power in shaping young minds. He shared an example of how many parents struggle to control their children's excessive screen time and often rely on teachers for behavioral correction, stating, "Parents often find their children refusing to listen, deeply engrossed in their smartphones. In frustration, they tell them, 'I will inform your teacher.'" This simple statement highlights the power and respect that

teachers command. As educators, we must use this influence to guide students toward responsible technology use and digital discipline." He further emphasized the need for structured policies in schools to minimize screen dependency and promote a balanced and healthy learning environment. Nasir Hamid Khan, Secretary of Amar Singh Club Srinagar, stated, "Digital addiction is an invisible pandemic silently affecting all age groups. Through this program, our aim is to raise awareness about the harmful effects of excessive internet use, video gaming, social media, e-shopping, and smartphone dependency.

## Two Day National Workshop on Importance of Industrial Safety under PM-USHA Concludes at SMVDU

Jammu, Feb 25:

The two-day National Workshop on the Importance of Industrial Safety, held at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) under Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan, successfully concluded today. The workshop was coordinated by Dr. Sanjeev Anand, along with co-coordinators Dr. Yatheshth Anand and Dr. Vineet V. Tyagi, brought together experts from various industrial sectors to discuss key safety measures and strategies.

Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice-Chancellor SMVDU congratulated the team for organizing such workshops as this bridges the gap between academia and industry, ensuring that students gain practical knowledge of industrial safety standards. In his welcome address Prof. Balbir Singh, Dean Academic Affairs and Chairman, PM-USHA at SMVDU emphasized the role of safety awareness in reducing workplace hazards and fostering a culture of preventive measures in industrial sectors.



The event featured notable speakers from industry and consultancy organizations which includes Dr. Atin Kumar Pathak, India Head for Climate Change and Sustainability at RINA, who provided insights into various safety aspects the classification bodies are evaluating before issuing necessary certifications. Er. Amit Sharma, DGM (Mechanical) at Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation emphasized the role of safety in power generation with videos of safety drill being conducted at hydro

power plants. Er. Vikrant Chib, Consultant and Assistant Engineer at Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited discussed electrical safety protocols. The requirement of these protocols for ensuring safe and reliable power supply. Mr. Gaurav Singh, Environmental Health and Safety Manager at Berger India Limited, shared best practices for maintaining workplace environmental, health, and safety (EHS) standards. He shared what is being practiced at Berger India.

Er. Ankush Kotwal, an IT and Planning Expert at Berger India Limited, highlighted the role of technology in industrial safety planning. Additionally, Mr. Manish Kumar, Associate Director at Care Analytics and Advisory Pvt. Ltd., joined the workshop through an online mode, providing valuable insights into data-driven approaches for improving industrial safety and risk assessment. The workshop also included the demonstration of various Fire Fighting Equipment to the participants by a team from Fire Station Kakryal under the guidance of Er. Sarvesh Langer, Asstt. Director Fire and Emergency Services, Reasi. The workshop aimed to enhance students understanding of industrial safety protocols, risk management, and sustainable safety solutions. Participants were introduced to the latest safety technologies, workplace hazard identification, emergency response planning, and compliance with industrial safety regulations.

## Narayana Health Expands in Eastern India, lays foundation stone for the 21st Unit

Jammu: 25 February. Reinforcing its mission to revolutionize healthcare access in Narayana Health laid the foundation for its largest initiative, Narayana Health.

Dr. Emmanuel Rupert, Managing Director and Group CEO, Narayana Health, highlighted the facility's transformative potential, stating, "Narayana Health City, New Town, Kolkata, will be the largest private hospital facility, redefining healthcare in Eastern India, upon completion. It will feature all Centers of Excellence, cutting-edge technology, and world-class expertise under one roof. This expansion strengthens our commitment to providing advanced medical care, ensuring that patients receive the highest standards of treatment and clinical outcomes." With this flagship unit, Narayana Health solidifies its position as the largest and most comprehensive private healthcare provider in West Bengal, setting new benchmarks in medical excellence and patient care.

Mr. R Venkatesh, Group COO, Narayana Health, underscored this aspect, saying, "With rising medical emergencies, having a well-equipped critical care unit is no longer optional—it's essential. This expansion will elevate Kolkata's ability to handle

complex and emergency cases with world-class infrastructure."

It is a matter of pride for all of us as we see our brand scaling new heights and with this strategic expansion, Narayana Health reaffirms its commitment to making high-quality healthcare accessible to everyone." says Dr. M.M. Mathavan, Facility Director, SMVD Narayana Superspecialty Hospital, Katra, J&K.

As a leader in high-quality healthcare, Narayana Health has been serving the people of South India through Bengaluru, Shimoga, Mysore, Dharwad, Davangere and Kolar. East through Kolkata, Howrah, Barasat, Raipur, Guwahati and Jamshepur. West through Mumbai and Ahmedabad. North through Delhi NCR, Jaipur and Katra. Set to become the largest private hospital unit in Eastern India upon completion, this state-of-the-art multi-specialty facility will significantly enhance the region's healthcare infrastructure. The new 10-lakh-square-foot facility will house multiple Centers of Excellence across specialties such as Oncology, Cardiac Sciences, Organ Transplants, Orthopedics and Advanced Trauma Care, Neurology, Gastroenterology, Renal Sciences, and Critical Care.

## Visit to Suchetgarh Border by NCC Cadets of Dogra Degree College



Bari Brahmana, Samba. The NCC unit of Dogra Degree College conducted a patriotic visit to the Suchetgarh border RS Pura in which the NCC cadets of Dogra Degree College took part enthusiastically. Suchetgarh Border or BoP Octrol is located on the zero line of Indo Pak border and has been developed as a tourism spot by the J and K state tourism department. Suchetgarh post served as the route to Sialkot during the pre partition era which is just 11 km from the post and

earlier there was an octare post at this point. The process of converting the place on the line of Wagha border was started few years back now Retreat ceremony is also organized on every Saturday and Sunday at 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. which is only one sided at present. Around 30 NCC cadets took part in this visit under the guidance of Mr. Gulshan Sharma CTO/ANO NCC, Dogra Degree College. During the visit the cadet interacted with border security forces

personnel's in which the cadet came to know that Jammu and Kashmir is the only international state and or union territory in which all the borders are working borders, all the other states have International borders. The cadets were further explained about drill by a BSF personnel who was himself an Senior cadet.

The cadets for further guided about AK 47 rifle and the Indian made AK 47(Tara) and other advanced weapons (P 90) which are used during night operation by the border security forces Mr. Gulshan Sharma CTO/ANO, NCC unit Dogra Degree College further motivated young cadets about how they can contribute to society by joining the armed forces and how the NCC can help in achieving their dreams of becoming an army officer. Overall the visit turned out to be a fruitful experience for the NCC Cadets.

## MLA Mohan Lal Flags Off Free Ganga Pilgrimage for Devotees

Akhnoor, February 25, 2025: In a remarkable initiative to facilitate spiritual fulfillment, MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat flagged off a free pilgrimage to the Ganges on the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri and Amavasya. This initiative was specially arranged for individuals who had never experienced the sacred ritual of Ganga Snan (holy bath in the Ganges). The pilgrimage, organized by Jammu Yatri Bhawan Trust, saw 50 devotees from various villages of the Akhnoor constituency embarking on this spiritual journey. The entire arrangement, including transportation, accommodation, and meals, was provided free of cost by MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat and Jammu Yatri Bhawan Trust.

The flag-off ceremony witnessed the presence of several distinguished personalities, including BJP District President Kuldeep Sharma, DDC Member Bhushan Baral, former Sarpanch Shamsher Singh, former Sarpanch Kuldeep Singh, Gullu Ram, Daler Singh, Mandal President Akhnoor Deepesh Singh, Mandal President Sungal Shamsher, Mandal President Pargwal Gaurav Singh, Anil Sharma, Ramesh Chandra, Sudarshan Sharma, Vinay



Sapolia, Suman Chib, Kuldeep Sharma, Sonia Verma, Surinder Singh, Jagdish Sharma, and several other notable figures. Addressing the devotees, MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat emphasized the significance of Ganga Snan in Hindu tradition and expressed his dedication to ensuring that even the underprivileged get to partake in this sacred practice. "It is both my duty and moral responsibility to facilitate this pilgrimage for those who have never had the opportunity to visit the Ganges. In Hinduism, bathing in the

holy river is considered highly auspicious, and its importance is magnified on occasions like Maha Shivratri and Amavasya," he said. He further assured that all necessary arrangements, including comfortable accommodation, nutritious meals, and travel facilities, had been meticulously planned to ensure a hassle-free and spiritually enriching experience for the devotees. The entire journey is free of cost, ensuring that financial constraints do not become a barrier to one's faith. MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat also an-

nounced that this initiative would not be a one-time event. "Next year, we will organize this pilgrimage once again, and in the future, we aim to make it a regular service so that more and more people can benefit from this divine experience," he added.

Before the departure, all devotees were served refreshments and blessings, marking the beginning of their sacred journey. MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat extended his heartfelt wishes, urging them to embrace this pilgrimage as an opportunity for spiritual cleansing and self-purification. He reiterated that this was not merely a travel experience but a profound step towards attaining inner peace and enlightenment. Concluding his address, he expressed his hope that such initiatives would inspire others to contribute to religious and social welfare, fostering a stronger sense of faith, community, and selfless service. With prayers and good wishes, the free pilgrimage was officially flagged off, as devotees embarked on their journey to the holy Ganges, a step towards spiritual awakening and divine blessings.

## Khatana Visits DU, Listens to Student Grievances

New Delhi, [25/02/2025]: In a heartfelt effort to bridge gaps and address student concerns, Mr. Gulam Ali Khatana, Senior BJP Leader and Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), today embarked on a special visit to Delhi University's iconic hostels—Gwyer Hall and Jubilee Hall. Interacting closely with students, especially those from Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Khatana listened intently to their grievances, aspirations, and challenges, promising to champion their cause at the highest levels. The visit was marked by candid conversations, where students shared their experiences of navigating life in the capital while



pursuing their academic dreams. Mr. Khatana, known for his unwavering commitment to youth empowerment, assured them of his dedication to creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for students from marginalized regions.

