

# Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication



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### 'No Eid Namaz At Eidgah Srinagar'

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: Chairperson of Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board, Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi on Wednesday said Eid prayers will not be offered at Eidgah Srinagar, as the

### Mysterious Blast Creates Panic In Poonch

YOGESH

JAMMU: A low-intensity explosion in the heart of bordering Poonch sparked panic among locals and security agencies late last night.

An official said that the blast occurred near a religious place, following which police and security forces reached to the spot.

"Preliminary investigation suggested that the blast was apparently caused by hurling of a grenade by suspected terrorists," he said.

## Anurag Thakur Leads Rally In Support Of Dr. Jitendra In Udhampur

YOGESH

JAMMU: Union Minister Anurag Thakur embarked on a significant tour to Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, marking a pivotal moment in the state's political landscape. Upon his arrival at the Jammu airport, he was warmly welcomed by state BJP leaders.

According to the reports received, Thakur proceeded to Udhampur by road, where he actively campaigned in support of Union Minister and BJP candidate Dr. Jitendra Singh.

The rally, commencing from Ambedkar Chowk in Jakhaini, traversed through various squares and intersections of the city, drawing enthusiastic crowds along the way. The culmination of the rally saw participants converging at the district party office.

Addressing reporters, Thakur underscored the transformative initiatives initiated by the

Articles 370 and 35A, Thakur lauded the government's efforts in ushering in a new era of development and progress in Jammu and Kashmir.

HIGHLIGHTING THE MONUMENTAL DECISION TO revoke

## Eastern Ladakh Situation

### Our Preparedness Levels Of Very High Order: Army Chief

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 27: In the backdrop of the nearly four-year border row with China in eastern Ladakh, Army Chief General Manoj Pande on Wednesday said the Indian Army's preparedness levels are of a "very high order" and the force is keeping a "very close watch" on developments across the border.

In response to questions asked during a panel discussion at Times Now Summit here, General Pande also said he believed that it was "only through talks" that one can find resolution of the balance issues that are currently at hand.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong Lake area.

The ties between the two countries nose-dived significantly following the clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.

"We are prepared



in every manner. Our levels of operational readiness, operational preparedness is of a very high order. In terms of our deployment along the entire length of 3,488 km (LAC) of our borders, I would say is both robust as well as balance. We have also ensured that we have adequate reserves in terms of dealing with contingencies... We have

"I BELIEVE, WE are moving in the right direction".

Jaishankar On Boundary Issue With China

NEW DELHI: External affairs minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday took a jibe at China and said that Beijing has failed to uphold longstanding written agreements with India.

Responding to a question on the current state of India's relations with China during an interaction with the Indian diaspora in Malaysia, the external affairs minister emphasised on the paramount importance of securing India's borders.

"My first duty to Indians is to

### 'New Age Epidemic'

## 90 Pc Colorectal Cancers Preventable: Onco Surgeon

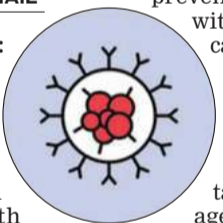
JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Colorectal cancer, a major health challenge globally, is increasingly becoming a cause for concern in Kashmir, with medical experts raising concern over the rising incidence rates and a growing number of young patients.

Dr Shabnam Bashir, a senior consultant specialising in breast and colorectal cancer surgeries, revealed startling statistics which show the severity of the situation. "Ninety percent of colorectal cancers are preventable, yet we are witnessing a surge in cases, with 20 percent of patients being below 35 years of age," she said.

Dr Shabnam described colorectal cancer as a "new age epidemic", saying approximately 2 crore new cases are detected worldwide annually, resulting in 1 crore deaths.

Despite advancements in medical science, she lamented that a major portion of these cases could have been prevented, with colorectal cancer being one of the most common types alongside oral, lung,



## Skyrocketing Airfares To Kashmir Worry Tourism Players

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: With airline companies hiking airfare, tourism players fear it could impact the ongoing spring and summer seasons during which Kashmir receives a major chunk of tourists.

For the last few weeks airline companies have made a steep hike in airfare. It has worried the tourism players, who claimed that their packages are getting costlier, following which the majority of the tourists cancel their plans.

"Airfare hikes have always been an issue with Kashmir tourism. It becomes one of the major deterrents to our promotion activities. We have been always requesting the government to curb the menace as we lose a huge chunk of tourists due to the unaffordable air tickets," said President Travel Agents Association of Kashmir Rauf Tramboob.



## 7 Kashmir Districts Record Deficient Rainfall In Ongoing Season

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: At least seven districts of Kashmir division have recorded deficient rainfall in the ongoing season till Wednesday (March 27) while Shopin district has become the only place where large deficient precipitation has been recorded during the period.

The data prepared by the Meteorological Department (MeT) said that Srinagar, Anantnag, Budgam, Baniptora, Ganderbal, Kulgam and Kupwara have recorded deficient rainfall from March 01-March 27, 2024.

Srinagar, as per the data has recorded a precipitation of 80.5 mm rainfall against the normal precipitation of 102.2, recording a deficit of 21 per cent during the period.

Anantnag however, has recorded a rainfall of 74.0 mm against the normal precipitation of 125.6 mm while Budgam recorded 58.2 mm rainfall against the normal of 103.3 mm during the period.

Baniptora and



### '20 Pc Off On Tickets'

## Tulip Garden Attracts Over 51,000 Tourists In 5 Days

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: Asia's largest tulip garden in Kashmir Valley has seen a remarkable influx of tourists, with more than 51,000 visitors gracing its vibrant blooms since its opening on March 23, officials said.

They said that despite the ongoing holy month of Ramadan, tourists, both local and international, have flocked to witness the spectacular display of tulips.

As per the details available, the garden, managed by Khan Mudassir, has witnessed an unprecedented response from visitors within the first five days of its opening, with 51,786 enthusiasts exploring its winding pathways and colourful floral arrangements.

To further enchant visitors, the floriculture department has introduced five new varieties of tulips, adding to the garden's allure.

To streamline the visitor experience and reduce long queues, the garden's management has introduced online ticket processing, a move that has been warmly welcomed by tourists.

Additionally, to promote educational visits, a special 20% discount on tickets has been extended to students until April 10, announced by the contract overseeing the garden.

Moreover, visitors have lauded the efforts of the government in ensuring a seamless and enjoyable experience, expressing their satisfaction

### Misappropriation Of Funds

## ACB Charges Former MC Prez, Officials

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday said to have registered a case against the then President, two officials of Municipal Committee, Thanamandi and others for misappropriation of funds.

A statement issued reads that ACB registered a case under FIR number 01/2024 at Police Station ACB Rajouri under section 5(1)(c) (d) r/w section 5(2) of Prevention of Corruption Act, Svt. 2006 and section 120-B RPC against Shakeel Ahmed Mir, then President Municipal Committee Thanamandi, Mushtaq Ahmed, then Executive Officer, Riyaz Ahmed, then Storekeeper and other officers/officials of Municipal Committee Thanamandi as well as against Proprietor of M/s Gouri Sales Agencies and others.

"The instant case was registered on the outcome of verification conducted by ACB

**INOX CINEMA SHIVPORA SRINAGAR**

Thursday 28 March MOVIES Schedule

 <b>JATT NUUH CHUDAIL TAKRI (PUNJABI)</b> 06:15PM (U)	 <b>YODHA (HINDI)</b> 03:30PM (U/A)	 <b>SHAITAAN (HINDI ATMOS)</b> 02:40PM, 05:45PM (U/A)
 <b>MADGAON EXPRESS (HINDI)</b> 12:00PM (U/A)	 <b>DUNE PART TWO (ENGLISH)</b> WITH ENG SUBTITLES 02:00PM (U/A)	 <b>KUNG FU PANDA 4 (ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE)</b> 12:40PM (U)

# Debate competition on voter awareness held at GCW Nawakadal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** On the directions of the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, a debate competition on Voters Awareness under the banner of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) was Wednesday organised at Government College for Women Nawakadal, here to sensitize students about the significance of participation in electoral process.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik; Principal of the College, Prof. Dr. Mohammed Farooq Mir and Chief Education Officer Srinagar/Nodal Officer SVEEP, Ab Hamid Fani; Officers of District Election Authority, staff of the College and other concerned were present in the event.

The Debate competition was held on the topic 'Is Political Parties' Interaction a Threat to the Integrity of Adult Franchise?'. The event witnessed an



overwhelming participation of the student community. The purpose of the debate was to foster critical thinking, informed discourse, civic engagement among the students regarding the functioning of political parties and their impact on the integrity of adult franchise.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar while speaking at the

relies upon its youth and their active participation in all democratic engagements, especially in voting and highlighted the pivotal role of the younger generation in shaping the country's future trajectory.

In his opening remarks and welcome address, the Principal of the College emphasized to the students the paramount importance of healthy participation for a thriving democracy. He underscored that democracy thrives on the active engagement of its citizens, and it is through their participation that the democratic process is enriched and strengthened.

Head, Department of Political Science emphasized the pivotal role of political parties within a democratic framework and underscoring the essence of voting.

Earlier, during the event about 18 students and two SVEEP Ambassadors namely Fajar Ali of 4th semester and Mehak Fayaz of BG-2nd Semester and Raziya Firdous (Class Rep-

resentative of 6th Semester) presented their views regarding how participation in electoral process is important in a democratic country.

The students stressed that active participation in the electoral process is essential for the functioning of a vibrant democracy. It empowers citizens to shape the direction of their country, uphold democratic values, and ensure that the voices of the people are heard and represented in the corridors of power.

Besides most of the student speakers acknowledged the crucial role that political parties play in shaping the future of a country, emphasizing that their influence is not a threat to adult franchise but rather an integral component of political awareness.

# HOIs, BLOs of AC-Zainapora imparted Election training



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** In view of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024, Head of Institutions (HOIs), Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and In charge polling stations were Wednesday imparted training at Mini Secretariat, Shopian.

The training was held under the supervision of District Election Officer, Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb.

The main objective of the training was to provide

necessary know-how to the staff detailed for election duties in order to prepare them for the smooth conduct of elections in the district.

Speaking on the occasion, DEO briefed the staff about their significant role in the election process and directed them to take full benefits of the training program and implement the same throughout their election related duties.

BLOs and HOIs were imparted training by the

Master Trainers designated for the purpose

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Shakoor Ahmed Dar; Dy. District Election Officer, Shopian, Jahangir Ahmed; Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat (Nodal Officer, Trainings) Shopian, Manzoor Ahmed, SDM Zainapora, Nisar Ahmad and other concerned were present at the event.

## LOK SABHA POLLS

### DEO B'la visits AC 13-Pattan, inspects availability of AMFs at polling stations



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA:** To review the preparations for the upcoming General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024, the District Election officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa Wednesday undertook an extensive tour of Assembly Constituency (AC) 13-Pattan in Baramulla.

During the visit, the DEO inspected several designated polling stations within AC Pattan to ensure that Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) is available for both voters and polling staff ahead of the upcoming elections.

Minga Sherpa also toured the Temporary Strong Room in Pattan

where Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and poll-related materials will be stored during the conduct of the elections, ensuring strict compliance with the guidelines set by the Election Commission of India.

Meanwhile, the DEO conducted comprehensive inspections of Static Surveillance Teams posted in AC 13-Pattan to evaluate their preparedness in fulfilling their duties towards ensuring the fair conduct of the election process.

The DEO was accompanied by Sub Divisional Magistrate Pattan, SDPO Pattan, Executive Engineer R&B and other officials during the extensive visit.

# Mega AC level Awareness programme held at GDC Sogam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** As part of the calendar of activities, a constituency level Mega Awareness program under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) was organized Wednesday at Government Degree College Sogam.

