

Good Morning Kashmir

16th Year Of Publication



Omar Abdullah
@OmarAbdullah

Remembering former CM of J&K, late Mufti Mohd Sayeed Sb on his 9th death anniversary. Mufti Sb was one of the most senior political leaders to emerge from Kashmir, having served in various ministries in the Union Government & been elected CM of J&K twice. His death left a gap in the political landscape of J&K that remains unfilled. May Allah grant him highest place in Jannat.

Srinagar • Wednesday 08, January 2025 • Vol: 16 • Issue No: 07 • Pages: 08 • Price: ₹ 2/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

Kashmir To Receive More Snow From Jan 11

Barring Pahalgam, Kashmir Records Above Normal Night Temp



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The night temperature has settled above normal across Kashmir barring the famous tourist destination, Pahalgam where the mercury settled at minus 7.8 degree Celsius, which was the coldest place across the Valley.

The minimum temperature in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has settled at 0.9 degree while in Qazigund, it has settled at 0.4 degree.

Kupwara in north Kashmir has recorded a low of minus 1.4 degree Celsius while Kokernag recorded a minimum temperature of minus 0.5 degree.

Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, has recorded a minimum

temperature of minus 6.6 degree Celsius.

The weatherman has however, predicted dry weather conditions for the next three days, saying that the weather would remain generally dry till January 10.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, said that there is a possibility of light snow at isolated to scattered places on January 11 and 12.

Furthermore, he added that the weather would remain generally dry from January 13 to 15.

In its advisory, the local MeT has said that in view of fresh snowfall, sub-freezing temperature & icy conditions over roads plains and higher reaches, the tourists, travelers and transporters

Terror-Free, Fear-Free J&K Our Resolve: LG

Challenges Of Disinformation, Deep Fakes Remain Major Concerns

GMK NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR: Asserting that terror-free and fear-free Jammu Kashmir was his resolve, the Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Tuesday that at operational level, we have improved coordination between Police and other security agencies and adopted 'whole of government approach' to dismantle the entire terrorists and separatists' eco-system.

Sinha made these remarks while addressing the Passing Out Parade of Probationer Deputy Superintendents of Police (DySPs) at Police Academy here on Tuesday.

In his address, the LG congratulated all the 61 passing out police officers and asked them to discharge their duty with honesty, dedication and high professionalism.

"From today, the nation is entrusting you with the important responsibility of maintaining internal security, combating terrorism, ensuring Rule of Law, and a safe and secure environment for the people. I wish you victory in



every mission," he said.

Sinha paid tributes to the brave-hearts of J&K Police and the jawans of other security forces who have laid down their lives for the nation.

He highlighted that the J&K Police, working under extremely challenging circumstances, is playing a significant role in the country's internal security, ensuring the integrity of the nation and safety of the citizens of Union Territory.

"Terror-free and fear-free Jammu Kashmir is our resolve. At operational level, we have improved coordina-

tion between Police and other Security agencies and adopted 'Whole of Government Approach' to dismantle the entire terrorists and separatists' eco-system," he added.

Speaking on the new emerging security challenges, the LG entrusted upon J&K Police to use the innovative tools to enhance its capabilities in countering disinformation and dealing with cross-border cyber threats.

"Modern technology like Artificial Intelligence tools have changed the security landscape. Challenges of disinformation and

FROM TODAY, THE NATION IS ENTRUSTING YOU WITH THE IMPORTANT responsibility of maintaining internal security, combating terrorism, ensuring Rule of Law, and a safe and secure environment for the people. I wish you victory in every mission," he said.

Fraudster Posing As Govt Official Arrested



GMK NEWS NETWORK

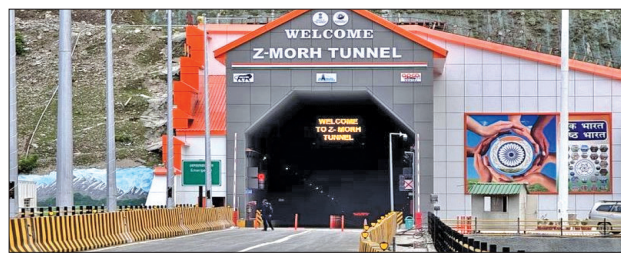
SRINAGAR: Srinagar Police on Tuesday said to have arrested a man accused of impersonating a government officer to extort Rs two lakh from a woman, promising to secure her husband's release from custody.

In a statement issued here, a spokesman said that Police has arrested a fraudster, who falsely claimed to be a government officer in order to defraud an individual of substantial sum of money promising to release a drug peddler detained under drug-related crime.

It reads that on 06-01-2025, a complaint was filed by Safiya Riyaz wife of Riyaz Ahmad Channa accusing Sadiq Hassan Chalo, a resident of Shaheedgunj, of impersonating a government officer and defrauding her of Rs 2 lakh.

"The accused person falsely claimed influence to facilitate

PM Modi To Inaugurate Z-Morh Tunnel On Jan-26



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the Z-Morh tunnel in Ganderbal district on January 26, a project expected to prove a game changer in regional connectivity and will improve border security, and enhance civilian and military logistics in the region.

As per the reports, the tunnel, built at a cost of 2,400

crore, is strategically vital for maintaining uninterrupted connectivity to Sonamarg, a region that often remains cut off during harsh winters due to heavy snowfall. This development is being seen as a major milestone in improving infrastructure and ensuring all-weather accessibility in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Z-Morh tunnel is a game-changer for both the military and civilians.

CM Omar Meets Sitharaman, Seeks Liberal Funding For J&K

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday called on Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman here to seek liberal funding for Jammu and Kashmir, sources told a local news agency KNO.

They said that the Chief Minister pushed for enhancing financial support to the UT for minimizing liabilities of the last financial year.

"The CM is believed to have sought additional financial support from Centre for minimizing liabilities of Rs 10000-12000 crore accumulated in 2023-24," they said.



Omar, according to the sources, held pre-Budget consultations with the Union Finance Minister and sought much-needed support from the Centre for the region.

"The Finance Minister assured all possible

Bye-Polls For Budgam, Nagrota To Be Announced Later: CEC

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Election Commission of India on Tuesday announced that bye-elections for the Budgam and Nagrota constituencies in Jammu & Kashmir will be held later due to snowy conditions.

Addressing a news conference, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said the schedule for the bye-polls in Budgam and Nagrota will not be announced today due to the adverse weather conditions in the region.

"There are two constituencies in J&K which are also due for elections: Budgam and Nagrota. Because of

snow conditions, we will do till April; before that, we will complete the election," he said.

Omar Abdullah vacated the Budgam seat on October 21, while the Nagrota seat

became vacant on October 31 following the demise of Devinder Singh Rana. According to section 151A of the Representation of Peoples Act-1951, a bye-election for filling any vacancy must be held within six months from the date of the occurrence of the vacancy.

So election of these seats has to be completed before April 20.

While the BJP is likely to field Devinder Singh

Over 17% Primary, 12 Percent Hr Sec Students Quit Studies Midway In J&K



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: In Jammu and Kashmir, over 17 percent of students at primary level and 12 percent learners at senior secondary level quit studies midway—thus raising a question on the functioning of the department.

The official reveal that "The retention rate at Primary level in Jammu and Kashmir was 82.70 and 88.42 at senior secondary level."

The official documents however state that, "About 46,000 Out of School Children (OoSC) have been mainstreamed."

Meanwhile, the government-run-school teachers say that many students in rural

areas quit studies midway. "The retention problem is mainly seen in tribal and remote areas wherein the students quit studies midway."

The documents further state that a notable shift of thousands of students from private to government schools has been recorded.

"There has been impressive enrolment of 217,890 students in 2022-23, marking a 17.87 percent increase in total enrolment," it reads.

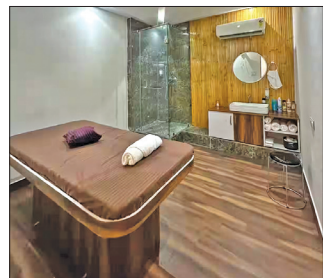
It also said that the department introduced vocational education in 804 schools, and expanded to 1,067 schools in 2023-24—thus benefiting 1.25 lakh students.

The documents further reveal that the School Educa-

tion Department established 3,000 ICT and CAL labs and were planning for additional 834 ICT labs and 1,352 smart classrooms in 2023-24 to enhance experiential learning. Stating the works completed in the School Education Department, the documents reveal that it has completed 2,562 infrastructure projects in 2022-23, including civil works and facility enhancements under UT Capex and Samagra Shiksha.

"SED implemented Early Child Care Education with kindergartens in nearly 2,000 schools, alongside infrastructure improvements like child-friendly furniture and model kindergarten," it reads—(KNO)

SPAs In Jammu Under Police Lens



AGENCIES

JAMMU: In a major crackdown, Jammu Police conducted surprise raids at around 20 spa centres across the city on Tuesday.

According to the information received, the police conducted simultaneous raids at 20 spa centers operating in the Jammu city and verified its documents.

"The teams checked various documents of the centers including operational permissions, rent deeds, documents of employees, ESCI credentials of working staff, hygiene and other laid down norms to ascertain legality of these centers," police officials told a local news agency KNO.

The raids were conducted in areas including Channi Himmat, Greater Kalish, Sanik Colony.

The police seized a large quantity of objectionable

MUFASA
MUFASA: THE LION KING (3D HINDI) (U) 03:10PM

PUSHPA 2
PUSHPA (THE RULE PART-02) (HINDI) (U/A 16+) 12:30PM, 02:50PM, 05:45PM

YEH JAWAANI HAI DEEWANI
YEH JAWAANI HAI DEEWANI (HINDI) (U/A) 12:00PM

INOX SRINAGAR

Movies SCHEDULE

Wed, 8th Jan 2025

TICKETS AT FLAT

₹ 150

KRAVEN THE HUNTER
KRAVEN THE HUNTER (HINDI) (A) 04:30PM

BABY JOHN
BABY JOHN (HINDI) (U/A 16+) 11:40AM

TICKETS AT:

www.bookmyshow.com
www.inoxmovies.com
Paytm, Inox App or Directly from the booking counter at the cinema.

Call 95416 13868
For assistance with tickets

Parents aghast over non-availability of BOSE Textbooks

Let students enjoy winter vacations: Chairman BOSE

AGENCIES
SRINAGAR: As the non-availability of textbooks for students of grade 6 to 9 has been giving parents headaches, Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE), Parikshat Singh Manhas, has told parents and students to "take it easy and enjoy winter vacations instead of worrying".

Parents have been expressing concern about the unavailability of BOSE textbooks which are not available in markets or schools which, according to them, result in loss of precious studying time. "The textbooks are not available even in schools, which has left us helpless. Students cannot start their new academic year properly," a couple of parents

said. Local news gathering agency Kashmir News Trust approached BOSE Chairman Manhas regarding the issue and appeared to downplay the urgency. "Can't you tell parents that there is winter vacation and let the students enjoy it? Why are you pressurizing the students and not allowing them to enjoy the vacation period?" he

responded. On being reminded that the results have already been declared and students need textbooks to commence their studies, Chairman Manhas stated, "Our books are already in the market." He added that the schools are currently closed due to the winter break, which is why textbooks may not be available in school premises. KNT

MISSION YUVA IEC awareness programme on Baseline Survey held in Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK
KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Tuesday presided over the Udyam Jagriti (2.0) IEC Awareness programme regarding Baseline Survey under Mission YUVA at Mini-Secretariat Kulgam. The DC emphasised upon all the officers and officials involved in Baseline Survey to carry out the assigned task with utmost diligence & professionalism. Assuring enumerators of all the possible support from District Administration, DC informed the audience that dedicated committees including Monitoring Committee and Control room have been set up to provide all the possible technical expertise and help as and when required by the field investigators/enumerators. Further, while directing for adhering to the timelines regarding accomplishment of the task, the DC laid

emphasis on high quality and accurate data capturing so that prospective beneficiaries can be identified to facilitate their livelihood/employment generation under Mission YUVA. ADDC and DSEO Kulgam in their address requested people of Kulgam to cooperate and provide correct information and details to the visiting enumerators/investigators. The enumerators were also instructed to disseminate the information among target groups about the robust support mechanism envisaged under Mission YUVA. Contents/Videos were displayed and deliberated upon during the event. Besides Additional District Development Commissioner Kulgam, District Statistics & Evaluation Officer Kulgam, Career Counselling Officer & Employment officer DE&CC Kulgam, the IEC programme was attended by Supervisors, Master Trainers & Enumerators.