During his visit, Mr. Khatana was accompanied by prominent student leaders and faculty members, who actively participated in the discussions. Their presence added depth to the dialogue, highlighting the collective effort to address student issues and foster a

positive academic environment. Later, the MP made his way to the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) office, where he engaged with the elected secretary, Ms. Mitravinda Karanwal, and other representatives. Discussions revolved around

key student issues, with Mr. Khatana emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts to ensure the welfare and progress of the student community. The visit resonated deeply with the students, who expressed gratitude for Mr. Khatana's proactive approach and genuine concern for their well-being. His message was clear "Your voices matter, and I am here to ensure they are heard." This inspiring visit not only highlighted Mr. Khatana's commitment to the youth but also reinforced the importance of dialogue and action in building a brighter future for students across the nation.

## DC Shopian meets SBDU, BHD members under Mission Yuva Sensitises them regarding their role, responsibilities for impactful implementation

SHOPIAN, FEBRUARY 25: A meeting was today convened by Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta with all the members of Small Business Development Units (SBDU) and Business Help Desks (BHD) to discuss the roles and responsibilities of each member in the context of the Mission YUVA project. A comprehensive and detailed presentation was shared with the members, outlining the specific roles and duties of each member.

The committee members were sensitised about their job profile and helped to clarify expectations and facilitate a deeper understanding of the tasks at hand. DC Shopian emphasized the importance of their specific and critical roles in the project and stressed that a clear comprehension of responsibilities would ensure a smooth and efficient execu-



tion of the Mission YUVA project. Furthermore, he directed that each Yuva Doot will be identified after filling all the details of their selection as per the Yuva Doot Document. Additionally, the panchayats will be allocated to them, ensuring that the next steps can be taken accordingly in the project.

North in News

EDITORIAL

1.5 crore plantation in J&K.  
WOOD IS GOOD, BUT TREE  
IS BETTER.

In the vast evergreen forest Nature works in perfect rhythm, roots digging deep or exploring nearer the surface for food and moisture, Imperceptibility. Nature builds those mighty pillars with aisels, innumerable arches, multiplex, in the cathedral of forest. It has been said that man has done much to spread the Sahara desert by his misuse of soil, cutting down trees; uncontrolled grazing & over-cultivation; has created dust bowls where there was once rich land. When the world entered 21st century, Environment had become the most serious diplomatic issue across the globe, as a result of the growing recognition of our responsibility towards the planet earth. The Kyoto Protocol was aimed at targeted reductions of global Green House Gas Emissions. It has been rightly said Plant (vegetation) power means as much as to a nation as horse power, water power, fuel power, sea power or brain power means. It is the treasure that buys a nation's independence and supremacy. Man has developed dyes and herbal medicines from the forests and undertaken voyages of discovery also for this sake. The forest has been described as perfect economist which perfectly combines communism, capitalism and Social Credit and instead of building up a burden of debt, it stores up real wealth-the wealth of the wood. India has an opportunity to create a better environment and sustainable infrastructures drawn from the environmental investments from developed countries. Jammu and Kashmir with diverse geographic zones has a tremendous potential for raising plantation under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). In a welcome move, the Jammu & Kashmir Forest Department has unveiled an ambitious plan to plant 1.5 Crore saplings up to March end this financial year, aiming to improve the region's green cover and mitigate climate change. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF/HoFF) Sh. S. K. Gupta, announced the initiative during a plantation drive at Ompora City Forest. He expressed concerns over increased forest fires, PCCF attributed the incidents to a prolonged dry spell, adding that swift action by forest officials had prevented significant damage. The department is also taking steps to strengthen its work force. Male poplar clones were also distributed by the Social Forestry Department. Integrating modern techniques into nursery management has been laid stress upon. The community involvement is crucial to protect and expand the forests. He urged upon the residents to participate in the plantation drive. Hopefully, the endeavour, among other benefits, will make Jammu & Kashmir a role Model in the field of climate change mitigation, which is crucial for the rich fragile eco system of Jammu & Kashmir. BEST WISHES.

RAJNI SHARMA.....

RBI should go for an 'accommodative' stance

Uttam Gupta

While inflation has been steadily declining, the RBI opted to retain its 'neutral' stance, signaling a measured approach rather than give push to boost liquidity and demand. On February 7, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra announced the decisions taken by the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) in its sixth bi-monthly meeting of the current financial year (FY). It has reduced the policy rate or the repo rate (the interest rate at which the RBI lends to banks) by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent. This marks the first repo rate cut in nearly five years. Moreover, it has continued with a neutral stance which it shifted in its fourth bi-monthly review/announcement on October 10, 2024, from its earlier stance of "withdrawal of accommodation". In 2016, the Union Government put in place an institutionalized framework to enable the MPC to formulate monetary policy and determine the key interest rates including the policy rate for inflation targeting. It mandated the RBI to fix the policy rate in such a manner as to maintain the Consumer Price Index or CPI (it corresponds to a basket that includes food, fuel, manufactured goods, and select services) within the target range of 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent). The RBI decides the policy rates once in two months during each FY. The mandate initially given for five years ending March 31, 2021, has since been extended for a further period of five years. The current mandate will continue till March 31, 2026. The other crucial policy instrument the RBI uses for targeting inflation



is Liquidity - jargon for the quantum of credit available in the banking system. Pumping more liquidity along with a reduction in the policy rate represents a scenario which in jargon is described as an 'accommodative' policy stance. The terminology was coined by the outgoing governor Shaktikanta Das in June 2019 when he started going for aggressive cuts in the policy rate and an increase in credit availability. Since June 2022 the RBI changed its stance to "withdrawal of accommodation" and had stuck to it till October 9, 2024, when in the fourth bi-monthly review, the MPC decided to go for a "neutral" stance. A "neutral" stance connotes that the RBI has vowed to keep its options flexible meaning it will neither squeeze liquidity by restricting credit availability and keeping policy rates high nor go for unrestrained lending at low interest rates. While inflation targeting is important, it is equally necessary to dovetail the monetary policy to sustain the momentum of high growth. During the second quarter of the current FY, growth in GDP plummeted to a low of 5.4 per cent down from a high of 8.1 per cent during the second Qr of

FY 2023-24. For the current FY 2024-25, it is estimated at 6.4 percent against 8.2 percent recorded during FY 2023-24. Seen in this backdrop and an overarching need to achieve a growth of 8 per cent on a sustained basis in line to make India a 'developed economy' by 2047, the RBI could have given the desired push. It could have gone for an 'accommodative' policy stance by opting for a significant cut in the policy rate and pumping sufficient cash into the banking system. However, it has stuck to a "neutral" stance while reducing the repo rate by a small 0.25 per cent. RBI's reluctance has to do with a mindset that was reflected in ex-Governor Das's observation while announcing the first bi-monthly policy of the current FY. He had said "The elephant has now gone out for a walk and appears to be returning to the forest. We would like the elephant to return to the forest and remain there on a durable basis." Put simply, he meant there was no need to start reducing interest rates until inflation reached the target of 4 per cent and stayed at that level. The incumbent Governor has continued with this mindset. In February

2023, the policy rate was at a peak of 6.5 per cent. During FY 2022-23, the CPI inflation was hovering around 8 per cent. In the following year, it started decreasing from 7.4 per cent in July 2023 to 5 per cent in September 2023, 4.8 per cent in October 2023 and 5.1 per cent during January/February 2024. For FY 2023-24, it was 5.4 per cent. During the current FY also, it has kept low; 5.08 per cent in June 2024 and 3.54 per cent in July of 2024. After a brief spurt of 6.2 per cent in October 2024, in January 2025, it declined to 4.3 per cent. During FY 2024-25, the RBI has estimated it at 4.8 per cent. Given the above, from the third quarter of FY 2023-24, the CPI inflation has remained well within the target range of 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent). This position continues during the current FY. For FY 2025-26, the RBI expects it to be 4.2 per cent. Thus, there was a strong case for a significant reduction in the repo rate besides the injection of sufficient liquidity. This would have helped in stimulating demand thereby giving a boost to economic growth besides helping millions of borrowers reduce their EMIs and helping industries, especially MSMEs reduce the cost of servicing their loans. But, this was not to be. The problem is RBI's obsession with inflation. Malhotra recognizes that inflation is on a downward trajectory. Yet, he doesn't want to relinquish his neutral stance citing global economic challenges "progress in global disinflation is stalling." Put simply, he fears imported inflation impacting CPI hence, a "neutral stance will provide MPC flexibility to respond to evolving macroeconomic environment." A major factor

contributing to wide variations in CPI inflation is food inflation which has a weight of around 40 per cent and is impacted predominantly by supply side/seasonal factors whereas monetary policy instruments work on the demand side. Invariably, food inflation maintains an upward trend even as a small disruption in supply caused by seasonal factors can lead to spiralling prices. As long as food remains a part of the CPI basket, inflation targeting will always remain a problem. There is an urgent need to exclude it while setting benchmark interest rates, an idea that was mooted by the Chief Economic Advisor in the Economic Survey (ES) for 2023-24. The CEA argued that monetary policy has no bearing on the prices of food items, which are dictated by supply-side pressures. For instance, during 2021-22, wheat output was affected by unusually high temperatures. During 2022-23, rains accompanied by hailstorms acted as a spoiler. During the first half of FY 2023-24, food inflation went up due to a spike in the prices of vegetables caused by seasonal factors. The spurt in food prices during October 2024 also had to do with supply-side pressures only. The RBI can achieve little to control them by keeping the policy rate high. The RBI should take the idea mooted in the ES - 2023-24 on board. Meanwhile, it should consider reducing the weight of food inflation in CPI to reflect the contemporary reality. The current 40 per cent weight is based on the Consumption Expenditure Survey (CES) of 2011-12 whereas Summary Statistics from the 2022-23 CES point towards a significant reduction.

