

Good Morning Kashmir

16th Year Of Publication

Office of Chief Minister, J&K
@CM_Jnk



Directed officers to enhance the e-SeHAT App with user-friendly features, including integration with key health institutions. Hands-on staff training and public awareness campaigns will follow. Regular reviews will ensure transparency and effective performance monitoring.

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Our Progressive Farmers Shaping Future Of J&K's Agriculture: CM Omar



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday chaired a review meeting on the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) here at the Civil Secretariat. The meeting was attended by Minister for Agriculture Production Department Javed Ahmed Dar, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Agriculture Production Department (APD) Shailendra Kumar, Mission Director HADP Rahul Yadav, and other senior officials. All Deputy Commissioners of Jammu & Kashmir, along with progressive farmers, participated in the meeting via video conferencing from their respective district headquarters. Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah, while sharing the vision of HADP, remarked that the programme is not just a policy intervention but a movement to empower farmers, modernize the agri-sector, and build a sustainable Rs 100,000 crore agri-economy for Jammu & Kashmir by 2030. On the role of digital innovation in agriculture, he stated that by integrating cutting-edge technologies such as AI-based advisory tools and real-time monitoring applications, governance is being redefined at the grassroots. "We are redefining how governance reaches the grassroots. HADP is making agriculture smart, data-driven, and future-ready," the Chief Minister said. Terming progressive farmers as the backbone of agricultural transformation, the Chief Minister said, "Their stories

Dr Farooq Secretly Supported Article 370 Abrogation: A S Dulat

Not Surprised As Abdullahs Meeting PM On Aug 04 Was Not Mystery: Sajad Lone

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Former RAW Chief, A S Dulat has stirred the 'Hornet's Nest' by claiming that former J&K Chief Minister and National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah had 'secretly' supported the abrogation of Article 370.

In his new book "The Chief Minister and The Spy", Dulat has made startling revelations. Several opposition leaders took to the micro-blogging site, X and reacted to the revelation. Peoples Conference (PC) President and MLA Handwara, Sajad Gani Lone in a post said that he was not surprised at the revelation and that the August 4, 2019 meeting of incumbent Chief minister and Farooq Abdullah with the PM was never a mystery for him. "Dulat sahib has revealed in his upcoming book that Farooq Sahib privately supported the abrogation of Article 370. Coming from



Dulat sahib makes this revelation very credible. Dulat sahib is the closest ally of and friend of Farooq sahib. Virtually his alter ego. Incidentally Dulat sahib is the famed Uncle of the infamous Uncles and Aunties Brigade of Delhi," Lone wrote on X. Of course NC will deny it. Call it yet another conspiracy against NC. They have perfected playing the victim card, he said, adding that "Uncle and Aunties will take cognisance of my tweet and other such tweets and implore upon BJP to teach such tweeters a lesson."

"Out here, their MLAs will privately visit LOP Sunil Sharma and tell him that they are brothers separated at the Kumbh Mela. That the theatre they enact in Assembly and outside assembly is in national interest. I personally am not surprised at this revelation. The August 4 2019 meeting of CM sahib and Farooq sahib with the PM was never a mystery for me. I can visualise Farooq sahib saying— Humey roney deejije— Aap apna kaam karein— hum aap kay Saath hain— It now seems 2024 was

'Cheap Stunts': Farooq Abdullah On Dulat's Claim
GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah has sharply rebuffed claims by former R&AW Chief A.S. Dulat that he had privately supported the abrogation of Article 370. Calling Dulat's assertions a "figment of imagination" and a "cheap stunt" to promote his upcoming book The Chief Minister and the Spy (releasing April 18), senior Abdullah dismissed the idea that the National Conference (NC) would have backed the move. He stressed that both he and his son Omar Abdullah were detained during the August 5, 2019, decision because of their known opposition. He also highlighted his role in forming the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration to resist the revocation. Refuting Dulat's suggestion that NC might have passed a resolution in favor of Article 370 abrogation, Abdullah pointed out there was no assembly in place at the time. He criticized

Justice Arun Palli Takes Oath As 38th CJ Of J&K HC



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Justice Arun Palli was on Wednesday sworn in as the 38th Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh at a ceremony held here, an official said. Justice Palli made and subscribed to the oath of office before the Lt Governor Manoj Sinha at a function attended by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Speaker of Legislative Assembly Abdul Rahim Rather and judges of high court, subordinate judiciary and other dignitaries, the official said. Chief justice of the High Court of Himachal Pradesh Justice G S Sandhawalia, sitting and retired judges from Justice Palli's parent high court of Punjab and Haryana, along with advocates, family and friends also attended the event held at the Convention Centre. On April 12, Union Ministry of Law and Justice issued notification regarding appointment of Justice Palli as Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and

Amarnath Yatra Registration J&K Bank Registers 4200 Yatris On Day One

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Pilgrims are on their way to the Amarnath Cave temple through the Chandanwadi route after the Amarnath Yatra resumed facing the partial suspension due to the cloudburst, on Monday. Marking a strong start to this year's Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra registration process, J&K Bank registered over 4200 pilgrims on Tuesday through its 91 designated branches spread across the country. The registration for the annual pilgrimage, which commenced on April 14, 2025, is being carried out on a first-come, first-served basis and includes the issuance of Yatra Permits to eligible pilgrims. This year, the holy

Yatra to Himalayan cave of Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine is scheduled to begin on 3rd July and conclude on 9th August, 2025. Expressing satisfaction at the response, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "It is encouraging to see a good response from devotees on Day One. Registering over 4,200 pilgrims in a single day reflects the trust people have in Bank's service delivery and commitment to this sacred pilgrimage." "We have ensured seamless arrangements at all designated branches with dedicated helpdesks, registration counters and trained staff to facilitate hassle-free registration. As always, J&K Bank remains deeply committed to be a



Law Will Prevent Misuse Of Waqf Property

Large Section Of Muslim Community Welcoming Waqf Amendment Act: Rijiju

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Noting that a large section of the Muslim community is wholeheartedly welcoming the Waqf Amendment Act, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju has said that the newly enacted legislation establishes a transparent and accountable system for waqf administration. In an interview, Rijiju said Waqf land is not being "utilised" for the benefit of vast sections of Muslim community and that "some powerful" people are misusing it. He said only those parties which treat Muslim community as "vote-bank" and want to keep it isolated, had opposed the bill. He slammed attempts at "fear-mongering" against the Waqf



Amendment Act.