DC Kupwara finalizes arrangements for Lolab Winter Festival

GMK NEWS NETWORK
KUPWARA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan Tuesday convened a meeting of concerned officers to finalize the arrangements for conduct of the Lolab Winter Festival. On the occasion, the DC directed the concerned officers to make fool proof arrangements for vibrant and smooth conduct of the Lolab Winter Festival in the serene Lolab valley. To ensure well organized facilities and participation of local populace in the Lolab Snow Festival venue, a Committee consisting of CEO LBDDA, SDM Lolab and Tehsildar Sogam was designated who shall personally monitor the arrangements in coordination with different departments and stakeholders. Police department will ensure security arrangements and participation of the Police band. DFO Kamraj will decorate the venue and make arrangements for the Bonfire.

Besides, installation of stalls displaying information related to various government schemes and achievements will be done by the Forest department, Industries, YS&S, CEO LBDDA, Handicrafts/ Handloom, NRLM and Agriculture & allied departments. Besides, GM DIC and District Officer KVIB shall ensure ATV, Snow biking, Zip Lines and Ice skating facilities at the venue. Several other arrangements which were finalized include publicity of the festival, sanitation and cleanliness of the venue, decoration of sports, Igloo competition, transport, road clearance, seating/ heating arrangements, fire tender etc and the concerned officers were directed to ensure the same at the venue well before the beginning of the event. The meeting was attended by CEO LBDDA, SDM Lolab, ASP Kupwara, ACD, ACP, CPO, DFO Kamraj, XEN R&B Lolab, besides, officers from Police and Army were present in the meeting.

DC Shopian for efficient verification of beneficiaries under PDS

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SHOPIAN: A meeting on efficient verification of beneficiaries of Public Distribution System (PDS) was Tuesday held at Mini Secretariat Shopian under the chairpersonship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar. The verification process for availing the benefits under the National Food Security Act shall be undertaken across the district by multiple teams of officers and officials. Village level teams of frontline workers of dif-



ferent departments including Revenue, FCS&CA and RDD have been constituted to verify the antecedents of ration card holders in the district, the officer of the concerned department intimidated.

A total 61000 ration card holders are to be verified in the district for ascertaining their economic status afresh and their eligibility thereof under the scheme. Tehsil and block level teams have been constit-

uted and deputed to oversee the verification process of village level committees as per norms. The DC tasked the officers associated with the process to monitor time bound verification of the teams and to ensure that the whole exercise is done with impartiality and integrity. Shahid called for conducting massive door to door visits by the teams to take on spot appraisal of the verification process. The meeting was attended by ACD, AD FCS&CA, Tehsildars, BDOs, TSOs and other officers.

UDYAM JAGRITI 2.0 Baseline survey campaign launched in District Ganderbal

GMK NEWS NETWORK
GANDERBAL: As part of the Udyam Jagriti 2.0 campaign, a Baseline Survey event was held at Duderhama, Ganderbal, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir. The event aimed to ensure the successful implementation of the campaign by equipping the supervisors and enumerators with the necessary guidance and motivation to carry out the survey with dedication and precision. Addressing the gathering, the DC highlighted the importance of the Baseline Survey in identifying key areas for intervention and urged the supervisors and enumerators to work dili-



gently to achieve the objectives of the campaign. He emphasized the role of accurate data collection in shaping developmental initiatives under Udyam Jagriti 2.0. Assistant Director Employment & Counsel-

ing Centre, provided a comprehensive overview of the Baseline Survey and its integration with Mission YUVA, emphasizing its significance in empowering the youth and boosting local entrepreneurship. During the event, master

trainers and supervisors briefed the participants on the technical aspects of the survey process and addressed challenges that might arise during implementation. Open discussions allowed participants to share insights and solutions for effective execution. The event witnessed active participation from local residents, social workers, and other stakeholders, showcasing collective enthusiasm for the campaign's success. The District Administration remains committed to ensuring the smooth execution of Udyam Jagriti 2.0 and encourages active cooperation from all sections of society to achieve its objectives.

Rift between Omar, Ruhulla a 'fixed match: BJP

GMK NEWS NETWORK
JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir BJP Legislative Party leader Sunil Sharma Tuesday said that the ongoing 'rift' between National Conference president and chief minister Omar Abdullah and party MP Aga Ruhulla was a fixed match and a concerted effort to divert public attention from the ruling party's failure to deliver and unfulfilled promises. Sharma described the reported tensions within the NC as a "fixed match," accusing the party of

using internal conflicts as a distraction from pressing issues such as unemployment, unfulfilled commitments of free electricity, and the restoration of Article 370. Sunil Sharma claimed that: "National Conference MLAs are increasingly unhappy with Omar Abdullah's leadership. This dissatisfaction has forced him to delay the much-anticipated cabinet expansion, as any such move could expose and deepen the internal divisions within the party." [KNT]

DC Kulgam reviews progress of works under JJM

GMK NEWS NETWORK
KULGAM: In order to evaluate the progress of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the district, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Tuesday chaired a meeting with concerned officers of the Jal Shakti Department at mini-secretariat, here. During the meeting, the DC reviewed both the physical and financial progress of the works being executed under the JJM in the district. The Executive Engineer gave a detailed brief of all works to the chair. It was also informed that under the JJM, the district has a total of 143 schemes encompassing 222 works, with several works already completed. Emphasizing the importance of JJM as a flagship

program aimed at covering all households, officers were instructed to work in coordination to ensure the smooth execution of JJM works in their respective areas by the DC. Various issues and bottlenecks impeding the speedy completion of few projects were comprehensively discussed during the meeting. The DC instructed the concerned to ensure timely completion and target achievement under Jal Jeevan Mission. He instructed for strict measures like penalties and blacklisting of contractors/firms failing to meet project conditions and deadlines. The meeting was attended by ADDC, Bashir Ahmad Wani, ADC, Vigar Ahmad Giri, Superintending Engineer, Executive Engineers, AEEs and other officers.

MISSION YUVA Baseline survey to identify aspiring entrepreneurs begins in B'pora

GMK NEWS NETWORK
BANDIPORA: A vibrant launch ceremony of Mission YUVA was held Tuesday at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora, marking a significant step towards making Jammu and Kashmir a hub of enterprise creation and employment generation. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri stressed the importance of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) strategies to channelize the mission effectively. Highlighting the survey component of Mission YUVA, the DC underlined its basic objective of identifying potential entrepreneurs and urged the enumerators to approach the task with dedication. He urged Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) Bandipora to accelerate the process while ensuring data accuracy. Speaking at the event, the DC urged senior officials, including ADC, ALC, and AD Employment, to closely monitor the process and ensure assignments are carried out as per job profiles without any changes or swaps. Speaking on the occasion, Nodal Officer, Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) highlighted the importance of productive interaction between enumerators and aspiring entrepreneurs. She emphasized the need to focus on the target audience to

serve them effectively. She outlined the objectives of Mission YUVA, including enterprise creation, identification of potential entrepreneurs, and understanding their needs. She stated that Mission YUVA, being an umbrella project, is built on the foundation of 4C's including Culture, Capital, Capacity and Connectivity, which will guide its execution and success. During the event, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bandipora, Zaffar Husson Shawl reminded the enumerators that their work should be commendable, as it directly impacts the program's success and emphasized corrective measures should be taken promptly to reduce delays, and additional deployments have been arranged considering the region's challenging terrain and topography. Joint Director Employment and Nodal Officer for Bandipora District stressed the need for dedication and persistence from the enumerators and supervisors. She acknowledged the challenges faced at the grassroots level but urged the teams to tackle them with determination to ensure the program's success. The event concluded with a renewed commitment from all stakeholders to make Mission YUVA a transformative initiative for the district, fostering an entrepreneurial spirit and creating sustainable employment opportunities.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PW(R&B) DIVISION, SHOPIAN

e-mail: - rmbdivisionshopian@gmail.com

e-auction/NIT No: 66/7571-76/SPN/RnB/e-Tendering/2024-25 **Dated:-07-01-2025**

For and on behalf of the Honorable Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of J&K, e bidding in Single cover system is invited by Executive Engineer R&B Division Shopian for

S.No.	Name Of Work	Cost Of Tender Document/in Rs.	EMD	Min. Auction Starting Amount
1.	Standing auction of building (Dilapidated) at old DC Office along with Bathrooms.	Rs. 200/-	Rs. 1580/-	Rs. 79000/-

The tender documents along with list of items can be downloaded from the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> from 10:00 A.M. for which the cost of tender documents in the shape of Treasury Challan of Rs. 200/- in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Shopian, to be remitted in treasury under M.H- 0059 is to be uploaded with tender documents. The earnest money amounting to Rs. 1580/- in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Shopian is to be uploaded with tender documents. The bidders should submit the bid Forms in two parts i.e., technical bid and financial bid separately. The financial bid shall be opened only after the bid documents of intending bidders are found technically qualified. Bid documents should be deposited in electronic format on the website: <http://jktenders.gov.in>. The bids (technical/financial bid) shall be opened on 16-01-2025 online. The bid documents along with terms and conditions can be downloaded from the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> as per the schedule of dates given below:-

Date and time of inspection of Standing Building.	08-01-2025 to 15-01-2025
Date of issue of Tender notice:	07-01-2025
Period of downloading of tender Documents	from 08-01-2025, 10:A.M to 15-01-2025, 2:00 P.M
Bid Submission start date	08-01-2025 10:00 A.M
Bid Submission end date:	15-01-2025 upto 2:00 P.M
Date and time of opening of bids (online)	16-01-2025 at 11.00 A.M

No: - 7571-76
Dated: -07-01-2025

DIPK-10576-24
DT: 07/01/2025

Sd/- Drafts man	Sd/- Camp Clerk	Sd/- Head Assistant	Sd/- Technical Officer
			Executive Engineer R&B Division Shopian

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT. GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR

BAGHI-ALI-MARDAN, NOWSHARA SRINAGAR.
E-mail:-phegwds@yahoo.com, Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

EXTENSION NOTICE2ND.

Subject:

- Construction of Bore Well at Yal Bonpora Shumhall District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_1.
- Construction of Tube Well Near Ahli-Hadees Masjid, Buchan Shangus Chittergul, Utrasoo at District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_3.
- Construction of tube Well at GMS (Govt. Middle School) Sonach District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_5.
- Construction of Bore Well Near Fullah Masjid at R.C Pora Koveripora District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_7.
- Construction of Tube Well Near Primary School Ganiegund Sakiabad District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_8.
- Construction of tube Well at Nai Basti Panzgam Breng Panzgam District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_14.
- Construction of tube Well for Residents of Karewa Kanganhall Magraypora Achabal Anantnag Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_15.
- Construction of tube Well for Govt. High School at Wandergund Mohripora Achabal District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_16.
- Construction of Tube Well Har Lamin Achabal District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_17.
- Construction of Bore Well for Grewallipora Ward No. 1 Soaf-C Breng District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_18.
- Construction of Bore well near Shop of Mohammad Hussain Wani, Mohammad Hussain Reshi at MR Akingam-A. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_20.
- Construction of Tube Well for Govt. middle School Awanpora, khoveripora District Anantnag. Tender ID No. 2024_PHE_268229_21.

Reference: This office e-NIT No.46-JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2024-25, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/24-25/Corrs./9108-19, dated: 16-12-2024.

Due to "No Response" for the above mentioned Subject works advertised e-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 06-01-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM are extended as per the details given below:-

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	15-01-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	16-01-2025 11.00 AM

NOTE:
All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endsst: nos. No-JS-PHE/GWDS/24-25/Corrs./10234-45
Dated: 07-01-2025
DIPK-10532-24
DT: 01/07/2025

Sd/= Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

12th UT Level NCORD Meet

Strict enforcement of laws, proper treatment, mass awareness key to tackle drug menace: CS

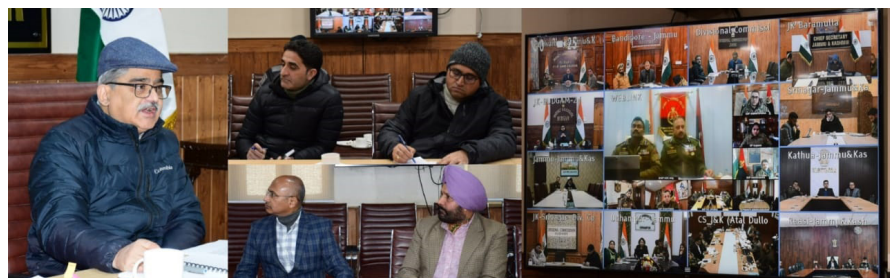
GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today emphasised strict enforcement of relevant laws, proper rehabilitation of victims and massive awareness generation to effectively tackle the drug menace in the Union Territory.

