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JK occupies important place on national cultural map: LG Sinha

KC NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today flagged off the 55-member Youth Contingent from UT of Jammu Kashmir for New Delhi to participate in the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue - National Youth Festival 2025.

The Lieutenant Governor interacted with the participating youth and officials, and extended his best wishes for the prestigious event.

He called upon the youth to embrace this special opportunity to display their leadership talent and demonstrate diversity in folk dance, poetry, writing, painting and music.

The Lieutenant Governor asked the Youth to achieve excellence in their



respective competition and also explore ways to contribute to nation building. "Youth are responsible for writing

their own destiny and shaping the future of Jammu Kashmir. Never feel satisfied. Remove the word 'Impossible' from

your dictionary and move forward with determination and confidence," he said.

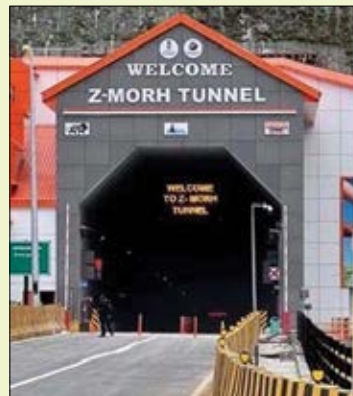
Speaking on the vision and objective of National Youth Festival, the Lieutenant Governor said the glorious event prepares our youth to assume future challenges and responsibilities towards the nation with patriotic feelings.

"Jammu Kashmir occupies an important place on the national cultural map. The youth festival will provide an opportunity to make our rich cultural legacy popular and enrich cultural consciousness of the society," the Lieutenant Governor said.

At UT level, the event brings youth from different districts and different backgrounds to mingle and learn from each other.

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PM Modi to inaugurate Z-Morh tunnel in Kashmir on Jan 13



KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Jammu and Kashmir on January 13 to inaugurate the Z-Morh tunnel on the Srinagar-Sonamarg road to make Sonamarg an all-weather tourist destination.

Official sources said that the PM will arrive here on January 13 to physically inaugurate the Z-Morh tunnel that will bypass the road from Gagangir to Sonamarg allowing visitors and locals to



visit the hill station throughout the year.

At present, the Gagangir-Sonamarg stretch of the road gets blocked by heavy snowfall and avalanches that hit the area every year.

The Z-Morh Tunnel is a 6.5 km long 2-lane road tunnel between Gagangir and Sonamarg in the Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir. It is named after the Z-shaped stretch of road that the tunnel has replaced (Z-Morh translates to "Z-turn" in English).

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CM Omar risks being seen as 'New Delhi's representative': Aga Ruhullah

KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Member of Parliament from central Kashmir's Srinagar Lok Sabha segment, Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, said today that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah risks being seen as 'New Delhi's representative' unless he leads the struggle for the restoration of Article 370 and statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

The senior NC leader, who has been facing criticism from his party colleagues over his participation in a protest outside the CM's residence, made these remarks while speaking to The Wire.

"The NC has received a different mandate this time compared to the past. It comes after the abrogation of Article 370. Today, the assembly is constituted with this mandate. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have taken the democratic route once again, so this mandate is more than just normal. It is a political message and a political disapproval of the decisions taken after August 05, 2019," said Ruhullah. "I believe this mandate carries a huge responsibility, and one has to be very

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Orientation Programme For MLAs To Commence Today

KC NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The three-day orientation programme for MLAs of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly will commence from 9th of January, 2025 at Central Hall of J&K Legislative Assembly Complex, Jammu.

The programme is being organised by J&K Legislative Assembly Secretariat in collaboration with PRIDE, Lok Sabha Secretariat.

The inaugural function of the programme will be graced by distinguished dignitaries like Chief Minister, Speaker, J&K Legislative Assembly, Deputy Chief Minister as well as other senior officers.

The first Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir was constituted on 8th October 2024. The ninety (90) Member House presently has eighty eight (88) members, of which, fifty (50)



members have been elected for the first time.

In order to help the newly elected members to effectively discharge their onerous responsibilities of meeting the aspirations of people, this three day orientation programme is being held on Parliamentary Practices, Procedure and Conduct of Business in the House.

The programme will

feature discussions by eminent Parliamentarians like Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, Chairperson, Committee on Estimates; N.K. Premachandran and Dr. Satyapal Singh, former Members Lok Sabha. The subjects to be discussed and deliberated during the programme included Legislative Processes, Budgetary Process, Executive Accountability through

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Govt sets up special ICU ward in Jammu amid HMPV concerns

KC NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Responding to the concerns triggered by the detection of human metapneumovirus (HMPV) cases in the country, the Jammu and Kashmir health department has set up a specialised ICU ward in Jammu to address any potential outbreak of the disease.

"We have prepared a special ICU ward to handle any eventuality. God forbid if a pandemic occurs, we are ready," Dr Hamid Zargar, medical super-



intendent of Gandhinagar government hospital,

told PTL.

"The centrally-heated ward has eight beds supported by ventilators and 24x7 oxygen supply," he added.

Doctors have assured the public that there is no need to panic, emphasising that HMPV is not a new pathogen and it is not causing a widespread outbreak.

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CS for smooth career progression of employees



KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today convened a meeting with the Administrative Secretaries to take stock of promotions and compassionate appointments made in favour of employees working for the UT government.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took note of the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) meetings held by the departments both at

administrative and HoD level for the Gazetted and Non-Gazetted posts.

He impressed upon the departments to conduct DPCs on regular basis for the employees who deserves career progression while performing their assigned tasks. He asked about the employees placed on higher grades in OPG mode and their subsequent promotions on regular basis.

He also impressed upon the ARI & Trainings Department to conclude finalisation of Recruitment Rules of different departments currently under updation. He urged them to make this updation a time bound exercise.

Dulloo further noted that few departments are plagued with adhoc promotions that needs to be fixed. He directed for constituting a committee of senior officers including from GAD and Finance to look into the issue to settle it forever. He advised them to examine the matter related to identification of the non-gazetted vacancies for recruitment in the education department.

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2025 Begins With 59 % Deficit Rainfall In J&K



Owais Gul

SRINAGAR: The New Year—2025 has begun with the deficit precipitation as Jammu and Kashmir has recorded a deficiency of 59 per cent in the first week of January.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), from January 01 to January 08, J&K has recorded a deficit rainfall of 59 per cent despite the recent snowfall in most parts of the Valley. Against the normal rainfall of 18.4 mm, J&K has recorded

a precipitation of 7.6 mm.

Nine stations across J&K including the winter capital of the Union Territory—Jammu recorded large deficit rainfall. The large deficit rainfall is being marked from 60 per cent to 99 per cent. Four stations including the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar have recorded the normal precipitation during the period. As per the details, Budgam and Ganderbal stations in central Kashmir saw large excess rainfall from January 01 to January 08.

>>>SEE ON P-7

Inspection and trial runs on USBRL trek concludes successfully: CRS

KC NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A new chapter was written in the Indian Railways' history with a successful rising grade speed trial in the challenging geography from Jammu and Kashmir's Katra to Banihal along the USBRL project, a top official said on Wednesday.

The remarks by the Northern Circle's Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) Dinesh Chand Deshwal offers a positive indication for an early start to direct rail services between Kashmir and rest of the country.

However, he said they would analyse the data collected after completion of the two-day statutory inspection later in the day before the Centre might take

a decision to start the much-awaited service. Jammu and Kashmir tourism

"The trial run at 110 kilometres per hour on the 180-degree rising grade in such a challenging geography



Talking to reporters on reaching Banihal after the successful high-speed trial run from Katra station, Deshwal said his team would return to Katra and all the collected data would be analysed before a decision was taken on the start of direct train services to Kashmir.

from Katra to Banihal has written a new chapter in the history of the Railways. The trial run was smooth and filled up with a sense of fulfilment and the credit for it goes to our engineers who have done such a great work," the CRS said.

>>>SEE ON P-7

Court’s Opinion V. Legislative Power: SC On CEC, Election Commissioners Selection

NEW DELHI: It will be court’s opinion versus the legislative power to enact law, the Supreme Court on Wednesday said as it posted the pleas challenging the appointment of the chief election commissioner and election commissioners under the 2023 law on February 4.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan was informed by advocate Prashant Bhushan, representing an NGO, the incumbent Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar was set to superannuate on February 18, and a new CEC would be appointed under the new law, if the court didn’t intervene.

Bhushan said the top court in its the March 2 2023 verdict set up a panel comprising the Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition and the CJI to appoint the CEC and election commissioners (EC).

“However, under the new law the selection committee will comprise the Prime Minister, a union cabinet minister, the Leader of Opposition or the leader of the largest opposition party in Lok Sabha. They have removed CJI from the selection committee,” submitted Bhushan.

While posting the hearing on February 4, the bench said it would see whose views had supremacy.

“It will be the opinion of the court under Article 141 versus legislative power to enact law,” it underscored.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for one of the petitioners, said the government did not remove the basis of the March 2, 2023 judgement, and enacted a new law.



Bhushan said the government couldn’t control the appointment of election commissioners as it would be a threat to democracy.

“We are of the view that the government cannot remove the CJI from the selection panel which was directed to be formed by the Supreme Court on March 2, 2023,” he said.

Sankaranarayanan said the only way the Centre could have got around the judgement was by amending the Constitution and not enacting a law.

The bench asked Bhushan and Sankaranarayanan to remind the judges on February 3 for the matter to be taken up the following day.

On March 15, 2024, the top court refused to

stay the appointments of new ECs under a 2023 law which excluded the CJI from the selection panel and deferred the hearing on a batch of pleas challenging the appointments.

The top court told the petitioners the March 2, 2023 verdict directed for the three-member panel comprising the Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition and the CJI to operate till Parliament enacted a law. Bhushan, who appeared for the petitioner Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), challenged the CJI’s exclusion and contended the Election Commission should be insulated from “political” and “executive interference” for maintaining a healthy democracy.

ADR’s plea alleged the verdict was overruled by the Centre without removing its basis and the composition of the selection committee under the new law which amounted to excessive interference of the executive in the appointments and was detrimental to the independence of the poll panel.

Former IAS officers Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Sandhu were recommended to be appointed as ECs in 2024 by a selection panel chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi under the new law.

The NGO challenged the validity and sought a stay on the operation of Section 7 of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners Act, 2023, which excluded the CJI.

The apex court’s March 2, 2023 verdict held leaving the appointment of the ECs and CEC in the hands of the executive would be detrimental to the health of the country’s democracy and the holding of free and fair elections, it said.

Another petitioner, Congress leader Jaya Thakur from Madhya Pradesh, sought to restrain the Centre from appointing new ECs under the 2023 law while challenging its provisions.

The Constitution bench on March 2, 2023, ruled, “As far as appointments to the posts of chief election commissioner and election commissioners are concerned, the same shall be done by the president of India on the basis of the advice tendered by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister of India, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and, in case there is no such leader, the leader of the largest party in the opposition in the Lok Sabha and the chief justice of India.”

Lower GDP forecast: Mayawati urges Centre to focus on public welfare, shun ‘narrow politics’

NEW DELHI: Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Wednesday urged the Centre to prioritise national and public welfare over “narrow politics”, after the government revised downwards the GDP growth estimate for the current fiscal.

Her remarks came at a time when the Indian rupee has hit a record low of 85.83 against the US dollar, and the GDP growth rate is forecast to drop to 6.4 per cent for 2024-25, the lowest in four years.