The programme was organised to specifically target the female and first time voters of the Kupwara to enthusiastically participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

The programme was presided over by District Nodal Officer SVEEP (CEO Kupwara), Abdul Majeed Dar; ZEOs and Principals of Zone Sogam and Khumriyal, besides hundreds of women including young female voters participated in the mega program.

On the occasion, DNO SVEEP appreciated the enthusiasm of voters of assembly constituency Lolab. While highlighting



the importance of the electoral process in shaping the future of the nation, he underlined the importance of voter registration and participation in voting for establishing a vibrant and truly peoples' democracy where there is accountability and transparency.

He also emphasized strengthening the democracy through greater electoral participation at the grassroots level.

Speakers, on the occasion urged the youth, women folk, especially young female voters to

enthusiastically participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha election and contribute to the strengthening of the democracy. They also highlighted the significance of active participation of the women in the electoral process for betterment of the nation.

Cultural programmes by local Artists, felicitation of student achievers, skit on SVEEP and essay competition, were the main highlights of the program.

The Voting pledge was also administered to the participants.

# ADC G'bal supervises General Training for Poll Staff

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL:** In preparation for the upcoming Lok Sabha Election 2024, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Gulzar Ahmad Wednesday supervised the ongoing general training for poll staff at Govt Degree College Kangan.

The training programme that began from March 25th is being conducted at three different venues across the district and will continue until March 30th, 2024.

The primary objective of this training program is to equip the poll staff with essential skills and knowledge to facilitate a seamless and efficient election process.

It covers various facets of election duty, including the operation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)



machines, the polling process, and the handling of election-related documents.

The training sessions are being conducted by District Level Master Trainers, ensuring comprehensive instruction and guidance for the poll staff.

During his visit to GDC Kangan, the ADC, along with the Deputy District Election Officer, inspected the arrangements and briefed the poll staff about their roles and responsibilities during the upcoming elections.

# 8 more candidates file nomination for Udhampur seat

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA:** On the last day of nomination papers for the Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency, eight more candidates Wednesday filed their nomination papers.

The candidates, including Mehraj Din as Independent Candidate, Rajesh Manchanda from Rashtri-

ya Krantikari Samajwadi Party, Ch Lal Singh from Indian National Congress, Divya Suraj Partap Singh from Indian National Congress, Sachin Gupta from Inqalab Vikas Dal (I.V.D), Manoj Kumar from Ekam Sanatan Bharat Dal, Balwan Singh from J&K National Panthers Party and Dr Panjaj Sharma as Independent, filed their

nomination papers in the office of Returning Officer.

With the filing of nomination papers by these eight candidates, the total tally of candidates who have filed their candidature for 4-Udhampur PC goes to fifteen.

The scrutiny of the nomination papers will be held on March 28, 2024 at 01:00 PM.

# DEO B'pora chairs meeting on Absentee Voter Essential Services

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman on Wednesday chaired a meeting of Officers to discuss various provisions of Absentee Voter Essential Services (AVES).

The meeting discussed the facility of voting through postal ballots as absentee voters in the category of persons employed

on essential services. The DEO said this measure aims to facilitate the voting process for individuals employed in critical services who may not be able to visit polling stations due to their work commitments.

On the occasion, the concerned departments were asked to submit the list of employees who may not be able to visit their concerned polling stations.

The DEO directed the

concerned to take all necessary measures well in advance as per ECI guidelines to facilitate those eligible as absentee voters.

The meeting was attended by Nodal Officer MCC, Umar Shafi Pandit; Dy DEO Mohammad, Rafeeq Bhat; ARO 15-Bandipora, Shabir Ahmad Wani; Nodal Officer postal ballot, Mehraj Wani; Nodal Officer MCCM, Dr. Naseer Ahmad and other concerned.

# 'One Day Yog Shivr' under SVEEP organised in Udhampur



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**UDHAMPUR:** The SVEEP Cell of District Election Office Udhampur, in collaboration with the Department of Ayush and the Department of Youth Services and Sports, Wednesday organized a vibrant 'One Day Yog Shivr' in the Sports Stadium here.

The event was spearheaded by District Election Officer, Saloni Rai and Deputy District Election Officer, Dr. Anirudh Rai.

The primary objective of the event was to foster awareness and active participation in the upcoming Lok Sabha Election.

Witnessing a remarkable turnout, members of the community enthusiastically engaged in various yogic

practices and exercises.

District Panchayat Officer and Nodal officer SVEEP, Dr. Preeti Sharma, while speaking on the occasion, stressed on the importance of understanding the true value of a vote to encourage greater participation in the electoral process.

Through a series of yoga practices and exercises, attendees were not only inspired to embrace healthier lifestyles but also educated on the significance of their active participation in the democratic process.

The event served as a platform to instill a sense of responsibility and empowerment among citizens, emphasizing their pivotal role in shaping the future of our democracy.

website: www.jkprisons.org | Srinagar (May-Oct) Phone 0194-2457969 - FAX 2457811  
email: jk.prison@gmail.com | Jammu (Nov-Apr) Phone 0191-2561004 - FAX 2561008

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**  
**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE**  
**PRISONS DEPARTMENT, J&K**

**3RD EXTENSION NOTICE**

Subject:- Supply of Dietary items to Central Jail Kotebhalwal Jammu and District Jail Jammu.  
Ref:- This office E-NIT No. 02 of 2024 dated: 14.02.2024, 1st Extension Notice No. Accts/N/7407476/10935 dt. 07.03.2024 and 2nd Extension Notice No. Accts/N/707476/1121 dated: 15.03.2024

Due to poor response, it is notified for the information of all concerned that the dates of online submission, and date of opening of technical bids in respect of e-Nit No. 01 of 2024 dated: 14.02.2024 for supply of Dietary items to Central Jail Kotebhalwal Jammu and District Jail Jammu are extended as under-

1	Bid submission documents End Date and time	03.04.2024 upto 1800 Hrs
2	Date and Time of opening of Technical Bids in online mode	04.04.2024 1400 Hrs in the office of Director General of Prison J&K

All other terms and conditions of the e-NIT shall remain unchanged.  
No. Accts/N/707476/11514  
Dated: 27/3/2024

Financial Advisor/CAO  
Prisons Department  
J&K, Jammu

DIPK-18221-23  
DT: 27/03/2024

# HED seeks clarification on assigning charges of principals amid MCC

RIYAZ BHAT

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Department has sought clarification as to whether it can assign look after charges of principals of colleges during the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

The department in a communique to government has informed that a large number of principals of the government degree colleges are attaining the age of superannuation during the months of March and April, 2024.

"In order to run the affairs of these colleges smoothly, the Department

intends to allow senior most faculty members amongst the faculties of the same college to look after the charge of the principal in addition to their own duties till permanent arrangement is made by the Department," it reads.

In a communique the official said that the Higher Education Department may be advised as to whether assigning of the look after charge to the senior most faculty members in the respective colleges can be made by the department during the currency of the Model Code of Conduct in the interest of administration and students.

"The Higher Educa-

tion Department has received select lists from the JKPSC for the appointment of Assistant Professors in respect of various subjects, which may also involve their postings in the department," it reads.

It also said that the Department is receiving the character and antecedents verifications from CID.

"The Election Commission of India in a communication regarding enforcement of MCC, Dos and Don'ts, wherein Point No. 22 allows regular recruitment or appointments or promotion through the UPSC, State Public Service Commissions or the Staff Selection Commission or

any other statutory authority can continue," it reads.

The communique further reads that the recruitment through non statutory bodies will require prior clearance of the Commission.

"In this regard, the Department may kindly be advised as to whether the appointments on the recommendations of the JKPSC could be effected."

"The Higher Education Department may be advised whether the placement of the eligible Assistant Professors to the next higher grades under Career Advancement Scheme could be considered or otherwise, during MC or not," it reads—(KNO)

## UDHAMPUR LS CONSTITUENCY

# Lal Singh files nomination papers in Kathua

KNO CORRESPONDENT

**KATHUA:** On the last day of filing of nomination papers for Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency, Congress candidate Choudhary Lal Singh filed his nomination papers in Deputy Commissioner Office Kathua here today.

He filed his nomination papers around 12 pm after which he straight away drove to Ramlila ground Kathua where he and other Congress leaders addressed a rally.

Singh was accompanied by All India Congress Committee (AICC) General Secretary and incharge party affairs for Jammu and Kashmir Bharatsin Solanki, Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Vikar Rasool Wani, AICC co-incharge J&K Manoj Yadav and other party leaders.

Thousands of people attended the rally who had



come from the length and breadth of the constituency which is spread from Lakhampur in Kathua district to Jawahar tunnel in Banihal and Marwah and Warwan areas of Kishtwar district.

Addressing the rally, Singh said that he always stands for justice and will never back off. "You will find people from every community in my rallies. Be it Gujjars, Bakarwals, Giddis, Poonchis, Mirpuris, Kishtwaris, Bharderwahis

and Dogras, everybody becomes part of my rallies," he said.

He was critical of the present government for not addressing the issues of the common people.

The filing of nomination papers by Choudhary Lal Singh marked the beginning of the direct fight between the two national parties Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) and Congress. From BJP side Dr. Jitendra Singh had filed his nomination papers on March 21

whereas Congress candidate filed it today.

Besides, BJP and Congress, another high profile candidate is Ghulam Muhammad Saroori from Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) who is banking on the good work done by him during his tenure as MLA Derwal and on the work done by DPAP chairman and former Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad.

By end of the date for filing of nomination papers, a total of 12 candidates have filed their papers with returning officer (DC Kathua) including covering candidates of BJP and Bahujan Samaj Party. Tomorrow the scrutiny of papers will be done and March 30 is the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers.

This constituency will go for polls on April 19 in the first phase and the counting of votes is on June 4—(KNO)

# Rural areas in Budgam face severe waste management crisis

NAVEED UL HAQ

**BUDGAM:** Residents of rural areas of Central Kashmir's Budgam district are facing a severe waste management crisis, with road sides and several designated dustbin sites turning into dumping sites despite numerous government initiatives, while the situation has raised significant environmental and health concerns.

Several places in rural areas of district Budgam are struggling with the issue of waste management, with villages, roadsides, and recently installed dustbin sites becoming overwhelmed with garbage.

Despite the implementation of various government schemes, the problem persists, highlighting a collective failure to safeguard the environment. As per the data, under the

Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen initiative, as many as 6,535 waste collection and segregation sheds were constructed in the UT as part of the initiative and around 50,000 dustbins, soak pits, compost pits were set up for the first time to manage solid liquid waste. However, despite these efforts, the intended waste segregation and disposal processes have not been effectively executed.

Government officials had envisioned residents segregating their waste and depositing it in designated dustbins, which would then be transported to the sheds for composting. However, the reality is far from this ideal scenario.

Instead, residents are filling the sheds indiscriminately with various types of waste, including sanitary pads, food items, plastic items, medical



waste, electronic waste, and other things.

"Given dustbins are either

overflowing or have been taken back to various places.

Locals throw trash every-

where—including in local rivers, canals, and roadsides—because there is no effective

waste management solution in place, putting at risk our environment constantly," said Chadoora resident Mushtaq Ahmad.

The surplus trash bins in several villages paint a grim picture of the situation, with sanitation standards plummeting due to prolonged neglect. Both locals and officials are being held accountable for the worsening condition, emphasizing the urgent need for action.

"We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating waste management situation in our district," said Manzoor Ahmad, a local resident from Budgam. "It is disheartening to see our beautiful villages marred by garbage, and it is high time we all take responsibility for our actions."

Another resident Nisar

Ahmad Malik from Beerwah echoed the sentiment, stating, "We urge both the residents and officials to work together to address this crisis. It is imperative that we act responsibly and dispose of our waste properly in designated soakage and compost pits."