The Chief Secretary, while chairing the 12th UT Level NCORD Committee meeting, advocated the significance of collective approach in combatting this challenge.

Present in the meeting were DG, Police, Principal Secretary, Home, ACS, Jal Shakti Department, Principal Secretary, School Education Department, ADGP Crime, ADGP, Headquarters, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir/Jammu, ADGP, Jammu, IGP Kashmir, Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare, Commissioner Secretary, Forests, Secretary, Health, Secretary, RDD, Secretary, Law, Zonal Director, NCB, Deputy Commissioners, District SSPs, representatives from BSE, ED, SIA and other senior civil and police officers while outstation officers participated online.

Dulloo emphasised the need for making collective efforts by the civil administration and Police department to eradicate this evil from the society. He maintained that strict action against the drug dealers would act as an effective deterrent for the people involved with this illicit practice. He called upon the investigation and prosecution agencies to prepare strong cases against such unscrupulous elements. He



observed that sometimes tardy investigations and weak prosecutions lead to early acquittals of the arrested persons. He exhorted upon the police department to enhance the capacity of both Investigation Officers and Public Prosecutors so that the cases framed against the culprits succeed in making convictions in the court of law.

The Chief Secretary also enjoined upon the department to be strict against the police officers found defaulting on framing strong cases against the drug dealers. He also made out that the government employees found involved in NDPS cases should be taken to task as per the laws in vogue.

He enquired from each SSP about the bails/acquittals challenged in higher judicial forums. He said that all bails/acquittals orders passed should be assailed in higher courts.

He remarked that the motive of each investigation should be to turn the case into successful conviction by following the requisite SoPs throughout the case proceedings right from seizure. He also quoted several Supreme Court directions passed to secure the nation from falling prey to this threat.

He said that the burden of

proof in NDPS cases lies on the accused so here police should use the enforcement laws much effectively to rid this region from the affliction affecting us badly. He also directed for audit of each case resulting into acquittals so that responsibility of any loophole found in the case is fixed properly.

Dulloo underscored the need for having IPD facilities of drug de-addiction in all the district hospitals in future and OPD facilities in most of our health facilities. He also asked the Health Department to provide best of the counselling and treatment to the victims both through online and offline mode. He also urged the concerned Departments to collaborate with the School Education and Higher Education Departments to create awareness among the students there.

He called upon the Police Department to hold panchayat level events where videos and other IEC material should be displayed and distributed to create mass awareness. He called for framing calendars in each district along with designating nodal officers to accomplish the tasks with reports sent to SSPs in the district.

DG, Police, Nalin Prabhakar, explained that there is huge paradigm shift in

taking up of investigations under NDPS and PITNDPS Acts. He revealed that actions against these persons have increased manifold with focussed attention of the Department towards curbing this illicit trade.

He further gave out that the attachment of properties together with other strict measures being taken by police force are showing its impact on ground. He observed that although there is always scope for improvement but the Department has done a yeoman's job on this front.

Principal Secretary, Home, Chandraker Bharti, while speaking in the meeting, suggested the police department to make full use of national portals like NIDAAN to trace the forward and backward links of the case. He recalled that PITNDPS has been very effective in dealing with this illegal practice after devising its SoPs by the Department.

He further apprised that timely appeals against bail orders would be a good measure to dissuade the traders. He also emphasised upon attachment of properties of these drug dealers besides making red entries in revenue records simultaneously against such immovable properties.

Ensure completion of SDHs within targeted time: Dy CM to officers

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Underscoring the need for providing better healthcare facilities to the people living in far flung areas, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Tuesday directed the officers for speeding up the pace of work on the ongoing health related infrastructural projects.

The Deputy Chief Minister was addressing the officers during a review meeting convened to discuss the status of completion of under-construction Sub District Hospitals of Sunderbani and Nowshera in Rajouri district.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Power Development Department, Secretary, PW(R&B) Department, Secretary, H&ME Department, MD JPDCL Jammu, Director Health Services, Jammu, Chief Engineers, PW(R&B) Zone Pir Panjal/Mechanical and Hospital Engineering Department Jammu/JPDCL Jammu and other senior officers.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the officers to maintain close coordination for ensuring that the SDHs are completed within the stipulated time. He said that the bottlenecks, if any, should be removed so that

the work on the project is speeded up and people get benefitted from the initiatives undertaken by the government for providing better healthcare facilities to them. "Ensure the work on these ambitious healthcare projects is done in double shifts for speedy completion of these projects", he asked the officers.

"We are committed for providing enhanced healthcare facilities to the people of Jammu and Kashmir with emphasis on rural and far-flung areas. Instructions have already been passed for speeding up the pace of work on various healthcare related

infrastructural works especially the under-construction Hospitals. Besides, strict monitoring is also being done so that they are completed as early as possible.", the Deputy Chief Minister maintained.

The meeting was told that the 50 bedded Sub District Hospital at Sunderbani is being constructed with an estimated cost of Rs. 18.57 crore and is expected to be completed by July, 2025. Similarly, upgradation of 100 bedded SDH at Nowshera is being taken up with an estimated cost of Rs. 18.8 crore which is expected to be completed by July, 2025.

BJP has always respected electoral process: Chugh hits back at Kejriwal

AGENCIES

JAMMU: Ahead of the announcement of dates for the Delhi Assembly polls by the Election Commission, BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh stressed that the party has always shown regard for the electoral process and said that the people of Delhi will give their blessings to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Elections are the festival of democracy. The BJP has always respected the electoral process. The people of Delhi want to be free from the 'AAPda' named Arvind Kejriwal...", Chugh said.

"Kejriwal has pushed back Delhi to 50 years. The public is repeatedly shouting, 'Kejriwal sahab bye-bye'".

"The people of Delhi are going to form a double-engine government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," the top BJP leader said. "Modiji is going to receive the blessings of the people."

BJP leader Nalin Kohli said, "...It gives the people of Delhi an opportunity to elect the government of their choice. Before them is a model of the Aam Aadmi Party of failed promises, tall promises not implemented and scams... On the other hand, will be the developmental model for an aspirational India as promised and delivered by PM Modi's govt at the Centre and BJP-NDA govts in states."

Meanwhile, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar said the election commission will



announce the dates for the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections today. Kakkar stated the party is ready with all 70 candidates and Arvind Kejriwal as its CM face while criticising BJP and Congress for their lack of preparation.

She expressed confidence in a fair election and predicted Kejriwal's reelection for a fourth term. Speaking to ANI, Kakkar said, "AAP is ready to go into the election. We have the CM face, and we have declared all 70 candidates. Contrary to that, the BJP and Congress aren't prepared. We hope that the Election Commission will conduct a free and fair election. The people will elect Arvind Kejriwal for the fourth time."

Earlier, Aam Aadmi Party Chief Arvind Kejriwal claimed that "Large-Scale" fraud in voter addition and deletions in the New Delhi Assembly seat is taking place.

In a post on X, Kejriwal cited a letter from Chief Minister Atishi sent to Delhi Chief Electoral Officer. "Large-scale fraud taking place in voter additions and deletions in the New Delhi assembly. Delhi CM Atishi ji writes this letter to CEC presenting evidence and seeking time to meet," he said. (ANI)

J&K Pavilion emerges as most celebrated attraction at IIMTF 2024

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KOLKATA: The Jammu and Kashmir pavilion, with its stunning display of regional craftsmanship, authentic products and emerging entrepreneurial talent, emerged as one of the most popular and celebrated attractions in the 23rd India International Mega Trade Fair (IIMTF), held at the Science City Grounds in Kolkata from December 20, 2024, to January 6, 2025.

The pavilion, being sponsored by the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO), featured 21 dedicated stalls including contributions from women entrepreneurs, one of whom, an award recipient, showcased live Pashmina weaving at her stall.

This vibrant platform allowed artisans and businesses from Jammu and Kashmir to display their unique products. The exhibition offered a diverse range of high-quality items including Pashmina Shawls, Sozni embroidered textiles, GI-tagged Kashmiri saffron, dry fruits, hand-embroidered Phiran, and organic food products such as Honey, Anardana, and Rajmash from Jammu. These traditional, meticulously crafted products attracted significant attention from the visitors.

The pavilion offered visitors the chance to purchase one-of-a-kind items, while fostering direct interactions between the artisans and guests. This engagement allowed them to discover the intricate techniques and stories behind each creation, which in turn helped many artisans generate valuable business leads. The immersive experience not only added value to the products but also deepened the appreciation for Jammu and Kashmir's rich artistic heritage.

The event proved to be a tremendous success, achieving sales of around Rs 1.3 crore and generating more than 1,900 business leads for future orders. This exceptional response highlights the rising demand for Kashmiri products and underscores the growing recognition of region's craftsmanship both in domestic and international markets.

IIMTF 2024 featured over 1,000 stalls representing exhibitors from 20 Indian states and 15 countries worldwide and Jammu & Kashmir Pavilion was one of the major attractions for the visitors. JKTPO had successfully participated in prominent events such as the IITF 2024 in Delhi, PITEX in Amritsar, CII Fair in Chandigarh, MSME Expo in New Delhi etc. Besides, JKTPO organised J&K Textile Sourcing Fair 2024, J&K Trade Show 2024 (Summer Edition) and Basmati Fest 2024 to effectively showcase Jammu and Kashmir's economic potential.

In the coming months, the JKTPO will enhance its outreach by participating in major events like MITEX Mumbai, Surajkund Mela and Bharat Tex 2025. Additionally, it will host the 2nd Agro and Food Fest on January 22, 2025 and the JK Trade Show 2025 (Winter Edition) on January 31, 2025.

CAT's Jammu bench disposed of record over 15,500 cases: Jitendra Singh

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT), Jammu bench, has disposed of a record over 15,500 cases in a brief period since its inception in 2020, Union minister Jitendra Singh said on Tuesday.

This was shared by the Union minister of state for personnel after a meeting he had with CAT Chairman Justice Ranjit More here about the current status and working of the tribunal, tasked with redressing government employees' service matters.

The meeting focused specifically on the infrastructural setup, manning position and institution/disposal of cases by the bench in Jammu, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, an official statement said. Jammu and Kashmir tourism

"The Central Administrative Tribunal Jammu bench has achieved a record of sorts by disposing of as many as 15,537 cases in a brief period since its inception in 2020 during the height of Covid pandemic," the minister was quoted as having said in the statement issued by the Personnel Ministry.

The tribunal's bench was established on June 8, 2020, with one Division bench, which later on was

increased to two Division benches on January 10, 2023 by the central government, after considering the transfer of large number of long pending cases from the J&K High Court to the tribunal, the statement said.

As of now, both the Division benches in Jammu comprising two Judicial members and two administrative members are functioning with full strength. Since the inception of the Jammu bench, the total number of cases transferred from the high court are 11,792, out of which 9,275 have already been disposed of, including cases pending for years, the statement said.

In addition, 8,745 cases have been freshly instituted in CAT, Jammu bench since inception and out of this, 6,262 cases have already been disposed of, it said.

"This means that a total of 15,537 cases have been disposed of by the CAT, Jammu bench since inception," the statement said.

The infrastructure of the CAT Jammu bench has been enhanced through the joint efforts of the Union government and the government of Union Territory of J&K.

A new building, equipped with adequate amenities, is expected to be functional by the end of this month, it said.

Omar Abdullah honors Mufti Mohammad Sayeed on 9th death anniversary

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, remembered the former Chief Minister of the state, late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, on his 9th death anniversary, highlighting the significant role Sayeed played in the region's political landscape.

In a tweet, Omar acknowledged Mufti Sayeed's legacy as one of the most senior political leaders to emerge from Kashmir. He recognized the late leader's distinguished service in various ministries

of the Union Government and his two terms as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Remembering former CM of J&K, late Mufti Mohd Sayeed Sb on his 9th death anniversary. Mufti Sb was one of the most senior political leaders to emerge from Kashmir, having served in various ministries in the Union Government & been elected CM of J&K twice. His death left a gap in the political landscape of J&K that remains unfilled. May Allah grant him highest place in Jannat," reads the tweet of CM Omar. —(JKNS)

Anantnag Police Attach Property Worth Rs 1 Crore Under NDPS Act

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: In a significant action against Drug trafficking and its financial networks, Anantnag Police has attached the Double-storey Residential house of Khurshid Ahmad Dar, son of Abdul Gani Dar, resident of Satkipora.