M23 rebellion and Rwanda's role: The escalating crisis in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

Debashis Jena

At the heart of this conflict lies a web of ethnic tensions, political grievances, and economic exploitation, particularly vast mineral wealth of DRC. The recent escalation of violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a stark reminder of the region's deep-rooted instability. The resurgence of the M23 rebellion, which led to the seizure of Goma and further advances into South Kivu, is not merely an internal Congolese crisis-it is a conflict with significant regional and international implications. Rwanda's involvement, whether direct or indirect, remains contentious, as accusations of its support for M23 persist. While Kigali denies these allegations, the sophistication of M23's operations raises serious questions about its backing. At the heart of this crisis lies a complex mix of ethnic tensions, political grievances, and economic exploitation, particularly concerning the DRC's vast mineral wealth. For years, Rwanda has been accused of providing M23 with financial and military support, a claim reinforced by multiple UN reports and statements from Western governments. Kigali, however, insists that it is acting in self-defence,



citing the threat posed by the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a Hutu militia operating in eastern DRC with historical ties to the perpetrators of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Yet, Rwanda's actions go beyond border security. The conflict's economic dimension cannot be ignored, with Rwanda being accused of profiting from the illicit exploitation of Congolese minerals, particularly coltan, a key component in electronic devices. The capture of Rubaya, a coltan-rich area, by M23 last year suggests that economic interests play a crucial role in shaping the rebellion's trajectory. M23 claims to be fighting for the rights of ethnic Tutsis in eastern DRC, arguing that the Congolese government has failed to protect them from persecution. While there is historical evidence of ethnic violence

against Tutsis in the region, M23's actions undermine its credibility. Rather than advocating for political rights through diplomatic means, the group has engaged in violence, forced displacement, and human rights violations. Its strategy of seizing key cities and resource-rich territories suggests an agenda extending far beyond self-defence. The DRC, backed by the international community, has dismissed M23's claims, arguing that the group is acting as a proxy for Rwanda's regional ambitions. The latest attempt by regional leaders to broker peace, with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC) calling for an immediate ceasefire, reflects a growing recognition that the crisis cannot be resolved through military means alone. However, the

reality on the ground tells a different story. M23 had briefly declared a ceasefire before resuming attacks, signalling that diplomatic efforts are struggling to keep up with battlefield developments. The DRC's call for UN sanctions against Rwanda, coupled with protests in Kinshasa where demonstrators burned portraits of President Paul Kagame, indicates a deepening rift between the two countries. With diplomatic ties severed and hostilities intensifying, the prospects for a negotiated settlement remain bleak. A purely military solution is unlikely to yield lasting peace. The Congolese army has historically struggled to contain well-equipped rebel groups, and the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, has done little to prevent the latest wave of violence. Foreign military intervention, whether from regional forces or international actors, risks escalating the situation rather than resolving it. The most viable path forward is a combination of military containment and political engagement. Strengthening the DRC's security forces to prevent further territorial losses is crucial, but diplomatic efforts must also address the root causes of the conflict, including ethnic grievances and economic exploitation.

## Jammu Kashmir Rehbar-e-Taleem Teachers Forum Submits Memorandum for Educational Reforms

LIAQAT ALI KHATANA Rajouri, February 25 : The Jammu Kashmir Rehbar-e-Taleem Teachers Forum has urged the government to address pressing issues in the Education Department ahead of the upcoming Assembly session. In a memorandum submitted on behalf of the teaching fraternity, the forum highlighted several challenges plaguing government schools, which have led to a steady decline in student enrollment. The memorandum underscores concerns regarding irrational pupil-teacher ratios, lack of headteachers in middle schools, and stagnation in career progression for teachers engaged through the Rehbar-e-Taleem (ReT) scheme. "Most middle schools are running without headteachers, severely impacting academic performance. The creation of master-grade headteacher posts in every school is imperative," the forum stated. Another critical



demand is the introduction of a well-defined transfer policy for ReT teachers, many of whom have been stationed in the same schools for over two decades. The memorandum also calls for an end to ad-hoc deployments, attachments, and irrational rationalization of teachers, which, according to the forum, has disrupted the educational ecosystem. The forum has further demanded that no

teacher be assigned non-teaching duties in administrative offices such as ZEO and CEO offices, emphasizing that their primary responsibility is classroom instruction. Additionally, concerns were raised about the lack of proper school infrastructure, with many institutions facing space constraints. "The government should allow the construction of second floors in schools facing a

space crunch," the forum recommended. Other demands include the timely provision of textbooks, the digitization of education through ICT labs and smart boards, the formation of dedicated district-level academic inspection teams, and the merger of Anganwadi centers with schools to streamline Mid-Day Meal (MDM) services. The forum also stressed the urgent need to fill vacant headmaster and

lecturer posts to ensure the smooth functioning of schools. A key demand in the memorandum is the restoration of the old pension scheme, which teachers believe is a crucial post-retirement support system. "It is a humanitarian issue that must be addressed," the forum stated. Furthermore, the teachers called for the abolition of multiple nomenclatures within the department, arguing that such classifications create unnecessary divisions. They also advocated for the introduction of new subjects and streams at the higher secondary level to provide better academic and employment opportunities for students. The forum concluded by urging the government to take immediate action to overhaul the education system in Jammu and Kashmir, which, they argue, remains educationally backward due to these long-standing structural issues.

## BGSBU Hosts Lecture on New Criminal Laws

LIAQAT ALI KHATANA Rajouri, February 25 : Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU), Rajouri, organized an insightful lecture on the three newly introduced criminal laws, bringing together esteemed speakers from law enforcement and academia. The event aimed to educate faculty and students on key legal amendments and their broader implications for the justice system. The session was graced by Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, BGSBU, Prof. Jawaid Iqbal, along with DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range, Shri Tajinder Singh (IPS), Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri, and Registrar, BGSBU, Mr. Abhishek Sharma (IAS), Aijaz Ahmad Malik (JKPS), I/c Commandant IRP 2nd Battalion, and Dr. Vinay Gadge (IPS, Probationer). The speakers provided a comprehensive overview of the legal reforms, emphasizing their role in enhancing law en-



forcement efficiency, ensuring swift justice, and protecting citizens' rights. In his address, Prof. Jawaid Iqbal underscored the importance of legal awareness in fostering a responsible and law-abiding society. He lauded the collaboration between law enforcement and academia in facilitating such informative sessions, which provide students with a practical understanding of contemporary legal developments. The vote of thanks was presented by Deputy Commissioner Rajouri and Registrar BGSBU, Mr. Abhishek Sharma (IAS), who ex-

pressed gratitude to the distinguished speakers for sharing their expertise and to the attendees for their active participation. The event concluded with the National Anthem, reinforcing a spirit of unity and patriotism among participants. The lecture was coordinated by Dr. Gaurav Sehgal and Dr. Aasim Mir, Assistant Professors from the Department of Management Studies, BGSBU. The university remains dedicated to organizing such knowledge-sharing initiatives to promote academic enrichment and societal awareness.

## DC reviews progress of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme in Poonch

POONCH, FEBRUARY 25: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, chaired a crucial meeting today in the DC office complex to review the progress of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) for the financial year 2024-25. During the meeting, the DC sought detailed updates from various departments involved in the programme, including Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Sericulture, and other relevant sectors. He emphasized



the importance of collaboration among departments to enhance the overall effectiveness of the programme. The DC directed the concerned departments to focus on key indicators to improve statistics at the Union Territory level. He stressed the need to increase the reg-

istration of farmers to meet the established targets promptly. The meeting was attended by key officials, including the Chief Agriculture Officer Poonch, Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, District Sheep Husbandry Officer, District Sericulture Officer, Assistant Director of Fisheries and other stakeholders. The Deputy Commissioner reiterated the government's commitment to advancing agricultural development and ensuring the welfare of farmers in the region.

## Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari extends greetings on Maha Shivratri

*Says, Herath holds a unique place in Kashmir's history, culture, and rich pluralistic ethos*

Srinagar, February 25: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari has extended warm greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri, which the Kashmiri Pandit community celebrates as "Herath" in the valley, observing centuries-old local traditions and rituals while marking this important festival. In his message, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari said, "I extend my heartfelt greetings to everyone on the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri. In particular, I convey my best wishes to our Pandit brethren, who celebrate this significant festival as 'Herath,' enriching it with their age-old traditions and customs."



He further remarked, "Herath holds a unique place in Kashmir's history, culture, and rich pluralistic ethos. This festival is not only of religious significance but also plays a vital role in preserving our shared heritage and composite traditions." "On this special occasion, I pray for peace, stability, and harmony to prevail in Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

## Seven-Day Course on 'Leadership Through Hindi Literature' Concludes at GGM Science College

A seven-day course on 'Leadership Through Hindi Literature,' organized by Prithibhaya-Vedantsara Foundation, an NGO, in collaboration with NSS units of GGM Science College, concluded successfully with great enthusiasm. The initiative aimed to explore the intricate relationship between leadership and Hindi literature, inspiring students through thought-provoking discussions and interactive sessions. The session commenced with a warm welcome address by Sh. Bharat Makotra, Director & CEO of Prithibhaya-Vedantsara Foundation. He underscored the critical role of leadership in today's dynamic world and emphasized how Hindi literature provides invaluable lessons on leadership and ethics. The chief guest, Dr. Narinder Kumar, Head of the Department of Zoology, delivered a compelling address, highlighting the transformative power of literature in shaping strong, ethical leaders. He encouraged students to draw inspiration from literary figures and historical narratives that embody leadership qualities. The event was honored by the presence of distinguished faculty members, including Prof. Bal Krishan, Dr. Neha Sharma, and Dr. Rahul Kait, NSS Program



Officer. Their participation reinforced the institution's commitment to promoting leadership development and literary engagement among students. Throughout the seven-day course, students delved into the wisdom embedded in Hindi literature, exploring leadership principles demonstrated in classic and contemporary works. The valedictory ceremony marked the successful culmination of the course, featuring a certificate distribution ceremony for the participants. Letters of appreciation were also presented to Dr. Narinder Kumar, Prof. Bal Krishan, Dr. Rahul Kait, and Dr. Neha Sharma, acknowledging their invaluable contributions to the program. The course was widely appreciated by students and faculty alike, with many expressing their gratitude for the opportunity to engage with leadership concepts through the lens of Hindi literature. The successful conclusion of this program reaffirms GGM Science College's dedication to holistic education, blending academic excellence with leadership development for the benefit of future generations.