KNO spoke with Anoo Malhotra, the Director General of Rural Sanitation for J&K, and she assured to look into the matter while sanitising the areas until the first week of April. "I recently visited a number of districts, and in every case the issue was resolved and the department continues to work on it. If there are any concerns in Budgam district, I will take action and ensure that the garbage is removed till the first week of April," she said—(KNO)

## TWO DECADES ON

# Anantnag's incomplete shopping complex leaves locals frustrated

JAHANGEER GANAIE

**ANANTNAG:** A shopping complex built by the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) in the heart of Anantnag town nearly 20 years ago remains incomplete, leaving locals and shopkeepers frustrated over the prolonged delay.

According to an official, the construction of the shopping complex began in 2004 under the ULB's jurisdiction. However, despite two decades having passed, the project remains unfinished.

"The construction work was paused in 2009 due to insufficient funds. It was later resumed in 2015 after a six-year hiatus, with the project cost revised to Rs 19.28 crore from the initial estimate of Rs 8.65 crore," the official revealed.

The project has faced

multiple setbacks over the years, resulting in repeated abandonment and delays, much to the dismay of local shopkeepers and residents.

Expressing his frustration, a local shopkeeper lamented, "The government invited people to deposit money for shop bookings, yet the complex remains incomplete. It's unjust to those who deposited tokens nearly two decades ago, still waiting for their shops."

Another shopkeeper said if the complex is completed, everything would be available for customers under one roof. "It would have also provided space for those currently occupying footpaths, potentially easing traffic congestion," he said.

Locals raised concerns about the complex's cur-

rent state, saying the incomplete structure has become a haven for drug addicts, posing a safety concern for the community. They expressed disappointment with the authorities' inaction despite repeated notifications about the issue.

"Despite being aware of the situation, authorities have failed to address the matter effectively and are resorting to delaying tactics for reasons unknown," the concerned residents said.

With approximately 90 percent of the complex already constructed, locals are urging the intervention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to expedite the completion process and ensure deserving individuals are allocated shops as originally intended—(KNO)

# 49 drowning incidents in 14 months in Kashmir: SDRF

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

**SRINAGAR:** The Kashmir Valley has witnessed an alarming surge in drowning incidents over the past 14 months, raising concerns and an urgent need for preventive measures to curb such tragedies.

Data accessed from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) department reveals a total of 49 drowning incidents reported in the Kashmir Valley from January 01, 2023, to March 06, 2024.

SDRF officials said that out of the 49 reported incidents, the bodies of 35 victims have been successfully recovered. However, the status of nine individuals remains unknown, while efforts to retrieve the remaining bodies are ongoing, they said.

Breaking down the incidents by district, an official of the SDRF said that Srinagar recorded the highest number of casualties,



with 19 drowning incidents reported. Baramulla followed closely with 11 incidents, while other districts also reported varying numbers of cases.

The rise in drowning incidents underscores the critical need for enhanced water safety measures and public awareness campaigns throughout the Kashmir Valley, the SDRF officials said.

"There is a need for col-

laborative efforts among stakeholders to prevent further tragedies and ensure the safety of residents, particularly during recreational activities near water bodies," they said.

They urged the people to remain vigilant and prioritise safety protocols when engaging in activities near water bodies. "Proactive measures are essential to mitigate risks and prevent loss of life," they said—(KNO)

# Sopore residents urge authorities to macadamise roads

Say neighbourhood lacks proper drainage system

WARIS FAYAZ

**SOPORE:** Inhabitants of Tawheed Bagh locality in Sopore town have raised concerns over the dilapidated road conditions and improper drainage system, urging higher-ups to intervene into the matter to redress the longstanding issue.

The aggrieved Ward 06 inhabitants said that their roads, which have been macadamised several years ago, have fallen into disrepair and are causing a great inconvenience and adding misery to them.

"The road is in bad condition. Big potholes filled with water dots, making the movement of people very hectic," said Junaid, a local of Tawheed Bagh.

He added that the dilapidated condition of the road is speaking of the incompetence of the authorities.



The residents said that they took up the matter several times with the concerned authorities to no avail. "The authorities seem least bothered in addressing their issues," they lamented.

Further highlighting the lack of proper drainage system in the locality, the residents said that they are facing immense problems especially during the rainy season.

The residents appealed to higher-ups to intervene in redressing their genuine demand of mending the roads and improving the drainage system—(KNO)

# H&ME constitutes committees for rationalization of manpower

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** The Health and Medical Education department has constituted divisional level committees for rationalization of the manpower in the department.

As per the order issued by the Health and Medical Education Department, the committees have been asked to suggest an alternative course of action for meeting out manpower deficiency.

Director of Health Services of both divisions will be Chairpersons of their respective divisions while other members of the committee include Chief Accounts officers

of respective divisions, Deputy secretary/under secretary health and medical education, chief medical officer of the concerned department and any other member co-opted by the committee while deputy director planning of respective directorates will be member secretary of the committee.

For government medical colleges, Principal GMC Srinagar and Jammu will be chairpersons of their respective divisions.

The other members of the committee include Personnel Officers of the New Medical Colleges, Deputy Secretary/under secretary of Health and Medical Education Depart-

ment, registrar Paramedical Council J&K and any other member co-opted by the committee while administrators of GMC Srinagar and Jammu will be member secretaries of the committee.

The terms and references of the Committee are that the Committee shall examine the sanctioned strength of each institution viz a viz IPHS/NMC norms and point out the deficient/surplus manpower, the Committee shall identify the posts which have become redundant with the passage of time for their abolition and corresponding creation of new posts in the category(ies) where there is an actual shortage

of manpower, by analysing the work done reports. Besides the committee shall also propose new creation of posts for enhanced health care Infrastructure, if needed and the Committee shall suggest an alternative course of action for meeting out the manpower deficiency, if any in the Institutions by shifting or utilization of services from other Institution on temporary basis till the regular posts are created in the Institution.

"The Committee shall also suggest utilization of doctors having super-specialization for the best possible health care in the Secondary/tertiary care facilities and the Com-

mittee shall also look into the utility/requirement of Medical Officers/Dental Surgeons in the Urban PHCs or those PHCS/Dispensaries located in the vicinity of Secondary and Tertiary Health units besides that the Committee shall submit its recommendations to the Government (Health and Medical Education Department) with in a period of 30 days after the issuance of this Order.

"The committees (Health/Medical Education) from both the Divisions shall hold frequent consultations/meetings and submit joint recommendations to the Government," reads the order—(KNO)

# Transporters in Jammu call strike against operations of e-buses

YOGESH

**JAMMU:** Privately owned passenger bus operators held a massive protest on Wednesday in Jammu against the operation of Smart City e-buses. The transporters also announced one-day token strike on Thursday against operation of e-buses, which they alleged are affecting their livelihood.

Led by All Jammu and Transporter Welfare Association, many transporters assembled in Warehouse of Jammu city, raised slogans against administration for 'illegally' running e-bus ser-

vice in various congested routes of Jammu. Vijay Singh Chib, President of the association, said that government and transporters have done an agreement to run e-buses on uncovered and less congested routes, but the administration unilaterally violated the agreement and start operations of e-buses in all busy routes, causing hardships to private transporters. He said earlier during introducing e-rickshaws, the government failed to address the issue of Auto owners, which rendered them unemployed.

He said they have purchased their vehicles through

loans, but as their livelihood gets affected, they won't be able to pay the monthly installments. Another transporter said, "e-Buses are meant for uncovered areas of city, and if they want to ply on overpopulated route, the government should think about our livelihood too. This issue has severely affected our livelihood, and we are hardly earning bread and butter for our families."

The bus operators said that around 80 of their buses have been affected due to the issue and appealed Lieutenant Governor led administration to look into the issue—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Traffic Management

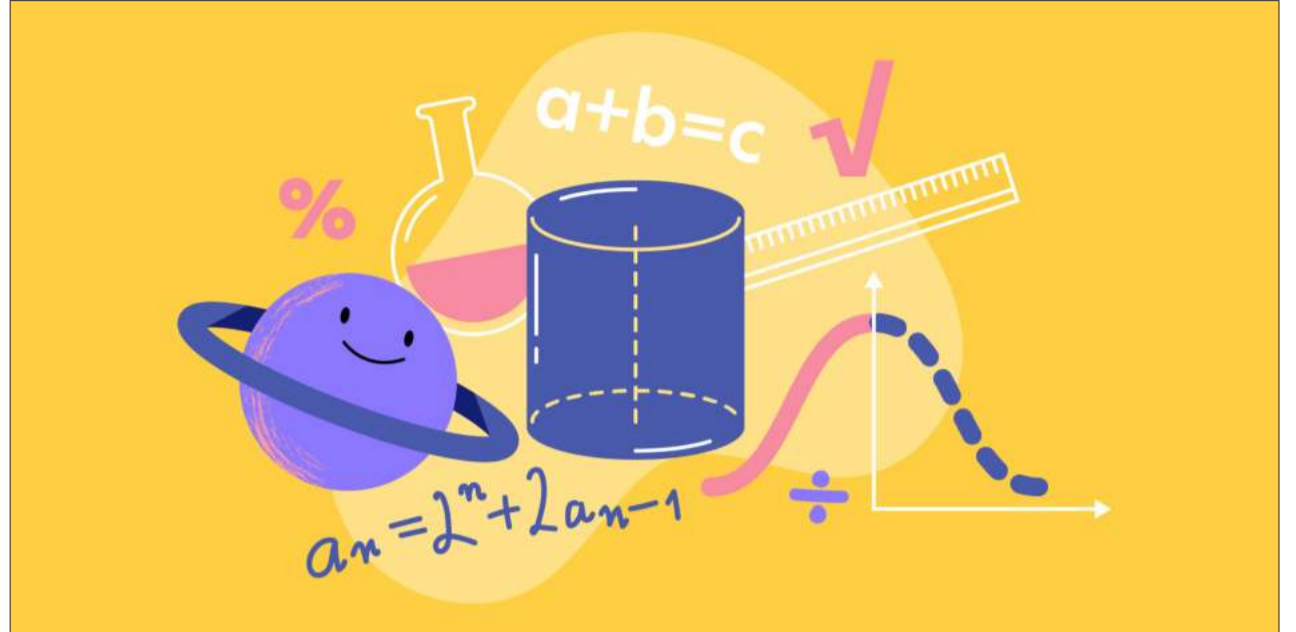
Srinagar City is witnessing a horizontal growth. Right before our eyes Srinagar city expanded from a population of six lakh souls to the current 18 lakh souls and counting. All this growth is horizontal with an insatiable need of everyone wanting an independent standalone home entailing an unavoidable horizontal growth. It would not be surprising to see that at four million souls population Srinagar may have a cumulative area of any Indian metropolitan city. Providing civics facilities over such a large area can be a huge infrastructural challenge. One such challenge that is currently visible on the roads of Srinagar is the transport scenario - unending traffic jams and bumper-to-bumper traffic are the order of the day. There are various choke points where the traffic jams just seem perennial. The reason behind all this traffic mess is the absence of roads. At two million population we have the same number of roads we had when the city's population was barely five lakh souls. Why no government in the last four decades taken pains to create newer, wider roads? This is a question that needs some serious answers. One can only imagine the scenario in 2035 when the city's population including the fleeting population would be around three million souls. With a better economy, there would always be more cars-always. Where are we building those roads on which these half a million more cars will play? We have to explore the option of water transport for intra-city mobility. A case in point can be the water metro in Cochin which has revolutionised the transport scenario in Kerala's financial capital. Also, we can pray for the proposed Srinagar metro to start operations by 2030. Let us hope the current administration will seriously chalk out a strategy for the better management of the city's traffic.