“The GDP growth rate is expected to fall to 6.4 per cent. Most newspapers highlighted this as their top news today. The ones who are truly saddened by this are the country’s poor and hardworking population, who, despite their tough lives, are not ready to hear any harm coming to their nation,” Mayawati said in a post on X.

“The poor may not have a direct connection with the falling value of rupee in the global market, yet they are unhappy about it. The government must respect their emotions, and, setting aside its 24-hour narrow politics, focus on public and national welfare to fulfil their hopes for ‘Achhe Din’,” the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister added.

On Wednesday morning, rupee depreciated to a record low of 85.83 against the US dollar. On Tuesday, the government estimated the country’s GDP growth rate for 2024-25 at 6.4 per cent, marking a four-year low, primarily attributed to underperformance in the manufacturing and services sectors. It is the slowest growth since the Covid pandemic year of 2020-21, when GDP recorded a negative growth of 5.8 per cent, significantly lower than the 8.2 per cent achieved in FY 2023-24.



Aiming to produce 5 mn tons of Green Hydrogen by 2030: PM Modi

VISAKHAPATNAM (ANDHRA PRADESH) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said as part of National Green Hydrogen Mission, the country is aiming to produce 5 million tons of green hydrogen by 2030.

After virtually laying the foundation stone and launching projects worth over Rs 2 lakh crore here, Modi said two green hydrogen hubs will be set up in the country out of which one will come up here.

“The country launched the National Green Hydrogen Mission in 2023. Our aim is to make 5 million metric tons of green hydrogen production (annually) by 2030. As a first step, two green hydrogen hubs will be set up, out of which one is in Visakhapatnam,” he said.

He further said as part of “Swamandhra Pradesh”, by 2047, Andhra Pradesh is aiming to become approximately a USD 2.5 trillion economy and the Center will work with the southern state in realizing that vision.

Describing the state as



a “land of possibilities and opportunities”, Modi said the time has come for it to become a centre of new futuristic technologies.

Earlier, the PM virtually laid the foundation stone and launched a number of projects, including a green hydrogen hub in Anakapalli.

Among others he laid the foundation stone for a railway zone here and dedicated to the nation various projects in the rail and road sectors.

The green hydrogen hub coming up in Anakapalli district, near here, is a joint green energy

ecosystem initiative between NTPC Green Energy Ltd and the New & Renewable Energy Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh (NREDCAP).

Modi virtually laid the foundation stone for Krishnapatnam industrial hub, a Rs 1,518 crore project coming up on a 2,500-acre land parcel in the first phase. It is expected to generate employment opportunities for 50,000 people.

Foundation stone was also laid for a Rs 1,877 crore bulk drug park in Nakkapalli. Entailing an investment of Rs 11,542 crore, the drug park coming up on

2,002 acres of land is expected to provide jobs for 54,000 people.

AP Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan were also present at the event. Earlier, the three leaders took out a grand road show upon Modi’s arrival in this city.

People gathered in large numbers, showered flowers on the leaders as they travelled atop an open vehicle, waving back at the public.

The entire stretch was decked up with the party flags of TDP, BJP, and Janasena.

Starting from Sampath Vinayak temple in the port city, the roadshow reached Andhra University’s engineering college ground, where a public meeting has been scheduled.

This was Modi’s first visit to the state after he assumed the office of the Prime Minister for the third consecutive term in 2024. The NDA alliance in Andhra Pradesh consisting of TDP, BJP and Janasena played a key role in forming the union government.

MHA Asks States To Take Steps For Reducing Overcrowding In Prisons

NEW DELHI: The Centre has asked all states to ensure that an undertrial prisoner arrested for an offence for which the punishment of death or life imprisonment has not been specified should be released if he or she has already undergone detention for half of the maximum prison term specified for that offence, thus reducing overcrowding in jails.

In a communication to chief secretaries and directors general of prisons of all states, the ministry of home affairs said the prison authorities should approach the court concerned for release of such eligible prisoners under the provisions of the Section 479 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS).

The Section 479 of the BNSS states that when a person has, during the period of investigation, inquiry or trial of an offence under any law (not being an offence for which the punishment of death or life imprisonment has been specified as one of the punishments under that law) undergone detention for a period extending up to one-

half of the maximum period of imprisonment specified for that

The ministry said it had issued an advisory to the states



offence under that law, he shall be released by the court on bail.

“In case of first-time offenders, such prisoners shall be released on bond by the court, if they have undergone detention for a period extending up to one-third of the maximum period of imprisonment for that offence. Further, Section 479 (3) of the BNSS casts a specific responsibility on the Superintendent of the Prison to make an application to the concerned court for release of aforementioned undertrial prisoners on bail/bond,” the communication said.

and union territories on the issue on October 16, 2024 and had requested them to provide the benefit of the provisions of Section 479 of BNSS to all eligible prisoners and have their bail applications filed in the court accordingly. It said on the occasion of Constitution Day i.e. November 26, 2024, the home ministry had launched a special campaign under which all the states and union territories were requested... to identify eligible prisoners under the provisions of the Section 479 of BNSS and move their applications to the concerned courts for their release

on bail/bond.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had also sent a letter to chief ministers of all states and Union territories in this regard. The states and Union territories had actively participated in this exercise and had furnished the details of the number of prisoners who benefitted from the provisions of Section 479 of BNSS up to November 26, 2024.

However, the ministry has conveyed to the states that it was not a one-time exercise and the states and Union territories need to take advantage of the provisions of Section 479 of BNSS and provide the benefit of the same to all eligible prisoners on a continuous basis.

“The states and UTs are requested to provide details, as in the attached proforma, for the period November 27, 2024 to December 31, 2024, on urgent basis, whereafter a monthly report, even a NIL report, is to be provided to this ministry in the prescribed proforma, starting from January 1, 2025,” the communication said.

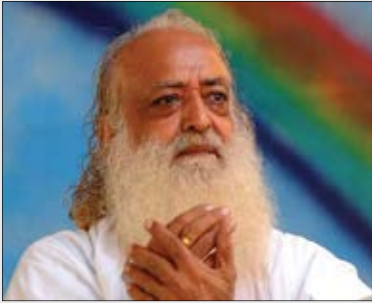
Interim bail for Asaram Bapu: Security tightened for rape victim’s family

SHAHJAHANPUR (UP): The family members of Asaram Bapu’s rape victim have been provided with additional security, a day after he was granted interim bail on medical grounds by the Supreme Court, police said on Wednesday.

Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Sanjay Kumar Sagar said after the Supreme Court’s order, he personally visited the victim’s residence and interacted with the family.

“A police guard is already deployed at the victim’s home and her father has a gunner for security. Additional police personnel are now being assigned, and necessary instructions have been issued to the relevant police station and circle officer to ensure the family’s safety,” Sagar said.

“Orders have been given to repair the dysfunctional CCTV cameras

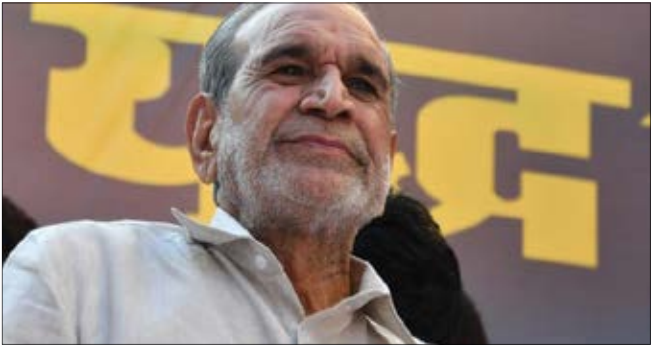


around the victim’s house, and the victim’s father has been advised to inform authorities before stepping out. We are continuously monitoring the family’s safety as this is a high-profile case,” Sagar added.

The victim’s father expressed that he was shocked to learn that Asaram had been granted interim bail. He said, “I haven’t been able to sleep since, as I am deeply concerned about my family’s safety. Even while in jail, Asaram was responsible for the murder of four witnesses – Rajkot’s Amrut Prajapati, Akhil Gupta (a cook), Lucknow’s Rahul Sachan, and Shahjahanpur’s Kripal Singh.”

He alleged, “While in jail, Asaram orchestrated false cases against me in Jammu, Jodhpur, Delhi, and Surasagar. Two of my witnesses, Bholanand and Sureshanand, are still missing. The government says laws are in place to ensure capital punishment for crimes against minors, but in Asaram’s case, the court continues to show leniency. Asaram, who is serving a life sentence in a sexual assault case, was granted interim bail by the Supreme Court until March 31, 2025, on medical grounds. The court imposed specific conditions before granting him bail.

1984 Anti-Sikh Riots Verdict In Murder Case Against Sajjan Kumar Likely On January 21



NEW DELHI: A Delhi court is likely to deliver on January 21 its verdict in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots murder case against former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar.

The case is linked to the alleged

killings of two men in the Saraswati Vihar area during the riots.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja, who was scheduled to pass the order on Wednesday, deferred the pronouncement. “January 21 is the

next date,” the judge said.

Kumar, currently lodged in Tihar central jail, appeared before the court via videoconferencing.

The court had reserved the judgment after hearing the final arguments in the case related to the killings of Jaswant Singh and his son Tarundeep Singh on November 1, 1984.

Though the Punjabi Bagh police station initially registered the case, a special investigation team subsequently took over the investigation. On December 16, 2021, the court framed charges against Kumar, finding a “prima facie” case against him. According to the prosecution, a huge mob armed with deadly weapons, resorted to large-

Delhi Polls Congress promises Rs 25 lakh health cover under ‘Jeevan Raksha Yojana’

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Wednesday promised a “Jeevan Raksha Yojana” for free health insurance of up to Rs 25 lakh if it is voted to power in Delhi.

Senior Congress leader and former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot said the proposed scheme would be a game-changer. “The chances of the Congress forming the government in Delhi are increasing. I believe this is also necessary for the country,” he said. Gehlot also

highlighted that the proposed scheme reflected the party’s commitment to addressing Delhi residents’ healthcare needs. The party’s campaign slogan “Hogi Har Zarurat Puri, Congress Hai Zaroori” was prominently displayed during the announcement, highlighting the Congress’ “promise” of ensuring essential services for all. Gehlot said the proposed scheme aimed to provide comprehensive health coverage to families.

Jal Shakti minister reviews Swachh Bharat progress in Karnataka, Haryana

NEW DELHI: Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil on Tuesday conducted comprehensive review meetings of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) for Karnataka and Haryana, charting the way forward for rural sanitation and waste management.

The review meetings assessed the progress made by the two states in the 2024-25 financial year.

In his address, Patil lauded the states for their progress in achieving Open Defecation Free (ODF) Plus Model Village status, noting that 37 per cent of Haryana’s villages and 18 per cent of Karnataka’s villages had been declared ODF-Plus Model.

However, he emphasised the need to address

the remaining gaps.

“Both Haryana and Karnataka must strive to become regional leaders in achieving the Swachh Bharat Mission goals. Sustaining these achievements and driving targeted interventions will ensure a cleaner and healthier environment for rural communities,” Patil said.

Of Haryana’s 6,619 villages, 97 per cent (6,419) have been declared ODF-Plus, with 2,500 villages achieving the ODF-Plus Model status. Of these, 1,855 villages have also been verified.

The state has achieved 76 per cent Greywater Management (GWM) coverage in its villages and implemented solid waste management in 65 per cent of villages.