Rijiju said Waqf Act has been enacted after detailed consultations and there is no question of snatching somebody's property. "Large section of the Muslim community is wholeheartedly welcoming this Act. The requirement for change in the Waqf Act,

the necessary amendments we have made, are in fact suggested by the committees which were formed during the Congress time. If you see 1976 Waqf inquiry report, the Sachar Committee report, K Rehman Khan report, they all have talked about (carrying out) the

CS Pushes For Achieving Green Goals Under CAMPA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday while addressing the 25th Steering Committee Meeting of Compensation Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), emphasized on the department to work dedicatedly towards achieving the set targets in a given timeframe. The meeting besides Commissioner Secretary, Forests, Ecology & Environment was attended by Principal Secretary, Finance; PCCF; Chief Wildlife Warden; Secretary, Planning; Director, Remote Sensing; CEO, CAMPA and other concerned HoDs of the department. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took stock of the afforestation efforts made during the past year and the targets achieved



during this time. He asked the officers to complete installation of Boundary Pillars (BPs) around the forests across J&K to ensure their protection. He also enjoined upon the concerned to digitize these BPs in order to create digitized maps of all the forest areas. He urged them to give details of the areas treated in lieu of the forest areas that came under Hydro Electric Projects of Kwar, Kiru and Ralehere. Dulloo further remarked that forests are lungs of the earth guaranteeing its sustainability. He advised for adopting modern technology to map the highly degraded areas for its treatment on priority basis. On the occasion, Commissioner Secretary, FE&E, Sheetal Nanda, informed the meeting about the role and responsibilities of

Over 5 Lakh Tourists Visit Kashmir In First Three Months Of 2025

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: Kashmir is seeing a big boost in tourism this year, with 5,25,272 tourists visiting the valley in just the first three months and one week of 2025. This includes 5,14,845 domestic and 10,427 foreign tourists, giving a major push to the local economy and bringing smiles to people who depend on tourism for their livelihood. According to official data, in January, there were 1,51,023 tourists (1,48,439 domestic and 3,585 foreign) In February, 1,47,560 tourists visited (1,43,444 domestic and 4,116 foreign) - March recorded The highest numbers with 1,76,355 tourists (1,74,349 domestic and 2,006 foreign) From April 1 to 7, 49,544 tourists arrived (48,614 domestic and 930 foreign)



Tourism officials said that 2025 is turning out to be one of the best years in recent times. A major reason for the rise in tourists was the successful hosting of the Khelo India Winter Games in Gulmarg in March. "The Winter Games attracted national attention and brought adventure lovers

in large numbers," said a tourism department official. At the same time, the Tulip Garden in Srinagar is drawing thousands of visitors every day. "This place looks like heaven on earth. The flowers, the cool breeze, and the view of the Zabarwan Hills are simply

Rains lash Kashmir, MeT Predicts More



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A day after the Valley recorded the hottest day of the season, fresh rainfall in Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir on Wednesday led to mercury plummeting across the region. According to the details available, the weather conditions remained mostly cloudy today across the Valley while the rainfall in the evening led to the decline in temperature. Amidst the gusty winds, the rains lashed multiple areas of the Valley including Srinagar, especially north and central

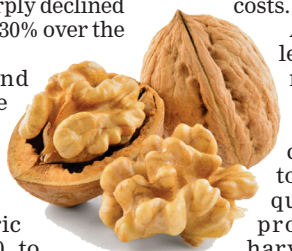
Kashmir. However, the weatherman has predicted generally dry weather tomorrow. Director Meteorological department, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the weather is expected to remain wet from April 18 as light to moderate rain and snow (higher reaches) at most places and moderate to heavy rain at isolated to scattered places during 18th & 19th April accompanied with thunder and gusty winds from April 18th evening onwards is expected in the region. The major activity is expected on April 19 as the local MeT department here

Kashmir's Walnut Industry Faces Chinese Threat

From 1.70 lakh MTs In 2020 To Mere 30,000 MTs In 2024

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The once-thriving walnut industry in Kashmir is facing a severe crisis as demand for its organic walnuts has sharply declined from 85% to just 30% over the past four years. Growers and traders are deeply concerned as sales have dropped drastically from 1.70 lakh metric tonnes in 2020 to a mere 30,000 metric tonnes in 2024. The primary reasons behind this decline include the influx of cheaper Chinese walnuts, inadequate processing facilities, and weak marketing strategies. In local markets, Kashmiri organic walnuts are currently priced between Rs 700-800 per kilogram, while Chinese walnuts sell for nearly half the price at Rs 350-400 per kilogram.



This stark price difference is largely due to China's mass production methods, which rely heavily on chemical fertilizers, allowing for large-scale exports at lower costs. A critical challenge for Kashmir's walnut industry is the lack of processing units to enhance the quality of the produce after harvest. Experts explain that while Kashmiri walnuts are rich in oil, their natural color does not turn white due to insufficient processing, making them less attractive in both domestic and international markets. Official data from the Horticulture Marketing Department reveals that only 15% of walnuts are currently being sold through formal channels. Official sources

CS pushes for achieving green goals under CAMPA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday while addressing the 25th Steering Committee Meeting of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), emphasized on the department to work dedicatedly towards achieving the set targets in a given timeframe.

The meeting besides Commissioner Secretary, Forests, Ecology & Environment was attended by Principal Secretary, Finance; PCCF; Chief Wildlife Warden; Secretary, Planning; Director, Remote Sensing; CEO, CAMPA and other concerned HoDs of the department.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took stock of the afforestation efforts made during the past year and the targets achieved during this time. He asked the officers to complete installation of Boundary Pillars (BPs) around the forests across J&K to ensure their protection.

He also enjoined upon the concerned to digitise these BPs in order to create digitized maps of all the forest areas. He urged them to give details of the areas treated in lieu of the forest areas that came under Hydro Electric Projects of Kwar, Kiru and Ratlehere.

Dulloo further remarked that forests are lungs of the earth guaranteeing its sustainability. He advised for adopting modern technology to map the highly degraded areas for its treatment on priority basis.

On the occasion, Commissioner Secretary, FE&E, Sheetal Nanda, informed the meeting about the role and responsibilities of the Steering Committee in deciding the future course of action to take up the CAMPA works during the year ahead.

She also made out that the Committee had an overarching role of monitoring the department's activities besides giving necessary directions for utilization of resources to achieve the



desired goals.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Suresh Kumar Gupta, gave out that the scheme is being implemented smoothly in the UT, obtaining tangible results over the years. He said that installation and digitization of BPs around the forests had been achieved to a larger extent with the left out forests to be demarcated in the year or two ahead.

He asserted that the department has established strong internal and social audit mechanisms, including inter-range and inter-divisional checks, alongside monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting formats to monitor the outcomes of this CAMPA scheme.

Moreover, it was given out that the public transparency is being maintained through the e-Green Watch portal, where data from 3,410 projects (including geotagged coordinates) is accessible.

Elaborating further, CEO CAMPA, T. Rabi Kumar, revealed that the third-party evaluations show improved survival rates. The third party evaluation (2012-2019) reported a 50% survival rate and in the next phase (2019-2022), conducted by AFC India Limited, survival rates improved significantly to 62.70%, with Kashmir at 65.40% and Jammu at 60%.

Giving the financial overview of this scheme as on March 2024, it was divulged that a total of Rs 851.65 crore were available with an approved outlay of Rs 276.27 crore for FY 2024-25. It was further added that an expenditure of Rs 153.67 was booked during

this year leaving a balance of Rs 727.66 crore available with the department.

As far as the outcomes over the past 15 years are concerned, the meeting was apprised that during 2010-11 to 2024-25, a substantial amount of forest land has been treated under CAMPA initiatives, with the total area afforested reaching thousands of hectares. A significant financial commitment of Rs 1369.76 crore has been made during this period.