Science And Mathematics - A Natural Connection



DR. REYAZ AHMAD

Even though many people appreciate the glories of science, there is a fascinating paradox that comes up when the subject of mathematics is brought up. Frequently characterized as difficult, demanding, and occasionally even unnecessary, mathematics does not appear to elicit the same level of affection. This occurrence raises the question, Why is math so often looked down upon? It's general knowledge that not all subjects are loved by all people and math is no exception. Although other people might not care too much about it, open hatred seems confusing. Neither math should feel like a chore nor should it cause agony. Removing oneself from the situation could help one's anger to subside and create a neutral position if the urge to interact with math is the source of the problem. Individuals' choices are as diverse as the people who possess them. For example, a person may enjoy science fiction stories immensely but not care for the movies that adapt them. However, where does this dislike of math come from? Does dissatisfaction with our knowledge fuel this feeling, a sense that there isn't enough real-world application, or perhaps by the simplistic and sometimes mocked mathematical models? Even if mathematical skills are not very pleasant, they are necessary to understand the essence of science. Let's continue to be passionate about science and maybe we may reduce the pressure of learning the more difficult



parts of mathematics. Mathematics is a discipline that involves rigorous proofs, abstract reasoning, and pattern detection. It is much more than just crunching numbers. It is similar to science in terms of problem-solving, experimentation, and the articulation of physical principles and hypotheses. If you're passionate in science but math seems unappealing to you, it might be time to investigate its hidden sides. You could start by reading up on understudied mathematical ideas or discovering the fun of solving math puzzles for fun. Mathematical disciplines such as differential equations and geometry provide beautiful explanations for the mysteries of terminal velocity in freefall and geometric marvels that tessellate a plane, similar to the hexagonal patterns of a honeycomb. Unfortunately, not many people—even in the scientific community—acknowledge the intrinsic beauty of mathematics. Math was once admired for its creative and artistic

traits, but somewhere along the line, it was relegated to the domains of the geeky and sophisticated. This distorted perspective could result from ignorance or a failure to relate mathematical ideas to practical applications. Furthermore, the importance of educators cannot be emphasized. The beauty of mathematics must be inspired and communicated by a math instructor, and all too frequently, pupils see a teaching approach that prioritizes memorization over creative thinking. Students may internalize a feeling of failure and get disengaged with arithmetic when they become lost in the cumulative math learning process. Unlike the physical discoveries of science, the beauty of arithmetic is invisible and requires explanation to be fully appreciated. Many people are unable to appreciate mathematics appeal on their own, even with the help of stimulating literature or puzzles. This deficiency is primarily the result of educational

institutions. In fact, the conventional educational approach to math, which frequently emphasizes memorization and drills, hasn't done much to highlight its elegance or significance. It should come as no surprise that a lot of people decide to give up math as soon as possible when faced with assignments that are challenging, unpleasant, and appear without reward. Social narratives categorize people as math people or aggravate this problem by ingraining mathematics into people's identities and preventing them from ever appreciating it in the future. While there is hope that educational reform will improve the way math is taught and perceived, real transformation is sadly rare. Reform initiatives frequently place more emphasis on test scores than on cultivating awe. Author is Faculty of Mathematics, Skyline University College, University City of Sharjah

Concept Of Climate Change

Origin And Effects On Daily Life



DR. RAJKUMAR SINGH

The concept of climate change has its origins in scientific research and observations dating back to the 19th century when modern understanding of anthropogenic (human-caused) climate change began to take shape. Scientists in the 19th century, such as John Tyndall, recognized the greenhouse effect, which is the process by which certain gases in Earth's atmosphere trap heat from the sun, thus warming the planet. Tyndall's work laid the groundwork for understanding the role of carbon dioxide (CO2) and other greenhouse gases in regulating Earth's temperature. In line, the Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius was one of the first to propose that human activities, such as the burning of fossil fuels, could lead to an increase in atmospheric CO2 concentrations and consequently raise global temperatures. In his paper "On the Influence of Carbonic Acid in the Air upon the Temperature of the Ground" he suggested that doubling the atmospheric CO2 concentration could lead to a significant warming effect. Throughout the 20th century, scientists continued to study the Earth's climate system, making advances in understanding the complexities of atmospheric dynamics, ocean currents, and other factors influencing climate. However, it wasn't until the latter half of the century that concerns about human-induced climate change gained widespread attention. Keeling Curve (1958): Charles David Keeling began measuring atmospheric CO2 concentrations at Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii. His measurements, known as the Keeling Curve, showed a clear upward trend in CO2 levels, providing direct evidence of increasing human



emissions of CO2. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (1988): The IPCC was established by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to provide policymakers with regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts, and options for adaptation and mitigation. Kyoto Protocol (1997): The Kyoto Protocol was the first international treaty aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It set binding targets for developed countries to reduce their emissions below 1990 levels. Paris Agreement (2015): The Paris Agreement, adopted at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP21), aims to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Rules of climate change Climate change is governed by a complex interplay of scientific theories and principles from various disciplines, including atmospheric science, oceanography, geology, ecology, and more. The fundamental theories and principles that underpin our understanding of climate change include: a. Greenhouse Effect: The greenhouse effect is a natural process whereby certain gases in the Earth's atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and water vapor, trap heat from the sun, preventing it from escaping back into space. This process is essential for maintaining Earth's temperature within a range suitable

for life. However, human activities, such as the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, have increased the concentration of greenhouse gases, enhancing the greenhouse effect and leading to global warming. b. Radiative Forcing: Radiative forcing refers to the change in the energy balance of the Earth's climate system caused by external factors, such as variations in solar radiation, volcanic eruptions, and human activities. Positive radiative forcing, such as that caused by increased greenhouse gas emissions, leads to warming, while negative radiative forcing, such as from volcanic aerosols, can cause cooling. c. Climate Feedbacks: Climate feedbacks are processes that amplify or dampen the initial effects of a change in climate. For example, as temperatures rise, ice and snow melt, reducing the planet's albedo (reflectivity) and causing more heat to be absorbed, further increasing temperatures. Positive feedback loops can amplify climate change, while negative feedback loops can mitigate it. d. Oceanic Heat Uptake: The world's oceans play a crucial role in regulating Earth's climate by absorbing and storing heat. However, as the atmosphere warms due to increased greenhouse gas emissions, the oceans also absorb more heat, leading to thermal expansion and contributing to sea level rise. e. Proxy Data Analysis: Scientists use proxy data, such as ice cores, tree rings, sediment layers, and historical records, to reconstruct past climate conditions and understand natural

climate variability over long timescales. By analysing these records, researchers can infer past temperature changes, atmospheric composition, and other climatic factors, providing context for understanding current and future climate change. Climate change has a profound impact on daily human life in numerous ways, influencing everything from the food we eat to the air we breathe and the places we live. a. Weather and Climate: Climate change alters weather patterns, leading to more extreme and unpredictable weather events such as heatwaves, storms, floods, and droughts. These events can disrupt daily activities, damage infrastructure, and pose risks to health and safety. b. Food and Agriculture: Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns affect crop yields, availability, and prices of food. Climate-related disruptions to agriculture can lead to food shortages, price volatility, and insecurity, impacting diets, nutrition, and livelihoods. c. Water Resources: Climate change affects the availability and quality of water resources, leading to changes in rainfall patterns, snowmelt, and freshwater supplies. This can affect drinking water availability, sanitation, irrigation, and industrial processes, influencing daily routines and economic activities. d. Health and Well-being: Climate change poses risks to human health through heat-related illnesses, respiratory problems from air pollution, vector-borne diseases, food and waterborne diseases, and mental health impacts associated with extreme weather

events and displacement. e. Energy Use: Changes in temperature and weather patterns affect energy demand for heating and cooling, as well as energy production from renewable and non-renewable sources. Extreme weather events can disrupt energy infrastructure, leading to power outages and affecting transportation, communication, and daily routines. f. Transportation and Mobility: Extreme weather events, such as storms and floods, can disrupt transportation networks, including roads, railways, airports, and ports. Climate change also influences travel patterns, with shifts in demand for transportation modes and infrastructure resilience affecting daily commutes and mobility options. g. Housing and Infrastructure: Rising sea levels, increased flooding, and more frequent extreme weather events pose risks to homes, buildings, and critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and utilities. Climate-resilient design and construction practices become increasingly important for ensuring safety, comfort, and functionality in daily life. Economic Activities: Climate change impacts economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism, insurance, and manufacturing, influencing employment opportunities, incomes, and consumer behavior. Adaptation and mitigation efforts, as well as regulatory policies, shape business practices and investment decisions. i. Community and Social Dynamics: Climate change can exacerbate social inequalities, displacement, and conflicts over resources, affecting community cohesion, resilience, and well-being. Overall, climate change permeates various aspects of daily human life, underscoring the importance of understanding its impacts, implementing adaptation measures, and mitigating greenhouse gas emissions to safeguard the well-being and sustainability of present and future generations. Dr. Rajkumar Singh is a youth motivator and former Head of the University Department of Political Science, B.N. Mandal University

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# Peace Movement And Contemporary History



BHARAT DOGRA

If one is asked to identify three biggest needs of our deeply troubled times these would be—peace, peace and peace. This is because while peace itself is such a compelling need it is in addition essential to provide the basic conditions of international cooperation and national stability in which the nearly a dozen serious environmental problems can be resolved before it is too late. In addition it is always important to remember that durable and broad-based peace is never possible without justice and whenever one speaks of peace in a credible way one must speak in terms of peace with justice.

While peace is of the greatest importance, the actions of several of the top world leaders do not appear to reflect this understanding at all. In fact the actual conduct of some of the most powerful leaders and authorities has been quite the reverse of what a commitment to peace, justice and environment protection would require. The result is that in recent decades the world has seen many entirely avoidable wars and related actions ( such as sanctions) which have directly and indirectly caused the death of millions of people in very cruel conditions, a big majority of them being innocent civilians, a majority of them women and children. The race for dominance has intensified as also the arms race. Disarmament efforts have suffered badly. Enough nuclear weapons already exist to destroy the entire world more than once. Meanwhile ever more dangerous weapons are being 'developed'. Research on banned weapons is continuing in disguised ways. There has been more talk of the possibility of a nuclear war and a third world war in the last three years than in the previous three decades.

In these conditions the worldwide peace movement, which just now is



quite weak relative to the challenges it faces, has become increasingly relevant and important. One of the extremely important tasks that it should take up is to try to present contemporary history as truthfully as possible as this can help the peace processes greatly. Understanding of truthful history of contemporary times can help to bring many more people to the peace (with justice) movement and make it much stronger.

Of course many eminent persons in the academics, journalism and among independent researchers have already contributed to this, and the peace processes and the peace movement have benefited from this, but there are also important gaps.

Here I will just give three examples of such gaps. Firstly, there is the huge tragedy of the three terrible assassinations that shook the USA—and in fact the entire world—during the 1960s. The reference here of course is to the assassinations of President John Kennedy, his brother and Presidential candidate Robert Kennedy Sr., and the great civil rights

and peace movement leader Martin Luther King. As is well-known, several serious discrepancies in official explanations have been identified by several competent researchers on the basis of which official explanations of these events appear to be highly suspect. On the other hand a lot of evidence of insider involvement has been presented. There are films on this that have been seen by millions, books that have been read by millions. This much has been already achieved.

It is also known that after these three great men were assassinated in the 1960s, no other President or senior opposition leader in the USA has really taken up the agenda of world peace in a courageous, continuing way, in a way that is effective enough to prevent avoidable wars. Those who came forward a little did not advance far enough. President Obama held out so much hope at one time only to dash them in a most cruel way. Robert Kennedy Jr. as a current Presidential candidate, running on a supposedly peace agenda, appears to have already dashed the hopes of many of his peace

movement supporters with his support for Israel in the ongoing conflict in the Middle-East, as several reports from US say.

However if the peace movement can convincingly show, with enough evidence and in a credible way, that the voices of the three biggest champions of peace with justice in the USA (with a worldwide influence) were silenced by inside forces related to the military industrial complex (against whom President Eisenhower had given such an important warning at the time of his departure from Presidency, on the basis of his entire experience as a president and earlier a very senior military general), then the peace movement would be able to get a lot of people to do a lot of rethinking resulting in many of them coming out more actively on the side of the peace movement.