Additionally, Haryana has reported 100 per



cent access to and usage of toilets, according to an official statement issued by the ministry. Efforts are on to ensure the functionality of

the Solid Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) assets and to conduct ground truthing to verify progress.

At the meeting, Patil urged Haryana to intensify its efforts to address gaps in the waste management systems.

Karnataka has also made notable advancements, declaring 4,873 villages as ODF-Plus Model, with 99.3 per cent of its villages managing solid waste effectively.

Karnataka has linked 1,905 villages to Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) systems. With a target of achieving ODF-Plus Model status for all 26,484 villages by March 2025, the state is on track to make significant progress, the statement said.

DC Srinagar reviews arrangements for Republic Day-2025

Directs ensuring meticulous arrangements for smooth, peaceful conduct of National Event

SRINAGAR: In connection with celebrations of forthcoming Republic-Day-2025, a meeting was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud Din Bhat at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex here to ensure smooth and flawless conduct of the national event.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Imtiyaz Ahmad was also present in the meeting.

At the outset, the DC took a Department wise review about the arrangements to be put in place by the respective Departments.

The DC directed the Officers of the concerned Departments to ensure all preparations including Seating arrangements, March Past Parade, Cultural programmes, Transport & Parking facilities, Power & drinking Water Supply, deployment of Sanitation staff, Medical/First Aid & Fire and Emergency teams, Installation of Public Address System, besides illumination of Government Building on the eve of upcoming Republic Day.

On the occasion, matters related to Security, Media Management and entry of VVIPs, VIPs and other participants were also discussed in detail.

The DC stressed on making fool-proof security arrangements in and around the Stadium to ensure hassle-free celebrations of the function. He also enjoined upon the concerned Officers to maintain



close coordination with each other for holding the function smoothly.

Regarding parking for vehicles, the DC asked the Officers of the Traffic Department to formulate an action plan so that the maximum number of vehicles of the dignitaries and other participants coming to attend the function are accommodated in a hassle

free manner.

SMC authorities were asked to ensure proper cleanliness in and around the Bakshi Stadium, besides functioning of all washrooms and mobile toilet facility at the venue on January 26. They were also asked to take measures for dog menace around the venue.

Dr Bilal asked the Education Department and Cultural Academy to ensure all necessary arrangements for boarding/lodging of participating school children and Artists are taken care well in advance with concerned, while transport arrangements will be made by JKRTC. He emphasized on proper safety measures of the participants at the accommodations.

He also stressed on making elaborate arrangements to tackle any water logging, if any caused due to rain/snowfall on the occasion of Full Dress rehearsal proceedings and the main event on 26th January.

The DC also asked the PDD for illumination of identified Government buildings and other prominent spaces on the eve of the Republic Day-2025. He also asked the Officers to hoist the national flag in their respective offices on the Day.

SSP Srinagar also spoke on the occasion and briefed about the security plan being put in place for peaceful Republic day celebrations for this year.

Besides, Additional District Development Commissioner, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Ahmad Kataria, Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, SDM East, SDM West, Chief Medical Officer, the meeting was attended by senior Officers of PDD, PHE, R&B, SRTC, Cultural Academy, Hospitality & Protocol, RTO, YS&S, Sports Council, Mechanical Engineering and other line Departments.

Capacity building programme for Officials of I&C Department commences at IIT Jammu

JAMMU: A two day capacity building programme was inaugurated here today by Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Vikramjit Singh at IIT Jammu Campus.



As many as, 40 officers of the rank of Functional Manager, Project Manager and Industrial Promotion Officers participated in the training programme.

The training session commenced with welcome address by Dr. Arun Manhas, Director, Industries and Commerce, Jammu followed by inaugural speech by Commissioner Secretary, I&C Department.

The Commissioner Secretary said that the training program is aimed at providing comprehensive knowledge base to the officers of the department covering various topics related to Modern Industrial Ecosystem including Policy Implementation Strategies and intervention of technologies including Generative

Als. "The program will enhance critical thinking skills and providing Stress Management Techniques bringing in conducive working environment at workplace", said Vikramjit Singh.

He further highlighted the need for capacity building exercises and urged the participants to upgrade their existing skill sets to cope up with the emerging demand and working environments.

Dr. Manoj Singh Gaur, Director IIT Jammu, also addressed the participants and requested them to indulge in the interactions with the speakers and obtain maximum benefits from the program.

The intensive training session has been divided into theoretical and case study based practical exercises which will equip the officers in applying analytical approaches in executing their assignments.

Hosting Team headed by Dr. Amitash Ojha, Assistant Professor, department of Humanities and Social Science, IIT Jammu, distinguished speakers and SMEs possessing academic and industrial knowledge would contribute in deliberating on different topics.

Besides the participants, Joint Director (M&P), Joint Director (Dev), Chief Accounts Officer I&C, Deputy Director (Planning), Assistant Director and faculties from IIT Jammu were present in the program.

The inauguration session concluded with vote of thanks by Miss Garima Assistant Professor, IIT Jammu.

DC Baramulla finalizes arrangements for Republic Day-2025



BARAMULLA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, chaired a meeting today to finalize the arrangements for the Republic Day 2025 celebrations in the district.

Senior officers from the civil administration, police, education department, and other concerned agencies were present in the meeting.

The DC reviewed the arrangements in detail, including seating, heating, security and the cultural programs planned for the event. He emphasized the importance of ensuring proper seating arrangements, uninterrupted heating facilities.

The main event will be held at District Police Lines, Baramulla, where the National Flag will be hoisted and cultural programs will showcase

the region's heritage and diversity. Departments were instructed to ensure active participation of participants and local artists to add vibrancy to the celebrations.

The DC also reviewed security arrangements and directed the police to deploy adequate personnel and ensure stringent measures at all venues. Traffic management, emergency response plans, and crowd control measures were also discussed to ensure a smooth and secure event.

Additionally, the DC directed the concerned departments to ensure the availability of essential services, such as water supply, power backup and medical facilities, to address any exigencies during the program.

BJP excels in rhetoric, falls short in action: Dr. Farooq Abdullah

Meets scores of delegations in Jammu

JAMMU: The President of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, Dr. Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday said that the promises made by previous undemocratic regimes to ensure balanced development in J&K have proven to be empty, as evidenced by the deteriorating civic infrastructure in Jammu city.

He made these remarks while echoing the sentiments of several individuals and delegations who visited him at his residence in Bathindi, Jammu. The delegations hailed from Poonch, Katra, Jammu Rural, and Kathua.

In attendance at this event were Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, former minister and Additional General Secretary, as well as Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of Jammu.

Dr. Farooq expressed deep concern over the escalating struggles faced by the general public on a daily basis. "The residents of Jammu city are grappling with numerous civic challenges as a result of the lackadaisical attitude of the authorities over the past ten years. Tall claims have remained mere words on paper. The previous monsoon season has laid bare the

hollowness of the BJP-led Jammu Municipal Corporation's lofty promises."

He further stated that BJP has exacerbated the suffering of the population. He emphasized that JKNC is dedicated to rectifying the injustices inflicted by the BJP in J&K.

He stated that the BJP cannot use its right-wing ideology as a shield to avoid answering crucial questions about the declining civic amenities in Jammu city. He urged party functionaries to prepare for the upcoming ULB and Panchayat elections.

"Jammu and Srinagar cities are in desperate need of a comprehensive urban renewal program and united efforts to tackle the issues arising from the ever-growing population. Only NC has the vision to move in that direction, as outlined in our manifesto. The BJP excels in rhetoric, but when it comes to action, they fall short. Jammu, like Srinagar, is the cultural and economic hub of our region, and any progress must be all-encompassing and sustainable. It must impact every aspect of urban life, from culture to commerce."



DC Udhampur listens to people's issues at Latti

UDHAMPUR: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai listened to the issues and

in the area to promote sports activities, establishment Kendriya Vidyalaya, introduction of a bus



demands of locals at a public outreach camp held at Latti as part of the weekly block Diwas initiative.

A large number of residents and officials from across line departments participated in the event.

During the interactive session, former PRI members and locals projected several demands seeking forest clearance of the road from Sira to Shivgali, establishment of a sports stadium

service from Ramnagar to Latti, provision of ultrasound machine and up-gradation of PHC Latti to a Community Health Centre and appointment of a veterinary doctor at Latti and Dudu. They also demanded measures to augment water supply, construction of Panchayat Ghar and a health sub-centre at Latti B, Installation of a mobile tower at Dudu to improve connectivity, establishment of a potato farming house at Latti to support local farmers.

The DC assured the locals of timely redressal of their issues.

She emphasized the administration's commitment to improving connectivity and infrastructure in remote areas. She also briefed the participants about the Mission Yuva baseline survey and the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, urging them to take maximum benefit of these initiatives. The DC informed the gathering about proposed road projects aimed at boosting connectivity and promoting economic growth in the region.

Later, the DC visited PHC Latti and enquired about the facilities being provided to patients and held interaction with farmers producing onion crop and participated in signature campaign against narcotics and drug abuse. The program witnessed active participation of Additional Deputy Commissioner, Prem Singh, SDM Dudu Dr Manmeet Kumar and officers of various departments.

Committed to End TB by 2025: NTEP team organises Nikshay Shivr in Border villages of Uri

BARAMULLA: In line with the national goal of eliminating tuberculosis (TB) by 2025, the NTEP Team Uri, under the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Baramulla and with the support of Block Medical Officer (BMO) Uri, organized a Nikshay Shivr in the border villages of Balkote, Hathlanga, and Mothal in Uri.

The camp witnessed encouraging response from the local population, providing free TB screening, diagnosis, and treatment to residents in these remote areas. A skilled team of doctors, nurses, and paramedics was deployed to deliver comprehensive medical services.

During the camp, 204 individuals were screened for TB. Out of these, 54 were tested using NAAT, 130 underwent X-ray examinations, and 18 were tested with Cy-TB. The initiative aimed to ensure early detection and timely treatment of TB cases in these underserved communities.

Speaking on the occasion, a retired teacher, expressed his gratitude to the district health administration for reaching out to these far-flung areas with much-needed healthcare services. He commended the efforts of the NTEP team for their commitment to public health.

While interacting with media, Dr. Ifitikhar Ahmad, Nodal Officer for NTEP, assured that similar camps will be organized in every panchayat of Block Uri. He emphasized the importance of these camps in bridging the gap between rural communities and quality healthcare.

HEW Jammu spreads awareness about gender equality, women centric schemes



JAMMU: Jammu-Mission Shakti SANKALP HEW Social Welfare Department conducted awareness sessions in Village Khanpur block Nagrota and Kalka colony Bahu Fort to empower women and promote gender equality

The initiative was designed to inform the community about the government schemes focused on uplifting and supporting women, with a broader mission of fostering gender equality and strengthening the role of women in society.

At the informative session, Mission Shakti's team covered an array of government programs that cater specifically to women's welfare, economic empowerment, safety, and security. Key schemes highlighted included:

The officials explained Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), providing financial support to pregnant and lactating women to improve health and nutrition; State Marriage Assistance Scheme (SMAS) for underprivileged women to support marriage-related expenses; Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) scheme to encourage safe motherhood through institutional deliveries; Widow and Old Age Pension Schemes ensuring financial aid for widows and the elderly, focusing on social security for vulnerable groups.

The sessions also introduced women to vocational and entrepreneurship programs such as Skill Development Courses at ITIs and Polytechnics to enhance employability of women; Business Startup Schemes like the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), Tejaswini, Mumkin, SC/ST Corporation, and the Women Development Corporation (WDC), offering women the resources and guidance to start their own ventures.