In addition, it was given out that the CAMPA budget has seen consistent increase over the years, peaking at Rs 153.67 crore in FY 2024-25 with corresponding increase in year-wise plantation efforts. These efforts are aimed at enhancing green cover, improving biodiversity, and mitigating the impact of climate change.

The Annual Plan Outlay (APO) for the fiscal year 2025-26 was presented and approved, with a total proposed outlay of Rs 193.72 crore, of which, Rs 170.47 crore have been proposed under the forest sector activities and Rs 23.25 crore under wildlife conservation.

Regarding different components of APO, the Compensatory Afforestation has an outlay of Rs 12.71 crore, Additional Compensatory Afforestation Rs 7.27 crore, NPV (Forest) Rs 117.96 crore and NPV (Protected Areas) Rs 23.25 for the ensuing year.

The Committee also reviewed and approved several key targets for the upcoming fiscal year. These included Plantation & Assisted Natural Regeneration on 14,680 hectares, Soil & Mois-

ture Conservation Works on 6,468 hectares, Forest Protection Works (Fencing etc.) on 8,087 hectares, Fire Protection Measures on 2,061 km (firelines), establishment of 163 Nurseries and plantation of 1.82 crore saplings to be planted generating 20.24 lakh casual labour man days across the UT.

Later, the Chief Secretary also released the 'Annual Asian Water Bird Census' (AWC 2025) of 26 wetlands/waterbodies of Kashmir valley. The Count was conducted simultaneously in all the major water-bodies along with lesser-known wetlands of the valley which included Hokersar, Shalabugh, Hygam, Mirgund, Wullar Lake Badinambal, Narkara, Nigeen Lake, (6 associated wetlands, Anchar Lake, Dal Lake, and wetlands from Pampore viz., Manibugh, Kranchoo, Chatlum and Fashkhoori.

It was revealed that the activity was conducted by 160 volunteers including NGOs, Bird Lovers, students from Kashmir University and SKUAST-K along with the staff of Wetlands Division and North Division.

The survey culminated into recording a total of 13,43,506 number of birds belonging to 67 species in all the wetlands. Hokersar contributed 29.97% of the total birdcount followed by Shalabugh (29.44%) and other wetlands (40.59%).

On the occasion, the Chief Secretary launched two mobile apps pertaining to monitoring of CAMPA works and its nursery module for real time updation of data by the concerned to chase the targets on time.

RAMP Scheme implementation takes off in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR: In a significant move towards creating a feasible ecosystem for the growth of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME), the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme was launched Wednesday in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory with the successful conduct of the first District-Level RAMP Awareness Workshop in Udhampur.

The event, held here at the ITI college, was jointly organized by the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) and Grant Thornton Bharat LLP (SPIU for RAMP), in collaboration with the District Industries Centre (DIC). The event marked the beginning of a series of district-level outreach programs designed to build awareness and capacity among MSMEs, stakeholders, and implementing agencies under the RAMP initiative.

The RAMP scheme, an initiative of the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, supported by the World Bank, is a strategic intervention aimed at revitalizing the MSME sector

across India. With a national outlay of 6,062.45 crore till FY 2026-27, the scheme focuses on improving market access, financing, digital adoption, greening enterprises, streamlining compliance, and enhancing institutional capacity.

Jammu and Kashmir has been allocated 74.03 crore under the scheme, including 66.63 crore as the central share and 7.40 crore as the UT's contribution. The Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, has been entrusted with the responsibility of the scheme across the UT. The Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) has been nominated as the Nodal Agency for overall coordination and execution of RAMP-related activities.

Managing Director, JKPTO Sudarshan Kumar underlined the strategic significance of the RAMP scheme for the UT. "This scheme directly addresses the on-ground challenges faced by MSMEs, from access to credit and markets to skilling and formalization. Under the guidance of Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary,

Industries & Commerce, we are committed to ensuring that the RAMP scheme becomes a game changer for MSMEs across Jammu and Kashmir."

The SPIU Team delivered a detailed presentation, outlining the formalized interventions under the RAMP scheme in J&K. These interventions include the formalization of MSMEs through Udyam Registration in the UT of J&K, MSME packaging and publicity of GI/ODOP/DEH/unique products from J&K, and the establishment of producer companies/associations for GI/ODOP/DEH/unique products under cluster development programmes. Additionally, the scheme encompasses buyer-seller meets (BSMs) and reverse buyer-seller meets (RBSM), the Jammu & Kashmir MSMEs Health Clinic, the J&K Ramp M&E Dashboard, Entrepreneurship and skill development programmes (ESDP), Management Development and upskilling of existing entrepreneurs (MDPs), and the penetration of digital financing.

The workshop witnessed active participation from MSME entrepreneurs,

officials, and stakeholders. Key functionaries present included Kishor Singh Katoch, General Manager, DIC Udhampur, and Sourabh Sharma, General Manager, JKPTO.

SPIU consultants and officials from the Department of Industries and Commerce and ITI Udhampur responded to various stakeholder queries, reaffirming the government's commitment to grassroots-level implementation.

Furthermore, Management Development Programmes (MDPs) have been initiated in 15 districts across J&K by JKEDI starting from April 15, 2025. Moreover, the Directorate of Industries & Commerce, Kashmir has launched a dedicated Awareness cum Formalization Drive today, targeting unregistered enterprises in the Kashmir division, thereby paving the way for broader inclusion under government schemes.

The event concluded with a collective commitment from all stakeholders to maximize the benefits of the RAMP scheme across districts, ensuring that J&K's MSMEs emerge stronger, more competitive, and more resilient.

Director Extension SKUAST-Kashmir visits KVK Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Director Extension SKUAST-Kashmir, Prof. Riahana Habib Kanth Wednesday visited KVK Kulgam, where she inaugurated Hi-Tech Dairy Unit & newly established High-Density Orchard trellis system, established under the university's outreach and development programmes.

On the occasion, Prof. Kanth also distributed

certificates among the successful trainees of vocational courses in cutting & tailoring and nutrition.

Addressing the trainees, Prof. Kanth emphasized the importance of skill development and its role in self-employment and said that these certificates are not just documents to collect, but a key to creating sustainable employment opportunities.

She also urged more youth and women to come

forward and benefit from the various schemes and training programmes offered by SKUAST-K.

Prof. Kanth also delivered a detailed presentation on "Poshan Pakhwada" and emphasised the importance of balanced nutrition in improving the health of mothers and children.

The Director Extension was accompanied by Dr Liyaqat Ali Chowdhary, Incharge, KVKs-Kashmir. Besides, Dr Manzoor

Ahmad Ganai, Prof & Head KVK Kulgam, along with scientists and other staff members and trainees, were present at the event.

The visit was marked by interactive sessions, showcasing of progressive farming practices, and a strong emphasis on promoting entrepreneurship in the agricultural and allied sectors.

About 15 Chemist shops in areas of Nehama, DH Pora and Watoo, Asnoor were inspected.