Secondly, there is the war on terror tracing its roots to the 9/11 attacks. The most horrible 9/11 attacks were a huge tragedy that killed nearly 3000 people immediately and many others indirectly from the impact of various haz-

ards unleashed by the attacks. These were used as a pretext for launching a series of 'War on Terror' attacks on several countries which have directly and indirectly killed over 4.5 million people, still counting, most of them innocent civilians. Many researchers have contributed to show the glaring flaws in the official narrative of 9/11, some have alleged insider involvement, giving a lot of evidence. If however the peace movement can make a more organized attempt to present a very convincing narrative of what is most likely to have happened, then this too can lead to a lot of rethinking among many more people and bring them to the peace movement to contribute in whatever way they can for a more peaceful world.

Thirdly, there is the more recent case of the October 7 attack of Hamas about which there is increasing evidence that the Netanyahu government had many advance warnings but ignored them. Increasingly this appears to be a case of deliberate neglect, so that this terror attack could be used as a pretext for a much bigger attack on Gaza (revealing similar kind of thinking behind 9/11 and 10/7). Again if the peace movement can show this more convincingly within the next one month or so, this can be very helpful to isolate the most aggressive forces and pave the way for peace.

These are only three of the most obvious examples. A more detailed study is likely to reveal that a lot of the contemporary history needs to be retold if truth is to be told. Who will do this? The American lobby will not like the truth to be uncovered in any of the three cases mentioned above. The Chinese lobby, which increasingly uses its resources to emerge as the main 'left' voice, has reasons to cover up many other aspects. It will never admit that over 10 million people died in the man-made famine and atrocities of 'the great leap forward' of 1958-62 in China, followed by other cruelties of the so-called Cultural Revolution. So the first thing that the truth movement has to do is to get rid of the American lobby and the Chinese lobby (as well as all other such narrow lobbies) and try to create a genuine truth lobby!

*Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children, Planet in Peril, A Day in 2071 and Earth without Borders.*

# Role Of Robotic Surgery I Management Of Hepatobiliary, Pancreatic Cancers

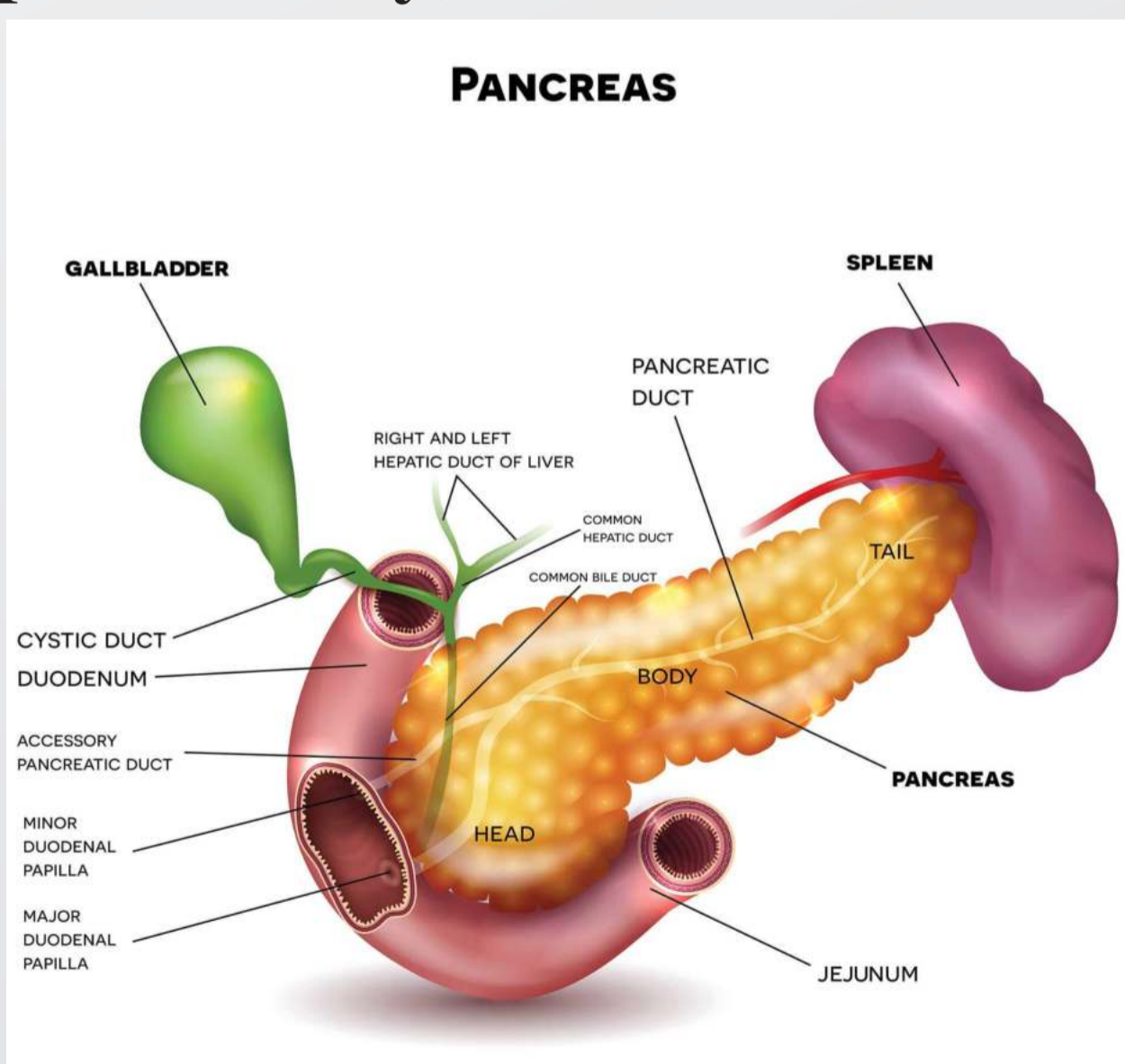


DR SURENDER KUMAR DABAS

Hepatobiliary and pancreatic cancers are cancers involving the liver, gallbladder, bile ducts and its branches and pancreas. Robotic surgery has emerged as a transformative technology in the field of hepatobiliary and pancreatic cancers, revolutionizing the way these complex surgeries are performed. The integration of robotics into surgical procedures has significantly impacted patient outcomes, offering advantages such as enhanced precision, improved visualization, and reduced invasiveness.

In hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgeries, the intricate anatomy and proximity to vital structures pose challenges to traditional open surgeries. Over the years of surgical evolution, open surgery has largely been replaced by minimally invasive surgery, laparoscopic to begin with and now recent transition to robotic surgery. This is more so true in the management of complex hepatobiliary and pancreatic tumours. The introduction of robotics at the end of last millennium has helped overcome the shortcomings of laparoscopic surgery due to its inherent 3D HD vision, 7 degrees of freedom, more precision and control, meticulous dissection, better ergonomics, improved dexterity, endowrist movements, 10X magnification and greater instrument stability. This allows for more precise dissection and reconstruction, minimizing damage to surrounding tissues and organs.

One key benefit of robotic surgery



in hepatobiliary and pancreatic cancers is its minimally invasive nature. Traditional open surgeries often involve large incisions, leading to prolonged recovery times and increased

postoperative pain. Robotic-assisted procedures utilize smaller keyhole incisions, resulting in reduced blood loss, shorter hospital stays, and quicker recovery for patients.

The robotic platform's ability to facilitate complex manoeuvres in confined spaces is particularly advantageous in hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgeries. Surgeons can navigate

intricate anatomical structures with greater ease, ensuring meticulous removal of tumours and precise reconstruction of vessels and ducts. This level of precision contributes to improved oncological outcomes and a lower risk of complications.

Furthermore, the enhanced visualization offered by robotic systems is invaluable in identifying and sparing critical structures, such as major blood vessels and the bile ducts during surgery. This can be crucial in preserving organ function and minimizing postoperative complications.

The role of robotic surgery extends beyond the operating room. Telesurgery, enabled by advanced robotic systems, allows experienced surgeons to remotely guide less-experienced colleagues through complex procedures. This facilitates knowledge transfer and expands access to specialized surgical expertise, especially in regions with limited resources.

Despite the numerous advantages, challenges remain in the widespread adoption of robotic surgery for hepatobiliary and pancreatic cancers. The initial cost of acquiring robotic systems and the need for specialized training are factors that healthcare institutions must consider. Additionally, ongoing research is essential to continually assess the long-term outcomes and cost-effectiveness of robotic-assisted procedures in comparison to traditional approaches.

In conclusion, robotic surgery has significantly influenced the management of hepatobiliary and pancreatic cancers, offering improved precision, reduced invasiveness, and enhanced patient outcomes. As technology continues to advance and experience with robotic systems grows, the role of robotics in these complex surgeries is likely to expand, further shaping the future of surgical oncology.

*Author is Vice Chairman - Oncology, BLK-Max Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi*

# Intermittent Fasting May Raise The Risk Of Cardiovascular Death: Study

Intermittent fasting is currently one of the most popular health and fitness trends. It is commonly used to lose weight. Weight loss is further linked with better health and overall well-being. It is an eating pattern in which your day or week is divided into fasting and eating periods.

Most diets tell you what to eat. On the other hand, intermittent fasting emphasises on when to eat. Those following intermittent fasting usually extend their sleeping fast by skipping breakfast. They eat lunch around noon followed by an early dinner before 8 pm. Intermittent fasting has

been a popular social media trend. Many celebrities have also attributed their body transformation to intermittent fasting. However, a recent study has highlighted the downsides of intermittent fasting. The study highlights that limiting mealtimes to a period of just 8 hours a day

is linked to a 91% increased risk of death from heart disease. The researchers examined a group of 20,000 adults. After noting their dietary patterns, it was concluded that participants who practised intermittent fasting were 91% more likely to have died from heart disease than

those who didn't. Also, those with pre-existing heart conditions had a 66% higher risk of dying from heart disease and stroke. "Time-restricted eating is popular as a means of reducing calorie intake," Keith Frayn, emeritus professor of human metabolism

at the University of Oxford, said in a statement to the UK Science Media Center. "This work is very important in showing that we need long-term studies on the effects of this practice. But this abstract leaves many questions unanswered." The findings were presented at the American Heart

Association's Epidemiology and Prevention, Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Scientific Sessions 2024, March 18-21, in Chicago. The AHA also mentioned that the findings are considered preliminary until published as a full manuscript in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

### Anurag Thakur

Modi government for the holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that the region, once plagued by the scourge of terrorism, had witnessed a paradigm shift under BJP governance. He lamented the tragic loss of over 45 thousand lives due to terrorism and separatism under previous administrations.

Highlighting the monumental decision to revoke Articles 370 and 35A, Thakur lauded the government's efforts in ushering in a new era of development and progress in Jammu and Kashmir. He cited the surge in tourist footfall and the proliferation of employment and self-employment opportunities as tangible evidence of the positive impact of these reforms on the state's socio-economic landscape—(KNO)

### Our Preparedness

our response mechanism firmly in place," General Pande said.

He was asked how well is the Indian Army prepared in the backdrop of the eastern Ladakh border standoff.

"We have talks at two levels. One is at the military level, at the level of our corps commanders, we have had 21 rounds of talks. At the diplomatic level, where we have the mechanism, WMCC (Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs)," he said, adding several rounds of WMCC talks have taken place post the event of mid-2020.

The 28th meeting of WMCC was held on November 30, 2023. "It is my belief that only through talks you will find resolution of the balance issues that are currently at hand. While these talks are progressing, we are also focusing on capability development along our northern borders, of which technology infusion, modernisation are important," the Army chief said.

General Pande said the Army is also focusing on infrastructure development and "I believe, we are moving in the right direction".