Beyond these specific schemes, Mission Shakti emphasized the critical role of women in nation-building and highlighted the importance of the girl child in Indian society.

Qazi Salman Promoted as Director, PIB Srinagar



SRINAGAR: Senior Indian Information Services (IIS) officer Qazi Mohammad Salman has been promoted as Director, Press Information Bureau (PIB), Srinagar, with additional charge as Director News, Doordarshan Kendra (DDK), Srinagar.

The order was issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India today for 27 senior level IIS officers posted across the country.

According to the Associated News Bureau, Salman was serving as Joint Director, Press Information Bureau (PIB) Srinagar, with an additional charge of the News Unit of Doordarshan Kendra (DDK) Srinagar. In his new role, Shri Salman will continue to oversee the operations of PIB Srinagar and News Unit of DDK Srinagar, ensuring enhanced public outreach and information dissemination in the region.

The officer has vast experience in the field of public information and broadcasting. His leadership in various roles has been widely recognized and instrumental in strengthening the communication of government policies and programmes in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. (ANB)

Strengthening Defence Logistics

To enhance the skills and capability building of their personnel, Indian Army and Indian Air Force signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara in the presence of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw in New Delhi on Monday. The MoU will enable the two Services to acquire higher expertise on logistics. It will ensure development of in-house expertise on various facets of logistics operations and contribute effectively towards the national development plans - PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan 2021 and National Logistics Policy 2022. Logistics, traditionally seen as a support function, has now emerged as a critical component in ensuring military readiness and operational efficiency. As India continues to advance its defence capabilities under the vision of Aatmanirbharta, the need for seamless and efficient logistics becomes paramount. The MoU is aimed at developing in-house expertise in logistics operations, aligning with national initiatives such as the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan and the National Logistics Policy. The significance of this partnership lies in its ability to empower the Armed Forces with cutting-edge education, research, and innovation in logistics. Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, with its focus on experiential learning through real-world case studies, will play a crucial role in shaping a new generation of logistics experts. These professionals will not only enhance the capabilities of the defence sector but also contribute to India's broader development goals. The MoU's emphasis on indigenization and self-reliance further reinforces the government's push for Aatmanirbharta. By leveraging domestic resources like Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, the Armed Forces will acquire the skills and knowledge needed to manage logistics independently, without relying on foreign expertise. This initiative reflects a broader vision of developing India's infrastructure and manufacturing capabilities to meet the growing demands of national security. This partnership is a forward-thinking step that enhances India's defence logistics capabilities, contributing to the nation's long-term vision of self-reliance in defence. By investing in education, innovation, and collaboration, India is ensuring that its Armed Forces are not only prepared for the challenges of modern warfare but also positioned to support the country's broader development objectives.

Masjid, a fundamental Institution in Islam

BY: AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON

The mosque has always been the heart of a Muslim community, serving as a sanctuary of unity, learning, and spiritual rejuvenation. From the humble structures of early Islam to the grand masjids of today, the essence

carpets for comfort and during winters hot water while masjid hamaam provides comfort, warmth (A Hamam in Kashmiri refers to a heated room with limestone slabs over a hollowed floor, warmed by a fire beneath, traditionally used in mosques and shrines for warmth and ablution in winters.)

of a mosque is through prayer, not its structure.'

Salah is undeniably the cornerstone of faith, establishing a direct and unbroken connection between a believer and Allah. It is described as the defining characteristic of a believer, where deliberately neglecting it equates to an act of disbelief (kufr). The importance of



remains unchanged: drawing humanity closer to Allah. The first mosque in the world, Masjid al-Haram, holds unparalleled sanctity. AllamaIqbal beautifully encapsulates its significance in his couplet: "Duniyakebutkadonmein, pehlawohgharkhudaka, Hum us kepasbaanhain, wohpasbaanhamaara." (Among the idol houses of the world, the first is the house of Allah al-Haram, We are its guardians, and it is our protector.) This profound verse highlights the reciprocal relationship between believers and the mosque. It reminds us of our role as custodians, emphasizing that protecting and honoring this sacred trust safeguards our faith and identity. A Space of Unity and Equality Mosques are sacred spaces where worldly distinctions dissolve, and believers stand shoulder to shoulder in devotion to Allah. AllamaIqbal eloquently reflects this egalitarian spirit in his couplet: "Ek hi safmein kharay hogaye Mahmood o Ayaz, Na koi bandarahauma koi bandanawaz. Banda o sahib o mohtaj o ghaniek hue, Teri sarkarmeinpohanche to sabhi ek hue." (Sultan Mahmood and his servant Ayaz stood together in the same row. No servant remained, nor did any master. The servant, the king, the needy, and the wealthy became one. When they came into Your presence, all became equal.) This imagery underscores Islam's emphasis on equality, where the only distinction in Allah's sight is righteousness, as stated in the Quran: "Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you." (Surah Al-Hujurat: 13). The Rights of the Mosque Yet, an important question arises: Are we, as believers, fulfilling the rights of our mosques and valuing their sacred role? While the mosque provides us with tranquility and ease—clean water for ablution, lights for clarity, and

These blessings come with the obligation to ensure their sustenance,—how often do we consider our responsibilities toward it? A mosque is not anyone's personal property; it is our collective heritage. Its protection, maintenance, and cleanliness are responsibilities that rest upon all of us. Here are key areas where believers can contribute: Financial Support: Every worshiper should contribute a fixed monthly amount to the mosque, no matter how small. Consistent donations collectively ensure the mosque's upkeep. Maintenance and Cleanliness: Participating in cleaning and maintaining the mosque is as important as monetary contributions. Support for the Mosque Team: Those who dedicate their time to administrative and fundraising efforts deserve the community's wholehearted support. Just as we budget for household expenses like electricity, internet, and school fees, the mosque should be part of our financial priorities. The services we enjoy—water, electricity, and cleanliness—require resources. It is our shared duty to provide them. A Call to Action A mosque is not merely a place of worship but the foundation for strengthening community and society. It serves as a spiritual haven, a center of learning, and a hub for unity and support. However, its upkeep often goes unnoticed, depending entirely on the contributions of the faithful. Supporting the mosque is not limited to financial contributions. Volunteering time and skills, organizing community events, and teaching younger generations the value of the mosque are equally important. Together, these efforts ensure that the mosque continues to enrich the lives of future generations. The mosque's True Beauty Despite all these efforts, the true adornment of a mosque lies in the establishment of prayer, as emphasized by our beloved Prophet (PBUH) in the hadith: 'The beauty

Salah is profoundly emphasized in the Hadith: Sunan al-Tirmidhi (Hadith 2620): "The covenant that distinguishes between us and them (disbelievers) is prayer; whoever neglects it has committed disbelief." SunanIbnMajah (Hadith 1079): "Between a person and disbelief is abandoning the prayer." The detachment of Muslims from their mosques signifies a distance from Allah's mercy. This estrangement is one of the reasons why oppressor nations have gained dominance over us. Reflecting on the condition of Muslims and their relationship with mosques, AllamaIqbal poignantly remarked: 'Masjid to bana di shabbharme inimaankiharawatwalon ne, Mann apnapuranapapihai, barsonmein namazi ban nasaka.' "Though the mosque was built overnight by the passionate believers, Their hearts, tainted by old sins, could not become devout even after years." This verse captures the irony of building magnificent mosques while neglecting the spiritual transformation that true devotion and prayer bring." May Allah Almighty grant us the understanding that the mosque is not just a building but an integral part of our spiritual and communal life. May He guide us to fulfill this sacred responsibility with sincerity, enabling us to prioritize Salah, revive the essence of mosques in our daily lives, and strive for spiritual and moral transformation? Only through such efforts can we hope to regain the honor and dignity that Allah has promised to those who adhere steadfastly to His commandments. May He guide us to take this responsibility seriously and enable us to serve the mosque in every possible way?

(The author is a Columnist and a Motivational Speaker)

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The unique style of Kashmiri Sufi music has been referred to as “Sufiyanakalam,” where Persian and local influences mingle in soulful and hypnotic expressions. Poetic and musical traditions have been carried out during religious gatherings and festivals that assemble the people into one spiritual event. This rich cultural heritage, so deeply rooted in Sufism, continues to be a source of pride for the people of Kashmir and reminds the region of its rich spiritual and cultural legacy.

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Winter Woes: Managing Asthma, Respiratory Challenges



BY: DR (BRIG) SARVINDER SINH

As the winter season sets in, many people eagerly await the cozy evenings and festive celebrations. However, for individuals with respiratory conditions like asthma, this season often brings a host of challenges. Asthma is a significant public health concern in India, affecting approximately 3.5 crores individuals over the country. The cold weather, combined with allergens and environmental changes, can act as a significant trigger for asthma attacks, leading to discomfort and potentially severe health complications. Understanding the connection between winter and asthma can help individuals manage their symptoms effectively and enjoy the colder months without undue stress.

Why Does Cold Weather Worsen Asthma?

Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition characterized by inflammation and narrowing of the airways, making it difficult to breathe. Cold weather exacerbates these symptoms for several reasons. Breathing in cold, dry air can irritate the airways, causing them to constrict and leading to bronchial spasms, a common trigger for asthma attacks. Low humidity levels during winter further dry out the mucous membranes, making the airways more sensitive to irritants. Additionally, winter air often carries allergens such as mold spores, dust mites, and pet dander. These allergens become more prevalent indoors as people spend more time inside with closed windows and reduced ventilation, creating an environment conducive to triggering asthma symptoms. The colder months also see a spike in respiratory infections like colds and the flu, which can inflame the respiratory tract

and exacerbate asthma. Furthermore, winter is associated with increased pollution levels due to the burning of wood and other fuels for heating. The presence of smog and particulate

Preventing Asthma Attacks During Winter

Taking proactive steps can help minimize the risk of

Additionally, following your doctor's advice on preventive medications, especially inhalers, is crucial. Protect yourself from respiratory infections by getting vaccinated for the



matter in the air can irritate the lungs and aggravate asthma symptoms. Common signs that cold weather is affecting asthma include wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, and a persistent cough. These symptoms may worsen during outdoor activities in the cold or when exposed to common allergens indoors.

asthma attacks during the colder months. Covering your nose and mouth with a scarf or mask helps warm and humidify the air you breathe, reducing irritation to the airways. Maintaining indoor air quality is equally important—use air purifiers, keep your home well-ventilated, and regularly clean surfaces to remove dust and pet dander. Avoid exposure to smoke from fireplaces, wood stoves, and cigarettes, as these can worsen asthma symptoms.

flu and pneumonia. With the right precautions and timely medical intervention, individuals with asthma can reduce the impact of winter triggers and maintain their quality of life. While winter may bring its share of challenges, careful management and awareness can ensure that the season remains enjoyable and safe for everyone.

(The author is a Senior Consultant – Pulmonology, Yatharth Hospital, Greater Noida)

The colder months also see a spike in respiratory infections like colds and the flu, which can inflame the respiratory tract and exacerbate asthma. Furthermore, winter is associated with increased pollution levels due to the burning of wood and other fuels for heating. The presence of smog and particulate matter in the air can irritate the lungs and aggravate asthma symptoms.

Satish Sharma calls on Union Minister Pralhad Joshi

Holds discussion on augmentation of Renewal Energy, Solarisation, PDS in J&K

NEW DELHI: Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Information Technology, Science and Technology, ARI & Training, Satish Sharma, today called on Union Minister for Food and Public Distribution, New and Renewable Energy, Pralhad Venkatesh Joshi, in New Delhi and had a detailed discussion on matters pertaining to consumer affairs, public distribution and renewal energy.