## DC Bandipora Visits Tehsil Library, Takes Stock of Facilities

BANDIPORA, FEBRUARY 25: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Zaffar Husson Shawl, on Tuesday paid a visit to the Tehsil Library Bandipora to assess the available facilities

and took feedback from students and staff. During the visit, the students and library staff raised several concerns, including extending the library's operating hours, improving heating and cooling facilities, and address other infrastructure

issues. The Deputy Commissioner listened patiently to the concerns and assured the students and staff that all genuine issues would be resolved within a specified time frame. He said District Administration Bandipora is committed to enhance

## India's Hyperloop Vision Moves Forward with IIT Madras Collaboration and Cutting-Edge Test Track

*Next-Gen Transport: Hyperloop Technologies Set to Transform India's Travel Landscape*  
*India Takes a Giant Leap Towards Hyperloop Travel with Launch of Test Track at IIT Madras*

IIT Madras, which hosted Asia's First Global Hyperloop Competition 2025 concluded successfully, spotlighting the progress and promise of cutting-edge transportation technologies. The event was India's involvement in hyperloop development, a revolutionary transportation concept aimed at reshaping the future of high-speed travel. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav's Vision for Innovation During the closing ceremony, Union Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting, Electronics, and IT, Shri Ashwini Vaishnav, joined virtually and emphasized the government's commitment to fostering innovation through collaborations between Indian Railways and academic institutions like IIT Madras. Shri Vaishnav reiterated that the competition was aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of promoting technological advancements and strengthening partnerships

between industry and academia. Highlights of the Competition: Prestigious Awards: Several awards were presented, with the Best Demonstration Team Award being among the most notable. Other categories recognized teams for achievements in Braking & Traction System Demonstrations and Best Sub-System (Mechanical). Innovation at the Forefront: Shri Vaishnav praised the young innovators who participated in the competition. He highlighted that their groundbreaking work reflects India's growing capabilities in science, engineering, and next-generation transportation solutions. These innovations play a crucial role in accelerating India's journey towards adopting hyperloop technology, among other futuristic travel systems. Hyperloop Test Track: The competition showcased the 422-meter-long Hyperloop test track at

IIT Madras, located in Chennai. This state-of-the-art facility is a key asset, marking a significant partnership between Indian Railways and IIT Madras. The test track serves as a crucial testing ground for hyperloop systems, signalling India's growing commitment to leading the way in hyperloop technology. Focus on Future Transportation Projects: The Railway Minister's address also highlighted the collaboration between Indian Railways and IIT Madras on another exciting project: the development of a Vertical Take-Off & Landing (VTOL) Vehicle. This VTOL project is set to revolutionize the way we think about mobility, as it promises to provide solutions for efficient and sustainable transportation in urban and rural areas. The project is funded by Indian Railways and is expected to push the boundaries of modern mobility technologies. The Significance of Hyperloop Technology in India's

Future The competition was not only a showcase of India's potential in hyperloop technology but also an indicator of the country's ambitious plans for a futuristic transportation network. Hyperloop systems are expected to dramatically reduce travel times between cities, offering an alternative to traditional rail and air travel. The hyperloop concept envisions high-speed, low-pressure pods traveling at speeds of up to 1,200 km/h, connecting major cities in a matter of minutes. As part of the competition, participants presented innovative ideas for the design, safety, and efficiency of these pods, making clear strides towards creating a feasible and scalable hyperloop system. IIT Madras and the Future of Mobility Shri Vaishnav emphasized the crucial role of IIT Madras in India's technological strides, including the successful rollout of India's 5G network, the fastest in

the world. This partnership between academia and Indian Railways is expected to accelerate the development of hyperloop technology and other future-ready mobility solutions. By showcasing the capabilities of India's young innovators and their contributions to the hyperloop field, the event demonstrated the potential for India to become a global leader in the next generation of transportation systems. A Bright Future for India's Transportation Innovations The Hyperloop test track and the ongoing VTOL project are just the beginning. As the country continues to explore futuristic travel solutions, the collaboration between Indian Railways and IIT Madras will likely play a central role in making these innovations a reality. With both technological breakthroughs and collaborative partnerships on the horizon, India's journey toward revolutionary transportation systems is poised to accelerate in the coming years.

## Range Police Headquarters Rajouri Concludes Volleyball Tournament Under Civic Action Programme 2024-25

LIAQAT ALI KHATANA Rajouri, February 25 : The Range Police Headquarters Rajouri successfully concluded a spirited Volleyball Tournament at District Police Lines Rajouri, organized under the Civic Action Programme 2024-25. The tournament, which kicked off on February 18, saw enthusiastic participation from teams across District Rajouri and Poonch, aiming to promote sportsmanship and strengthen police-public relations. The final match, held on February 25, was a nail-biting contest between Choudhary Club Rajouri and Shaheed Manjeet Singh Club Poonch, with Shaheed Manjeet Singh Club Poonch emerging victorious after an intense showdown. The closing ceremony was graced by Sh. Tejinder Singh, IPS, DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range, Sh. Abhishek Sharma, IAS,



prizes to both teams. Officials also extended words of appreciation to all participating teams and match officials for their contributions to the tournament's success. This initiative by Range Police Headquarters Rajouri underscores the J&K Police's commitment to community engagement, youth development, and the promotion of sportsmanship in the region.





# SP named every govt-funded project after 'Samajwadi' while in power: Yogi

Lucknow Feb 25: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Tuesday that during the Samajwadi Party regime, only people associated with the ruling party received financial help for medical treatment, every work was given a 'Samajwadi' name.



He alleged that the CM's Discretionary Fund was misused in the same way during the previous Samajwadi Party rule.

Addressing a query during Question Hour in the state Legislative Council, the chief minister spoke about the state's current healthcare facilities comparing them with that of his predecessor. He said, "Getting medical treatment is no longer difficult for the poor. Under the PM Ayushman Bharat and Mukhyamantri Jan Arogya Yojana, 10 crore peo-

ple in the state are receiving free health insurance coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh."

He said government employees are benefiting from free medical services through the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Cashless Health Scheme. Financial

assistance from the CM's Discretionary Fund has been provided to every needy person without any discrimination in the past eight years of the BJP rule. In fact, healthcare benefits are being provided to all citizens without any discrimination.

Speaking in the Legislative Council, he stated that unlike the previous SP government, his administration was working to ensure that no one is deprived of medical aid. The government is covering additional medical expenses when needed, as every human loss not only affects one family but also society and the state.

CM Yogi highlighted the rapid expansion of medical facilities, stating that until 2017, there were only 17 government medical colleges in Uttar Pradesh. Now, efforts are underway to establish a medical college in every district. These colleges are being staffed with qualified professors, and District Magistrates have been directed to appoint skilled doctors at district hospitals, CHCs, and PHCs. Steps are also being taken to develop super-

specialty blocks and strengthen faculty in medical colleges.

"The government has launched the Mukhyamantri Jan Arogya Mela, which is held every Sunday at PHC-level facilities, providing health services under both central and state schemes. Free dialysis services are now available in every district, ensuring accessible treatment for patients across the state," he added.

Highlighting the government's commitment to improving healthcare services across the state, the CM mentioned that every district now has a blood bank to ensure easy access to testing facilities for all residents. Alongside the expansion of medical colleges, continuous efforts are being made to enhance paramedical and nursing education.

# Delhi Assembly Speaker suspends 12 AAP MLAs, including LoP Atishi, Gopal Rai

New Delhi, Feb 25: Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta on Tuesday suspended 12 AAP MLAs, including Leader of Opposition and former minister Atishi and senior AAP leader Gopal Rai amid ruckus over the alleged removal of portraits of Bhagat Singh and Dr BR Ambedkar from the Chief Minister's Office.



As soon as the address of Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) VK Saxena started, AAP legislators began raising slogans against the BJP government. The AAP MLAs were carrying posters of Ambedkar as they chanted "Jai Bhim" slogans.

Following the uproar, Speaker Gupta suspended 12 AAP MLAs, including LoP Atishi and Gopal Rai. Later, the AAP legislators staged a protest outside the assembly and raised slogans against the newly formed BJP government.

allegations of removal of portraits of Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Delhi minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said that the AAP MLAs were doing this drama in a bid to divert attention from the CAG report.

"The party (AAP) knows nothing except quarrels. No one can remove the portraits of Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and Shaheed Bhagat Singh and neither

have we removed them. They are doing this kind of drama to divert attention from the CAG report," he said. The ruckus by AAP legislators came ahead of the tabling of 14 CAG reports by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta. These CAG reports, which were allegedly blocked by the previous Aam Aadmi Party government, will scrutinize the financial and administrative performance of the previous AAP government.

# No honorarium hike for 'shiksha mitras' in UP



Lucknow, Feb 25: The Uttar Pradesh government has no plan to increase the honorarium of 'shiksha mitras' in the state.

Replying to a question of SP MLA Rakesh Verma in the UP Assembly on Tuesday, UP primary education Minister Sandeep Singh said that there is no plan to increase the hono-

rarium of shiksha mitras, and that they will continue to get honorarium of Rs 10,000 per month.

There are around 1.50 lakh shiksha mitras in the northern state.

However, the SP MLA targeted the government, alleging that the UP government has made Shiksha Mitras a bonded laborer and they are being given

less honorarium than minimum wages. Pointing out the Education Minister, he said, "the person who takes care of the dog at the minister is getting Rs 30,000 but those who are taking care of the future children are being ignored". The BJP MLAs objected when SP MLA compared the education Minister with a person who takes care of dogs. The treasury bench demanded an apology from the SP MLA for his comment on the Minister. Primary Education Minister Sandeep Singh said that earlier too the opposition had compared him with animals. They should apologize in the House, he demanded. Earlier, SP MLA Ragini Sonkar alleged that the state police is converting most of the murders as suicide.

# Three trampled to death by wild elephants in Andhra Pradesh

New Delhi, Feb 25: Three devotees were trampled to death by a herd of wild elephants in Andhra Pradesh's Annamaya district in the early hours of Tuesday.

Two others were critically injured in the incident that occurred in the forest area near Gondalakona in Obulavaripalle mandal.

Wild elephants attacked a group of devotees heading to a local temple for Shivratri celebrations around 2 a.m.

Three devotees hailing from Y. Kota died on the spot while two others were critically injured. The injured were shifted to a hospital, where their condition was stated to be critical.

The incident sent panic in the region. Forest department officials went on alert and launched an operation to drive away the elephants into forests.

Andhra Pradesh has witnessed a series of man-elephant conflicts in recent months. Rayalaseema districts bordering Tamil Nadu and Karnataka see frequent move-



ment of wild elephants. The movement of wild elephants has become more frequent recently in the forests of Chittoor and Tirupati regions. Last month two herds of wild elephants crossed into Seshachalam forests from neighbouring states. The two herds, comprising 35

jumbos, are said to be competing for food, water, and dominance, creating havoc in nearby villages. On January 18, a man was trampled to death by wild elephants in Kandulavaripally in Chittoor district. Forest officials say depleting resources in the forests and lack of

habitat have driven elephants into human settlements, resulting in significant damage to crops, property and lives.

Elephant attacks have claimed 22 lives in undivided Chittoor district since 2011. The cumulative crop loss in the region is estimated to be 233 acres since 2015.

Vizianagaram and Parvathipuram Manyam districts, bordering Odisha have also witnessed many incidents of man-elephant conflicts in recent months.

The Andhra Pradesh government last year sought help from Karnataka to address human-elephant conflict.

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, who holds the forests portfolio, met Karnataka's Minister for Forest and Environment Eshwar Khadke and sought the help of the Karnataka Forest Department in dealing with the problem.