"Our preparedness levels are of a very high order and we are keeping a very close watch on developments and what is happening across the border," he added.

Asked to quantify the threat perception from China, General Pande said from time to time "we keep reviewing threats". So, threat during the winter months may be slightly different from what it may be during the summer months, he added.

"Just as our western adversary, with respect to our northern adversary, I would only say, our preparedness level is of a very high order," the Army chief asserted.

On the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, he underlined the Army formations deployed in the UT, both in hinterland and along the LoC in counter-infiltration grid.

"There are attempts at infiltration, which are continuing both in the Valley region as to the south of the Pir Panjal region. But we have a very robust and effective counter-infiltration grid which has proven successful," he said.

On criticism surrounding the Agnipath scheme, General Pande said it was a "transformational" change or reform that "we undertook in the past so many years".

The feedback received from the units is "extremely encouraging, extremely positive", General Pande said, adding cynicism as to what will happen to the Agniveers after four years is "misplaced".

On role of the women in the army, he said, "Close to 128 women officers are now donning the rank of a colonel and they are now commanding officers".

The general was also asked about the Indian Army's role in controlling the Manipur situation.

"On the night of May 3-4, I think it was our pro-active deployment, induction of additional forces there that we were able to control the violence levels to a very large extent. Be it the Assam Rifles or the army units deployed there, I would say they have given an excellent account of themselves," General Pande said.

In terms of preventing collateral damage to non-military or civilian population, in terms of ensuring their own protection, "I would believe they have done an excellent job", he said.

On the challenges there, General Pande said one is the aspect of weapons which are still available at large.

There is still fairly a large number of weapons that is still available and that is a "cause of concern", he added.

Also, the issue of activities happening across the Indo-Myanmar border and with these kinds of weapons available that remains a challenge, the Army chief said.

The situation in Manipur transcends the law and order situation or of land domain, General Pande said.

"We will have to come up with a very comprehensive and a detailed framework

to be able to find an answer to the ongoing issues there. We have a large ex-servicemen community. So, we have asked them to engage with people. Our units are helping internally displaced people in various relief camps," he said.

General Pande in his opening remarks said that he saw the Indian Army as "a key contributor and a stakeholder" in the nation's rise.

"I believe the nation's security and progress are inextricably linked. While the economic progress is the fountainhead of growth, it is the military strength that lends it the capability to be able to address ongoing as well as future security challenges. The army's commitment to India's growth story is absolutely unwavering," he said. (Agencies)

### Jaishankar On Boundary

secure the border. I can never compromise on that," Jaishankar said while responding to a question on the current state of India's relations with China during his interaction with the Indian diaspora here in the Malaysian capital.

He said every country wants "good relations with its neighbours. Who doesn't? But every relationship has to be founded on some basis." "We're still negotiating with the Chinese. I talk to my counterpart. We meet from time to time. Our military commanders negotiate with each other. But we are very clear that we had an agreement. There is a Line of Actual Control. We have a tradition of not bringing troops to that line. Both of us have bases some distance away, which is our traditional deployment place. And we want that normalcy," he said.

"So that normalcy that returns to where we are in terms of the troop deployment will be the basis for the relationship going forward. And we've been very, very honest with the Chinese about it," Jaishankar said.

He said that in the case of China, the relationship has been difficult for a variety of reasons, including the fact that the two sides have a boundary dispute.

"But despite the boundary dispute over the many years, we actually built up a substantial relationship because we agreed that while we will negotiate the boundary dispute, both of us will agree that we will not bring soldiers in large numbers to the boundary. And we will never have a situation where there'll be violence and bloodshed on the contrary," he said.

So this understanding which started in the late 1980s, actually was reflected in several agreements. And those agreements gave the relationship stability based on which in other areas, the relationship went forward, he said.

"Now, unfortunately, for reasons which are still not clear to us, these agreements were broken in 2020. And we actually had violence and bloodshed on the border," Jaishankar said.

Ties between India and China nose-dived significantly following the deadly clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in more than four decades. (Agencies)

### 'No Eid Namaz At

condition of the Eidgah ground is not up to the mark.

Dr. Andrabi said this year the 'Namaz E Eid' is not possible to be offered at Eidgah Srinagar, as the condition of the ground is not up to the mark.

She added that they are working on improve the condition of the ground and soon Namaz will be offered at Eidgah Srinagar.

Meanwhile, reliable sources in the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board told KNO that a major renovation project of Eidgah Srinagar is in the pipeline, and would like to be started soon—(KNO)

### Mysterious Blast

adding that the area has been cordoned off.

SSP Poonch Yougal Manhas told KNO that investigation has been started and details will be shared later. "Necessary investigation into the matter has been set into motion to ascertain the exact nature of the material which apparently looks like a handmade crude substance," the SSP said—(KNO)

### 90 Pc Colorectal

breast, and cervical cancers. "March is observed as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month globally," Dr Shabnam said. She shed light on the prevalence and impact of this disease.

According to the GLOBOCAN 2020 report, colorectal cancer ranks as the 3rd most diagnosed cancer in men and the 2nd in women worldwide, with around 15 lakh new cases detected annually. In India, Dr Shabnam revealed that

approximately 75,000 new cases are detected annually, with a concerning trend of younger patients being affected. "In a study conducted at the State Cancer Center SKIMS, we found that 20% of colorectal cancer patients are below 35 years of age, with 50% of cases being diagnosed at Stage 3," she added.

About regional variations, Dr Shabnam said that Southern Europe, Australia and Northern Europe are among the regions with the highest incidence rates globally.

In India, Bangalore sees a higher prevalence among men, while Aizwal district in the northeast reports more cases among women, she informed.

She further said the projected increase in colorectal cancer cases globally by 2030 is alarming and stressed the need for better screening programs and awareness campaigns.

Despite advancements in screening tests, the doctor said mortality rates are still high. She cited factors such as late presentations, lack of awareness and inadequate access to healthcare facilities.

She also highlighted the importance of understanding risk factors associated with colorectal cancer, including age, gender, family history, lifestyle habits, and genetic predisposition. She urged people to adopt preventive measures such as maintaining a healthy lifestyle, regular exercise, and avoiding tobacco and alcohol consumption.

"Early screening and diagnosis play a critical role in improving survival rates. So, the people need to be vigilant about the signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer and go for regular screenings for early detection and timely intervention to combat this disease effectively," Dr Shanman added—(KNO)

### Skyrocketing Airfares

He said the Kashmir packages have become costlier due to the airfare hike by the airline companies. "Such is the situation that a trip to Dubai or Thailand becomes cheaper than a Kashmir trip. Tourists prefer international trips over Kashmir due to the airfare hike," Trambo said.

He said the number of queries has dipped for the last few weeks due to the airfare hike. "If we were receiving 1000 queries from tourists every day we now get some 300-400 queries a day. We appeal to the government to deploy additional flights and regulate airfare," Trambo said.

Pertinently, with the arrival of the Spring season, Kashmir is witnessing a rush of tourists particularly from Maharashtra and Gujarat following which the hotels and houseboats are booked till the month of April.

For the last two weeks, the airfare from various destinations to Kashmir has been increasing and has now hiked by more than 60 per cent.

A cursory look at the airfare chart by portals including MakeMy Trip and EaseMyTrip shows that the tariff from the nearest destination New Delhi to Kashmir for the next two weeks has gone up to Rs 13,000.

Barely one or two weeks before, the airfare from the same destination to the valley was just Rs 5000-5500 per passenger.

The return ticket from Kashmir to Delhi has also witnessed a hike of nearly 30 per cent and sells at Rs 83,00 per person.

A one way air ticket from Maharashtra, where from the valley receives bulk tourists during ongoing season, sells between Rs 15000 to 18000 per person. The return ticket from Srinagar to Mumbai too has hiked between 18000 to 25000 per person.

From Gujarat and Kolkatta, which too contribute to the growing tourists number in Kashmir, the airfare too has skyrocketed.

From both these destinations, the airfare has gone up by more than 50 percent in the last two weeks—(KNO)

### 7 Kashmir Districts

Randerbal recorded a deficient rainfall of 49 per cent and 24 percent respectively, the data said, adding that Kulgam and Kupwara have recorded a deficient rainfall of 44 per cent and 46 per cent respectively.

According to the data, Shopian district in South Kashmir have recorded a large deficient rainfall of 76 percent as against the normal precipitation of 101.2 mm, the station has recorded just 24.3 mm rainfall.

Baramulla and Pulwama stations have, however, recorded normal precipitation during the period, the data added.

Pertinently, the weatherman has predicted intermittent wet spell in Jammu and Kashmir till March 31, saying that two back-to-back Western Disturbances are affecting the Union territory from this evening.

The light rains and snow are expected in J&K intermittently till March 31, the weatherman has said—(KNO)

### ACB Charges

into the allegations that Municipal Committee Thanamandi, Rajouri invited tenders for installation of street lights in the limits of Municipal Committee vide number MC/T/19/193-97 dated 06-03-2019 worth lakhs of rupees for specific brands as well as specifications i.e., Havells, Syska or Philips with two years guarantee/replacement, but the concerned Executive Officer, by abuse of his official position, connived with supplier firm and accepted supply of LED bulbs of very inferior quality instead of quoted brands," the statement added.

During the course of verification, it surfaced that President Municipal Committee Thanamandi Rajouri invited tender notice vide number MC/T/19/193-97 dated 06-03-2019 for purchase of street lights having specific brands mentioned above. As per record, 100 streetlights of 60 watt, make Mos-Lites, were received from M/S Gouri Sales Agencies in Municipal Committee Thanamandi instead of prescribed brand i.e., Syska/Havells/Philips, the statement said.

"The same was found entered in receipt register without mentioning of date of receipt as well as brand. Out of said 100 street lights, only 42 lights were identified by staff of Municipal Committee Thanamandi, whereas 58 lights could not be traced. These lights were also found purchased on exorbitant rates," it added.

The verification conducted further revealed that Mushtaq Ahmed, then Executive Officer Municipal Committee Thanamandi, without initiation of any tendering process issued another supply order vide No. MC/T/2019/108A dated 16-05-2019 to said M/S Gouri Sales Agencies for purchase of 150 LED street lights of 45 watt, 150 LED bulbs of 40 watts etc. on the rates already approved by Municipal Committee Thanamandi for the year 2018-19., it said.

"However, no such LED street lights & LED bulbs etc. so purchased through the said supply order, were found received in Municipal Committee Thanamandi. In this regard, no record has been found in respect of receipt/issuance of such lights and bulbs. But bills against such purchases stand endorsed by Riyaz Ahmed, then Storekeeper of Municipal Committee Thanamandi. It also surfaced that Shakeel Ahmed Mir then President, Mushtaq Ahmed then Executive Officer, Riyaz Ahmed then Storekeeper and other officers/officials of Municipal Committee Thanamandi, by abuse of their official positions and in lieu of criminal conspiracy hatched among themselves as well as Proprietor of M/S Gouri Sales Agencies (supplier firm), released full payment of amount against LED Street lights and LED bulbs purported to be purchased/supplied vide tender notice No. MC/T/19/193-97 dated 06-03-2019 and supply order No. MC/T/2019/108A dated 16-05-2019," it added.

"By acting in this manner, the above named public servants and others misappropriated/embezzled Govt. money just to confer undue pecuniary benefits to them as well as supplier with corresponding loss to Govt. exchequer on account of LED street lights purchased on exorbitant rates as well as loss on account of non-existent LED street lights and LED Bulbs which came upto Rs 5,96,870/- (approx)," the statement said.