The Minister discussed various matters of public interest including extension of Jammu Solarisation Scheme for two more years under which almost 50 thousand households have already been covered, necessary assistance for solarisation of all hospitals falling in border areas in the national interest besides solarisation of emergency/trauma centres in accident prone areas.

He also requested to increase 20 villages (one in each district) under Model Village Scheme and award one crore rupees for each such village for maximum solarization, sanction of 4000 more agricultural pumps under PM KUSUM Yojana for the benefit of farmers.

Regarding development of Solar Power Infrastructure, the Minister urged for establishment of large scale Solar Power Plants in regions of J&K where solar irradiance is high, financial and technical assistance for augmentation/implementation of rooftop solar installations across government buildings, educational institutions and residential areas under the Grid-Connected Rooftop Solar

Program, establishment of Solar Parks under Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) particularly in arid and barren lands of J&K, augmentation of ongoing PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna across all parts of J&K.



Satish Sharma also demanded for establishment/promotion of micro and mini Hydroelectric Plants in rural/hilly areas across all districts of J&K, development of decentralized Hydel Projects to meet the energy needs of remote villages particularly in districts like Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, Kistwar, Kupwara, Bandipora, establishment of Hybrid Renewable Energy Projects (solar + wind or solar

+ hydro) in J&K where conditions are favourable. The Minister further sought support for pilot projects integrating hybrid systems with energy storage solutions to ensure reliable power supply, energy access for remote areas with Off-Grid Solar

in solar and hydro energy technologies besides training programs and workshops to enhance local capacity in renewable energy development and maintenance, introduction of a special financial package for renewable energy development in J&K under the Prime Minister's Development Package and support for innovative financing models to encourage private sector participation in renewable energy projects.

Satish Sharma also proposed to conduct a national summit (AREIAS) regarding solarisation in Srinagar which will be a unique initiative of its kind.

Satish Sharma asserted that the government is focused on sustainability and green energy transition and insisted for collaboration to achieve the renewable energy targets set under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).

The Minister also raised several issues pertaining to Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs. He apprised the Union Minister that free additional ration was distributed for 30 months under PMGKY which caused deficit of 73 crore rupees and requested for release of same amount. He asked him to allow the government to utilise savings under PMGKY/Tide over to run the state sponsored schemes. He also asked for special package so that government could increase the volume of ration to be distributed among the people.

The Union Minister patiently heard the demands/issue and assured to consider all the points for prompt action.

Javed Dar conducts surprise visit to GMC Baramulla; reviews functioning

BARAMULLA: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Javed Ahmad Dar, today conducted a surprise visit to Government Medical College (GMC) Baramulla to review its functioning and service delivery.

During the visit, Principal GMC Baramulla, Dr. Majid Jahangir and Medical Superintendent of associated hospital, Dr. Parvaiz Masoodi, briefed the Minister about the operations, infrastructure and challenges faced by the institution. They provided updates on ongoing projects and initiatives aimed at improving patient care and healthcare services.

The Minister interacted with the patients, attendants, doctors and paramedical staff to seek feedback on healthcare services there. He inspected various departments and sought details about the duty rosters of staff, particularly during the evening and morning hours, to ensure adequate staffing and seamless service delivery. He directed the administration to strictly adhere to the duty schedules and ensure presence of staff at all critical hours.

Javed Dar also issued strict directions for maintaining cleanliness and hygiene across the institution, ensuring availability of essential medicines and equipment besides improving the response time in emergency services. He further stressed the need for regular monitoring and timely redressal of grievances to build public trust in the healthcare system.

Highlighting the government's commitment to quality healthcare, Javed Dar urged the staff to uphold high standards of professionalism and deliver compassionate care to patients. He assured full support for strengthening the institution's infrastructure and resources.

Arrangements finalized for Dubjan Winter Festival at Shopian

DC chairs meeting of stakeholder departments, details out action plan

SHOPIAN: Arrangements for inaugural Winter Carnival, 'NAGRAI HEEMAL,' scheduled for January 11th and 12th at Dubjan, Shopian were finalized at Mini-Secretariat Shopian under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar.

On the occasion, the DC detailed out the department wise action plans for the impactful organisation of mega and first of its kind event in the district, which aims to promote tourism, culture, and community engagement.

The carnival will feature a variety of activities, including snow crafts, snow igloos, ice sports, competitions for children, and exhibitions of local cuisine and arts.

The administration has sought participation of locals for engaging them in activities of adventure, arts etc along with showcasing the rich culture and heritage of the district.

The District administration has made all arrangements and is coordinating efforts across various departments to ensure the event's success for promoting the tourism potential of Mughal road- Heerpora wildlife sanctuary and Historic Sarais circuit.

DC emphasized the importance of effective planning and collaboration among departments to provide a memorable experience for participants and has called out for maximum participation.

SSP, Shopian, Anayat Ali; ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone; ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faza officers of district administration & security forces were present.

Seminar on NEET held at GDC Shopian

District administration felicitates NEET qualifiers of the District



SHOPIAN: A seminar for the aspirants of National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) of the district was organized at Government Degree College (GDC) Shopian by District Administration Shopian. The event was hosted by the Chief Education Officer, Shopian in collaboration with GDC Shopian and DIPR Shopian and was attended by NEET aspirants and recent NEET Qualifiers of the district.

The function was aimed to orient the NEET aspirants of the district about the upcoming initiation of the free NEET Coaching and mentorship program by the district administration at two centres put up in Shopian town and Zainapora Subdivision. The function was also graced by recent NEET Qualifiers of the district who provided guidance and mentorship/ counseling to the aspirants. It also served as a motivational event, recognizing the achievements of the district's NEET qualifiers and inspiring others to pursue their dreams in the medical field. Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar attended the seminar and took the opportunity to felicitate the NEET qualifiers from the district with Mementos and Appreciation certificates. The seminar aimed to provide a platform for aspirants, qualifiers and educators to discuss the importance of NEET, its exam pattern, and preparation strategies, said Shahid Saleem. He urged the aspirants to use the facility provided by the district administration to give shape to dreams in the much cherished field of medical education and health. The District Administration's initiative demonstrates its commitment to promoting education and encouraging students to excel in competitive exams like NEET. Principal, GDC Shopian, Dr. (Prof.) Shafiq Ahmad, CEO, M Shabir, DIO Showkat Hussain Ganie and other concerned officials were also present on the occasion.

DC Srinagar chairs DLC meet, finalizes action plan for re-verification of beneficiaries in PDS database

SRINAGAR: In order to finalize the action plan for re-verification process of beneficiaries listed in the Public Distribution System (PDS) database in the District, a meeting of District Level Committee was Wednesday held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat here in his office chamber.

During the meeting, the DC asked the officers to expedite the re-verification process for all beneficiaries, particularly those under the AAY and PHH categories. He stressed the officers to conduct a detailed review of current income status of the beneficiaries to ensure the transparent PDS database.

On the occasion, the DC also

directed the Officers to ensure 100% completion of e-KYC for all beneficiaries and to incorporate any eligible beneficiaries who may have been left out from the system.



The DC also directed the formation of Sub Committees at the Village and Ward levels which will conduct general surveys to streamline and update the database in stipulated time.

Notably, the District Level Committee has been formed by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to oversee the verification of beneficiaries enrolled under the



Public Distribution System (PDS) database. As per Government order the Committee will be responsible for verifying the eligibility of beneficiaries, identifying and including any left-out eligible

individuals, and completing the e-KYC process for pending beneficiaries. The District Level Committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner, with the Assistant Commissioner (Revenue), Assistant Commissioner (Development), District Social Welfare Officer, and Assistant Director (FCS&CA) as members is tasked with verifying the eligibility of all beneficiaries enrolled in the Public Distribution System (PDS) database, in accordance with the applicable rules, and ensuring the removal of ineligible beneficiaries. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Ahmad Kataria, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Assistant Director FCS&CA, Tehsildar Headquarters and other concerned.

Secretary RDD reviews progress on Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen with DCs

Calls for expeditious work execution, submission of Annual Implementation Plan within one week

JAMMU: Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (RDD&PR), Mohammad Aijaz Asad, chaired a comprehensive review meeting with the Deputy Commissioners to assess progress on implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) in Jammu and Kashmir.

The review focused on key aspects such as the functionality of SBM-G assets, preparation of Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) for 2025-26 and strategies to expedite development of sanitation infrastructure.

The meeting was attended by all District Development Commissioners, Director General SBM-G, Director RDD Kashmir, Director RDD Jammu, Director Panchayati Raj, Director Finance, Additional Secretary, Kartar Singh, Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Superintending Engineer REW Jammu, Deputy Director Rural Sanitation Kashmir, all Assistant Commissioner Panchayats (ACPs) and others.

During the meeting, the Secretary expressed concern over delays in asset creation and functionality in certain districts. Highlighting the pivotal role of Deputy Commissioners, he directed them to personally intervene to address challenges and ensure swift implementation of SBM-G initiatives.

Aijaz Asad instructed the DCs to submit their Annual Implementation

Plan (AIP) for 2025-26 within a week. He also asked the Rural Engineering Wing (REW) to accelerate the tendering process for ongoing and upcoming projects to eliminate delays.



He highlighted the need for land identification to establish Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs), Waste Stabilisation Ponds (WSPs) and Decentralised Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS).

Mega IEC campaign begins in B'la to promote Mission YUVA, PM Surya Ghar, HADP schemes Javed Dar launches campaign from Rafiabad; Urges youth, farmers to avail benefits for economic upliftment

BARAMULLA: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Javed Ahmad Dar, in presence of Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today kick started a Mega Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign at Dak Bungalow, Chijhama, Rafiabad, to create awareness about various government sponsored initiatives including HADP, PM Surya Ghar Yojana and Mission YUVA project.

Similar such IEC campaigns were also held across the district at the sub division and tehsil levels where the Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from the respective constituencies spearheaded these programs to empower the public about the benefits of these schemes.

The campaign witnessed an overwhelming response from the local population including representatives and other stakeholders, empowering

them to take full advantage of these schemes for their economic upliftment.

The event began with the Minister inspecting the informative stalls set up



by different government departments, providing detailed information on the schemes, their objectives and process for availing the benefits.

In a series of comprehensive

presentations, senior officials from various departments highlighted the scope and importance of the schemes. Key emphasis was laid

on the transformative potential of HADP to modernise agriculture, PM Surya Ghar to promote solar energy adoption and Mission YUVA to empower youth through skill-building and entrepreneurship.

Javed Dar urged all the stakeholders, including farmers, youth and local leaders to actively participate in these schemes, emphasising their potential to transform the economic landscape of the region.

The DC provided an in-depth presentation on the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Mission Yuva and PM Surya Ghar Yojana. He highlighted how these schemes are tailored to address critical challenges in agriculture, youth empowerment and renewable energy adoption.

Later, the Minister handed over the keys of tractors, weeders and other agricultural machinery to the beneficiaries under HADP and various other schemes.

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Javed Rana reviews functioning of tribal hostels in JK

Calls for saturation of critical gaps for upliftment of tribals

JAMMU: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmad Rana, today chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review the functioning of tribal hostels in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Tribal Affairs, Prasanna Ramaswamy G, Director, Tribal Affairs, Ghulam Rasool and other officers. The Minister had a detailed assessment of functioning of the hostels with emphasis on the staff strength, improving sanitation, dining facilities, digital classrooms, libraries and recreational spaces to foster academic and personal growth for hostel inmates.