The property, built on 1 Kanal of land and valued at approximately ₹1 crore, was attached under Section 68-F of the NDPS Act. The house has been linked to proceeds of Drug trafficking.

The accused is implicated in a major narcotics case registered under FIR No. 47/2019 at Police Sta-

tion Srigrufwara, involving the recovery of substantial quantities of contraband substances.

This decisive step underscores Anantnag Police's commitment to eradicating the drug menace and dismantling the economic framework supporting illegal narcotics trade. The action aims to deter criminal activities and protect society from the adverse effects of drug abuse.

The Police urge citizens to support their efforts in creating a drug-free society and reiterate their resolve to take stringent legal actions against those involved in drug-related crimes.

Avalanche Triggered in Gulmarg During Routine Snow Safety Exercise

AGENCIES

BARAMULLA: Ski resort Gulmarg, Tuesday witnessed a controlled avalanche as part of routine winter safety protocols. The Assistant Director of Tourism, Gulmarg, informed

the news agency Kashmir News Trust that controlled blasting was carried out at Afarwat to prepare slopes for skiing and reduce the risk of natural avalanches in the future. "This controlled avalanche was part of our routine winter exercise,

carefully managed under the supervision of our Snow Safety Officer and the team," the official stated.

He said that this practice has been in place for years, and there is no cause for concern. "Authorities assured tourists and locals that such

measures are conducted to enhance the safety of skiers and visitors at the tourist resort. "The exercise is an integral part of the resort's preparations during the winter season to mitigate potential risks posed by heavy snow accumulation." [KNT]

Phone:-01933-295302 | Government of Jammu & Kashmir (UT) | E-mail:-techrpu786@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION PULWAMA.

TENDER NOTICE

E-NIT No: 112/EEP/RNB/ of 2024-25/8168-78 | Dated: 07 /01/2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT term e-tenders (In Single Cover system) are invited on %age Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Government for the following work :-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost(Rs. Lacs.)	Cost of T/D (Rs.)	Earnest Money (In %age)	Time of Completion in working Days	Class of Contract	Major Head of Accounts	Administrative Approval No:	Call No:
1	Construction of drain from H/O Gh Rasool Dar to River Rambh Ara at Zahid bagh Litter Pulwama.	5.82	300/	2% of Adv. cost	20 working days	DEE/CEE	3054		1st call

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

1. Date of Issue of Tender Notice	07 - 01-2025
2. Bid downloading Start Date	07 - 01-2025 from 10:00 A.M
3. Bid submission Start Date	07-01-2025 from 10:00 A.M
4. Bid Submission End Date	14 - 01-2025 upto 0 4:00 P.M
5. Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	15 - 01-2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama
6. Submission of Performance Security(PS)	Within three (03) days of receipt of LOA. (The First lowest successful bidder has to provide 5% of allotted cost as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and EMD of 2% shall be released after receipt of 5% Performance security.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in the shape of Treasury Challan /Receipt as per Annexure -C (Debited to M.H.0059 PWD) and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama (The Date of Treasury Challan and EMD should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.
- EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of the Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama
- The Contractors are advised to visit the site and to be aware of the conditions for launching at site of work before quoting the rates.
- The contractor shall also be responsible for any theft/ damage to any of the component at site and the cost of damage/ theft if any shall be deducted from the work done or CDR of the Contractor till completion of work and handing over.
- The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama within three (03) days after the date of receipt of letter of acceptance and shall be released after successful completion of DLP. The Bank Guarantee should be valid for 45 days beyond DLP

Head Draftsman: **DIPK-10561-24** | Technical Officer: | Executive Engineer: **R&B Division Pulwama**
DT: 07/01/2025

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

HMPV Knocks At The Doors

There has been a quiet panic on social media regarding the initial verified cases of a new virus. Three cases of respiratory distress-causing HMPV - two in Bengaluru and one in Ahmedabad - have been detected amid fears of the virus's spread. Following two cases in Bengaluru, the Karnataka government issued an advisory, urging citizens to avoid going to public places if they are symptomatic and to wear masks in crowded areas to reduce the risk of transition. This is coming in the backdrop of reports of rise in viral infections in China that have been linked to the metapneumovirus (HMPV), a respiratory pathogen that was first detected in 2001. Bronchopneumonia, also known as bronchial pneumonia, is a type of pneumonia that involves inflammation of both the bronchi and the alveoli in the lungs. Symptoms can range from mild to severe and include fever, cough, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, sweating and chills, headaches, muscle aches, fatigue and loss of appetite. According to the union health ministry, the two HMPV cases in Bengaluru were identified through routine surveillance for multiple respiratory viral pathogens, as part of the Indian council of Medical Research's ongoing efforts to monitor respiratory illness across the country. It would not be long when this virus will spread pan-India. We need to be prepared and need to broadcast information about this virus through radio, television and newspapers. This information dissemination has to be calibrated so as to prevent panic or rumours from spreading. Parallely, it would serve us good to ramp up our preparedness for any eventuality. There has been quite some development post-covid and we are better equipped to deal with any airborne virus. But when it comes to actual hands on experience would this on-paper preparedness hold water when the spread of virus peaks. That is the million dollar question the media should be asking of the current dispensation right now.

COVID 2.0 And HMPV: A New Pandemic Looming?

MAHMODUL SHESHEIR
MEHADI SHAWON
FAIAZ AHMED

In the midst of our recovery from the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, whispers of a potential new viral threat have surfaced, capturing the attention of global health experts and citizens alike. Human metapneumovirus (HMPV), a respiratory pathogen that has largely flown under the radar, is now being dubbed the potential "COVID 2.0." But is this comparison justified, and what should we learn from the last three years to prepare for any future pandemic?

The Rise of HMPV

HMPV is not a new virus. Discovered in 2001, it belongs to the same viral family as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and is a leading cause of respiratory illness in children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals. Unlike SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, HMPV has not been associated with global pandemics. However, recent surges in cases, coupled with its ability to cause severe respiratory distress, have raised alarms among virologists and epidemiologists.

In some regions, HMPV has accounted for up to 20% of respiratory infections requiring hospitalization. With symptoms like coughing, fever, nasal congestion, and shortness of breath, the virus mimics many aspects of influenza and COVID-19, complicating diagnosis and treatment. What differentiates HMPV from seasonal viruses is its ability to evade immunity, potentially leading to widespread outbreaks if left unchecked.

Lessons From COVID-19

COVID-19 has taught us hard lessons about the vulnerabilities of our healthcare systems, the importance of global cooperation, and the devastating consequences of delayed action. As we examine the potential threat of HMPV, these lessons become our greatest asset: Surveillance is Key: Early detection and monitoring of viral outbreaks are essential to preventing pandemics. The lack of robust surveillance systems in the early days of COVID-19 allowed the virus to spread undetected. With HMPV, enhanced surveillance could involve genetic sequencing, rapid diagnostic tools, and integrating real-time data from hospitals and clinics.

Invest in Research: One of the triumphs of the COVID-19 era was the rapid development of vaccines. However, such success requires sustained investment in virology and immunology research. Currently, there is no approved vaccine or specific antiviral treatment for HMPV. Funding research now could save millions of lives later. Public Health Communication Mat-



ters: Misinformation plagued COVID-19 management, from vaccine hesitancy to mask resistance. Clear, science-based communication about the risks of HMPV and the measures to mitigate its spread is critical. This includes combating myths and ensuring that accurate information reaches the public through trusted channels.

The Role of Climate Change and Urbanization

The emergence and re-emergence of infectious diseases like HMPV are increasingly linked to global phenomena like climate change and urbanization. Rising temperatures and shifting ecosystems are driving humans and animals closer together, increasing the likelihood of zoonotic spillovers. Densely populated cities amplify the speed at which viruses spread, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For HMPV, this means a heightened risk of outbreaks in vulnerable populations. Urban settings with poor air quality, for example, exacerbate respiratory illnesses, making individuals more susceptible to severe outcomes. Addressing these root causes requires international collaboration to tackle climate change and improve urban planning.

Beyond Health: Socioeconomic Impact

Another lesson from COVID-19 is that pandemics are not merely health crises—they are societal disruptions. The economic toll of COVID-19 was unprecedented, with millions losing jobs and industries like travel and hospitality brought to their knees. HMPV could have a similar ripple effect if it reaches pandemic levels, underscoring

the need for preemptive planning.

Policymakers must prioritize building resilient economies capable of weathering such shocks. This includes strengthening supply chains, ensuring equitable access to medical resources, and supporting small businesses that often bear the brunt of economic downturns.

Ethical Considerations

The inequities highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic—from vaccine distribution to healthcare access—must not be repeated. If HMPV emerges as a global threat, ensuring equitable distribution of resources will be paramount. This involves supporting low- and middle-income countries with funding, technology transfer, and logistical support to manage outbreaks effectively.

The Path Forward

While it is premature to label HMPV as "COVID 2.0," the comparison serves as a wake-up call. Our interconnected world is more vulnerable to pandemics than ever before, and complacency is not an option. Preparing for future viral threats requires a multifaceted approach:

Strengthen Global Health Infrastructure: Global health organizations like the WHO must be empowered with resources and authority to coordinate responses to emerging threats. National governments should collaborate to standardize protocols for outbreak detection and containment.

Promote Vaccine Development: Accelerating the timeline for vaccine development and approval through public-private partnerships and international collaboration is essential.

Advanced platforms like mRNA technology, which proved effective against COVID-19, should be leveraged for HMPV.

Foster a Culture of Preparedness: Pandemics should no longer be treated as once-in-a-century events. Routine drills, public education campaigns, and robust supply chain management can ensure societies are better prepared for future outbreaks.

A Call to Action

COVID-19 revealed humanity's resilience and ingenuity, but it also exposed deep flaws in our preparedness and response systems. As HMPV garners attention, it's crucial to approach the threat with vigilance and proactivity. Whether or not HMPV evolves into a pandemic, the steps we take today will determine our capacity to handle future public health crises. By investing in science, fostering global cooperation, and learning from the past, we can build a safer, healthier world. The response to HMPV must be swift, inclusive, and grounded in evidence. It is a reminder that vigilance against infectious diseases is a continuous process, one that demands not only resources but also the collective will to act. Let's ensure that the scars of COVID-19 serve as a roadmap to prevent the next pandemic from wreaking havoc on our lives and livelihoods.

Mahmodul Shesheir; Associate Researcher at Yale University-United States, Mehadi Shawon; PhD student at Kansas State University-United States, Faiaz Ahmed; Research Coordinator at Yale University-United States

WINTER WOES

Managing Asthma And Respiratory Challenges In Cold Weather



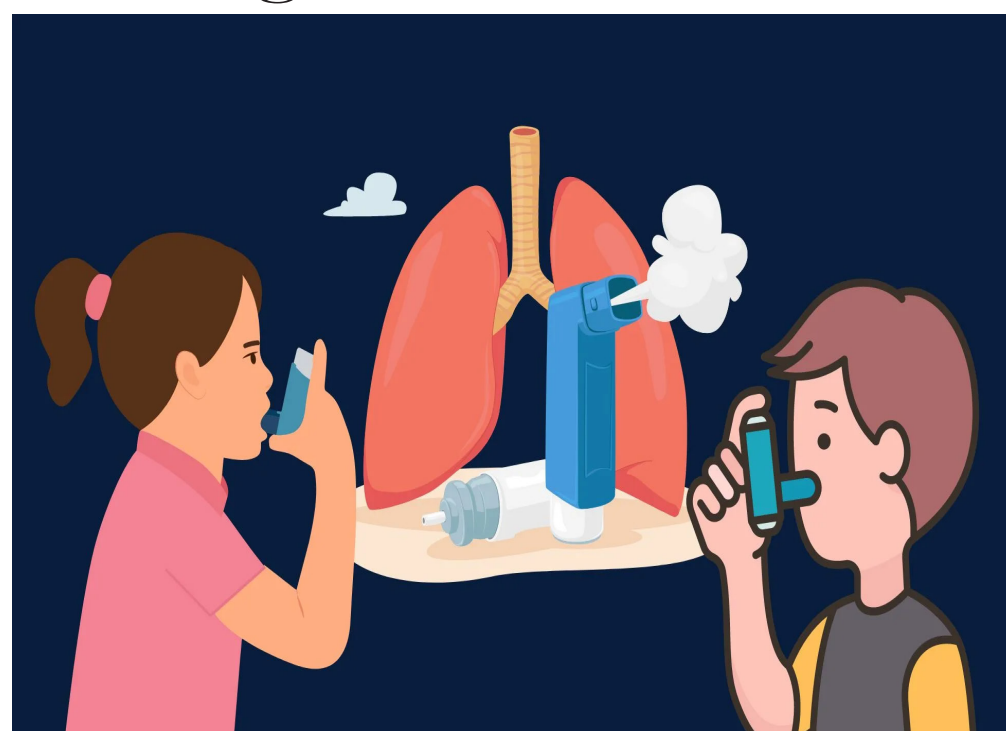
DR (BRIG) SARVINDER SINGH

As the winter season sets in, many people eagerly await the cozy evenings and festive celebrations. However, for individuals with respiratory conditions like asthma, this season often brings a host of challenges. Asthma is a significant public health concern in India, affecting approximately 3.5 crores individuals over the country.