Over 1.3 Crore Persons Insured through GeM in FY 2024-25

GeM facilitates hiring of 1 million people in FY 2024-25

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Government e Marketplace (GeM), India's largest e-marketplace for public procurement, sets yet another milestone in services delivery in the FY 24-25. Apart from facilitating hiring of 1 million manpower resources in FY 24-25, GeM has successfully facilitated insurance of more than 1.3 crore individuals covering Health, Life and Personal Accident Insurance policies.

1.3 crore insured persons reflects the growing confidence of government organizations in leveraging GeM for their insurance needs, reaffirming its role as a transformative force in public procurement."

A key advantage of GeM's insurance services is that it facilitates direct



transactions between government buyers and insurance providers without intermediaries. This streamlined approach has significantly expedited the process while also reducing insurance premiums thereby ensuring cost savings for government organisations.

Beyond Life and Health insurance, the platform has expanded its insurance offerings to include a comprehensive range of insurance services such as Asset Insurance, Transit and Marine Insurance, Liability Insurance, Livestock Insurance, Motor Insurance, Crop Insurance and Cyber Insurance. Such broad spectrum of services ensures that various insurance needs are met through a single, transparent and efficient platform to enhance accessibility and cost-effectiveness in availing Insurance services by Government Buyers.

While commenting on this milestone, CEO-GeM Shri Ajay Bhadoo said, "GeM remains committed to continuously enhancing its platform to provide seamless, secure and cost-effective procurement solutions. The milestone of

HDFC Bank Parivartan covers 298 border villages

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, under its CSR arm Parivartan, has covered 298 border villages across the country under its rural development initiatives. These clusters of villages are located in border areas of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Ladakh, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.

The Bank plans to extend its reach to 150 additional border villages in the years to come. These initiatives are aligned with national development goals outlined in the Centre's Border Area Development Programme and Vibrant Villages Programme.

Border area villages along the northern and northeastern Himalayan regions and the western desert stretches often grapple with unique challenges including difficult terrain, restricted access to essential services and economic vulnerabilities due to their remote locations. Parivartan has impacted the lives of approximately five lakh individuals in these areas through targeted need-based interventions.

The Bank implements two key types of projects in these areas Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP): This approach focuses on clusters of 15-20 contiguous villages over a span of 36-48 months. It integrates multiple aspects, including rural development, education, skill development, financial inclusion, health & hygiene, and natural resource management.

"A holistic approach to rural development is not merely desirable, but an absolute necessity, especially in border areas," said Nusrat Pathan, Head - Corporate Social Responsibility at HDFC Bank. "We ensure that progress in one sector reinforces and amplifies positive outcomes in others, thereby maximising the impact of our interventions." [KNT]

This initiative targets specific areas of intervention, achieving concentrated impact in one sector.

HDFC Bank's Parivartan initiative is committed to strengthening rural communities across border areas such as Lower Dibang Valley and Shi Yomi in Arunachal Pradesh; Baksa and Udalguri in Assam; Kishanganj, West Champaran and Madhubani in Bihar; Banaskantha, Kutch, and Patan in Gujarat; Ladakh; Chandel in Manipur; East Jaintia Hills in Meghalaya; Fazilka and Pathankot in Punjab; Barmer in Rajasthan; Gyalshing West and Pakyong in Sikkim; Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh; and Chamoli in Uttarakhand.

Speaking about the initiative, Mr. Kaizad Bharucha, DMD, HDFC Bank said, "We are committed to creating meaningful impact in India's border villages by providing access to technology-enabled education, improved agricultural productivity, renewable energy, and livelihood opportunities. By aligning with national development goals, we collaborate with local communities, NGOs, and government bodies to build stronger, self-reliant, and vibrant communities that contribute to India's economic and social fabric."

"We ensure that progress in one sector reinforces and amplifies positive outcomes in others, thereby maximising the impact of our interventions." [KNT]

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE ZONAL EDUCATION OFFICER KANGAN

Tel. No., 0194-2418237; Fax: 0194 2418237; E.mail: zeokangan@gmail.com
ADDRESS: NEAR JAMIYA MASJID, KANGAN-191202.

Subject: Engagement of Seasonal Educational Volunteers for 04 newly established Seasonal Centres (Behaks).

Reference: Director Samagra Shiksha J&K (UT) No. EDU/PD/Sms/Seasonal/8404-10/2024-25, Dated 01/08/2024 and CEO Ganderbal's Endorsement No. CEO/Gb/SS/Seasonal/970, Dated 02/08/2024 and Director Samagra Shiksha J&K (UT) No. EDU/PD/sms/seasonal/316-42/2025-26, Dated 11/04/2025.

Advertisement Notification No. 01-ZEO KGN/SMS of 2025 Dated:- 15-04-2025

Applications are invited from the desirous candidates from the revenue village mentioned against below 04 newly established seasonal centers (behaks), as per the prescribed format (Annexure-B) for the temporary engagement of Seasonal Educational Volunteers to provide education to children (6-14 years) of migratory nomadic Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities during their six-month migration on a monthly honorarium of Rs 10,000/- per month. This advertisement cancels and supersedes the previous advertisement notification issued by this office vide No. 06 of 2024, Dated 07/08/2024, and as such, the Candidates who have already applied against the said advertisement notification shall apply afresh for this notification. Details of Seasonal Centers and Vacancies:-

S.No	Name of the S.No Behak/Seasonal Center	Revenue Village	No. of Vacancies/Posts per Behak
1	Nardsar	Chattergul	01
2	Nikki Haldoor	Wangath	01
3	Kourdob	Anderwan	01
4	Peerpal Dadiwas	Anderwan	01

a. Eligibility Criteria
Candidates fulfilling the below conditions shall be eligible for applying as the Seasonal Volunteer:-
i. The candidate must belong to Scheduled Tribe (ST)/ Gujjar & Bakerwal community and shall possess a valid ST Certificate issued by a competent authority.
ii. Educational Qualification: Minimum 10+2. Preference shall be given for higher qualifications.
iii. Age Limit: 18-40 years as of 01/01/2025.

b. Terms and Conditions
The Seasonal Center must fulfill the criteria laid down in Government Order No. 1684-Edu of 2021, Dated 07/11/2021, and other guidelines issued by Director Samagra Shiksha from time to time.

c. Documents:
i. Application form.
ii. ST certificate (self-attested).
iii. Educational certificates (self-attested).
iv. Age proof (e.g., birth certificate, Aadhaar).
v. Residence proof (e.g., domicile certificate, ration card).
vi. Two passport-sized photographs.
vii. VEC recommendation.

d. Selection Process:
The candidate after fulfilling all the eligibility criteria and terms conditions and having the highest Qualification shall be selected for the Post against the particular Behak
Note:
The application along with all testimonials shall reach to this office within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice and no applications whatsoever shall be accepted by this office after the expiry of stipulated time period.