The Minister said that the government has launched various schemes for the upliftment of tribals that envision saturation of critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education and livelihood of tribal areas. He emphasised the need for coordinated efforts in effective implementation of schemes so that the benefits percolate to the last man.

The Minister asked the concerned officers to take up the matter of ongoing construction works in districts with the respective Deputy Commissioners so that all the projects are completed within the stipulated time frame.

Javed Rana also reviewed the expansion of Dharti Aaba Mission to all tribal villages, focusing on education, healthcare and livelihood opportunities. He took first

hand appraisal about implementation of the scheme being executed for welfare of tribal people. He also discussed various aspects related to the scheme and other modalities for its successful execution to achieve the target. Secretary Tribal Affairs gave a brief about the functioning of tribal hostels across Jammu and Kashmir. He also highlighted various ongoing works being executed under UT Capex Budget 2024-25.

He informed that under UT Capex Budget, a number of works for up-gradation of G&B Hostels, construction of 100 bedded new Hostels, adequate electricity, water supply and connectivity to tribal villages, transit accommodation for migratory nomadic population, empowerment of unemployed, skill development, establishment of Animal/sheep/goat units, establishment of smart classrooms/e-class rooms, creation of electric sub-station, installation of hand pumps, bore well have been taken up.

The Secretary said that during the current financial year 2024-25, the annual plan has been approved for a total outlay of Rs. 78.00 crore across the entire UT, against which 80% funds stand already released for different works which are under execution. He said that this shall significantly improve the infrastructure and standard of living of the tribals residing in remote/far flung areas.

During the meeting, the need of human resources for smooth running of tribal hostels and the offices at district level was also discussed in detail.

Vitamin C: Move over lemons and oranges, these 5 foods have heaps of this nutrient

Water-soluble nutrient, vitamin C is strongly linked to antioxidant properties that benefit skin health and strengthen immunity as well. This nutrient is found in abundance in fruits and vegetables. Unlike vitamin D, the human body cannot produce or store vitamin C which is why it is essential to consume it in good quantities. This nutrient is also essential for small blood vessels, bones, teeth and collagen tissue. Experts recommend a minimum of 90mg of vitamin C for normal functioning of the body and to

dodge the risk of deficiency. On one hand, the most popular sources of vitamin C like oranges and lemons give 53.2mg and 53mg of vitamin C in a 100-gram serving. However, there are a number of other sources of vitamin C that contain way more of this nutrient as compared to lemons and oranges. Keep reading to find out what they are. Pineapple: Some people enjoy its juice, some like it sliced and some enjoy it over a pizza – irrespective, pineapple is one of the best sources of vitamin C with 79mg in a single serving. Additionally, this fruit can help

build strong bones while maintaining blood sugar levels well. : Often recommended for irregular periods, this tropical fruit offers a distinct taste with some black salt sprinkled on top. Papayas, while being a rich source of fibre, a single cup of papaya gives 88m of vitamin C. Guava: Often enjoyed on a summer afternoon at grandma's house, guavas are a low-calorie fruit with limited quantities of fibre and carbohydrates per fruit. And in terms of vitamin C, a single fruit can give 126 mg of this nutrient – and most of it is found



in the rind. Kiwi: The deep-green coloured fruit has an extremely low glycemic index and is often seen on the recommended list of those who are trying to lose weight or of

diabetes patients struggling with high blood sugar levels. However, what makes this fruit a must-have is its vitamin C value – two kiwis can give as much as 137 mg of this nutrient. Bell peppers: Fruits indeed are some of the best sources of vitamin C; and in the vegetable category, bell peppers are another super-rich source. Be it the red, yellow or green variety, bell peppers have a varied quantity of vitamin C – the medium-sized red version contains 152mg, 96mg in the green version and the yellow one offers 218mg.

PART-III

The Best Foods To Eat When You're On A Diet

Final Verdict About Broth-Based Soups
Soups are filling and keep you full for a long time. Soup at the start of a meal can help you feel fuller, eat fewer calories, and lose weight over time. Plus, who can say no to broth-based soups? They're not only filling but delicious as well!

Boiled Potatoes

Many individuals avoid potatoes when trying to lose weight because of their high carb content, but they shouldn't. Vitamins, fiber, and other essential components are abundant in whole potatoes. Resistant starch, a kind of starch, is also included. Regular starch has half the calories of resistant starch (2 instead of 4 calories per gram). It works in the same manner as soluble fiber does in the digestive tract to make you feel full. People eat less calories when resistant starch is added to meals to help them feel full.

What Studies Say About Boiled Potatoes

Potatoes should be chilled after cooking to increase the amount of resistant starch they contain. Cooling and reheating potatoes several times increases their hunger-suppressing impact, according to studies. Boiling potatoes came out on top in research that looked at the ability of 38 different foods to satisfy hunger. The most filling item tested was boiling potatoes, however, fried potato chips were found to be three times less filling.

Final Verdict About Boiled Potatoes

On the satiety index, boiling potatoes, which are high in nutrients, rank first. Because fried potato chips are three times less full than baked potato chips, they are not recommended for weight loss. If you're on a diet and want to consume potatoes, make sure you cook them first.

Berries

Are you a sucker for sweets? A bunch of berries popped into your mouth – such an easy, delicious, and healthful way to satisfy that craving. Strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries can be combined together or picked out separately. Berries are great on their own or mixed into yogurt, and they add the perfect amount of spice to your diet. Because they're high in antioxidants and fiber, they're a healthy way to satisfy your sugar cravings.

Yogurt

For good reason, yogurt is always near the top of any list of healthy foods. Yogurt is a delicious breakfast, lunch, or dinner option. Try it plain or add berries and granola to amp up the flavor. Yogurt is high in probiotics, which help your body absorb less fat and supply beneficial microorganisms to help your intestines clean themselves. Yogurt also helps you burn fat, so there's no reason not to incorporate it in your daily routine!

Chili

Make things a little more interesting in your life! Spicy foods increase your metabolism, allowing you to burn fat faster. In only one chili pepper, you can get enough beta carotene for the entire day and TWICE the amount of vitamin C you require. Benefits to the skin, hair, nails, and waistline!

Cucumbers

Cucumbers are a must-have in any diet. Because cucumbers are mostly water, they are low in calories and satisfying. Try to include one in your daily lunch and see how much less bread you consume as a result! Cucumbers also aid in the reduction of bloating and water retention, so it's a win-win situation!

Salsa

Salsa can be produced with several fruits and vegetables, although tomatoes, onions, and peppers are the most frequent. All of these vegetables are incredibly nutritious and abundant in nutrients. Salsa has a low-calorie count due to the fact that it is produced using water rather than milk or oil. You are welcome

to eat it!

Lettuce

Lettuce has a bad rep for being nutritionally insufficient and the poor cousin of cabbage, spinach, kale, and all other greens. So, stop hating lettuce, because we're here to tell you that you shouldn't! If you choose the right kind, it's loaded with nutrients. Other dark green and purple lettuces, as well as romaine lettuce, contain vitamin B, folic acid, and manganese.

Quinoa

Quinoa is currently one of the most popular foods, and for good reason. It's low in calories but high in

We don't recommend doing the cinnamon challenge (in fact, we strongly discourage it...), but a pinch of cinnamon here and there can help you lose weight. The spice stimulates the synthesis of insulin, which aids in the regulation of high blood sugar levels. It may even encourage your body to burn fat rather than store it. Cinnamon is a fantastic health keeper for both the inside and outside.

Kale

Kale has definitely had its moment in the sun (and then some) but as far as healthy greens go, it certainly deserves praise. Cruciferous green (which is even available at McDonald's these days) is loaded with



protein, making it a filling addition to any meal and a terrific replacement for rice, pasta, potatoes, and other carbs. There are many different types of quinoa, but there isn't much nutritional difference between them, so choose your favorite – or mix them all together!

Cranberry Juice

We're not talking about the sugar-laden cranberry juice cocktail here. Grab a glass of 100% cranberry juice and watch the pounds melt away. The bitter juice is abundant in vitamin C and acts as a diuretic, allowing your body to rid itself of excess fluid.

Dark Chocolate

You probably didn't think chocolate would make the cut! Diets are challenging, and if you restrict yourself totally, you risk bingeing and destroying all of your hard work. If you want something sweet, consume a couple squares of dark chocolate every now and again to avoid this. Dark chocolate has healthy fats and contains less sugar than other chocolates, making it significantly healthier than other treats. According to some studies, it's even good for your heart! So, if you have a craving, don't be afraid to indulge – but only in moderation.

Almonds

Almonds are the least calorie-dense nut, with only about 7 calories per nut, but they are also the healthiest. They're high in protein and healthy fats (both of which are essential for weight loss), as well as vitamin E.

Cinnamon

health-boosting nutrients like vitamin A, phosphorus, and B vitamins like folic acid, and boasts twice the vitamin C of spinach, another nutritional superstar. Additionally, a study in the journal JRSMD Cardiovascular Disease found that a high daily intake of leafy green vegetables and cruciferous vegetables (such as kale) significantly reduced the incidence of several types of cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death among women in the United States. Feel free to add some kale to a variety of meals ranging from egg dishes to tacos, to beverages like juices and smoothies.

Dark green leafy vegetables, oranges and tomatoes, even fresh herbs, are full of vitamins, fiber and minerals. Adding frozen bell peppers, broccoli or onions to casseroles and omelets gives them a quick and convenient boost of color and nutrients. Oranges are not only delicious, but also packed with vitamins. They contain fiber, vitamin C, potassium, nutrients, and pectin. It would also help us lower blood pressure, improve blood vessel function, control cholesterol, and could boost our sodium and protein balance. This fruit would give us a lot of benefit to our body, especially our heart.

Garlic

Garlic belongs to the genus Allium and is closely related to onions, rakkyo (an onion found in Asia), chives, chives, leeks, and shallots. It has been used by humans for thousands of years and was used in Ancient Egypt both for culinary purposes and for its health and therapeutic benefits. In many countries, garlic has been used for medicinal purposes for centuries. Garlic

can have a variety of health benefits, both raw and cooked. It may have important antibiotic properties. Garlic has been used around the world for thousands of years. Records indicate that garlic was in use when the Giza pyramids were built, some 5,000 years ago.

Red Wine

Researchers have studied wine, especially red wine, extensively for its potential health benefits. Red wine has been part of social, religious and cultural events for hundreds of years. Medieval monasteries believed that their monks lived longer in part because they drank wine regularly and in moderation. In recent years, science has indicated that there might be some truth to these claims. According to a 2018 study, Trusted Source, although there are no official recommendations on these benefits in particular, drinking red wine in moderation has positive links with: cardiovascular disease, atherosclerosis, hypertension, certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, neurological disorders, syndrome metabolic

Sardines

Sardines have been around for centuries. These small fish are said to be named after Sardinia, an island in Italy, due to the abundance that could be found there. While sardines can be enjoyed fresh, they are highly perishable. That is why they are most often found in cans. Sardines abound in the Atlantic, Pacific and Mediterranean seas. They feed solely on plankton, which means they do not contain the high levels of mercury that other fish do. Sardines are not a popular fish in the United States, but after taking a look at their nutritional benefits, you might decide to give them a try for yourself. These small fish are packed with nutrients that can be beneficial in preventing a number of health problems.