The cold weather, combined with allergens and environmental changes, can act as a significant trigger for asthma attacks, leading to discomfort and potentially severe health complications. Understanding the connection between winter and asthma can help individuals manage their symptoms effectively and enjoy the colder months without undue stress.

Why Does Cold Weather Worsen Asthma?

Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition characterized by inflammation and narrowing of the airways, making it difficult to breathe. Cold weather



exacerbates these symptoms for several reasons

Breathing in cold, dry air can irritate the airways, causing them to constrict and leading to bronchial spasms, a common trigger for asthma attacks. Low humidity levels during winter further dry out the mucous membranes, making the airways more sensitive to irritants. Additionally, winter air often carries allergens such as mold spores, dust

mites, and pet dander. These allergens become more prevalent indoors as people spend more time inside with closed windows and reduced ventilation, creating an environment conducive to triggering asthma symptoms.

The colder months also see a spike in respiratory infections like colds and the flu, which can inflame the respiratory tract and exacerbate asthma. Furthermore, winter is asso-

ciated with increased pollution levels due to the burning of wood and other fuels for heating. The presence of smog and particulate matter in the air can irritate the lungs and aggravate asthma symptoms.

Common signs that cold weather is affecting asthma include wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, and a persistent cough. These symptoms may worsen during outdoor activities in the cold

or when exposed to common allergens indoors. Preventing Asthma Attacks During Winter

Taking proactive steps can help minimize the risk of asthma attacks during the colder months. Covering your nose and mouth with a scarf or mask helps warm and humidify the air you breathe, reducing irritation to the airways. Maintaining indoor air quality is equally important—use air purifiers, keep your home well-ventilated, and regularly clean surfaces to remove dust and pet dander.

Avoid exposure to smoke from fireplaces, wood stoves, and cigarettes, as these can worsen asthma symptoms. Additionally, following your doctor's advice on preventive medications, especially inhalers, is crucial. Protect yourself from respiratory infections by getting vaccinated for the flu and pneumonia.

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

Author is Senior Consultant - Pulmonology, Yatharth Hospital, Greater Noida

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Good Morning **Kashmir**

Printer, Publisher, Owner,
Editor in Chief:

Javed Ashraf Shah

Bureau Chief Jammu:

Harbans Nagokay

Manager:

Peer Sajad

R.N.I No: JKENG/2010/36998

Regd No: 109555

Office No: 0194-3593724

Email:

goodmorningkashmir@gmail.com

Office Address:

B-11, Budshah Flats, Jehangir

Chowk, Srinagar-190001

Printed at:

Khidmat Offset Printing
Press, The Bund, Srinagar

Published From:

Main Bus Stand, Near Masjid Rehmat,
Lal Bazar, Srinagar - 190023

Layout Designer

Aijaz Ahmad Dar

Meeting, Dating, Eating, Mating And OYO

BHABANI SHANKAR NAYAK

OYO Rooms, also known as OYO or OYO Hotels & Homes, is a successful Indian multinational budget accommodation and hospitality chain that operates through leased properties and franchised hotels, homes, and living spaces. The company has recently updated its check-in policy, which now prohibits unmarried couples from checking into its properties. Under the new guidelines, couples are required to provide proof of their relationship status to complete the check-in process. This policy was initially introduced in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, following demands from local civil society groups. OYO is considering expanding this policy to other cities in India, depending on feedback from similar groups across the country.

There are several fundamental questions OYO must address before implementing such a regressive, discriminatory, and potentially illegal policy. The majority of marriages in India are arranged marriages, and most of these are not officially registered. In such cases, where are couples supposed to obtain marriage certificates or proof of marriage? What other valid documents would meet the requirements of OYO's patriarchal check-in policies? Is India governed by civil society groups? No, India is governed by its constitutional and democratic legal systems, not by pressure from civil society groups. Who exactly are these civil society groups? Civil society is meant to promote citizenship rights and strengthen democracy, not restrict it. Yielding to the demands of these so-called civil society groups is a reactionary, backward step that undermines the fundamental rights of Indian citizens, especially adult students, youth, and women. Additionally, which law prohibits two consenting adults from staying together in a hotel or at home? If two unmarried adults agree to stay together, what exactly is the problem?

The answers to the above questions lie within the patriarchal narrative that differentiates between married and unmarried couples under a regressive caste, class, and race-based heteronormative social structure. Most of the time, arranged marriage in India is not merely a union between two free individuals exercising personal choice; rather, it is an institution designed to uphold and conform to reactionary, feudal social norms and family expectations. These norms are rooted in reli-



gious dogma, social class, skin colour, caste hierarchies, socio-economic status, and even unscientific beliefs such as horoscopes. In such an environment, individuals are compelled to surrender to feudal, patriarchal, and regressive institutions, where personal freedom to choose one's own life partner is sacrificed. This stagnant and outdated institution stands in direct opposition to social progress and resists change founded on progressive, democratic, liberal and secular values rooted in individual liberty and equality.

There is a fundamental dichotomy between arranged marriage and love marriage. Friendship, freedom, individual choice, mutual attraction and freedom to break away from the relationship plays a vital role in love marriages which defies regressive social, religious and cultural norms shaped by racialised caste and class based social, economic and cultural order. According to a 2020 survey titled "Marriage Preferences in India 2020, by Generation", published by Dr. Manya Rathore on July 10, 2023, in Statista, 62.3% of Millennials and 69.2% of Generation Z prefer love marriages over arranged marriages. Only 37.7% of

Millennials and 30.8% of Generation Z favour arranged marriages.

These statistics on marriage preferences pose a direct threat to the reactionary and feudal foundations of arranged marriage, which are upheld in the name of family, social, cultural, economic, and religious honour. As a result, in the name of civil society groups, these uncivil people and reactionary groups have risen in opposition, seeking to suppress every possible avenue that promotes an environment where Millennials and Generation Z in India can meet, eat, sleep, socialise, date, and stay together freely. The patriarchal and perverse geriatrics view young people merely as sexual objects who stay together solely for sexual pleasure in OYO rooms and hotels. By surrendering to such a perverted imagination, OYO's decision aligns with geriatric patriarchy and its regressive values, further reinforced by the reactionary political forces of the day.

These regressive forces in the name of civil society groups are dictating whom to meet, where to meet, what to wear, how to dress, what to eat, whom to choose, love, marry and where to sleep—all in

the name of preserving Indian culture. Such backward measures not only seek to domesticate individuals and restrict their freedom but also erode India's progressive values, along with its democratic and constitutional ethos. OYO's discriminatory policy directly contradicts India's liberal, democratic, and constitutional values, as well as its progressive cultural heritage, which celebrates and venerates the romance of Radha and Krishna.

So, Oyo's decision to bar unmarried couples from its properties in certain cities in India reflects the forward march of a regressive ideology rooted in the entrenched culture of patriarchy, which fundamentally discriminates against women, adult students, and the youth of India. This move infringes upon the personal liberties of young people, particularly targeting women and the youth. The state and government, influenced by Hindutva politics, have failed to curb such practices, which undermine efforts to strengthen citizenship, democracy, and constitutional rights in the country. Gender insensitive technological advancements and platform companies have not ended patriarchy; instead,

they have revived such a regressive ideology in a technological form. Opposition to all forms of regressive ideology is essential for deepening democratic equality, liberty, and citizenship rights in the country.

The idealism of youth has historically defeated all forms of feudal and fascist forces across the world. In India, countless young people sacrificed their lives to overthrow feudal and colonial powers. Thus, history serves as a promise to the present and future generations of Indian youth, inspiring them to reclaim their past glories by challenging the current feudal and patriarchal forces. Through meeting, eating, dating, and forming relationships based on love, friendship and India's liberal, progressive, and democratic values, young people can revive and celebrate these ideals, ultimately defeating the reactionary, religious, cultural, and discriminatory forces that seek to control and domesticate them.

Bhabani Shankar Nayak works as Professor of Business Management, Guildhall School of Business and Law, London Metropolitan University, UK.

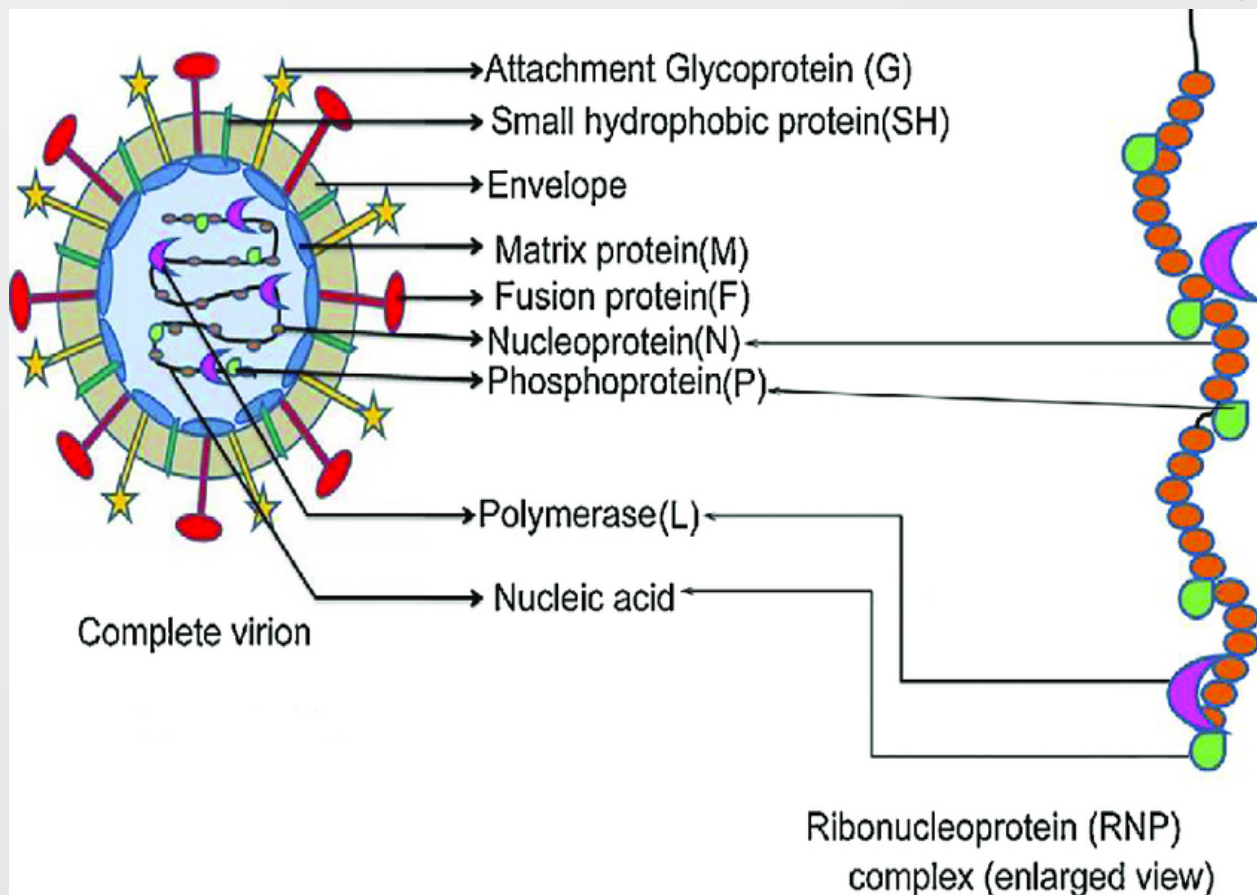
Human Metapneumovirus: A World Of Worry Once Again

PRIYANKA SAURABH

Human metapneumovirus, part of the Pneumoviridae family, is a respiratory virus that causes illnesses ranging from mild colds to more severe lung infections such as pneumonia and bronchiolitis. Although less recognized than flu or respiratory syncytial virus, human metapneumovirus is an important cause of respiratory illnesses worldwide, especially during winter and spring. The virus poses a particularly great risk to vulnerable populations such as young children, the elderly, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. The virus can cause great difficulties for them, so it is important to raise awareness and take preventive measures. Infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to severe respiratory conditions such as bronchiolitis and pneumonia.