ANNEXURE-B
APPLICATION-FORM FOR ENGAGEMENT AS EDUCATION VOLUNTEER

1.	Name of the Applicant	_____
2.	Parentage	_____
3.	Address	_____
4.	Date of Birth	_____
5.	Tehsil	_____
6.	Village	_____
7.	District	_____
8.	Qualification.	_____

S.No	Qualification	Board/University	Year of Passing	Marks Obtained	Percentage
1	10+2				
2	B.A./B.Sc./B-Tech				
3	M.A./Msc				

9. Contact No. _____

10. Mention the Name of the Behak for which you are applying:-
a. _____
b. _____

11. Do you have a valid ST Category :- _____

12. Declaration:- I declare that
a. All information as furnished by me above is true, complete, and correct.
b. I possess a valid ST certificate and meet eligibility criteria.
c. I understand the engagement is temporary, co-terminus with the six-month seasonal centre, with no permanent employment rights.
d. Misrepresentation will lead to disqualification/legal action.

Date: _____ Place: _____ Signature: _____

13. Village Education Committee (VEC)/SMDC Recommendation, with proper signature and seal
No. ZEO/Kgn/Sms/2025/759-63 Dated :-15-04-2025

DIPK-415-25
DT: 16/04/2025
Zonal Education Officer
Kangan

Dulat's Book exposes NC's role in Article 370 abrogation: Parra

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: People's Democratic Party (PDP) Legislative Party Leader and MLA Pulwama, Waheed Ur Rehman Parra, on Wednesday launched a blistering attack on the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference following explosive revelations made by former RAW chief and long-time associate of the Abdullah family, A.S. Dulat, in his recently released book.

Parra said, "Dr. Farooq Abdullah has been a close friend of ex-RAW chief A.S. Dulat. He says in his book that Dr. Farooq was brought onboard for the abrogation of Article 370 and even supported it. We don't need clarifications from their spokespersons; Dr. Farooq should himself come forward and clarify." He emphasized that this is not a minor political charge, but a fundamental question about trust, loyalty, and historical accountability.

He asserted that the statement made by Dulat is clearly mentioned in the book that, Farooq Abdullah, was in close contact with the central leadership at the time of Article 370's abrogation. He added that Dulat's book reveals

that Farooq Abdullah met the Prime Minister just two days before the abrogation, and yet, for the next six months, there was absolute silence from the NC.

He stressed that during that time, there was a complete communication blockade, widespread repression, and a systematic crackdown, but NC maintained a disturbing quiet.

He pointed out that the PDP bore the brunt of the state's iron fist; over 40 leaders were jailed, voices of dissent were silenced, Jamaat-e-Islami was banned, journalists and human rights defenders were targeted. He added, "Yet, NC remained untouched. Not a single strong statement. Not a single mass mobilization. Instead, what followed was electoral opportunism."

Parra said that soon after the crackdown, elections were held and NC contested and won 50 seats. He asserted that they sought votes on the basis of Article 370, the promise of statehood, release of political prisoners, and land rights.

"But when the time came to speak truth to power," he emphasized, "NC's reso-



lution in the Legislative Assembly didn't even mention Article 370." He said the language of the resolution was so watered down that it drew praise from the BJP's IT cell head. He added that not a single resolution was passed on critical issues like the Waqf Act. He stressed that even today, when the situation in Jammu and Kashmir continues to deteriorate, the National Conference chooses silence over resistance.

He remarked that, "Dulat's revelations today rip off the last remaining mask. The fiery speeches, the staged outrage, the carefully crafted image of 'fighting the BJP'; it was all theatre. A well-scripted performance aimed at misleading the people of Jammu and Kashmir into believing that the National Conference was standing

guard over their rights."

He asserted that in truth, the party was complicit; quiet facilitators of Jammu and Kashmir's disempowerment. "But should this come as a surprise?" he asked. "This is the same NC that watched silently for decades as Article 370 was gradually hollowed out, posing as protectors while doing little to actually protect." He emphasized that the party's legacy is not one of resistance but of convenient silence dressed up as statesmanship.

He said the aim of this carefully constructed political drama was singular to normalize the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A and to whitewash the fear and repression unleashed after August 5, 2019, under the label of a so-called 'popular government'.

He stressed that the truth is harsh but undeniable: "Generation after generation, the NC has built its political fortunes on the back of our dis-empowerment." He added, "Dulat's disclosures aren't shocking, they are a confirmation. A mirror held up to decades of hypocrisy, opportunism, and moral collapse."

CM chairs review meeting ahead of Mission YUVA launch in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday chaired a meeting to review the pre-launch preparations of Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan)—a transformative initiative aimed at empowering youth through entrepreneurship, skill development and inclusive economic participation.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Ministers Sakeena Itoo, Javed Ahmed Rana, Javed Ahmad Dar, and Satish Sharma. Also present were Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary Education Shantmanu, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance, AGM NABARD, Vice Chancellors of various universities of J&K, Secretary Labour & Employment Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, and all Deputy Commissioners and other concerned attended the meeting both in person and via virtual



mode. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah lauded the "path-breaking" work undertaken by the Labour & Employment Department during the baseline household survey conducted across Jammu and Kashmir.

He noted with satisfaction that much of the data aligns with existing government records.

He suggested that this data be shared across departments to ensure easy access and usability for formulating new schemes or refining those already in place.

Secretary Labour & Employment, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, presented

a detailed overview of the survey findings, highlighting its focus on four foundational pillars—Culture, Capital, Capacity, and Connectivity.

He explained that the survey is designed to foster an entrepreneurial culture and build a supportive ecosystem aimed at enabling individuals aged 18–49 to establish at least 1.37 lakh new enterprises, thereby generating around 4.25 lakh job opportunities over the next five years.

The presentation also provided insights into the programme's design, key innovations, implementation strategy, and budget as outlined in the Detailed Project Report (DPR).

Secretary Ranjan emphasized that the core objective of Mission YUVA is to identify youth inclined toward self-employment and entrepreneurship, and to provide them with robust support through structured mentorship, training, and access to capital.

Mission YUVA envisions transforming Jammu & Kashmir into a vibrant entrepreneurial hub by unlocking the potential of its youth.

With a focus on strategic interventions and comprehensive support systems, the mission seeks to spur economic growth, reduce unemployment and cultivate a spirit of self-reliance across J&K.

ECI launches first of its kind training program for BLAs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In a first, ECI launches training sessions for the Booth Level Agents (BLAs) to strengthen grassroots participation by political parties with around 280 BLAs of 10 recognised political parties from Bihar taking part in the 2-day training programme.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has commenced the training of Booth Level Agents (BLAs) from Bihar in view of the forthcoming elections in the State. The programme is being organised at the India International Institute for Democracy and Election Management, IIDEM, New Delhi.

Chief Election Commissioner, Gyanesh Kumar, along with Election Commissioners, Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Dr. Vivek Joshi addressed the BLAs in a first of its kind training programme. The training was conceptualised during the Chief Electoral Officers (CEO) conference held on the 4th of March, 2025.

The Commission underscored the importance of BLAs in the election pro-

cesses and asserted that the training programme would help them fulfil their responsibilities as delineated in the Representation of People Act, 1950 and 1951, Registration of Elector Rules 1960, Conduct of Election Rules 1961 and the manuals, guidelines and instructions issued by ECI from time to time.

The BLAs were given an overview of their appointment, roles and responsibilities as per the legal framework. The training programme familiarised them with various aspects of the election processes including the preparation, updation and revision of electoral rolls and the associated forms and formats associated.