The Karnataka government agreed to provide eight trained Kumi elephants to manage, drive, and capture wild elephants.

# 'Congress to repeat its defeated candidates in 2028 Karnataka assembly elections'

Bengaluru, Feb 25: The Congress has begun preparations for the 2028 Karnataka Assembly elections with an in-principle decision to repeat the party assembly candidates who lost in the previous state elections after surveys showed their prospects as positive. On Monday, KPCC President and Dy CM, DK Shivakumar, held a meeting with all the candidates who lost in assembly elections last time and asked them to gear up for the 2028 elections. According to Shivakumar, 60 of the defeated candidates could win the polls next time as per an internal survey. "As many as 60 candidates who lost the previous assembly election are said to win in the coming election according to an internal survey. Against this backdrop, we have asked our losing candidates to prepare for 2028," Shivakumar told media persons on Monday evening after the meeting was



over. "We invited 86 of our candidates who lost the previous election and listened to their concerns and deliberated on the preparations for the local body elections and the 2028 elections. We have given clear instructions to the defeated candidates to be proactive. We are also preparing an action plan in consultation with the

AICC on building the party in the remaining 20 constituencies," Shivakumar said. After a few hours, just before his departure to Delhi for meeting with central water resources ministry on Tuesday morning, DK Shivakumar told media persons about the rebuilding and rejuvenation of the party under which the Congress will

give leadership roles to those who work hard on the ground and not those who lobby with leaders in Bengaluru.

A list of such workers and leaders is being finalised and once done the state unit would seek ratification from the national leadership, he said. On the election preparations, he said another round of meeting with defeated candidates of assembly and Lok Sabha elections will be held to work out a focused plan to win their seats. The party has also been instructed to support and empower them. "The CM and I will fix a meeting with the losing candidates during the next session," Shivakumar said. "The CM and I along with the district in charge ministers will hold a meeting of the party workers from March 23 to April 1. We will allow the district in-charge ministers to hold these meetings if time permits before that."

# Stalin to hold all-party meet on Mar 5 over LS delimitation proposal

New Delhi, Feb 25: Describing the proposed delimitation exercise to redraw Lok Sabha constituencies on the basis of population of a state as a Damocles sword hanging over the heads of the southern states, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Monday announced an all-party meeting to be held on March 5 to discuss the issue.



Announcing this to the media after a cabinet meeting at the secretariat, he said letters have been sent to all 40 registered political parties to ensure their participation.

"Tamil Nadu is facing a grave situation as there is a threat to its existing representation in Parliament. The delimitation exercise based on population will result in the reduction of the number of MPs from

throughout the state. This cannot be allowed as it concerns our legitimate right," he explained.

"Tamil Nadu might lose 8 Lok Sabha seats. We are being pushed to launch a struggle to retain our rights. To discuss the issue of delimitation, invitations have been sent to all the 40 registered political parties in the state," he said, adding that it is necessary to put up a united face to protect the rights of the

state.

The state at present has 39 LS constituencies. Explaining that he was not against enhancing representation of the people in a democracy, Stalin made it clear that it, however, should not be at the cost of Tamil Nadu and other southern States which have successfully implemented the family planning programme and controlled population explosion.

# Patanjali University's 24 students secure jobs in campus placement drive

Haridwar, Feb 25: In a significant achievement for Patanjali University, 24 students of the final semester of MSc, BSc, BA, PGDYA and PGDYS courses of the Department of Yoga Science were successfully placed during the campus placement drive on February 23. The drive resulted in successful job placements for students in various positions at Anant Yogalaya Private Limited. Dr. Vinay Kumar Sharma, Placement Officer at Patanjali University expressed happiness over the success of the placement drive, highlighting that it was organised to offer students employment opportunities while they are still completing their studies. He further stated that the



institution is committed to providing quality education along with excellent career opportunities. This placement drive enabled students to showcase their talents and secure bright career options. The selected students expressed their happiness and gratitude towards the university and the participating companies. The Placement Cell of Patanjali University played a significant role in ensuring the successful organization of the campus drive.

# No-vehicle zone enforced in Mahakumbh fair area & Prayagraj for Mahashivratri snan

Mahakumbh Nagar, Feb 25: The grand Mahakumbh 2025, taking place on the sacred land of Prayagraj, is now approaching its conclusion on Wednesday. To facilitate seamless sacred baths and darshan for devotees, a no-vehicle zone has been enforced in the fair area and Prayagraj city starting Tuesday.



To ensure a smooth and secure experience for devotees during this holy gathering of faith and devotion, the fair police have issued special guidelines as part of crowd management measures for the final bathing festival on Mahashivratri (February 26).

According to the fair police here on Tuesday, no vehicle-zone will be implemented from 4:00 pm on February 25. Prayagraj Commissionerate will enforce a no-vehicle zone starting at 6:00 pm. All citizens have been urged to respect this regulation and co-

operate fully. To streamline crowd movement, devotees are encouraged to

bathe at the ghat closest to their entry point, ensuring both convenience and safety.

However, there will be no restriction on vehicles carrying essential items like milk, vegetables, medicines, petrol/diesel, ambulances, and vehicles of government employees (doctors, police, administration). All essential services personnel will be able to do their work uninterrupted.

As Mahashivratri marks the conclusion of Mahakumbh on February 26, devotees have been requested to take a quick dip at the nearest ghat, visit the Shivalayas, and proceed towards their destinations in an orderly manner.

To ensure smooth crowd movement, all pontoon bridges will be operated based on crowd pressure. Authorities have reiterated that all ghats hold equal religious significance as Sangam, urging devotees to cooperate by using the nearest available bathing site.

## Joint Tree Plantation Drive Conducted at Mendhar Poonch

Poonch : 25 Feb 2025

In a significant Military Environmental initiative, the Indian Army along with Forest Department Mendhar Forest Range, Poonch planted Trees inside COB Dhargaloon to promote sustainability and environmental conservation. The plantation was carried out under the theme "EK PED MAA KE NAAM", dedicating each tree to the nurturing spirit of the mother everywhere. This plantation program is a step towards securing fragile ecosystem and tackling climate change.



Indian Army and Forest Department will jointly combat forest fires and such incidents by sharing their resources and expertise. The initiative also focused on strengthening National Security through Environmental Protection by doing

plantation in border and sensitive areas. The Joint effort of Indian Army and Forest Department is to carry out afforestation in difficult areas under the theme "EK PED MAA KE NAAM". By this effort, the inter Department gap was

bridged and Forest Department has been convinced to actively collaborate in sharing any information related to anti national activities occurring in or nearby forest areas. This cooperation will help to enhance security and ensure that potential threats are identified and addressed promptly, contributing to the safety and wellbeing of both the environment and the nation. A total of 30 plants of different species have been planted inside COB Dhargaloon.

## Indian Army Conducted a Lecture on Upliftment and Empowerment of People of J&K at Bhala, Doda

Doda : 25 Feb 2025

As a part of ongoing process of educating the local population on 'Upliftment and Empowerment of People of J&K', a lecture was conducted at Bhala on 24 February 2025. Speaking on the occasion, a local Teacher said that the initiative reflects a collective effort to bring positive change to the lives of people in the region.

By focusing on education, entrepreneurship and cultural preservation, we are paving the way for a brighter future. The highlight of the event is edu-



ating the local populace to uplift and empower them through various courses like Computer Operator, Welding Courses, Women Nursing,

Motor Driving and Beautician courses which are being conducted every year. A total of 35 people attended the lecture. Mr Aashiq Hussain, Naib

Sarpanch appreciated the measures projected by the event to uplift and empower the people of J&K and to choose a progressive life.

## Police arrests 02 drug peddlers in Srinagar & Kulgam



Kulgam, Feb 25: Tightening noose against the drug smugglers/peddlers, Police in Srinagar & Kulgam have arrested two drug peddlers and recovered contraband substance from their possession Srinagar Police along with team of CKR office has arrested a drug peddler and recovered contraband substance from his possession. A Police team headed by SHO PS Shalteng, during surprise naka established at Narbal Sozieth

Bund intercepted a vehicle bearing registration number CH01M-9496, who tried to flee from the spot but was apprehended by alert police party.

During checking, substantial quantity (910 grams) of heroin-like substance was recovered from the driver of said vehicle. He has been identified as Ishtiaq Ahmed Khowaja son of Abdul Hamid Khowaja resident of Dildar Karnah Kupwara and was subsequently arrested. Moreover, the vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized. Meanwhile, police in Kulgam during patrolling at general road Malwan in the jurisdiction of Police Station Devsar intercepted a suspicious person carrying a bag.

The police party recovered 10 kgs of grinded Cannabis like contraband substance filled in the said bag. The said drug peddler identified as Arsalan Azad Ganie son of Azad Ahmad Ganie resident of Malwan was arrested on the spot. Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and further investigation have been initiated. Police warns of strict action against the persons indulging in drug trafficking, and other criminal activities and urged upon the citizens to cooperate with the police to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society.

## Indian Army Organized a World Peace Understanding Day at Chhatral, Poonch

Poonch : 25 Feb 2025

In a thought provoking lecture on World Peace Understanding Day, Rashtriya Rifles Battalion addressed a gathering of school students, emphasizing the importance of global harmony, mutual respect, and cultural understanding.

The event, held at Chhatral Higher Secondary School, Chhatral aimed to instill the values of peace and cooperation among young minds, shaping them into responsible global citizens.

A total strength of 175 including 150 students and 25 teachers attended the event. During the session, the speaker from Rashtriya Rifles Battalion highlighted how peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of justice, equality, and mutual respect. He engaged students in discussions about historical peace movements, the role of in-



ternational organizations, and the power of dialogue in resolving disputes. With inspiring anecdotes and real world examples, Rashtriya Rifles speaker encouraged

students to embrace empathy, tolerance, and non-violence in their daily interactions. The future of our world lies in the hands of the younger generation.

By fostering understanding and promoting peace, we can build a world where conflicts are resolved through dialogue and compassion, Rashtriya Rifles

speaker

stated. The interactive session also included a Q&A segment, where students eagerly asked questions about ways to contribute to world peace. Rashtriya Rifles speaker provided insightful responses, urging them to practice kindness, respect diversity, and engage in community service. The principal and teachers of School, expressed gratitude for Rashtriya Rifles speaker's impactful session, stating.

"This lecture has provided our students with a fresh perspective on global harmony and their role in promoting peace." The event concluded with a pledge by students to be peace ambassadors in their communities, reinforcing the message that peace begins with individuals.