Older adults, 65 years of age or older, as well as people with chronic health problems such as asthma or COPD, are more likely to have complications. During pregnancy, hMPV can cause respiratory problems, which can put the health of both mother and baby at risk. People who have weakened immune systems, whether due to a medical condition or treatment such as chemotherapy, are at higher risk of having severe symptoms. A recent outbreak of hMPV in China has highlighted the potential seriousness of this virus, especially in vulnerable groups. Most infections occurred in children under 14 years of age, with many cases requiring hospitalization due to their severity. Symptoms range from persistent cough and fever to more serious conditions such as bronchiolitis and pneumonia. Its similarity to other respiratory illnesses complicates diagnosis and treatment.

To prevent its spread, health



authorities in China have emphasized preventive measures such as hand washing, wearing masks, and timely testing. Symptoms of HMPV in adults often resemble the common cold or flu. These include persistent cough, frequent mucus production, nasal congestion or runny nose, fever, usually mild to moderate fatigue and general body aches, sore throat, and shortness of breath in severe cases. Children are more likely to have severe symptoms. Human metapneumovirus is highly contagious and spreads through a variety of means. The virus can spread when an infected

person coughs, sneezes, or talks, causing respiratory droplets to spread into the air. The virus can also spread through physical contact with an infected person, especially if someone touches their face, eyes, or mouth. The virus can persist on surfaces, and touching contaminated objects such as door-knobs or mobile devices increases the risk of infection. Small respiratory particles can remain suspended in the air, especially in crowded or poorly ventilated spaces.

Symptoms of human metapneumovirus resemble those of other respiratory infections, making

accurate diagnosis dependent on specific laboratory tests. This molecular test detects the genetic material of the virus with high accuracy and is considered the gold standard for diagnosing human metapneumovirus. Rapid antigen tests give quick results but are less sensitive than PCR tests. Most people recover from human metapneumovirus in about 7 to 10 days without complications. However, certain groups are at higher risk of serious complications. Human metapneumovirus can cause viral pneumonia, with severe cases requiring hospitalization and

intensive care. Infants and young children often experience inflammation and blockage of the airways, leading to difficulty breathing and wheezing. Human metapneumovirus can worsen existing respiratory conditions such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. These infections, such as bacterial pneumonia, can develop as complications due to a weakened immune system. Respiratory complications caused by human metapneumovirus during pregnancy may risk maternal and fetal health.

Human metapneumovirus has no specific antiviral medication. The main goal of treatment is to manage symptoms and prevent complications. It is essential to recover and maintain strength. Medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen can control fever and body aches. In severe cases, supplemental oxygen or mechanical ventilation may be needed. Patients with complications such as pneumonia may need to be closely monitored in the hospital. To prevent HMPV, it is important to focus on preventive measures, as there is currently no vaccine available. To reduce the risk of infection, follow these measures. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available. Stay away from individuals who show symptoms of respiratory illness. Avoid crowded areas during outbreaks. Be sure to regularly clean surfaces that are frequently touched, such as door handles, phones, and countertops. Wearing a mask during an outbreak or flu season can help reduce exposure to respiratory droplets. If you have any symptoms, it is important to stay home to prevent the spread of the virus. Being aware of human metapneumovirus and its potential impact is important for early detection and prevention.

Author is a Research Scholar in Political Science

Health Benefits Of Ghee With Warm Water

Ghee, also known as clarified butter, is a traditional fat made by simmering butter to remove water and milk solids, leaving behind a golden, aromatic fat. It is widely used in Indian cuisine and Ayurveda for its rich flavour and therapeutic properties. Ghee is highly nutritious, containing fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, E, and K, along with essential fatty acids. Its healthiness depends on portion size and dietary context. In moderation, ghee can provide energy, support digestion, and enhance nutrient absorption. Consuming it with warm water can improve digestion and act as a mild detoxifier, benefiting overall gut health. In this article, we discuss in detail how consuming ghee with warm water can provide amazing health benefits and how these benefits occur.

Here's how consuming ghee with warm water can boost your health

- 1. Aids digestion**
Ghee contains butyric acid, a short-chain fatty acid that promotes a healthy gut lining and supports digestive enzyme production. When consumed with warm water, it soothes the digestive tract, aiding in smoother digestion and preventing constipation.
- 2. Promotes detoxification**
Ghee with warm water acts as a natural detoxifier.



The combination helps flush out toxins (Ama) from the digestive system, cleansing the gut and enhancing metabolic functions.

3. Boosts metabolism
The healthy fats in ghee

provide a quick energy source, which, when paired with warm water, kickstarts the metabolism. This combination can improve fat utilization and support weight management.

4. Improves skin health
Rich in antioxidants and vitamin E, ghee enhances skin elasticity and hydration. Consuming it with warm water supports toxin elimination, indirectly benefiting

skin health by reducing acne and dullness.

5. Strengthens immunity
Ghee's butyric acid supports gut health, which is closely linked to a robust immune system. Its nutrient

profile, combined with warm water, fosters a balanced gut microbiome, bolstering immunity.

6. Balances hormones
Ghee contains healthy fats necessary for hormone syn-

thesis. Drinking it with warm water can support hormonal balance, particularly during menstruation, menopause, or stress-induced imbalances.

7. Relieves constipation
The lubricating properties of ghee soften stools and enhance bowel movements. Warm water further aids this process by hydrating the digestive system, offering quick relief from constipation.

8. Supports joint health
Ghee is an excellent source of healthy fats that nourish connective tissues and reduce inflammation. Combined with warm water, it helps maintain joint flexibility and may alleviate arthritis symptoms.

9. Enhances cognitive function

In Ayurveda, ghee is regarded as brain food. Its healthy fats support brain function, memory, and focus. Drinking it with warm water ensures better absorption, providing mental clarity and energy.

10. Aids weight loss
Though high in calories, ghee can assist in weight loss when consumed in moderation. The combination of ghee with warm water promotes fat metabolism and curbs cravings, making it a beneficial addition to a weight management routine.

Add ghee and warm water to your diet today to achieve these amazing health benefits.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Kashmir To Receive

are advised to plan accordingly & follow administration and traffic advisory—(KNO)

Terror-Free, Fear-

deep fakes, remain major concerns," he said.

He called for better use of technological tools to maintain law and order and remain constantly vigilant for effective monitoring and respond to challenges in real time, while also anticipating and analysing changes in the criminals' Modus Operandi to remain a step ahead. "We need to shift our tactics from reactive nature of policing to proactive nature of policing," he said.

"Narco-terrorism, social media weaponization, disinformation campaigns have also emerged as big threats to internal security and harmony in the society. I call upon young police officers to work with new ideas, new tools, and lead the fight against Narco-terrorism, Drug trafficking, cyber-crime and counter radicalization," the LG said.

He further emphasised that one more column of prosecution be added to the achievements and it should be ensured that the investigation of every crime is taken to its logical conclusion.

"Investigation and successful prosecution are important weaponries of effective policing. The responsibility of J&K Police is not limited to just neutralizing the terrorists, but also eliminating the divisive elements and those aiding and abetting terrorism and separatism," he said.

The LG also lauded the J&K Police for its civil action programmes.

Garib Dass, Director, Udhampur Police Academy briefed about the program and various activities conducted during the Training course.

The LG took the ceremonial Salute and inspected the parade. He also felicitated the new recruits who excelled during their training. An oath was administered to the passing out DySPs for performing their duties with dedication and honesty.

DGP, Nalin Prabhat; Principal Secretary, Home Chandraker Bharti, senior officials of Police, Security Forces and civil administration and family members of the passing out DySPs were present.

Terror Handler's

combat the terror activities," the police added.

The move is part of a major crackdown by the Jammu and Kashmir Police against terrorists operating from Pakistan.

In a similar operation, J&K Police on Tuesday attached property worth Rs 1 crore under the Prevention of Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in Anantnag district.

Police said that in a significant action against drug trafficking and its financial networks, Anantnag Police attached the double-storey residential house of Khurshid Ahmad Dar, son of Abdul Gani Dar of Satekipora village.

The property, built on one Kanal of land valued at approximately Rs 1 crore was attached under Section 68-F of the NDPS Act. The house has been linked to the

proceeds of drug trafficking.

On November 28 in a major breakthrough against terror networks, District Police Kishtwar in Jammu and Kashmir successfully attached the properties of seven absconding terrorists currently operating from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan.

Security forces have been aggressively carrying out anti-terrorist operations against terrorists, their over-ground workers (OGWs) and sympathisers to dismantle the terror ecosystem in J&K. These operations followed some dastardly attacks carried out by the terrorists after the peaceful and people-participative Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly elections in J&K.

Intelligence agencies say that the peaceful conduct of elections witnessed by diplomats of many countries has frustrated the handlers of terror sitting across the border in Pakistan. The agencies say the terror handlers have directed terrorists in J&K to give the dying terrorism its last push in the Union Territory.

Fraudster Posing

the release of her husband, who had been arrested on 19/11/2024 by Police Station Rajbagh in a narcotics case. After she discovered the deception and demanded the money back, the accused person returned only a partial amount and denied the rest," police said.

The statement reads in this connection, a case under sections 318(4), 319 and 351(2) of the BNS Act has been registered and the fraudster has been arrested. The investigation is ongoing, police said.

"It is pertinent to mention here that the husband of the applicant Riyaz Ahmad Channa had been booked under PIT NDPS Act and is presently lodged in Sub Jail Bhandarwah. We urge the public not fall prey to any individual claiming to have influence with law enforcement authorities, and anyone making such claim should be immediately reported to the nearest Police Station or dial 112," reads the statement further.

Bye-Polls For

Rana's daughter, Devyani Rana, as its candidate for the Nagrota seat, there is widespread curiosity about who the NC's candidate for the Budgam seat will be. The NC has not provided any hints about its candidate, evoking interest among political observers and voters alike.

In the 2024 J&K polls, Omar Abdullah won the Budgam seat by defeating Muntazir Mehdi, son of separatist leader Agha Hassan, by a margin of more than 18,000 votes. Devinder Singh Rana won the Nagrota seat by defeating Joginder Singh of the National Conference by 30,472 votes—(KNO)

cm Omar Meets

support to J&K Chief Minister and assured him that his concerns will be addressed," sources said, adding that the J & K Chief Minister's meeting the Union Ministers is an ongoing process of administrative work.

Pertinently, Omar had met Union

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on November 15, 2024 and today's meeting was his second within a span of one and a half month.

After meeting the Finance Minister Omar Abdullah had shared on Instagram—"Called on Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, smt.@nsitharaman ji. Our discussion centred around crucial economic matters concerning Jammu and Kashmir. I passionately advocated for much-needed support from the Union Finance Ministry for the region."

He had expressed optimism that collaborative efforts with the Central Government would enhance financial stability and promote sustainable development in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister had sought support of the Union Finance Minister to avail the multi-lateral funding for development of new tourism destinations in Jammu & Kashmir, aimed to decongest the existing locations and to create well-planned and world-class infrastructure at these new identified locations.

The CM had thanked the Ministry of Finance for approving the Competitive Improvement of Agriculture & Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP) for Jammu & Kashmir to rejuvenate the agriculture sector which entails financing of 100 million USD through International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) over the next 7 years.

In this regard CM had requested the Ministry of Finance to treat J&K at par with North Eastern States for availing incentives in respect of Externally Aided Project (EAP) loans and making J&K eligible for special lending arrangement under the EAP loans.

He had also requested the Finance Minister to consider Jammu & Kashmir for funding through the "Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment" scheme under which a 50-year interest free loan would be provided to states for capital expenditure.

The CM had also informed the Finance Minister about the difficult fiscal situation being faced by J&K and requested the Ministry to provide additional central assistance of Rs 6000 crore to bridge the resource gap in the UT budget for FY 2024-25.