The BLAs are appointed by the recognised political parties and play an important role at the booth level to ensure transparency and fairness in the final electoral roll. They are empowered to raise objections under the provision in the final section appeals under Section 24(1) and 24(2) of the RP Act 1950 in case they are aggrieved of the final electoral rolls as published.

NC Rejects Dulat's Claims On Dr Farooq's Stand On Article 370

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR- National Conference (NC) Chief Spokesperson and MLA Zaidibal, Tanvir Sadiq Wednesday rejected the claims made by former RAW chief A.S. Dulat in his new book "The Chief Minister and the Spy". He termed the claims as contradictory and an attempt to create controversy.

Dulat, in his book has alleged that NC president Farooq Abdullah privately backed the abrogation of Article 370 while publicly opposing it.

Sadiq said the book contradicts itself and questioned the credibility of the author. "If you look at the book and what he writes in it, he contradicts his own words. He writes that the Government of India waited for seven months to see Farooq Abdullah Sahib's reaction when he was in custody. If that was the case, then why did he promote the PAGD after coming out?" he said.

He added that the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar

Declaration (PAGD) was formed after Abdullah's release and that it was not broken by the NC.

Sadiq also questioned Dulat's comments about the PDP and its leadership. "The words he used about the PDP patriot are probably vulgar. I don't trust those things," he said. He added that Dulat had earlier made remarks against PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, which he termed as a bid to stay relevant.

He said that the opposition had no issue to raise now and was trying to divert attention. "They can't say anything on the budget or other matters. So they are making up stories," he said. "We have bigger issues to deal with like the amendment bill and the reservation issue."

Sadiq also said the concerns raised by Srinagar MP Syed Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, who alleged being sidelined by the party after supporting student protests, would be addressed internally. (KNO)

Kathua Encounters Exposed Infiltration Route, Operations On: Police

AGENCIES

JAMMU- The four recent encounters in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district "exposed" the route used by terrorists to infiltrate into India from across the International Border (IB), a senior police officer said on Wednesday.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Kathua, Shobhit Saxena also said the successful recovery of huge quantities of arms and ammunition including explosives from the terrorists after the gun fights scuttled a major plan of the terror groups to carry out a major strike in Jammu and Kashmir.

Kathua district witnessed four encounters between a group of recently infiltrated terrorists and security forces

in the past one month.

Two heavily-armed terrorists were eliminated in Safyan forest on March 27. Four police personnel were killed in the encounter which took place four days after police intercepted the infiltrating terrorists in Sanial forest of Hiranagar sector.

"We are chasing the remaining three to four terrorists who escaped the encounters and are on the run. We are confident of tracking and neutralizing them soon," the SSP told reporters at Rajbagh police station, where all the seized material including sophisticated weapons, explosives and daily-use items was on display.

He said a tight security grid is in place in the district, from the border villages to hinter-

land, leading to the successful operations against the terrorists. "The encounters exposed their traditional (infiltration) route... We will not allow them to use this route again," Saxena said.

He said the recoveries showed that they had come with ill intention and were prepared for a long stay.

He said the seizure of a huge quantity of explosive material thwarted their plan to carry out Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) blasts, while some quantity of heroin suggested that they were also consuming drugs.

He praised the cooperation of the people in the anti-terrorist operations and said the "civil population helped us a lot and are providing immediate information which helped

us to make an assessment about the terrorists on the run and are accordingly planning our operations to neutralize them".

According to evidence, Saxena said terrorists had recently sneaked into this side from across the border but police "did not allow them to succeed in their nefarious designs".

On local support to terrorists, he said 30 people have been identified and booked under Public Safety Act (PSA) in the district so far.

Among the material seized from the terrorists include two AK assault rifles, one M4 carbine, grenades, and sophisticated gadgets for navigation, clothes, sleeping bags, Pakistan-make medicines, beverages and food items.

CM inaugurates e-SEHAT App, one-stop healthcare solution for J&K citizens

GMK NEWS NETWORK

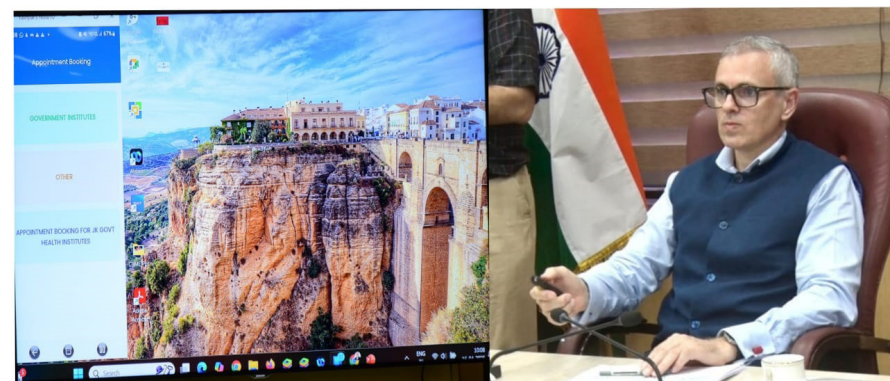
JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Wednesday launched the e-SEHAT App — a comprehensive, one-stop digital solution designed to cater to the healthcare needs of the people of Jammu & Kashmir, including citizens, doctors and medical professionals.

The Chief Minister congratulated the team for developing such an elaborate and wide-ranging application that addresses the health needs of J&K's citizens.

He suggested making the app more user-friendly and incorporating additional features, including the integration of the appointment system of empanelled private health institutions.

The Chief Minister also directed the concerned authorities to conduct hands-on training through scheduled workshops for the staff to familiarize them with the application. "Once the staff is trained, awareness campaigns can be launched to educate the public about the app and its benefits," he said.

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring, he called for regular



reviews — weekly by the Secretary, Health & Medical Education; monthly by the Chief Secretary; and quarterly by the Minister In-charge — to assess the app's performance and progress.

The launch event was attended by Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakeena Itoo, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Secretary Health & Medical Education Syed Abid Rashid, DG BISAG-N, Principals of various Government Medical Colleges, Medical Superintendents, HoDs and other concerned officials.

Earlier, Secretary H&ME Syed Abid Rashid gave a detailed presentation outlining the objectives, purpose, and target

users of the SEHAT App.

He informed that the department has developed a cutting-edge digital application designed to guide and support patients and their attendants in accessing healthcare facilities and services across both public and private sectors in Jammu & Kashmir.

He stated that the SEHAT App is a smart e-health solution offering tele-diagnosis and first opinion for healthcare needs. Useable from home, offices, or hospitals, the app is especially beneficial in remote areas and serves a broad range of users including the general public, patients, healthcare professionals, medical students, and aspirants of medical and paramedical courses.

The SEHAT App offers a wide array of features aimed at improving healthcare access and delivery across Jammu & Kashmir. It provides detailed information related to healthcare institutions, including doctors' availability, options for appointment bookings, diagnostic and surgical services, as well as tele-consultation, tele-medicine, and emergency care. For the general public, the app includes tools for health promotion and disease prevention, an AI-powered symptoms checker, health tracking capabilities, medication reminders, integration with wearable devices, and multilingual support.