The aforementioned facts constitute commission of offences punishable under section 5(1)(c)(d) r/w 5(2) J&K Prevention of Corruption Act, Svt. 2006 & section 120-B RPC against 1) Shakeel Ahmed Mir, then President, Municipal Committee Thanamandi Rajouri S/o Abdul Aziz Mir R/o Ward No. 07 Thanamandi Rajouri 2) Mushtaq Ahmed, then Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Thanamandi Rajouri (now EO MC Doda) S/o Lal Hussain R/o Fatehpur Tehsil & District Rajouri 3) Riyaz Ahmed, then I/C Sanitary Inspector (Storekeeper) Municipal Committee Thanamandi Rajouri, now posted as Supervisor in MC Doda S/o Amroo R/o Ward No. 07 Rajouri, other officers/officials of Municipal Committee Thanamandi as well as Proprietor of M/S Gouri Sales Agencies and others.

Anti-Corruption Bureau after registration of case under relevant sections of law, also conducted searches with the help of local police/ magistrates/ independent witnesses at residences of above named accused public servants situated in District Rajouri, the statement said, adding that further investigation in the case is going on—(KNO)

### Tulip Garden Attracts

with the arrangements made. "Despite challenges such as pre-booked accommodations hindering travel to Kashmir, the garden is expected to surpass last year's record of 366,000 visitors," the officials said, adding, "With an all-time high in tourist numbers, they anticipate a further surge in visitors after Eid."—(KNO)

# EAM Jaishankar lauds Malaysian PM's 'vision' for stronger bilateral ties

IAN S

**KUALA LUMPUR:** External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar on Wednesday met Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and said that his vision would help craft a "more ambitious agenda" for the India-Malaysia relationship.

Jaishankar, who arrived in Malaysia after concluding his Singapore and the Philippines visit, also conveyed greetings from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Malaysian leader.

"Honour to call on Prime Minister @anwaribrahim of Malaysia. Conveyed the warm greetings of PM @narendramodi," the Jaishankar said in a post on X. "His vision for stronger India-Malaysia ties, both in traditional and new-age areas, will help us craft a more ambitious agenda for the relationship," the EAM said, adding that he "benefitted" from PM Ibrahim's "guidance and insights on regional developments".



Earlier on Wednesday, EAM Jaishankar held a 'productive and frank discussion' with his Malaysian counterpart, Mohamad bin Haji Hasan, and the two leaders exchanged views on bilateral ties as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest. The two Ministers exchanged views on enhancing collaboration

in political, economic, defence, digital, startups, consular and people-to-people linkages.

In addition, they shared perspectives on the region, Indo-Pacific, West Asia, and Ukraine.

"As we near completion of a decade of our Enhanced Strategic Partnership, look forward to further strengthening our engagements,"

Jaishankar wrote on X after meeting Haji Hasan.

Bound by robust economic partnerships and close people-to-people ties, the two nations share a long-standing and substantive relationship.

In 2023, India was Malaysia's 12th largest global trading partner with total trade amounting to RM 77.76 billion (\$16.53 billion).

# Mumbai overtakes Beijing to become Asia's new billionaire capital

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Mumbai has surpassed Beijing to emerge as Asia's new billionaire capital while India has overtaken Germany to become the third-ranked country globally with 271 billionaires, according to the latest Hurun Research Institute report.

"Mumbai was the fastest-growing billionaire capital in the world, adding 26 in the year and taking it to third in the world and Asia's billionaire capital. New Delhi broke into the Top 10 for the first time," the report states.

India's economic prowess was further underscored by the remarkable surge in its billionaire population. The country added a staggering 94 new billionaires, the highest of any nation except the United States, bringing the total to 271 ultra-high-net-worth individuals. This surge, the highest since 2013, is a testament to the soaring confidence in the Indian economy, as noted by Rupert Hoogewerf, the institute's chairman and chief researcher.

Indian billionaires' cumulative wealth reached US\$1 trillion, surpassing



China's average wealth per billionaire (US\$3.2 billion vs US\$3.8 billion), the 2024 Hurun Global Rich List report states.

The report highlights that industry-wise the pharmaceutical sector leads the pack with 39 billionaires, followed by the automobile and auto components industry (27), and the chemicals sector (24).

Collectively, the wealth of Indian billionaires amounts to a phenomenal \$1 trillion, accounting for 7 per cent of the global billionaire wealth, reflecting the country's substantial economic influence.

The rise of startups, particularly in the boom-

ing Artificial Intelligence (AI) space, is a significant contributor as well. This trend aligns with the global focus on AI, which emerged as the biggest driver of wealth creation, generating over half of all new wealth this year.

With a young, tech-savvy population and a growing focus on innovation, India is well-positioned to capitalise on this AI revolution, potentially fuelling the creation of even more billionaires in the coming years, the report added.

Leading the Indian billionaire list is Mukesh Ambani, the chairman of Reliance Industries, with a staggering net worth of

\$115 billion. Closely following is Gautam Adani, the founder of the Adani Group energy conglomerate, with assets valued at \$86 billion, marking a \$33 billion surge in wealth attributed to a rally in his companies' shares.

While India's billionaire population soared, China witnessed a decline, with the report stating, "China had a bad year. HK was down 20 per cent, Shenzhen down 19 per cent, and Shanghai down 7 per cent."

This downturn can be attributed to the crisis in the country's real estate and volatile stock market problems in the renewable energy sectors.

# ED raids AAP leader Singla's residence based on Kejriwal's information



IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted raids at the residence of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Deepak Singla in the excise policy case, sources said.

Sources said that the raids come after information was revealed during the grilling of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who was arrested on March 21 in the case and subsequently remanded to ED custody until March 28 by a Delhi court.

Singla, a former AAP candidate, had contested elections from Delhi's Vishwas Nagar Assembly seat under the AAP banner.

Apart from his political endeavours, Singla also holds key roles within the party hierarchy, serving as the AAP's in-charge for Goa and co-in-charge of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

As per ED, Kejriwal was involved in the conspiracy of formulation of the Excise Policy 2021-22 to favour certain persons and

also involved in demanding kickbacks from liquor businessmen in exchange for favours granted in the said policy.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had said that approximately Rs 45 crore from criminal activities were utilised in the electoral campaign of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for Goa.

On March 23, the ED conducted similar raids at the home of AAP MLA Gulab Singh Yadav from Matiala in the national capital.

# Bengaluru cafe blast: NIA raids multiple locations in K'taka



IAN S

**BENGALURU:** The National Investigation Agency (NIA) was on Wednesday conducting simultaneous raids in Bengaluru and Shivamogga district in connection with the Rameshwaram Cafe blast case.

According to sources, the NIA was raiding five locations in Bengaluru city, and some houses in Thirthahalli town of Shivamogga district.

The raids were conducted on the suspected persons, who were in direct contact with the bomber and provided him financial assistance, sources said. More details are yet to

emerge on the NIA action.

The agency had detained two suspects in connection with the Rameshwaram Cafe blast case in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The preliminary probe revealed that the two suspects were in direct contact with the suspected bomber. Sources said that the raids were being conducted on the basis of information given by these two suspects.

Even as the NIA and police teams have launched an extensive search operation in various states, the bomber has remained elusive. The authorities had obtained the bomber's images and videos from CCTV footage on March 1, soon after the incident.

Sources said that the sleuths were suspecting that the bomber had come from Tamil Nadu and had stayed in a neighbouring state for two months before carrying out the blast.

The hair samples of the accused were gathered from the hat of the accused which he abandoned in Bengaluru near a religious place. The authorities have sent the samples for the DNA testing and were hoping for a breakthrough.

The Rameshwaram Cafe bomb blast took place on March 1 in the Brookfield area. Low-intensity Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was used to carry out the blast and nine persons were injured in the incident.

# Arjan Nagra clinches title in first leg of National Eventing Championship



IAN S

**GURUGRAM:** Nicolas Colsaerts, who called the DLF Golf and Country Club a tough course, got down to business as the Hero Pro-Am ahead of the Indian Open was conducted on Wednesday morning.

Whereas, Manvendra Singh and Sthavi Asthana claimed the second and third positions respectively at the ongoing NEC Eventing Novice & Pre Novice 2023-24 Championship at the Army Polo & Riding Centre.

Nagra did not concede any penalty while clearing 11 obstacles, completing the run in exactly one hour. He also did not concede a penalty in show jumping

but in the dressage section was 31.6 seconds more than the allowed time-limit.

In the 44-rider competition, over a 380-metre course, Nagra conceded the least penalties (31.6) and was followed by Manvendra (31.9) and Sthavi (34.2) in the leaderboard.

The eventing competition, also known as horse trial, comprises three disciplines dressage, cross country and show jumping.

Manvendra, who rode Hercules, and Sthavi who was riding Rustam Jee, also conceded penalty only in the dressage event.

The second leg of the National Eventing Championship will begin on Thursday.

# ED issues third summons to Mahua Moitra in FEMA violation case



IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued a third summons to Trinamool Congress leader Mahua Moitra for questioning in connection with a Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) violation case, a source said on Wednesday.

Moitra, who was expelled from Lok Sabha last year in December, has been asked to appear before the ED on Thursday at the ED Headquarters in Delhi, according to sources.

The summons comes after she failed to comply with two earlier summons, missing scheduled appearances on March 11 and February 19.

ED sources said that Moitra has been asked to furnish certain documents pertinent to foreign investments linked to the ongoing investigation.

Moitra had been embroiled in a controversy over allegations of receiving cash in exchange for putting up queries in the Parliament on behalf of businessman Darshan Hiranandani.

## VIKSIT BHARAT AMBASSADOR MEET-UP

# I&B Minister explains how Digital India is firming up nation's clout in world

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Anurag Thakur on Wednesday impressed upon the students of IIM Jammu about several landmark achievements in the past ten years of the Modi government and highlighted how an array of developmental schemes are setting the stage for realizing \$ 5 trillion economy goal.

Anurag Thakur, addressing the Viksit Bharat Ambassador meet-up event in Jammu, enumerated the multiple benefits of Digital India initiative and how it was taking the nation to new heights.

The I&B Minister informed that there are more than 1 lakh start-ups in country today and urged the students to embrace technology, as this will speed up the next phase of growth and development.

"We have opened up the space sector to FDI. Today,

CEOs of many global firms are Indians. Sundar Pichai once told me that he doesn't have digital certificate unlike other Indians," he said while recalling how Modi government pushed Digital India drive despite stiff resistance from the Opposition.

The I&B Minister spoke about poor-centric government schemes and how they have brought transformational change in people's lives.

"Government brought PMSVANidhi Yojana for street vendors, under which they are financially equipped to start and rev up their businesses. Under PM Vishwakarma Yojana, carpenters, barbers, masons and more are being extended Rs 3 lakh loan at very low interest rate. E-Shram cards are being extended to those employed in informal sectors, a field that employs more than 90 per cent of the country's workforce," Anurag Thakur pointed out.

Accentuating govern-

ment's target on making India into a \$ 5 trillion economy, he said that we have already crossed \$ 3.6 trillion and very soon, will achieve this goal.

"Today, India accounts for 40 per cent digital payment of the total digital payment in the world. UPI BHIM has shown India's dominance in digital payment not just in India but also abroad including Asia and European nations," he emphasised.

Comparing the scale of development in NDA and previous eras, the minister pointed out that the Gati Shakti has turned to be a game-changer in shaping India's infrastructure and potential for growth.

"Many projects were hanging fire for years but today, they are a reality. Mumbai Harbor link was conceptualized many decades ago but it came to life under Modi government. Kolkata under-water metro was conceived more than 50 years ago but it got completed in 2024. Earlier, just a couple of towns had

metro rails, today more than 20 towns have running metro networks," he said.

Anurag Thakur also told the IIM Jammu students that today there are much more IITs, IIMs, AIIMs than the previous regimes and medical and engineering seats have also seen an unprecedented rise.

"From India being the second largest importer of mobile phones to the second largest manufacturer of mobile phones, much has changed under the new government," he said.