Lentils

Here are some amazing ratios: One cup of lentils has the protein of three eggs, with less than a gram of fat! Their high fiber content makes them extremely satiating, and studies have shown that they accelerate fat loss: Spanish researchers found that people whose diets included four weekly servings of legumes lost more weight and improved their cholesterol more than people who didn't. Eat them plain as a side or simmer them in a soup. Lentils are relatively quick and easy to prepare, and their low cost makes them an affordable form of high-quality protein for many people around the world. Lentils can improve health, great nutritional content.

Pomegranate

When cracking open a pomegranate and freeing the jewels from the fruit is hard work, you may be making it even harder by spitting out the seeds. Despite some popular opinions, pomegranate seeds can be eaten, and they're good for you too! Pomegranate is a very healthy fruit. Many people open them, take out the seeds and eat them whole. Others suck the juice from each seed before spitting out the white stringy medium. This latter group may be missing out on some of the health benefits of pomegranate. In vitamin C, potassium and fiber. Most of that fiber is found in the white seeds that hide under the juice bags. Contains 48 percent of the recommended daily intake of vitamin C, important for a variety of health functions.

Blueberries

Blueberries can be eaten freshly picked or incorporated into a variety of recipes. They can also be bought frozen. They have been shown to protect against heart disease and cancer, and may also help maintain bone strength, mental health, and healthy blood pressure. Fast facts on blueberries: Blueberries contain a plant compound called anthocyanin. This gives blueberries both their blue color and many of their health benefits. Blueberries can support heart health, bone strength, skin health, blood pressure, diabetes control, cancer prevention, and mental health. A cup of blueberries provides 24 percent of the daily recommended amount of vitamin C.

Continued From P1...

JK occupies

This helps in developing better understanding and appreciation of different cultures and talents, he said.

During the interactive session, the youth spoke about different themes in which they are representing J&K and also shared the role of younger generation of Jammu Kashmir in realising the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary, Youth Services and Sports Department; Rajinder Singh Tara, Director General, Youth Services and Sports; Jitendra Mishra, Nodal officer, participating youth and officials accompanying the Contingent for National Youth Festival were present.

PM Modi to

The road used before was avalanche-prone and often got blocked for several months, but the Z-Morh tunnel provides all-weather connectivity to the Sonamarg tourist town. It takes only 15 minutes to travel the 6.5 km long tunnel compared to hours over the zig-zag road up and down the hills.

Together with the adjacent Zoji-La Tunnel, this geostrategically important tunnel on the Srinagar-Leh Highway will provide year-round weather-proof connectivity to Baltal (Amarnath cave), Kargil and other places in the Ladakh region.

It will also enhance military logistics and boost tourism and the economy. In addition to providing all-weather connectivity to Sonamarg, the tunnel will help the employment of local youth and boost tourism and allied activities in the area.

It is one of the 31 road tunnels, 20 in Jammu and Kashmir and 11 in Ladakh.

The construction of the tunnel was started in 2018.

The tunnel workers came under terror attack on October 20, 2024, when two terrorists entered the workers' camp at Gagangir and fired indiscriminately. Seven civilians, including six non-local workers of the infrastructure company building the Z-Morh tunnel, were killed. A local doctor was also killed in the attac

CM Omar

careful in addressing the aspirations of the people. Mr. Omar Abdullah has to be extremely cautious and careful in handling this mandate. Additionally, the Government of India (GoI) must respect the will of the people of Jammu and Kashmir," MP Ruhullah said.

Replying to a query, he warned that ignoring the mandate and aspirations of the people of J&K would be disastrous, not just for Kashmir but for the entire concept of India in Jammu and Kashmir.

He further expressed concern that Kashmiris are not just disappointed but also worried about Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. "Mr. Omar Abdullah should not distance himself from the people of Jammu and Kashmir or from the mandate that the National Conference (NC) secured in October 2024," he stated.

Ruhullah cautioned that Omar Abdullah risks being seen by Kashmiris as "Delhi's representative." Instead, he urged the Chief Minister to be "resilient," "express the dissent of the people," and lead what he called their "rebellion" in demanding their right to statehood and the return of Article 370.

When asked about the response Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had received from the Prime Minister and the Home Minister after his efforts to engage with the Modi government, Ruhullah described it as "disrespectful."

He stated that the Modi government appears to "turn a deaf ear" to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He also expressed concern over the delay in granting statehood, which the government had assured the Supreme Court it would restore. "The delay is very worrying," he said, adding that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are "more committed than ever" to the restoration of Article 370

Orientation Programme

Questions, Committee System and Information Support to Legislators, Do's and Don'ts for an Effective Legislator and a session on NEVA. The insights gained through these lectures will provide the newly elected members with a deep understanding of working of the legislature and the responsibility they carry as elected representatives. The lectures will also be co-hosted by Senior Officers of the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

This programme is expected to enhance the capacity of MLAs to significantly contribute to policy formulation and ensure its effective implementation for greater good of the Union Territory.

Submit Annual

Jammu, Director Panchayati Raj, Director Finance, Additional Secretary, Kartar Singh, Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Superintending Engineer REW Jammu, Deputy Director Rural Sanitation Kashmir, all Assistant Commissioner Panchayats (ACPs) and others.

During the meeting, the Secretary expressed concern over delays in asset creation and functionality in certain districts. Highlighting the pivotal role of Deputy Commissioners, he directed them to personally intervene to address challenges and ensure swift implementation of SBM-G initiatives.

Aijaz Asad instructed the DCs to submit their Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) for 2025-26 within a week. He also asked the Rural Engineering Wing (REW) to accelerate the tendering process for ongoing and upcoming projects to eliminate delays.

He highlighted the need for land identification to establish Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs), Waste Stabilisation Ponds (WSPs) and Decentralised Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS).

The Secretary asked the DCs to take personal interest in facilitating these initiatives, essential for achieving sustainable rural sanitation. He proposed deputing technical teams and consultants to support capacity building and organising workshops and training sessions for officers and field functionaries to enhance their operational efficiency.

Stressing the importance of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, the Secretary called for district-specific strategies aligned with local cultures about SBM-G initiatives. He underlined that a strong IEC plan is crucial for success of the programme. He assured districts of financial support towards the sanitation efforts.

Aijaz Asad reiterated the government's unwavering commitment towards providing safe, hygienic and dignified living conditions for rural communities. He urged all stakeholders to collaborate effectively to ensure timely completion of projects and optimal functionality of SBM-G assets.

DG Rural Sanitation, made a comprehensive presentation on the initiatives under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) which included clarification of several issued to the districts by the technical experts.

Govt sets

"It is a mild upper respiratory disease. Six cases have been detected so far (in the country), but there is no need to panic," Zargar said. Jammu and Kashmir tourism

To enhance readiness, the administration has convened meetings to review the situation and ensure that adequate facilities are in place. "Our oxygen plant with a capacity of 22,000 LPM is fully functional," Zargar said. "In addition to the special ward, our hospital has 100 oxygen-supported beds, along with sufficient concentrators and various types of cylinders," he added.

First identified in 2001 but known to circulate since the 1970s, human metapneumovirus is a common respiratory virus that causes mild cold-like symptoms.

Health experts have highlighted its potential impact on children and older adults, urging vigilance for the warning signs.

While a few HMPV cases have been reported from Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat, health experts maintain the situation remains under control, calling for calm and awareness among the public.

Inspection and

The trial train left Katra station at 10:30 am and reached Banihal station within one-and-a-half hours. The train left for Katra on its return journey at 2 pm and is expected to reach its destination by 3:30 pm.

This is the final speed trial run on the trek.

Deshwal, who reached Katra on a two-day statutory inspection of the newly completed railway line, said the Centre would take the final decision on the start of services between Kashmir and the rest of the country.

"I am not in a position to talk about it (start of services). The

statutory inspection will be completed by this evening and all the gathered data analysed in accordance with guidelines of the Northern Railway," he said.

The CRS said the inspection and the trial runs on the trek had been satisfactory so far.

"Our infrastructure is outstanding and very soon a fair decision will be taken based on our report," he added.

Last month, Rail Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced the completion of the Reasi-Katra section, an important development for connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country after nearly three decades of work.

On January 4, a successful trial run of an electric train was conducted on the Katra-Banihal section. The Railways have conducted six trial runs over the past month on various segments of the track, including the two major milestones of Anji Khad and Chenab bridges.

Of the total 272-kilometre Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, 209 kilometres were commissioned in phases.

Officials said the dream project to link Kashmir by train was started in 1997 and missed several deadlines due to geological, topographical and meteorological challenges.

2025 Begins

Meanwhile, the local Meteorological department (MeT) has issued a yellow warning, saying that there is a possibility of an isolated cold wave till January 10.

Amidst the forecast of an isolated cold wave, Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that there is a possibility of generally dry weather conditions and cloudiness during the 10th evening and night.

On January 11, he said that generally cloudy weather is expected with possibility of light rain in plains of Jammu and snow at isolated higher reaches of Jammu division & Kashmir division.

On January 12-14, the weather would remain generally dry, he said, adding that on January 15 & 16, generally cloudy weather is expected with possibility of light snow at isolated to scattered places.

Moreover, the tourists, travelers and transporters are advised to follow administration and traffic advisory

CS for smooth

Regarding the compassionate appointments in favour of the kin of deceased employees under SRO-43 and newly christened Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme (RAS), the Chief Secretary underscored the need of further accelerating the process. He directed the concerned to put the cases before the designated committees for their clearances and issuance of orders in favour of the applicants. He also enjoined upon them to complete the appointment of remaining eligible candidates under SRO-43 at an earliest.

Commissioner Secretary, GAD, M.Raju, while providing relevant details in the meeting, revealed that there are around 1151 cases of RAS pending, out of which, 507 cases received in 2022 and 2023 had been forwarded to the departments for their appointment. He further made out that there are just 175 SRO-43 cases pending in different departments most of which are going to be settled in a month or so.

About the promotions made by different departments, the meeting was apprised that at the HoD level 76 DPCs were convened in the year 2024 in addition to 14 at Administrative/PSC level for filling of gazetted vacancies.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that i want to apply for Change my Unique Disability Certificate to Multiple Disability Certificate, in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Chief Medical Office Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Maroof Reyaz.
S/O Reyaz Ahmad Ganie.
R/O Ajas. tehsil Sonawari District Bandipora.

Kashmir's ancient stone carving faces collapse amid mining ban

Carvers seek govt support, sustainable solutions; say hundreds of families lost livelihoods

Sajid Raina

SRINAGAR: Stone carvers in Sanderkoot village of north Kashmir's Bandipora district are grappling with the fallout of a mining ban imposed in 2019 which has now disrupted a centuries-old tradition of stone carving, leaving hundreds of families without their primary source of income.

The carvers, locally referred to as sangtaraash, have relied on devere stone from local mountains for generations to craft curbstones, gravestones, and floor stones. Since the 2019 mining ban, they



have lost access to this essential material, halting their craft and threatening their livelihoods and a centuries-old cultural tradition.

Notably, the Sanderkoot village is renowned for its centuries-old tradition of stone carving, which holds a significant place in Kashmir's cultural heritage.

The skilled artisans have been crafting exquisite stone pieces such as curbstones, gravestones, and floor stones from the region's unique devere stone.

Sharing his concern with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Shakeel Ahmad, a local who took up the craft in 2008, said they

now face challenges. "For years, I supported my family with this work. After the ban, everything changed. The government tells us to look for other jobs but does not provide alternatives or address our concerns. This is not just about stone carving; it's about survival for many of us," he said.