Healthcare professionals can benefit from secure messaging, access to Elec-

tronic Health Records (EHR), prescription and billing management, lab result integration, academic resources, and opportunities for research. The app also supports medical students by offering information on academic courses, hostel accommodations, library facilities, and student exchange programs.

Additionally, SEHAT includes helpline services for hospital assistance, ambulance information, and feedback mechanisms.

It facilitates a coordinated referral mechanism through hospital networking for efficient patient transfers and emergency support. The app also provides comprehensive details on health insurance schemes such as PMJAY, CGHS, and ECHS.

Furthermore, it promotes skill development through CPR and Basic Life Support (BLS) training, workshops, and various continuing education programs.

The Secretary emphasized that the SEHAT App is aimed at strengthening collaboration between healthcare providers, patients and insurers by improving communication and facilitating access to healthcare resources.

VIOLATING CONDITIONS

Operation of 03 Chemist shops disallowed in Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: In a bid to regulate the sale of Schedule H1 Drugs and to streamline the records by way of digitization, a special drive was conducted by the team of Drug Control Officers along with Police Officials in various areas of Kulgam.

About 15 Chemist shops in areas of Nehama, DH Pora and Watoo, Asnoor

were inspected. During the drive several Drug samples of different brands were lifted for ascertaining the quality standards.

Operation of three chemist shops was disallowed for violating the conditions of licenses.

Earlier in the day, a representative from the Drug Control Department delivered an elaborate lecture in an awareness programme

on the topic Drug/substance abuse, its genesis, role of the Drug dept. and collaborative approach by the student and teacher community to circumvent this growing menace.

The mega awareness camp was held at Degree College Kilam Kulgam and was organised by Dist. Administration Kulgam in collaboration with other line departments.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION RAFIABAD

Sub-CORRIGENDUM.

Ref- This office e-NIT No. 01/2025-26/R&B/Rafiabad Dated 09.04.2025.

For the subjected work issued under NIT referred above, kindly read condition 1.1 & 9.1 in NIT as under:-

S.No	Read As	Instead of
1	Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Rafiabad Deposited in MH 0059	Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Rafiabad

All other terms and conditions shall remain same.

No:EE/R&B/192-94
Dated:16/04/2024

DIPK-449-25
DT: 16/04/2025

s/d
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Rafiabad

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Rising Alcohol Consumption In Kashmir

The picturesque Kashmir valley, known for its serene landscapes and rich cultural heritage, is grappling with a silent yet alarming crisis: the increasing consumption of alcohol, particularly among its youth. This troubling trend not only poses a threat to public health and social harmony, but also risks eroding the deeply rooted cultural and religious ethos of the region. What was once a rarity is now becoming disturbingly commonplace. Liquor outlets have mushroomed across the valley in recent years, with little regard for the long-term consequences of such expansion. These outlets, often set up in close proximity to residential areas, are making alcohol easily accessible to the local population—especially the younger generation who are most susceptible to experimentation and addiction. What makes the situation more concerning is the growing involvement of non-local elements in the distribution and promotion of alcohol. It is not uncommon to find individuals from outside the region facilitating the sale of liquor, directly or indirectly, to impressionable youth. This raises questions not only about lax regulation and monitoring by the authorities, but also about the larger motives behind encouraging a culture that runs counter to the social fabric of Kashmir. The impact is already visible. Families are facing growing distress as addiction begins to take root in homes once untouched by such issues. Educational performance, mental health, and community relationships are all at risk. The normalization of alcohol consumption also brings with it the threat of associated crimes and anti-social behavior. It is imperative for both civil society and the administration to take note. There must be a strict regulation of liquor licenses, particularly in sensitive regions like Kashmir. Community-based awareness campaigns and rehabilitation support are also essential to stem the tide of addiction. Religious leaders, educators, and youth icons must play a proactive role in steering the younger generation away from this dangerous path. Kashmir has always been a land of spiritual richness and cultural depth. Allowing a creeping menace like alcohol to dilute this identity is a loss the valley cannot afford. The time to act is now—before the problem becomes too deeply entrenched to reverse.

Understanding The Roots And Reasons Of Stagnancy

BHABANI SHANKAR NAYAK

The Heraclitean notion that 'changes is only constant' suggests that transformation is inevitable, regardless of all opposition to it. However, when this continuity of change merely accommodates existing social, political, economic, cultural, and religious structures, it does not represent real change—it is simply the reproduction of the existing order by other means. Such a reproductive process of change enables the growth of different forms of stagnancy and allows all forms of orthodoxy to survive and even thrive, despite scientific revolutions and technological advancements. Thus, not all forms of change represent progressive transformations within society. The persistence of social and political stagnation often reflects a lack of progressive change grounded in self-reflections and criticisms.

Criticism is often branded as anti-national, while criticism of the family and society is labelled as anti-social behaviour or dismissed as deviant and perverse. Individual acts of critique often tend to breed enmity. In such an environment, science and scientific thinking wither away, as science thrives on the celebration of criticism and the questioning of all forms of established norms. The comfort zone of a culture devoid of criticism breeds stagnation under the guise of change, creating a fertile ground for anti-scientific thoughts, actions, and practices to survive and thrive in the name of customs and traditions both in their dominant and marginalised forms. These ideas based on traditions and customs produce dominant, anti-democratic institutions, structures, and processes that oppose all forms of progressive and revolutionary change by accommodating existing orthodoxies.

Such an entrenched, biased environment against science, reason, and objective knowledge has been shaped by the subjective conditions of all orthodoxies, which prohibit progressive consciousness and radical change necessary to create a new social, political, economic, and cultural order based on equality,

liberty, and justice. It helps the ruling classes to thrive and govern an orderly society which is free from critical thinking and self-reflection.

There is a growing trend of bourgeois criticism rooted in essentialist and functionalist perspectives, aimed at expanding narratives based on elite consensus. For example, the bourgeois often criticise democracy when empowered citizens challenge the capitalist realities of exploitation or when governments intervene in the accumulation processes of capitalism. Such criticisms are essentialist in nature and do not contribute to deepening democracy or empowering citizens, states, and governments to act in the interests of people. Instead, bourgeois critiques are often directed at undermining democracy under the guise of promoting market efficiency and productivity growth. Essentialist and functionalist criticisms promote conformity and reinforce status quo to normalise power and naturalise the hegemony of the powerful.

Petty-bourgeois intellectuals, journalists, politicians, NGOs, civil society organizations, and state institutions often create conditions for funded

research and research institutions that promote narrow empiricist narratives devoid of emancipatory scientific knowledge—knowledge that could liberate individuals from both physical and mental forms of slavery. These narratives, while presented as change, in fact produce and reproduce conformity, and social, political, economic and intellectual stagnancy to resist radical change.

The continuous growth of stagnancy is a product of accommodative change that upholds dominant ideologies of the ruling and non-ruling elites and their entrenched structural inertia and processes that resist radical transformation to empower people in a progressive path. The dissenting voices and scientific praxis are marginalised and undermined to discourage critical inquiry to produce knowledge that threatens elites. The radical and progressive movements are delegitimised in the name of law, order and stability to continue the hierarchy of power and its exploitative regime.