## Indian Army Conducts Medical Petrol for Awam at Bhattawali Poonch



Poonch : 25 Feb 2025

In order to provide medical assistance to AWAM residing in far flung areas of Poonch district, an initiative

was taken by the Indian Army wherein a medical patrol was conducted at Bhattawali, Mendhar to provide essential health-

care services and to conduct health checkup for the local population in the area. A total of 48 locals including 20 males, 21 females &

seven children reaped benefits from the medical facilities provided by the Indian Army. Medical facilities to include BP monitoring and distribution of medicines for minor ailments was also carried out.

The local populace expressed gratitude & appreciated the selfless efforts of the Indian Army. Civilians stated that such events not only assist in bringing medical aid at their doorstep but also help in building synergy between the Indian Army and the AWAM leading to collective development of the region.

## SSP Ganderbal chairs crime & security review meeting

Ganderbal, February 25: SSP Ganderbal Shri Ragav S-IPS chaired a Crime & Security review meeting at Conference Hall DPO Ganderbal. The meeting was attended by Addl. SP Ganderbal Shri Parvaiz Ahmad, all senior officers including SHOs and I/C PPs of the District.

During the meeting, SSP Ganderbal laid down special emphasis on the implementation of New Criminal Laws and provided a roadmap to increase the awareness about the benefits of the 'New Criminal Laws (NCL)' among the common



masses. He directed all the officers to ensure the provisions of the new laws are used to meet the ends of justice. He guided the officers regarding the victim centric approach that the new laws entail thereby en-

suring every individual is benefitted.

SSP Ganderbal also urged the officers to make all possible efforts in fighting against menace of drugs and work dedicatedly to act against cyber-

crimes. Moreover, directions were passed for the speedy and timely disposal of the pending UAPA/NDPS cases.

Furthermore, participating officers briefed SSP Ganderbal about the security scenario in their respective areas. SSP Ganderbal discussed in length regarding the measures that are to be adopted for countering the challenges posed by adversaries. Further, SSP Ganderbal also emphasized upon the officers to maintain close synergy and coordination with other security forces working on the ground.

## India-Japan Joint Military Exercise 'Dharma Guardian' Commences in Japan



Jammu : 25 Feb 2025

The 6th edition of the India-Japan joint military exercise, Dharma Guardian, began on February 24, 2025, at the East Fuji Training Area in Japan. This significant exercise marks a major milestone as it is being conducted at an enhanced scale, with the participation of troops expanded to a company-strength level for the first time since the inception of the exercise. The opening ceremony was graced by key dignitaries, including India's Ambassador to Japan, Mr Sibi George, and Lieutenant General Toriumi

Seiji, the Commanding General of the Japan Ground Self-Defence Force (JGSDF) 1st Division. Both dignitaries conveyed their best wishes to the participating troops, expressing hope that the exercise would foster greater cooperation and mutual understanding between the two nations' armed forces. They further emphasised that this joint exercise will not only enhance the operational readiness of both armies but also contribute to strengthening the enduring India-Japan defence relationship. This edition of the exercise,

which is scheduled to run from February 24 to March 9, 2025, is set to include an expanded range of activities that reflect the growing defence cooperation between India and Japan. Notably, the joint drills will involve counter-terrorism operations in urban terrain, a critical area of operational focus given the contemporary security landscape. The troops will also rehearse activities conducted during United Nations peacekeeping operations, simulating real-world situations where multinational forces must collaborate effectively in complex environments. This collaboration aims to improve both forces' ability to respond swiftly and effectively during operations. As the exercise progresses, the participating forces will engage in a series of tactical drills, exchanging knowledge and expertise, while building lasting ties of friendship and trust.

## Former Mayor Rajendra Sharma Extends Support to Movement Kalki, Strengthens the Ongoing Protest

Jammu, February 25 - Movement Kalki's ongoing protest received a significant boost today as former Mayor Rajendra Sharma visited Amphala Chowk, Jammu, to extend his support to the movement. His presence infused new energy and strength into the cause. The protest has been continuously running for 129 days, advocating for cow protection and the preservation of Sanatan Dharma.

On this occasion, Movement Kalki's Advisor Pritam Sharma and several key office bearers and supporters were present. The meeting focused on discussing future strategies and upcoming plans for the movement. Rajendra Sharma's Support and Message Shri Rajendra Sharma praised the efforts of Movement Kalki, stating that the organization is playing a crucial role in protecting Sanatan Dharma, ensur-



ing cow protection, and promoting social welfare. He formally announced his full support for the movement and urged the public to actively participate in it. He stated, "This movement by Movement Kalki is not just for Jammu and Kashmir but serves as a message of social and religious awakening for all of India. It is a major step towards preserving Sanatan culture and cre-

ating a corruption-free society." Advisor Pritam Sharma's Statement Movement Kalki's Advisor Pritam Sharma emphasized that Rajendra Sharma's support has given new strength to the organization. He urged all Sanatanis to unite and become part of this sacred movement, raising their voices against evils like cow slaughter. He also highlighted Rajendra

Sharma's remarkable contributions during his tenure as Mayor, particularly in fighting corruption and ensuring transparency in educational institutions and government departments. His efforts helped curb bribery and corruption in schools, colleges, and government offices. "Movement Kalki shares the same vision of creating a corruption-free society

while upholding religious and social values," - said Pritam Sharma.

Notable Attendees

The event was attended by key members of Movement Kalki's Legal Advisory Board, including Advocate Someshwar Kohli, Board Members Pawan Sharma, Anuradha Yogi, Sunita Kundal, Antu Kotwal, Monika Sharma, Sapna Hindu, Neha Malhotra, Mela Ram, and several other prominent figures. Additionally, a large number of media representatives, social activists, and Movement Kalki supporters were present at the gathering. Movement Kalki leaders emphasized that this support will further strengthen the organization, and they remain committed to relentlessly pursuing their goals.

## District Admin Baramulla Organizes Orientation Program for Mission YUVA

**BARAMULLA, FEBRUARY 25:** The District Administration Baramulla in collaboration with District Employment & Counseling Centre Baramulla today organized orientation program for Small Business Development Units (SBDUs) and Business Help Desks (BHDs) under Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan) at Dakbanglow Baramulla to foster entrepreneurship and job creation.

Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla Minga Sherpa, who inaugurated the program, highlighted the extensive groundwork done to identify potential entrepreneurs across the district. He informed that a comprehensive baseline survey mapped 57,000 potential entrepreneurs, with a dedicated workforce deployed across Baramulla to collect and analyze data.

This data will help us implement Mission YUVA in a way that ensures aspiring entrepreneurs receive targeted support," the DC said while speaking to the media. He further announced that Phase 2 of Mission



YUVA will be launched very soon, focusing on structured support, financial assistance, and capacity building for identified entrepreneurs.

He further said that 165 Yuva Doots will be deputed to assist entrepreneurs and facilitate their business ventures. Each Yuva Doot will be responsible for monitoring and sup-

porting entrepreneurs across three Panchayats, ensuring that they receive the necessary guidance, mentorship, and access to government schemes.

The orientation program covered key aspects, including an overview of Mission YUVA, detailed findings from the baseline survey, and the roles and responsibilities of SBDUs,

BHDs, and Yuva Doots in providing direct business support and mentorship. Strengthening these units will ensure effective outreach and implementation at the grassroots level.

Mission YUVA operates through a decentralized support system, with SBDUs serving as district-level incubation and facilitation centers, while BHDs function as sub-division level help desks, offering tailored guidance to entrepreneurs.

The Mission YUVA Portal/App also serves as a key platform, providing access to essential business resources, funding opportunities, and mentorship.

With the successful completion of the first phase, the administration is now set to roll out Phase 2, which will focus on equipping identified entrepreneurs with financial assistance, skill development, and market linkages.

The initiative aims to create a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in Baramulla, empowering youth and boosting local economic growth.

## Power Shutdown

**SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 25:** According to CE KPDCCL that in view of stabilization & improvement works, the power supply to receiving stations including Panzigam & Ajar and feeding areas including District Police Line, Town, Arin, Panzigam & Ajar shall remain affected on February 27 from 10AM to 4PM.

Similarly, power supply to receiving stations including Nusoo, Naidhal, Ajas and areas including Nursoo, Naidhal, Ajas, Guroora, Papchan, Nishat, Argam, SK Bala shall remain affected from February 27 from 10AM to 4PM.

Likewise, in view of stabilization and erection of poles & preventive maintenance of 33 KV Line Pampore-Khrew, the power supply to receiving stations including Shar Shali, Khrew1st, Khrew 2nd and feeding areas including Shar, Wahab Sahab, Khrew, Bathan, PHE/ Hospital and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 27 from 10AM to 4PM.

The power supply from 33kv line Pampore-Lethpora to receiving stations including Konibal, Lethpora, HPCL, LIS Ladhoo, Mills and feeding areas including Samboora, Lethpora, Patlabagh, Konibal, Chandhara, Druoso on March 03 from 10AM to 4PM. The power supply from 33kv line Pampore-Wagoora to receiving

stations including Kadlabal, HPCL and feeding areas including Gas Turbine, HPCL and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 27 from 10AM to 4PM.

In view of installation of link sets for Jail Tap and other maintenance works at Receiving Stations, the power supply to receiving stations including Hutmurrah, Saliya, Sallar, Aishmuqam, Pahalgam, GIS Pahalgam and Batkoot and feeding areas including Hutmurrah, Saliya, Sallar, District Jail, Aishmuqam, Pahalgam Town, Chandanwari, Aru, Yanner, Batkoot, Laddi and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 27 from 10AM to 4PM.

In view of stabilization of ACSR from Old Poles to newly erected poles, the power supply to receiving stations including Ashajipora, Dialgam, Malaknag, Brakpora, Janglat Mandi and feeding areas including Ashajipora, Dialgam, Malaknag, Hazratbal, Brakpora, Doonipawa and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 27 from 10AM to 4PM. To carry out the pending works of SITC of change over for 33 KV Silk factory line from Grid Station Rawalpora and 33 KV KP Bagh Line from Grid Station Beminia to Grid Station GIS Tengpora, the power supply to receiving stations KP Bagh, Jawahar Nagar, Rajbagh and feeding areas shall remain affected on March 03 from 10AM to 4PM.

## Athar Amir Khan kick starts "Clean Kulgam, Green Kulgam" campaign

**KULGAM FEBRUARY 25:** In an inspiring move to protect the environment, District Administration Kulgam in collaboration with the Municipal Council launches the "Clean Kulgam, Green Kulgam" awareness drive here at the conference hall of Mini-Secretariat.