Mushtaq Ahmad, another carver, said this craft has been in their families for hundreds of years. "It's not just a job but a way of life. Generations have passed this skill down, and now we cannot continue it. The government is preserving other art forms, so why not ours? We only ask for the means to work again," he said.

Haleema Begum, the wife of a stone carver, spoke about the struggles faced by families. "My husband's earnings came from carving stones for homes and masjids. Now, we don't even have enough for basic necessities. We don't want charity; we want to work. The ban has left us dependent on odd jobs, which are not enough to sustain our family," she said.

The locals said the ban was implemented without consultation or an understanding of its impact.

Several carvers have tried switching to other professions, but with limited skills outside their traditional craft, options remain scarce. "I tried working as a labourer, but the income is inconsistent," said Bashir Ahmad, another carver. "This art was our identity. Losing it feels like losing a part of who we are."

"This craft has been part of our lives for centuries, passed down from one generation to the next," said Nazir Ahmad, a stone carver. "Now, with the ban, we are unable to continue what our ancestors sustained for so long.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that in my Bank account No: 1204040100006007, my name has been Mistakenly written as Abid Hussain, while as my Actual and correct name as per my Aadhar card is Salah Abid Hussain Lone. Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person having any objection he/She may file the Objections in office of the Manager jammu and kashmir Bank branch office T P Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Salah Abid Hussain Lone.
S/O Mohd Ramzan Lone.
R/O Chettibandi Bandipora.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that i have lost my Driving licence bearing Registration No: JK15 20190000896. While traveling at Qazipora Bandipora, Now i want to apply for its duplicate and also want to Submit missing report in police station in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Assistant Regional Transport Office Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

Irfan Hussain Malla.
S/O Gh Hassan Malla.
R/O Qazipora Bandipora.

مدرسۃ البنات دار العلوم رحیمیہ بانڈی پورہ

کی تعمیر و تکمیل کے صدقہ جاریہ میں خصوصی حصہ لیجئے، موقعہ قیمت جانیں

اللہ تبارک و تعالیٰ کے فضل و کرم سے لڑکیوں کے لئے زیر تعمیر "مدرسۃ البنات"، کی مکمل عمارت کی آخری منزل مکمل ہونے جا رہی ہے اب اس میں اہم مرحلہ صحت کے جاننے کا ہے۔ انجینئر محترمت کے تجویز کے مطابق صحت میں تقریباً 33 لٹن لگائے گئے ہیں۔ کالیمیر اور میٹل کالک مارگر فرچ تقریباً 40 لاکھ روپے ملے۔ صحت پر لگنے والے ٹین کے ٹیٹ کا مرحلہ اس کے بعد ہے جس میں انک سے تقریباً 10 لاکھ روپے لگنا چاہئے ہے۔

عمارت کی صحت کی حیثیت سرچش کی جاتی ہے جو سارے کام کی سرچش کی کامیابی اور مستحکمیت کے اس ادارے کی سرچش اور ساریہ کا انتظام کرنے والے خدائی کی جانب سے رحمت اور ساریہ صحت ہونے کا ذریعہ ہے۔ ان میں شامل خدائی اس کا رخصت میں حصہ لینے کے لئے مدرسۃ البنات کا کیا کاؤٹ نمبر جانیں کیا کیا ہے:

Account Number

0727010100000200

Title of account

Madrasa Tul Banat Darul Uloom Raheemiyah

Branch

JK Bank Branch Nisbat Park Bandipora Kashmir

IFSC Code

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اس سے قبل بھی ان تعمیر میں بہت سے خوش نصیب محترمت نے کرے بنا کر یا ان کا حصہ لگ کر صدقہ جاریہ رکھنے کے لئے اپنا حصہ دار بنایا ہے۔ ہر لڑکی کے لئے موقعہ حاضر کیا کر حق رکھنے والے لڑکی اس کام میں بھی حصہ لگ کر اپنے لئے اپنے والدین کے لئے جزیرو و محنتیں کے لئے صدقہ جاریہ مضمین کر سکتے ہیں۔ اپنی خاٹیا کو بھی ترغیب دیں تاکہ وہ بھی اپنا حصہ ان کا رخصت میں لگائیں۔ کیونکہ یہ مدرسہ مستحکمیت کے لئے مخصوص ہے۔ اس کا ایک کرے کی لاکھ ساڑھے پانچ لاکھ روپے ہے۔ جتنی خوشی ہو کر دیں میں یا صحت میں حصہ لیں۔ انٹرکمل کر لیں۔

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محمد صوفی اللہ رحیمی

جام دار اسلام رحیمیہ بانڈی پورہ

Virat Kohli is always super motivated, he'll know what to do: Faf du Plessis

CAPE TOWN: Virat Kohli will be “super motivated” to put a struggling phase behind him and the premier India batter is capable of returning to his run-making ways, said former South African captain Faf du Plessis here on Wednesday.

Kohli had a torrid time in Australia during the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy, amassing a mere 190 runs at an average of 23.75 across five Tests despite starting off with an unbeaten hundred in the first Test at Perth.

Du Plessis backed Kohli, his one-time teammate at Royal Challengers Bangalore, to come back stronger from the struggles, and said retirement is a “very personal” choice.

“That is very, very personal. No one can speak to you about when that time is (up) as a player, you'll know,” du Plessis told PTI on the sidelines of the SA20 Season 3's Captain's Day.

“I know someone like him is super super motivated, he's gone through it all before, so he knows exactly what to do,” said Du Plessis.

The 40-year-old then went back to the day when he felt his time was up as a Test cricketer.

“It is different for every player. Every player needs to answer that question. I remember when that time was for me,” he said.

“I just knew that certainly from the Test cricket perspective for me. I didn't have that same hunger and drive anymore and I felt that that stage certainly for me was a good time to let new guys come in and also step

into the T20 world.

“I wanted to do that at the stage where I still felt like I was on top of my game,” he added.



Du Plessis was not pleased with ICC reportedly exploring the possibility of a two-tier Test system.

“No, I think we need the game to be healthy,” Du Plessis said.

“We saw over the last few years the value that was put on Test cricket by Australia, England and India making sure that there

were 4-5 Test series.

“When you look at the other teams, there are two Test matches here and there and playing

six Test matches a season. I do not think that is healthy for the game,” he offered.

“As long as we can look at Test cricket as (being) important, you just look at all the Test matches that took place over the last few weeks, some incredible matches have been played,” Du Plessis noted.

“SA deserve to raise WTC trophy”

South Africa spinner Keshav Maharaj rated the consistency of his side in Test cricket “phenomenal” and said they deserve to “raise a prestigious title.”

The Proteas will face Australia in the final of the World Test Championship in June at the Lord's.

South Africa advanced to the title clash of the 2023-25 cycle with a 2-0 win over Pakistan at home, while India's string of losses against New Zealand at home and against Australia ended their hopes of a third consecutive WTC final appearance.

“If you look at our Test unit, not many people would have afforded us the opportunity of making the final, but we've been phenomenal from a consistency point of view, from a cricket perspective,” Maharaj told PTI.

“The togetherness on the field and the camaraderie and spirit (that) you see within the dressing room propelled us to get there.

“Hopefully, this is our year and we go one better than we've done previously and raise a very prestigious title in the Test format,” he said.

Maharaj, however, conceded that defending champions Australia are a formidable opponent.

“It's the hardest format of the game. It's most challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. As a unit, the (kind of) cricket (that) we have played, we deserve to go and raise a trophy.

Bumrah continues to remain No. 1 in Test rankings

DUBAI: India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah continued to reign supreme at the top of the bowlers' chart with a career-best rating of 908 in the latest ICC Test Rankings, released on Wednesday.

Bumrah, who made history ahead of the fifth and final Test against Australia by recording the highest-ever ICC Rankings rating for an Indian bowler at 907 points, improved that tally by one point after taking two wickets in the first innings at the SCG.

However, a back spasm ruled him out of bowling in the second innings, restricting his role to just batting.

Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja, who climbed a spot to be joint-ninth, is the other Indian giving Bumrah company in the top-10.

He shares the ninth spot with Australian pacer Scott Boland, who has made a remarkable leap of 29 places to break into the top-10.

Boland's stellar performance in the Sydney Test, where he claimed a 10-wicket haul (4/31 and 6/45), proved too much for the Indian batters on a lively pitch.

His efforts were instrumental in Australia's triumph, ending a decade-long wait to reclaim the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Australia skipper Pat Cummins also made gains in the rankings, climbing to number two after picking up five wickets in the final match. South Africa's Kagiso Rabada rose a spot to occupy the third place while injured Josh Hazlewood moved down two places to be fourth.

Rishabh Pant's blistering 33-ball 61 in the second innings earned him a three-spot rise in the batting rankings, moving him to number nine while India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal retained his fourth spot.

South Africa captain Temba Bavuma extended his rich vein of form, scoring a vital century in the first innings to climb three spots to number six, also achieving a career-best rating of 769.

Meanwhile, Kyle Verreynne's impressive century saw him rise four places to secure the 25th spot.



“I just knew that certainly from the Test cricket perspective for me. I didn't have that same hunger and drive anymore and I felt that that stage certainly for me was a good time to let new guys come in and also step into the T20 world.

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Pakistan docked five WTC points for slow over rate during Cape Town Test

KC NEWS NETWORK

Pakistan have been docked five World Test Championship (WTC) points and fined 25% of their match fee for maintaining a slow over rate during their 10-wicket defeat in the second Test against South Africa in Cape Town. They were ruled to be five overs short of their target after time allowances were taken into consideration.

Match referee Richie Richardson imposed the sanction, which Pakistan captain Shan Masood accepted after pleading guilty to the charge - levelled by on-field umpires Kumar Dharmasena and Nitin Menon, third umpire Alex Wharf and fourth umpire Stephen Harris - which meant that was no need for a formal hearing.

Teams are deducted one point for every over by which they fall short of their target. This is Pakistan's third points deduction in the 2023-25 WTC cycle. They were docked two points after the first Test against Australia in Perth in December 2023, and six points following the first Test against Bangladesh in Rawalpindi in August 2024.

POS	TEAM	M	W	L	D	PEN	PTS	%
1	SA (0)	12	8	3	1	0	100	69.44
2	AUS (0)	17	11	4	2	-10	130	63.73
3	IND	19	9	8	2	-2	114	50.00
4	NZ	14	7	7	0	-3	81	48.21
5	SL	11	5	6	0	0	60	45.45
6	ENG	22	11	10	1	-22	114	43.18
7	BAN	12	4	8	0	-3	45	31.25
8	PAK	12	4	8	0	-13	35	24.31
9	WI	11	2	7	2	0	32	24.24

WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP (2023-2025) | ESPNcricinfo

Match referee Richie Richardson imposed the sanction, which Pakistan captain **Shan Masood** accepted after pleading guilty to the charge - levelled by on-field umpires **Kumar Dharmasena** and Nitin Menon, third umpire Alex Wharf and fourth umpire Stephen Harris - which meant that was no need for a formal hearing.

As a consequence, Pakistan now have 35 points - instead of a possible 48 - from 12 Tests in the 2023-25 cycle. The latest deduction has brought their percentage of points contested - the number that determines a team's position on the WTC table - down from 27.78 to 24.31. They remain in eighth place as before, but their points percentage is now only a few decimal points better than West Indies, who occupy the bottom of the nine-team table with a percentage of 24.24 - with no over-rate deductions.