Reiterating Modi government's resolve for women empowerment, he listed out several progressive schemes and informed, "paid maternity leave was extended to 26 weeks, 31 crore mudra loans have been extended to women beneficiaries, 300 ITIs have been opened exclusively for training women staff while Women's reservation bill was passed under the current dispensation."

# Sadanand Vasant appointed new NIA chief



IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre has appointed Sadanand Vasant Date as the Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), while IPS officers Rajeev Kumar Sharma and Piyush Anand have been appointed as DGs of Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) respectively.

The Secretariat of the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet Ministry of Personnel has given the approval for the appointments.

An order issued on Tuesday stated, "Appointment of Sadanand Vasant Date,

IPS (MH/90), as Director General, National Investigation Agency in Level-16 from the date of joining the post, for a tenure up to his superannuation on 31.12.2026 or until further orders, whichever is earlier, vice Dinkar Gupta, IPS (PB/87) upon his superannuation on 31.03.2024."

Rajasthan cadre IPS officer (1990 batch) Rajeev Kumar Sharma has been appointed as the DG of BPRD for a tenure up to his superannuation on June 30, 2026 or until further orders.

IPS officer Piyush Anand (Uttar Pradesh cadre 1991 batch) presently working as Special DG, CISF, has been appointed as the NDRF chief.

**THREAT OF CYBER ATTACKS**

# J&K Govt tells departments to undertake security audit of websites

MUBASHIR ALAM

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu & Kashmir government has directed its departments to undertake security audit of departmental websites/applications through CERT-In empanelled agencies within a period of one month.

In a move aimed at protecting government websites/applications against cyber threats, the General Administration Department (GAD) has directed

all administrative departments/heads of departments/deputy commissioners/managing directors of various public sector undertakings (PSUs)/Boards/Corporations to ensure security audit of their departmental websites/applications.

The Information Technology department has time and again issued instructions to all the administrative departments/heads of departments/deputy commis-

sioners/managing Directors of various PSUS/Boards/Corporations etc. to ensure security audit of their websites/applications periodically, at least once a year, in compliance with security policy, guidelines, and procedures, laid down by the CERT-In and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India.

The GAD, however, noticed that many such websites are still

unaudited. "Notwithstanding the instructions, it has been observed that large number of websites hosted on State Data Centre by different departments are still un-audited resulting in an increased risk of cyber-attacks as also reported by the CERT-In," it said.

CERT-In stands for Computer Emergency Response Team - India. It serves as the national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents—(KNO

# CS reviews development of 'Kisan Khidmat Ghar' portal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dullo, Wednesday had a detailed review of development of 'Kisan Khidmat Ghar' portal for Agriculture Production Department by BISAG-N in association with the NIC and IT Department of the Union Territory.



He also asked for making it a 'one stop solution' for availing all kinds of agriculture/horticulture related activities.

The Chief Secretary also discussed the type of services to be taken onboard on this new portal. He had feedback from all the stakeholders including the officers, IT professionals, agricultural academia besides the bank representatives and BISAG engineers.

It was given out in the meeting that the broad contours around which the portal is

being designed inculcates Booking/Buying farm inputs/machinery, applying for scheme based incentives, introducing farmer support system, looking for sale/marketing of products, getting skilled and extension of credit support.

It was further added that currently the work on data collection/collation is going on along with developing of relevant content and other APIs for synchronizing it to make Kisan Khidmat Ghar a viable solution for all Agri related avenues and enterprises.

Bank and other concerned officers of the department. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary held detailed deliberation over the services, applications and information to be made available over this multi-faceted web portal.

# J&K Sees Rise In Number Of Bird Species



AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir has 592 species of birds, an improvement from earlier reports.

A study published in Indian Birds-a journal of south Asian Ornithology-analysed the available data which revealed that J&K has 592 species of birds belonging to 21 orders and 88 families.

The last checklist of birds was made in 2020 for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and that had put the number of birds at 555.

"This time 592 species have been found only in J&K and does not include Ladakh. The data shows clear improvement from the previous checklist," said Intesar Suhail, Wildlife Warden North, and one of the authors of the report.

The other authors of the reports include Muzaffar A Kichloo, Neeraj Sharma, Parvaiz Shagoo and Parmil Kumar.

The comprehensive checklist of bird species found in Jammu & Kashmir, the report said, is based on a meticulous collation of ornithological literature, specimen collections, online and published sources with photographic

evidence, call recordings, and sight documentation supported by detailed field notes.

"We report 592 species in 21 orders and 88 families, of which 555 are supported with media documentation, 326 have been either examined in hand or deposited in museums across the world, and six species have been accepted based solely on documentation considered credible. 586 species have been validated either through specimens or photographs, and 564 species are listed on eBird, accounting for 95% of all the birds reported from Jammu & Kashmir," the report said.

The study found that 25 species are classified as globally threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

The study reveals that the areas that remained unexplored for a long time have lately emerged as the top bird watching destinations in Jammu & Kashmir. These include the north and central Kashmir Valley, the Shivaliks and parts of the Lesser Himalaya, and the southern plains of Jammu Division. (Agencies)

# DEO Srinagar reviews preparedness for LS Polls

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** In order to review the progress of preparation being put in place with regard to conduct of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, a meeting was today held under the Chairmanship of the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here.

The DEO took a detailed appraisal from all Assistant Returning Officers about the arrangements being made at Polling Stations, Strong Rooms and Counting Centres in Srinagar. He also took stock of the ongoing SVEEP campaign in the district.

On the occasion, the DEO stressed on ensuring all requisite/Assured Minimum Facilities(AMF) facilities at the all 929 designated polling stations, besides making welfare measures for the polling staff on polling day as per the laid guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI). He asked them to formulate a comprehensive action plan for the welfare of polling staff well in advance.

He also asked the Nodal Officer SVEEP/AMF to further intensify awareness campaigns to encourage young voters for maximum voting turnout.

The DEO directed the AROs and Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE and others concerned to work with utmost coordination to complete

all assigned tasks related to the conduct of the Lok Sabha elections-2024. He stressed that Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) should be ensured for PwD Voters at each and every Polling Station viz. Permanent ramps, drinking water, toilet facilities as per norms of ECI.

Dr Bilal enjoined upon the Nodal Officer Postal Ballot and all AROs to take up all necessary arrangements for facilitating voting by Postal Ballots by various categories of Voters including service voters, personnel on Poll Duty (EDC), migrant electors, absent electors, etc so that they exercise their franchise without any difficulty.

He stressed the officers to focus on meticulous preparations and maximum voter participation to reflect the commitment of conducting a successful Lok Sabha Election in 2024 in the district.

The DEO emphasised officers to uphold electoral laws, regulations and ethical standards to ensure the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

With regard to the training of polling staff, the DEO asked for setting up of facilitation centres in all tanning centres of all 9 Assembly segments of the District.

The meeting was attended by all Assistant Returning Officers, Superintendent of Police, Deputy District Election Officer, Nodal Officer, SVEEP/AMF, Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE, besides other concerned.

# Rajnath Singh To Address Army Commanders' Conference On April 2

AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will address a conference of army commanders here on April 2, during which the senior military leadership will also assess the overall security situation, the defence ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.



also feature talks by distinguished subject matter experts on the evolving geopolitical landscape and ramifications for national security, the officials said.

On April 1, the Army's top leadership will engage in intensive brainstorming sessions. The sessions will be aimed at enhancing operational effectiveness, the importance of fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability and investing in training and development programmes to ensure readiness for future challenges.

The brainstorming session will also encompass issues concerning the welfare of service personnel aimed at enhancing the quality of life for soldiers and their families, they said.

This will be followed by a meeting of the Investment Advisory Committee of the Army Group Insur-

ance, chaired by the Army chief, and attended by several experts in the field of financial management.

The committee will deliberate on various welfare measures and schemes for the financial security of serving soldiers, veterans and their families, they added.

The senior hierarchy of the Army will also be addressed by Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar and IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari, the statement said.

On March 28, the conference will be chaired by Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande with army commanders participating in a virtual mode from their respective Command Headquarters, it said.

The deliberation will be on a critical agenda impacting the field army and veterans' welfare.

The conference will

# Poll Staff imparted Training on handling of EVMs in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, series of training sessions on proficient handling of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines for Polling staff were Wednesday held in all Assembly Segments of Srinagar District.

At Government College of Education, the Training session was conducted under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO), Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to impart the necessary training to the designated polling staff on efficient operation of EVMs and VVPAT machines in the upcoming elections.

On the occasion, practical demonstration was given to the participant trainees regarding the functioning of EVMs and VVPAT machines to boost their understanding and proficiency in managing the voting process.

Speaking at the occasion, the Deputy District Election Officer highlighted the importance of election training to the polling staff. He said training enables polling officials to understand the election

system, learn handling and operation of EVMs to ensure an error-free election process. He also educated participants about their role and responsibilities in the fair and free conduct of elections.

The DEO said that training is pivotal to familiarize the staff with EVM & VVPAT operations and get acquainted with necessary knowledge and skills for effectively carrying out their duties during the electoral process.

Similar Training sessions were also held at other designated places at all eight Assembly segments of the District under the supervision of respective Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) during which the Master Trainers imparted hands-on training to the participants and acquaint them with necessary knowledge of EVM handling and operation.

During the training, collection of polling material, collection and installation of EVMs, setting up of polling stations and commencement of polls was thoroughly discussed with the trainees. The process with regard to sealing, installation and functioning of the EVMs was also demonstrated by the master trainers.

# SSH performs 22nd successful Renal Transplant

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** 22nd successful Renal Transplant Procedure was performed by the transplant team of Doctors in SSH Jammu under the guidance of Principal Medical College, Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, MS, SSH Dr Rehana Khurshid and Dy. MS, SSH Dr Sanjogita Soodan.

According to a statement issued, the Surgical Team led by Dr Elias Sharma, Prof. & Head Urology, Dr Rahul Gupta, Dr. Ajay Anand, Dr Muzain, Dr Sunil K Bhat, Dr Yasir, Dr Chetan exhibited extraordinary expertise and dedication in performing 22nd Renal Transplant procedure.

Medical management issues related to transplant workup, need of dialysis decision, decision regarding immunosuppressant, cross match and postoperative care is done by Dr. Abdul Majeed (DM Nephrology), Dr Raju Bhandari, Dr Aman Gupta, Dr. Anuradha, Dr Ashish, Dr. Baljeet, Dr Pranas from the Nephrology Department of SSH Jammu.

Anesthesia to the patient by provided by the team of Anesthesiolo-

gist comprising Dr Anju Gupta (prof & HoD) Dr Samriti Gulati (Prof), Dr Ashwini (Prof.), Dr Anjali Mehta (Associate Prof), Dr. Amit Manhas (Associate Prof.) and Dr Ranika (Lecturer).

This patient aged 45 was suffering from End stage Kidney disease and was on dialysis for more than 6 months is on the path of recovery. Department of Cardiovascular and Thoracic performs Open Heart Surgery The Department of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery (CVTS) Super Specialty Hospital (SSH) Government Medical College Jammu has been performing all the major Intra-ExtraCardiac, Thoracic and Vascular procedures with very good results.

Besides major Thoracic and vascular procedures, the Department has performed Five Open Heart Operations under cardiopulmonary bypass in the last about a month. On 26-03-2024 another Mitral valve replacement was performed in a very sick patient who had severe Mitral regurgitation with perforated anterior mitral leaflets. The patient was very sick, with multisystem problems.

# Bhat Family Bereaved



With profound grief, we inform the demise of Abdul Majeed Bhat, S/o Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, R/o Main Road, Ellahibagh, Srinagar on 27th March 2024 (Wednesday).

May Almighty Allah grant Jannat-UL-Firdous to the departed soul (Ameen).

Congregational Fateha Khawani will be held on 29th March 2024 at 02:30 am at their ancestral graveyard at Malik Sahab, Soura, Srinagar.

**BEREAVED BHAT FAMILY**