PM Modi To

It will facilitate faster deployment of troops, seamless supply of military equipment, and uninterrupted transport of essential goods to border areas. Improved connectivity will also enhance travel speed between Jammu and Kashmir and other regions, easing movement for local residents," says a senior official associated with the project.

"With the completion of the Z-Morh tunnel, connectivity to Sonamarg will now remain intact even during severe weather conditions," said Harpal Singh, General Manager of the National Highways Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL). Singh credited the success of the project to local workers and engineers, with 90% of the workforce hailing from Kashmir, Doda, and Banihal.

The tunnel is expected to provide a major boost to tourism in Sonamarg, which has traditionally remained inaccessible for six months of the year due to snowfall. "This project will enable safe travel through avalanche-prone areas

and significantly reduce travel time from Gagangir to Sonamarg to just 30 minutes," said Riyaz Ahmad, a local resident.

Ahmad highlighted that the tunnel's completion will enhance winter tourism, offering a lifeline to businesses and livelihoods in the region that have been adversely affected during the off-season.

Construction of the Z-Morh tunnel began in 2020 but faced delays, including a setback due to a militant attack in September. Despite these challenges, the project is now ready for inauguration. Officials have confirmed that the Prime Minister will e-inaugurate the tunnel on Republic Day, and that it will be the government's push for infrastructure development in Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

SPAs In Jammu

and obscene materials during the operation. During these raids an atmosphere of chaos was created on the spot.

Superintendent of Police, Jammu South, Ajay Sharma said that police received frequent complaints from citizens about unethical activities being carried out in spa centres across the city. Acting on these complaints, simultaneous raids were conducted at 20 locations in Jammu south.

He said moreover, an ex employee of one such center leveled serious allegations against his owner and FIR has been registered at police station Channi Himmit.

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Maha govt sets up Task Force after two HMPV cases in Nagpur

IAN S

MUMBAI: Two cases of Human metapneumovirus (HMPV) were detected in Maharashtra's Nagpur on Tuesday, said officials here, adding that both are children and their condition was stable.

The two girls, aged 13 and 7, had shown the symptoms. According to the state public health department sources, after two days of continuous fever, these girls undertook tests in a private lab and tested positive. They were treated at home and their condition was stable.

Taking serious note, the state government has established a Task Force headed by the JJ Hospital Dean Dr Pallavi Saple to craft standard operating procedure (SOP) and decide on future course of action.

"Both these girls had cough and fever, their samples have been sent to NIV as they had slightly different symptoms. Both the children did not need to be admitted to the hospital and both the patients have recovered," said sources.

"Parents don't need to worry, this virus is not like Corona. It is mild," said Superintendent of Government Medical and Hospital in Nagpur Dr Avinash Gawande. However, he suggested that children should wear masks.

Maharashtra Health Minister Prakash Abitkar



called an urgent meeting of the department regarding the HMPV virus. It is reported that Union Minister of State for Health Prataprao Jadhav will also be present in this meeting. The minister has urged the people not to panic.

The medical education commissioner, Rajiv Nivalkar, held a virtual meeting with the Deans of government medical colleges to review their preparedness to tackle HMPV patients and briefed them about the measures to be taken.

The BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has gone into an alert mode as special wards have been set up to treat HMPV patients.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said, "There is no reason to fear the HMPV virus. Accord-

ing to preliminary information, this virus is not new, this virus was prevalent earlier also. It seems that this virus is making a comeback once again. The regulations in this regard will be announced. The Union Health Ministry has decided to inform the states. Do not give fictitious information in this regard. Only the official information that comes should be given."

The state health department has issued an advisory asking the district administration to keep a close vigil while stepping up surveillance of patients with cold and cough.

The Health Department Director Dr Nitin Ambadekar said, "Human metapneumovirus (HMPV) causes respiratory infections. This virus

was first detected in the Netherlands in 2001. It is a common respiratory virus that causes infections in the upper respiratory tract. It is a seasonal epidemic and occurs in winter and early summer, like the flu. With the increased risk of HMPV, the Health Department has analyzed the respiratory infection statistics in the state. There was no increase in respiratory infections in the state in December 2024 compared to 2023. As a precautionary measure, the Health Department has said that citizens should take precautions to protect themselves from respiratory infections, he said. The department has also released dos and don'ts to be followed by the citizens."

DMK launches 'Get Out Ravi' campaign against TN Governor after Assembly face-off

IAN S

CHENNAI: The DMK has launched a poster campaign against Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi following his walkout from the state Legislative Assembly on the first day of the session.

The party has also announced statewide protest campaigns against the Governor in all districts.

The controversy began on January 6, when the Governor walked out of the Assembly in protest, citing "disrespect" to the Constitution and the National Anthem.

As per the Assembly tradition, the state song Tamil Thaaai Vaazhthu' is sung at the start of the session, and the national anthem is played at its conclusion.

The Governor objected to the omission of the National Anthem at the start of the session.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin criticised the Governor's actions, describing them as "childish".

He accused Ravi of



repeatedly insulting the people of Tamil Nadu, the elected government, and the Legislative Assembly, adding that his behaviour was unbecoming of the office he holds.

The DMK's Chennai West wing launched a poster campaign across the city targeting both the Governor and Leader of Opposition, Edappadi K. Palaniswami.

The posters feature the faces of Ravi and Palaniswami with the hashtag "#GetOutRavi".

One slogan loosely translates to: "The Governor who violates, and the

AIADMK-BJP secret alliance that will save him."

The controversy extended further when AIADMK chief Palaniswami led his party MLAs into the Assembly wearing badges that read "Yaar Antha Sir?" (Who is that Sir?), referencing the recent Anna University sexual assault case. The AIADMK MLAs were later evicted from the House.

Senior DMK leader and Tamil Nadu Water Resources Minister S. Duraimurugan criticized the Governor's walkout, calling it a violation of constitutional responsibilities.

Under Article 176 of the Constitution, the Governor is mandated to deliver the customary address at the beginning of the Assembly session. Duraimurugan condemned Ravi's actions, noting that the Speaker of the House, M. Appavu, had previously clarified the protocol.

Tamil Thaaai Vaazhthu is sung before the Governor's address, and the National Anthem is played at the session's conclusion. He accused Ravi of showing repeated disregard for these established traditions and questioned his intentions. Duraimurugan further emphasised that the people of Tamil Nadu, the state government, and the Legislative Assembly have always shown unwavering respect for the National Anthem, the Constitution, and the ideals of patriotism and national integration. The DMK's campaign and protests mark the latest chapter in the strained relationship between the ruling party and the Governor.

Two containers carrying Union Carbide's waste 'missing', two held for spreading rumours



IAN S

PITHAMPUR (MADHYA PRADESH): Two people have been arrested for spreading erroneous rumours that two out of 12 container trucks carrying hazardous waste of Union Carbide's factory were missing from Pithampur's Ramky factory, Dhar district collector Priyank Mishra said on Monday.

He said miscreants spread rumours through their social media posts to mislead the people on this sensitive issue, despite the clear instructions issued from district administration not to spread wrong information that may lead to violence.

"Two people have been arrested for spreading rumors about the missing of two containers from Ramky factory. Which is completely false and misleading information shared on social media accounts. Strict action will be taken against those found spreading rumours," Mishra said.

He further stated that heavy security has been deployed at Ramky factory's premises for the safety of people as many people attempt to reach the place where containers are parked.

"Security has been deployed to ensure that

no one can reach the containers. It is for the safety purpose, and not to provide security to the Ramky factory. All 12 containers are parked at the premises of the Ramky factory, and they will be opened only under the direction of the High Court," Mishra said.

Notably, all 12 containers loaded with over 337 metric tonnes of hazardous chemical waste from the site of the Bhopal gas tragedy, are parked at premises of the Ramky factory in tight security by state police. The containers reached Pithampur early morning on January 2. The state government in a status report submitted to the Madhya Pradesh High Court on Monday said public outcry has emerged due to certain fictitious media reports wherein baseless rumours have been floated with various sections of media.

Observing the situation, the Court ordered the media to not publish any fake news or misinformation regarding the disposal of Union waste material at the Pithampur facility. The Court also granted six weeks to the state government to comply with its directions regarding the disposal of Union Carbide's hazardous waste and has fixed the next hearing on February 18.

Allu Arjun visits injured boy at Hyderabad hospital



IAN S

HYDERABAD: Tollywood actor Allu Arjun on Tuesday visited KIMS Hospital, Secunderabad to meet the eight-year-old boy who was injured in the stampede during the premier show of 'Pushpa 2: The Rule' at Sandhya Theatre last month.

Amid tight security by the police, the actor reached the hospital in the morning and spent about half an hour.

He was accompanied by Telangana State Film Development Corporation Chairman Dil Raju. The actor enquired from doctors about the condition of SriTej, met his father and assured him of all support.

Allu Arjun had planned to visit the hospital on January 5 after reporting at Chikkadpally Police Station as per the condition laid down by a city court while granting him regular bail. However, he had to drop his plans after Ramgopalpet Police Station issued a notice advising him to reconsider his visit. The police had advised Allu Arjun to maintain his confidentiality to prevent any gathering of public/media at the premises which could disturb the peaceful environs of the hospital.

The actor was warned that in case of a lack of cooperation from his side, he would be held solely responsible for any negative consequences of his visit to the hospital.

The police on January

6 issued another notice to him to keep his visit confidential so that public order could be maintained in and around the hospital. The police also offered to make necessary arrangements for his visit.

A woman, Revathi was killed and her son Sri Tej was critically injured in the stampede at the theatre on December 4 during the premier show attended by Allu Arjun.

The police had claimed that Allu Arjun visited the theatre without permission and conducted a 'roadshow' which led to the tragedy. Allu Arjun was arrested on December 13 in the case. He was granted interim bail by the High Court the same day.

Nampally Court last week granted the actor regular bail. The court directed him to cooperate with the investigation and report to the concerned police station every Sunday.

The actor had come under criticism from various quarters for not consoling the family of the deceased or visiting the injured boy at the hospital. The actor's father and producer Allu Arvind visited the hospital twice. During his last visit on December 25, he presented a cheque of Rs 2 crore to the victim's family. While Allu Arjun has given Rs 1 crore, Mythri Movies, the producers of the movie have extended assistance of Rs 50 lakh. The film's director Sukumar has also given Rs 50 lakh to the family.

Satya Nadella announces \$3 billion investment to boost AI, cloud infrastructure in India

IAN S

BENGALURU: As India embarks on its artificial intelligence (AI) journey, Microsoft Chairman and CEO, Satya Nadella, on Tuesday announced \$3 billion investment in the country for cloud and AI infrastructure over the next two years.

This investment aims to accelerate AI innovation in the country, which is pivotal for achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of becoming a developed nation (Viksit Bharat) by 2047.

The tech giant also announced to train and skill 10 million people in AI by 2030. The company has already empowered 2.4 million Indians, including civil servants, college students and people with disabilities, with AI skills.

"India is rapidly becoming a leader in AI innovation, unlocking new opportunities across the country. The investments in infrastructure and skilling we are announcing today reaffirm our commitment to making India AI-first and will help ensure people and organizations across the country benefit broadly," said Nadella.

On Monday, PM Modi met Nadella, saying he was glad to know about the tech giant's ambitious expansion and investment plans in the country.

At an event here, Microsoft Research Lab launched an 'AI Innovation Network', a groundbreaking initiative designed to accelerate the

transition from research to real, usable business solutions.

Furthermore, Microsoft and SaaSBoomi have joined hands to propel India's AI and SaaS ecosystem towards a trillion-dollar economy, aiming to impact over 5,000 startups and 10,000 entrepreneurs, creating over 200,000 new job opportunities.

In the last 12 months, Microsoft has been a copilot to making AI a reality in India, taking it from boardrooms to classrooms, commerce to communities, and finance to farmers.

"Today's announcement strengthens our belief in India's potential and our resolve to equip the country with the resources and future-ready skills needed to excel in the global marketplace," said Puneet Chandok, president, Microsoft India and South Asia.

The company will expand its cloud and AI infrastructure across data centre campuses in the country. Microsoft already has three data centre regions in the market, and the fourth ready to go live in 2026.

This investment aims to develop a scalable AI computing ecosystem to meet the growing demands of India's rapidly expanding AI startups and research community, said the company.

Moreover, the company announced its next milestone, to equip 10 million more Indians with essential AI skills by 2030.

SC grants medical bail to Asaram Bapu till March 31

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday granted medical bail to self-styled godman Asaram Bapu till March 31.

A bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and Rajesh Bindal of the apex court extended the relief solely on humanitarian grounds to allow him to undertake medical treatment.