The initiative kick started by Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Amir Khan, aims to clean up local waterbodies and raise awareness about the urgent need to protect these crucial natural resources from pollution.

The campaign kicked off with an energetic cleanup drive, where volunteers and municipal authorities joined forces to remove waste from the region's water bodies. The event also aimed to educate the community on the harmful effects of pollution on aquatic ecosystems and the critical importance of preserving them.



Deputy Commissioner while speaking at the event emphasized the significance of collective action for environmental conservation.

"Our waterbodies are vital to our ecosystem so it is essential that we unite to prevent the further pollution of these resources", he said and added that the initiative is just the start of a larger movement to ensure

a cleaner and greener future for our nation.

"As a individual we owe the responsibility of keeping the surroundings neat and clean", he stated.

Executive Officer MC Kulgam Zahid Sajjad, expressed the government's unwavering support for such environmentally focused efforts. The residents of Kulgam have been

encouraged to actively take part in the ongoing cleanup efforts and spread the message of environmental responsibility.

The "Go Green Nation, Waste-Free India" initiative calls on people across the region to work together for a cleaner, greener future for Kulgam and the country as a whole.

Earlier the Yaad Gaar art and music theater performed a skit depicting the importance of keeping our waterbodies pollution free.

At the conclusion of the awareness programme, the different people were awarded with mementos and appreciation certificates for remarkable work in making environment pollution free.

Among other, the programme was attended by ACR Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, Sanitation Officers & workers of MC, Civil Society members and school children.

## District Industries Centre Kulgam organizes awareness programme at ITI

**KULGAM, FEBRUARY 25:** District Industries Centre (DIC) Kulgam today organized an awareness programme at ITI Chawalgam Kulgam.

General Manager DIC, Dr. Bashir Ahmad Lone, Principal Govt ITI Kulgam, Faculty Members ITI, IPOs and other resource persons were present in the awareness session.

Speaking on the occasion, General Manager talked about industrialization and its importance and sensitized the participants about rapidly changing job market and economies of the world and need to adapt to changing situations and earn a de-

cent livelihood by establishing the self employment units with the support of District Industries Centre. He also sensitized the participants about prevailing drug menace and urged them to stay away from such activities and be focused to achieve their goals and upgrade their skills.

Principal ITI Kulgam, Ishfaq Ahmad also delivered a speech and motivated young technically equipped students towards innovation and entrepreneurship.

During the programme detailed sessions regarding brief overview and benefits under PMEGP, NCSS, MSME, PM Vishwakarma

and Land Allotment were discussed.

On the occasion five participants shared their inspiring strategies with fellow candidates highlighting how they successfully leverage their skills to generate income while aspiring towards entrepreneurship.

The programme was followed by questions answer session and witnessed a threadbare discussion between the participants and speakers of DIC regarding the hiccups which are being faced by the entrepreneurs while applying/availing benefits under various schemes of DIC.

## Principal Magistrate JJB Shopian inspects Central Jail Srinagar

**SHOPIAN, FEBRUARY 25:** The Juvenile Justice Board Shopian, under the leadership of Principal Magistrate Bazila Bashir conducted a surprise inspection at Central Jail Srinagar. The Principal Magistrate was accompanied by APP Nighat Meharbaan, Deputy Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel Rafie Ahmad Ganie and LCPO Sumaira Imtiyaz.

The initiative was undertaken in strict adherence to the mandates outlined in the Juvenile Justice Act, ensuring the protection and rights of juveniles in conflict with



the law. During the inspection, the Superintendent Jail facilitated a comprehensive tour of all barracks within the facility, enabling the team to meticulously assess the liv-

ing conditions and interactions with inmates.

The visit included detailed interactions with inmates to verify their identities and ensure compliance with legal standards.

## CIPMC Sgr organizes HRD prog at Mattan, Anantnag

**ANANTNAG, FEBRUARY 25:** The Central Integrated Pest Management Centre (CIPMC) Srinagar, in collaboration with the State Agriculture Department of Anantnag, successfully organizes a Human Resource Development (HRD) Programme at the Mushroom Development Office in Mattan, Anantnag.

The event aimed to enhance the agricultural knowledge and skills of farmers in the region. The programme featured distinguished experts in the field, with Deputy Director (PP) Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Arya serving as the key speaker. Dr.



Arya delivered a detailed presentation on Integrated

Pest Management (IPM) techniques, emphasizing sustainable pest control methods for better crop yield. Assistant Plant Protection Officer (PP) Dr. Haroon Rashid Hakla, introduced the NPSS App, a technological innovation aimed at helping farmers monitor and manage pest-related issues more efficiently. Also, AEO Anantnag Abid Showkat spoke on the importance of organic farming, encouraging farmers to adopt eco-friendly practices for long-term agricultural sustainability. Mushroom Development Officer, Mattan Showkat

Hussain was also present at the event and praised the initiative. He highlighted the importance of such programs organized by the Ministry, which play a pivotal role in uplifting the farmers and ensuring their well-being. The event saw active participation from farmers across Anantnag District, along with agriculture officials from the region. This programme marked a significant step towards enhancing agricultural practices in the region, ensuring better productivity, and contributing to the welfare of the farming community.

## Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav Unveils Major Infrastructure and IT Initiatives at Advantage Assam 2.0

**Semiconductor Manufacturing Gets a Boost: New Plant Announced for Assam**

**Guwahati Railway Station to Be Transformed into IT Hub; Six New Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals to**

**Enhance Assam's Railway Network**

**New Amrit Bharat Trains to Connect Guwahati with Delhi and Chennai**

**Guwahati, 25th February 2025:** Shri Ashwini Vaishnav, Union Minister of Railways, Electronics & Information Technology, and Information & Broadcasting, participated in the Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment and Infrastructure Summit held in Guwahati today. During the event, he announced several key initiatives and projects aimed at accelerating the growth of the railway and IT industries in the region.

Highlighting the government's commitment to enhancing infrastructure and industrialization, Shri Vaishnav described the North East as the "New Engine" for India's development. He unveiled plans for a new semiconductor plant in Assam, reinforcing the state's growing role in electronics and semiconductor manufacturing. Additionally, he announced that Guwahati Railway Station would be transformed into a new IT hub, further strengthening the region's digital infrastructure. The Minister underscored the gov-

ernment's success in constructing 1,824 km of new railway tracks in Assam and the North East since 2014. He also noted the commissioning of two Gati Shakti cargo terminals in Assam at Moinarband and Cinnamara and announced development of 06 additional Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals at Chaygaon, New Bongaigaon, Bihar, Hilara, Baihata and Rangjuli which will significantly enhance the region's railway network. Further bolstering connectivity, he confirmed that one Vande Bharat Express is already operational in the Northeast, with another soon to connect Guwahati and Agartala. He also announced the sanctioning of two Amrit Bharat trains (between Guwahati-Delhi and Guwahati-Chennai), which will become operational this year, and the establishment of a railway engine midlife remanufacturing facility in Lumding. The Minister also announced the plan to set up a Wagon Workshop at Bashbari in Bodoland

area at a cost of Rs 300 cr. Shri Vaishnav emphasized the government's plans to improve connectivity between Assam and Bhutan, opening up new opportunities for economic growth. Addressing development in the Bodoland region, he reiterated the government's commitment under the Bodo Agreement by announcing the establishment of a Wagon Workshop in Bashbari. Discussing India's remarkable strides in electronics and mobile manufacturing, the Minister noted that over 98% of mobile phones are now produced domestically. To further strengthen the sector, he announced the development of a Greenfield Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) at Bongora, Kamrup, under the Electronics Manufacturing Scheme at a project cost of Rs. 120 crores. Additionally, he shared that the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) has been upgraded to a Deemed-to-be Univer-

sity, with plans to establish a campus in Jagiroad.

Shri Vaishnav reaffirmed the government's dedication to infrastructure and industrial development in the North East, expressing confidence that Assam will soon emerge as a significant industrial hub. Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma echoed this sentiment, acknowledging the central government's continuous support in fostering new initiatives in the state. He expressed optimism that Assam will become a key player in the global semiconductor ecosystem.

During the session, the Government of Assam signed MoUs with 10 industry groups from the semiconductor ecosystem across Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan, in the presence of the Union Minister strengthening international partnerships and fostering investment in the state's growing semiconductor industry.

## Srinagar Heritage Festival "Soun Meeraas" commences to celebrate rich cultural heritage of Kashmir

**Event aimed to highlight local tradition, cultural heritage preserving essence of Kashmir's cultural legacy, traditional practices for future generations: DC Srinagar**

**SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 25:** Srinagar Heritage Festival "Soun Meeraas" an initiative of District Administration Srinagar aimed to celebrate Srinagar's rich cultural heritage begins here today to highlight local tradition, culture, heritage and art, through live exhibitions and demonstrations. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat launched the first leg of the mega event with Painting and Calligraphy competition at Jhelum River Front showcasing culture, heritage and tradition of Kashmir Valley. The Srinagar Heritage Festival that commenced from today shall continue till February 28

has been organized by District Administration Srinagar in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts to preserve the essence of Kashmir's heritage, cultural legacy and traditional practices for future generations. Speaking about the event, the DC Srinagar maintained that the Srinagar Heritage Festival "Soun Meeraas" is set to become a vibrant event, offering varied activities, Live Exhibitions of Traditional Markets and Winter Preparations, besides showcase Traditional Attire March, Painting Contests, Shikara Events, Folktales, Cultural performances, Demonstrations through Jhankies etc to provide a

vibrant stage to present generation to learn about cultural background and develop a strong sense of belonging within their community.

DC added that during the Srinagar Heritage Festival events will be held at Jhelum RiverFront, Poloview, Dal Lake and at Kashmir Haat (Numeish Gah).

DC hoped that the event will provide a memorable experience for participants and visitors as well, besides building a strong sense of identity, fostering community cohesion and promoting understanding and respect for diversity. DC has called out for maximum participation from all sections of the society.

## District Health Society Jammu under the chairmanship of Chief Medical Officer Jammu Dr. Harbaksh Singh successfully conducted one day training of FMPHWs on National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) on 25-02-2025

Jammu, 25th February 2025: One day Training Program on National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) concluded successfully today. Organized by Office of the Chief Medical Officer Jammu with the support of Directorate of Health Services Jammu and National Health Mission (NHM) J&K. The program focused on various components of NRCP including Management of Animal bite cases, Pre & Post exposure prophylaxis to victims and timely administration of Anti-Rabies Vaccine and Rabies Immunoglobulin for prevention of this deadly disease.