During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Gujarat government, submitted that Asaram should not be released since adequate medical facilities were already available to him in custody.

On the other hand, Asaram's counsel highlighted grave inconsistencies in the testimony of the prosecutrix.

Without entering into the merits of the matter, the Justice Sundresh-led Bench asked Asaram to adhere to the conditions imposed, including the condition not to meet his followers upon his release from jail.

The top court suggested that Asaram's health condition may be re-assessed before the expiry of medical bail. In January 2023, a court in Gujarat convicted Asaram in a decade-old sexual assault case involving a woman disciple and sentenced him to life imprisonment.

The victim had accused Asaram of repeatedly raping her at his ashram in 2013.

Before this, the self-styled godman was convicted of raping a minor girl by a special POCSE court in Jodhpur which sentenced him to life imprisonment.

He has been in jail since September 2, 2013. Asaram was granted parole for 30 days by Jodhpur High Court on November 7, 2024 for treatment at a private Ayurvedic hospital located at Bhagat Ki Kothi in Jodhpur.

He got parole for treatment for the second time in 11 years. Earlier, he got seven days parole in August.

Setback to KTR as Telangana HC dismisses quash petition in Formula-E case

IAN S

HYDERABAD: In a setback to Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president and former minister K. T. Rama Rao in the Formula-E race case, the Telangana High Court on Tuesday dismissed his quash petition.

The High Court, which had reserved its orders on the quash petition on December 31, pronounced the same on Tuesday, paving the way for an investigation into the high-profile case by the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

KTR, as the BRS leader is popularly known, had sought orders to quash the First Information Report (FIR) registered by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB).

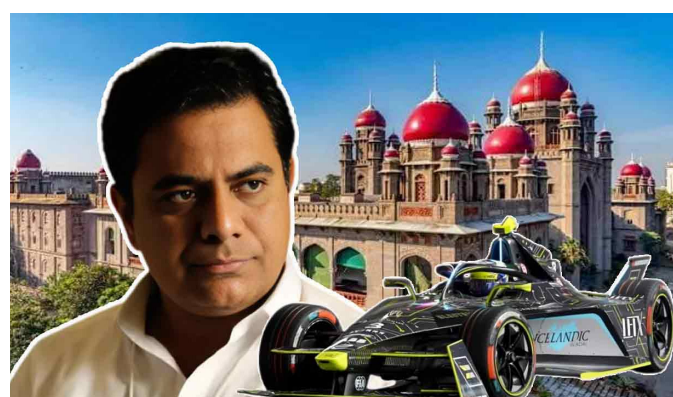
During the hearing of the

quash petition, the High Court had barred the ACB from arresting KTR. The ACB had summoned KTR for questioning on Monday (January 6). The former minister visited the ACB office but returned without appearing before the investigating officer after his lawyer was not allowed to be present during questioning.

He submitted a letter to the ACB, requesting it to defer the questioning till the High Court pronounces its order.

The ACB has issued a fresh notice, directing KTR to appear on January 9.

The ACB on December 29 had booked a case against KTR, Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar and Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority



(HMDA) former chief engineer B.L.N. Reddy for alleged irregularities in organizing the Formula E-car race in 2023 when BRS was in power.

During the arguments on the

quash petition, Advocate General A. Sudershan Reddy had told the court that Rs 46 crore in British Pounds were paid to Formula-E Operations Limited (FEO) in violation of rules.

The government counsel submitted to the court that HMDA required permission from the Finance Department for payment of more than Rs 10 crore but in this case, it made a total payment of Rs 54 crore without any approval.

The court was told that Secretariat Business Rules were not followed and that the then minister KTR signed the note file. KTR's counsel Siddhartha Dave argued that the sections invoked by the ACB in the FIR are not valid.

He submitted to the bench that it was not proper to name KTR as an accused in the case. He also mentioned that the Secretary, Municipal Administration signed the agreement for the Formula-E race.

The BRS leader's counsel contended that the ACB has not provided any evidence of corruption. He told the court that KTR was not the beneficiary.

The ACB had registered the FIR under Sections 13(1) (A) and 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, along with Sections 409 and 120(B) of the Indian Penal Code. The FIR, registered on a complaint by Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) Principal Secretary Dana Kishore alleges irregularities in payments exceeding Rs 54.88 crore made by the HMDA to Formula-E Operations Limited (FEO) and associated entities without adhering to established financial procedures.

According to the FIR, the

payments were made to FEO between September and October 2023, despite FEO terminating its agreement with the Telangana government during the same period.

This amount also incurred a tax liability of Rs 8.06 crore, which was borne by HMDA.

A tripartite agreement signed in October 2022 between the Telangana government, FEO, and event sponsor Ace Next Gen Pvt Ltd had limited the State government's financial responsibility.

The FIR alleged that disputes between FEO and Ace Next Gen Pvt Ltd led to the government assuming financial liability without regulatory approvals, causing losses to the exchequer.

Pakistan fined for slow over-rate in second Test vs South Africa

IANS

DUBAI : Pakistan have been fined 25 per cent of their match fee and penalised five ICC World Test Championship points for maintaining a slow over-rate against South Africa in the second Test in Cape Town.

"Richie Richardson of the ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees imposed the sanction after Pakistan were ruled to be five overs short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration," the ICC said in a statement on Tuesday.

In accordance with Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to minimum over-rate offences, players are fined five per cent of their match fee for every over if their side fails to bowl in the allotted time.

In addition, as per Article 16.11.2 of the ICC World Test Championship playing conditions, a side is penalised one point for each over short. Consequently, five World Test Championship points have been deducted from Pakistan's points total.



Pakistan captain Shan Masood pled guilty to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction, so there was no need for a formal hearing.

On-field umpires Kumar Dharmasena and Nitin Menon, third umpire Alex Wharf and fourth umpire Stephen Harris levelled the charge.

Pakistan lost the match

by 10 wickets after South Africa enforced the follow-on on the visiting side and bundled them for 478 in their second innings. The Proteas successfully chased a 58-run target without losing a wicket on Monday.

South Africa sealed the two-match series 2-0 after previously defeating Pakistan by two-wicket in the

opening Test to book a maiden World Test Championship (WTC) final berth.

Temba Bavuma-led side will face Australia in the WTC summit clash at Lord's from June 11. Pat Cummins-led Australia are the defending champions of the tournament, having defeated India by 209 runs in the 2023 final at The Oval.

YSS Department's Annual Skiing Courses Begin At Gulmarg

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GULMARG: The annual Skiing Training programme organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) J&K started on Tuesday at the picturesque Gulmarg here.

The yearly Training course for Batch 1st comprising of boys students was inaugurated by Joint Director Kashmir of Youth Services and Sports Department Mohammad Rashid Kohli. He was accompanied by District Youth Services and Sports Officer Baramullah Ghulam Qadir and Incharge YSS Skiing Courses Hilal Ahmed. The 1st batch of the student skiers comprising of 50 students mostly from Government Schools of various districts of the UT of J&K are participating in the 15 days basic training course. This year the Department has chartered out the plan of organising six courses for Boys and Girls under the guidance of Secretary YSS Sarmad Hafeez and DG YSS Rajinder Singh



Tara. While briefing the trainees about the importance and relevance of such courses, JD YSS said that the Department has deputed trained officials and skiing instructors of the department for the successful and effective conduct of the camp. He added that the Department has made best possible arrangements for boarding and lodging of the trainees at the scenic

health resort. He advised the young trainees to ensure that they learn the basics of the sport while ensuring that the tourist place is not polluted.

Pertinently Such courses are being organised for other districts of UT also and besides boys, girl students would also receive this training on the skiing slopes of world famous Gulmarg during the days to come. The Course is being

organised with the technical expertise of Incharge Course Ghulam Nabi Rashi, Mushtaq Ahmed Dar, Manzoor Ahmed Dar, Mushtaq Khan, Mohammad Rafiq, Fayaz Ahmed, Tariq Ahmed and Zahoor Ahmed. Department is exploring all the possibilities of organizing basic training in Skiing at Sonamarg, Yousmarg, Doodhpathri and other famous tourist places of the valley.

Saim Ayub leaves for London with Azhar Mahmood for ankle fracture treatment

IANS

CAPE TOWN: Pakistan opener Saim Ayub left for London from Cape Town on Tuesday along with assistant coach Azhar Mahmood for the treatment of his ankle fracture sustained during the second Test against South Africa.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday posted a video on X where Ayub was seen walking with the help of crutches towards the car for the airport.

On Sunday, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi decided to send Saim Ayub to London for immediate treatment and the decision was made after consulting the doctors. Naqvi had a phone call with Ayub, he inquired about his well-being and expressed good wishes for swift recovery.

"Saim Ayub will be checked up by the sports ortho specialist doctors in England as an immediate appointment has

been made by the PCB. The medical team is looking into the entire case and Dr. Mumraiz has shared Saim's medical reports with specialists in England," Naqvi had said.

"Saim's treatment will be done in the best hospital in the world and in this regard all resources will be used for his treatment. We hope that the left-handed batter will make a full recovery before the ICC Champions Trophy," he added.

Ayub was ruled out of competitive cricket for up to six weeks due to a right ankle fracture sustained while fielding on the opening day of the second Test. He is set to miss the two-Test series at home against the West Indies later this month and also the tri-series with South Africa and New Zealand in February before the Champions Trophy, starting across Pakistan and Dubai from February 19.

Rohit's hunger to play Test cricket must reflect in his actions: Bangar

IANS

NEW DELHI : Former India coach Sanjay Bangar feels that India captain Rohit Sharma, who is enduring a lean patch in Test cricket, has to show his hunger for runs in his actions to continue playing the red-ball format.

The 37-year-old opted out of the fifth and final Test against Australia in Sydney due to his awful outings in the three Tests of the series. He accumulated only 31 runs across five innings on the tour.

The veteran gave examples of Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahana, who had earned their place back in the team at the back of their domestic forms in the past.

"When you are 37 years old, every failure hurts because a cricketer is a very proud person. When he sees the kind of performances he's had in the past but can't replicate them,

and when young players are performing well, these factors weigh heavily on his mind. This might have influenced his decision. He needs to determine whether he still has the hunger to play Test cricket. If he does, that hunger must reflect in his actions." "There's been a lot of talk about playing domestic cricket," Bangar said on Star Sports.

"Players like Pujara and Rahane, who are on par with Rohit Sharma in stature, have been dropped in the past but have shown their hunger by playing in domestic cricket. Even today, they are sweating it out on domestic grounds, which is a big drop from the intensity of international cricket," he added.

Despite missing the Test at Sydney Cricket Ground that India lost by six wickets, ending their third consecutive World Test Championship final hopes, Rohit had expressed his desire to continue playing for India.

East Bengal sign Venezuelan forward Richard Celis till end of season

IANS

KOLKATA : East Bengal FC has secured the services of Venezuelan national team forward Richard Enrique Celis Sanchez for the remainder of the current season.

Celis last played for Venezuela's first division team Academia Puerto Cabello in October 2024.

Celis shared his excitement about joining Emami East Bengal FC, saying, "I am thrilled to join East Bengal - a club with such a rich history and passionate

fans. This is a new chapter in my career and I can't wait to embrace the challenges and opportunities ahead in Indian Football. Joy East Bengal!"

A versatile attacker who can play as both left winger and centre-forward, Celis has represented several top-tier clubs in Venezuela such as Atletico Venezuela CF, Deportivo JBL, Caracas FC and Academia Puerto Cabello, besides Colombia's Millonarios FC and Slovakia's FK Senica. Celis has also represented the Venezuela national team in

the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers and the Copa America in the past.

Emami East Bengal FC Head Coach Oscar Bruzon said, "We expect Richard's talent, skills, commitment and determination to embody East Bengal's values. We hope he'll make a significant impact as we strive together for immediate success."

The 28-year-old brings with him a wealth of experience, having scored crucial goals in over 250 top-tier club matches across domestic leagues and the

Copa Libertadores. Celis played a pivotal role in helping Caracas win the Venezuelan Primera Division title in 2019 and Millonarios' triumphant 2022 Copa Colombia campaign.

Welcoming Celis to the Emami East Bengal FC squad, Vibhash Vardhan Agarwal of Emami Group said, "We are happy to welcome Richard to the team. We hope his talent and goal-scoring prowess will strengthen our attack and help us achieve our goals as we approach the final part of the season."

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— DEEWAR SE JHALAKTE HAI —
DIL KE EHSAAAS



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