Held under the leadership of Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary, Health and Medical Education, J&K, and the supervision of Dr. Rakesh Magotra, Director, Health Services Jammu, the training witnessed participation from Female Multipurpose Workers from all the Nine Health Blocks and Jammu Urban under administrative control of District



Jammu. Dr. Poonam Sethi Dy. Director Schemes, Dy. Director Dentistry Dr. Sanjay Sharma, State Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Jyoti Jolly, Controller Stores Dr. Ritesh Khullar, State Venereologist

Dr. Kiran Kailu, Dr. Jitendra Kour Divisional Nutrition officer, Dr. Simmi Verma Assistant Director HEB and District Health Officer (DHO) Jammu Dr. Samina Nazir were among those who also at-

tended the training inauguration ceremony. Resource Persons were Dr. Deepika Dewan MD Community Medicine (Medical Officer), And Dr. Mehak Gupta (District Epidemiologist, NHM)

Dr. Harbaksh Singh, CMO Jammu highlighted the role of Peripheral Health staff in timely management of Animal bite cases to prevent the occurrence of rabies deadly disease. He stressed that though Rabies has 100% mortality but it is completely preventable also. He also emphasised that a strong inter-sectoral approach is essential in tackling rabies. He also discussed the ground level challenges faced by Health workers in implementation of this programme.

Director Health Services Dr. Rakesh Magotra and Dy. Director Schemes Dr. Poonam Sethi also shared their valuable insights regarding implementation of NRCP in the field with the Participants.

The training comprised technical sessions, case studies, and hands-on exercises to enhance skills of the FMPHWs in disease surveillance and management.

## Deputy Chief Minister holds review meeting at Sunderbani; Assesses public grievances



RAJOURI, FEBRUARY 25: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today chaired a review meeting regarding functioning of various departments at Sunderbani.

The meeting focused on addressing the issues and grievances of the general public relating different departments.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the concerned officers to resolve the public grievances on priority basis, ensuring swift and effective solutions to the concerns of the local residents.

During the meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister also had a comprehensive review of the progress on various schemes of different departments.

He emphasised the importance of raising public awareness about various government schemes and programs. He instructed the District Social Welfare Officer and Assistant Labour Commissioner to organise special camps in the district, particularly in Nowshera and Sunderbani, to educate the public about their initiatives and ensure maximum coverage.

The meeting was attended by ADC Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandani; ADC Sunderbani, Rajeev Magotra; SE PWD (R&B), Devi Dayal; ACD, Vijay Kumar; DSWO, Abdul Raheem; DMO, Mohd Sayeed; ALC, Pradyot Gupta and other officers.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister also attended a mega event organised at Guru Ravi Dass Ji temple at Dheri, marking his continued commitment towards community welfare and spiritual engagement.

### Mission YUVA project

## DC discusses modalities for seamless implementation in Poonch district



POONCH, FEBRUARY 25: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting with the members of the SBDH and BHD committees to discuss their role and responsibilities in the context of the Mission YUVA project.

A comprehensive and detailed presentation was shared with the members, outlining the specific roles and duties of each member.

The Deputy Commissioner guided the committee members through a detailed PPT, ensuring that everyone clearly understands his individual responsibilities. The personalized approach helped to clarify expectations and facilitated a deeper understanding of the tasks at hand. "A clear comprehension of responsibilities will ensure a smooth and efficient execution of

the Mission YUVA project," he added.

Furthermore, the Deputy Commissioner directed that each Yuva Doot will be provided identity cards after filling all the details of their selection as per the Yuva Doot Document. "Each of them will be allotted a panchayat, ensuring that the next steps can be taken as per the project.

Participants included Officers from RDD Agriculture, Labour & Employment, Banks, NABARD, NRLM, JKEDI, ITI, the institutional heads of Government Degree Colleges Mandher, Poonch, Surankote, besides CEO.

In addition, Block development officers, who joined virtually, were directed by the DC to identify the names of employees who had previously worked well in the baseline survey for the appointment as Yuva Doots.

## Distt Admin Srinagar bids warm farewell to Tharun Patnaik IAS probationer



SRINAGAR FEBRUARY 25: The District Administration Srinagar today organized an impressive function at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex, here to honour and bid warm farewell to Tharun Patnaik, 2023 batch IAS Probationer who completed his year long probation period in Srinagar District. Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat presided over the function. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner

Srinagar extended his best wishes to the outgoing IAS Probationer Officer for his future endeavours to serve the public with enthusiasm and dedication. He lauded the passion and dedication of the officer and advised him to continue imbuing excellence, integrity and commitment towards civil service which are rudimentary for public services and in shaping the nation. DC also commended his ability shown during both Lok Sabha and J&K Leg-

islative Assembly elections besides while working on the E-Arzi project in District Srinagar. Sharing his thoughts on the occasion, Patnaik said that he will always remain indebted to the District Administration Srinagar and all Employees of the DC Office Srinagar for the support, cooperation and affection showered upon him during his year long period in the District. He said that experience earned would always be a guiding light for him in future assignments. He expressed his gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat for hosting a farewell to honour him. Additional District Development Commissioner, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Syed Ahmad Katara.

## Principal Secretary APD reviews wayside amenities along highways across J&K

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 25: Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Shailendra Kumar, chaired a high level meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review the status of wayside amenities and toilet facilities along major highways and roads across Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was aimed to address the growing needs of both local commuters and the increasing number of tourists visiting the Union Territory. Commissioner Tourism, Yasha Mudgal, Secretary PWD, Bhupinder Kumar, senior officers from NHAI, BRO, NHIDCL, R&B and the Tourism Department attended the meeting. The meeting had detailed discussion on enhancing infrastructure to improve travel experience and ensure seamless access to essential facilities along major routes. The Principal Secretary asked the officers to identify the locations along the roads and acquire/transfer land in consultation with the concerned Deputy Commissioners for raising requisite facilities for the local and outside visitors. The Principal Secretary directed the officers to ensure installation of signboards marking toilet facilities and indicating distances along highways to enhance visibility and accessibility. He directed the Beacon authorities to submit a location plan for wayside amenities within fixed timelines besides asking the

## Speaker LA engages with Media in pre-budget session talks

### Assures them of extending every assistance for smooth coverage of proceedings

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 25: Speaker of Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today chaired a crucial meeting with the media fraternity to facilitate smooth and efficient coverage of the maiden Budget Session of Omar led government here.

The meeting was attended by Director Information, Nitish Rajora; Secretary, JKLA, Manoj Kumar Pandit; SSP Traffic, Faisal Qureshi; SSP Security Civil Secretariat, Sajjad K. Bhat; Director IT, Raman Gupta; Deputy Director Information (PR), Deepak Dubey, along with Bureau Chiefs, senior journalists, correspondents and editors from various media houses including All India Radio and Doordarshan.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on various issues concerning media professionals, focusing on ensuring hassle-free entry to the Legislative Assembly premises and smooth regulation of traffic on roads leading to the Assembly Secretariat and MLA's Hostel, Jammu.

The Speaker emphasized the importance of taking necessary measures to prevent inconvenience to journalists covering the proceedings. Senior journalists highlighted key



concerns including designating parking spaces, provision of high-speed Wi-Fi for seamless coverage and extension of other logistical support. Addressing these concerns, the Speaker directed the SSP Security, Civil Secretariat to make appropriate arrangements for media personnel, ensuring parking facilities at the new Assembly Complex and Zanana Park in the vicinity of the LA complex. Further, the Speaker instructed the senior officers from JAKEGA and the IT Department to provide high-speed Wi-Fi connectivity throughout the session, ensuring uninterrupted digital access for media persons. Additionally, he directed the Information Department to coordinate between the press and the

Assembly Secretariat to facilitate comprehensive coverage of the proceedings through both print and electronic media.

To enhance media accessibility, the Speaker directed the officials to install sufficient number of microphones and Public Address Systems (PAS) within the Assembly Hall and its lawns, facilitating smooth interaction between dignitaries, legislative assembly members and the journalists. He also instructed the Secretariat to prepare and issue entry passes for journalists well in advance for their unhindered entry into the assembly complex.

Recognizing the significance of media in highlighting public issues, the Speaker sought cooperation from media houses for balanced and responsible reporting of the Budget

Session. He emphasized the critical role of journalists in ensuring transparency and public awareness of legislative discussions and advised them to keep public interests paramount while discharging their professional assignments.

Additionally, the Speaker directed the Hospitality & Protocol Department to install a Shamyana with a dais for press briefings by the MLAs and Ministers. He also instructed for keeping provision of a dedicated space for media interactions in the Central Hall of JKLA.

In response to concerns raised by the media fraternity, the Speaker assured that all highlighted issues would be addressed on priority, ensuring a conducive environment for the journalistic duties. He reiterated the administration's commitment towards facilitating the press in fulfilling their professional responsibilities with ease. In response, the journalists showed their gratitude to the Speaker for giving them opportunity to put their concerns before him. They assured him of sticking to the higher professional standards and serving public interests with utmost dedication and a sense of duty towards them.

## J&K IT deptt wins prestigious "Technology Sabha Award-2025" for e-Unnat

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 25: The Indian Express Group, in its 37th edition of the Technology Sabha & Awards, has conferred the Technology Award-2025 in the Enterprise Application category to the Information Technology Department, Jammu & Kashmir, for its in-house project "e-Unnat."

The award ceremony was held at the Novotel Convention Centre, Hyderabad.

Aijaz Qaiser, Additional Secretary, IT J&K and Rachna Sharma, Deputy Secretary, IT Department received the prestigious award on behalf of the department.



Pertinently, e-Unnat is a revolutionary single unified portal developed in-house by the IT Department, J&K, aimed at providing seamless access to government services for the citizens. By integrating all online services onto one platform, it has significantly enhanced transparency, efficiency and ease of access. Recognized for pioneering innovative solutions and impactful digital governance initiatives, J&K has emerged as a leader in the country's digital transformation journey. This award is a

testament to J&K Government's unwavering commitment to public service and technological excellence. With 100% availability of 1,164 online services on the e-Unnat unified portal, Jammu & Kashmir has set a national benchmark in seamless digital service delivery, reinforcing its position at the forefront of e-Governance in India.

**Editor, Publisher, Printer & Owner: Rajni Sharma, Published at: Sec-2, Channi Himmat, Jammu**  
**Early Times Printing Press Samadhian Road, Jammu**

**E-Mail: editor.northinnews@gmail.com**

**All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Jammu City**