Therefore, social, political, economic and cultural stagnation is not an accidental outcome of constant change, but a deliberate strategy aimed at continu-

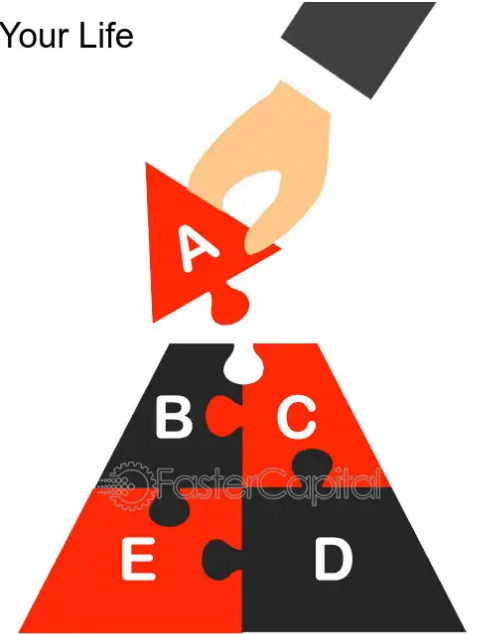
ously undermining and delegitimising progressive movements during periods of transformation intended to deepen democracy, secularism, and science for inclusive progress, peace, and prosperity for all. It suppresses progressive change while promoting accommodative change under the guise of stability and continuity. Social, political and economic stagnation is a systemic design that serves to preserve and promote the interests of the privileged. Stagnancy is a culture and a tool used by the bourgeoisie to create crises—social, political, economic, and cultural—thereby establishing the elites as the only alternative.

In such a scenario, it is essential to cultivate a culture of criticism and self-reflection—one that encourages questioning everything that exists in order to generate new knowledge and hopes that not only upholds democratic values but also broadens the horizons of scientific progress along a truly transformative path toward equality, justice, and liberty.

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Recognizing the Signs of Stagnation in Your Life

- A Lack of enthusiasm
- B Feeling trapped
- C Repetitive patterns
- D Fear of change
- E Lack of personal growth



ECONOMIC BOOSTER

Srinagar–Pahalgam Route Can Transform South Kashmir

ER. ISHFAQ KHALIQ

The proposed Srinagar–Pahalgam road via Khrew and Tral is a significant infrastructure initiative aimed at enhancing connectivity and boosting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. While the project has garnered support for its potential benefits, it also faces environmental concerns and awaits necessary approval.

Project Segments
Wahab Sahib Khrew to Pastuna – Estimated cost: 27 crore.

Bathnoor Karmula to Lehndajan Pahalgam – Estimated cost: 44.10 crore.

Project Overview
Route & Distance: The planned 70 km road will connect Srinagar to Pahalgam through Khrew, Wahab Sahib, Syeda bad (Pastuna), Karmula Tral, and Lehndajan. This new route is expected to reduce the travel distance by approximately 30 kilometers compared to the existing path via Anantnag and Bijbehara.

Current Status
Detailed Project Report (DPR): The DPRs for both segments have been prepared.

Pending Approvals: The project's advancement is contingent upon environmental clearances and the availability of funds. Specifically, the construction requires the acquisition of 108 Kanals (approximately 13.5 acres) of forest land and the felling of 845 trees.

Official Statements: The Minister for Roads and Buildings confirmed that while the DPRs are ready, the project awaits necessary environmental approvals and funding allocations.

Environmental Concerns and their remedies

Ecological Impact: Environmental groups, notably the Environmental Policy Group



(EPG), have raised alarms about the potential ecological damage. Concerns include deforestation, disruption of wildlife habitats, and risks associated with constructing roads in seismically active zones but when it comes to the connectivity of regions and development of a region various forests have been destroyed in the world for the construction purposes we it is a concern there were the trees are endangered species but in Kashmir we have growing vegetative soil were if 800 trees are destroyed we can plant 10000 trees and possibility is they will be all in good stage in coming years so such factors hardly matter when government is serious about countries developments and progresses.

Local Opposition: Residents of Khrew and surrounding areas, already affected by pollution from cement facto-

ries, fear that the new road could exacerbate environmental degradation and impact local agriculture, including saffron cultivation it is true they are in fear that it can exploit their environment and resources as they are in dilemma by previous projects of cement factories and other such allied industries but this time it is the construction of road from their localities the tourism will be boosted by the road connectivity there is no harm from the construction of roads through a locality it has always come with fortunes for the people living there they can install small stalls were they can earn their livelihood easily for the day they can open up hotels, restaurants, sports hubs amusement hubs to facilitate the tourists and people crossing the road from their areas.

While the Srinagar–Pahalgam road via Khrew and Tral promises improved connectivity and economic benefits, it is currently in the proposal stage, awaiting environmental clearances and funding. The project has sparked a debate between development objectives and environmental preservation, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that considers both infrastructural growth and ecological sustainability.

1. Enhanced Accessibility and Reduced Travel Time
Improved roads make remote or previously hard-to-reach destinations more accessible, encouraging more visitors and facilitating easier travel for locals. For instance, the proposed Srinagar–Pahalgam road via Khrew and Tral is expected to reduce travel distance by approximately 30 kilometers, making the journey more convenient for tour-

ists and pilgrims alike.

2. Economic Growth and Employment Opportunities

Infrastructure development often leads to economic stimulation in the region. The construction and maintenance of roads create jobs, while increased tourist influx boosts local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops. This economic activity can lead to improved living standards for residents.

3. Promotion of Local Culture and Heritage

Easier access to new areas allows tourists to explore and appreciate local cultures, traditions, and heritage sites. This exposure can foster cultural preservation and pride among local communities, as well as provide educational experiences for visitors.

4. Improved Infrastructure and Services

The development of roads often brings about improvements in other infrastructure and services, such as better healthcare access, education facilities, and utilities. These enhancements benefit both tourists and local residents, contributing to overall regional development.

5. Environmental and Sustainable Tourism Opportunities

With careful planning, road development can support sustainable tourism by providing controlled access to natural areas, thereby minimizing environmental impact. It also allows for the implementation of eco-friendly practices and infrastructure, promoting responsible tourism.

While the benefits are substantial, it's crucial to balance development with environmental conservation and community interests to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth.

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Importance Of Discipline In Life

IMRAN RESHI

As we see in our society there are many people who have made a great fortune and a lot many people who were having all the facilities available from the very childhood but still could not make out a successful life.

While making a keen observation in the lives of people I found that in one's life, there may be many reasons for success and failure in our endeavors, but as far as my observation is concerned, I have found one of the most important reason that lead to the failure in one's objectives in life is the lack of discipline.

We often hear the word discipline in our daily life. In fact, we utter it many times a day. I have observed thousands of times that we use this word synonymously with good manners. But the fact is that discipline is totally different from good manners.

Sometimes a person may exhibit manners and still be devoid of discipline and in some cases, it may be vice versa as well. Your good manners are responsible for making you a humble and polite person and getting love and respect from people. But your discipline is something which builds your character and makes you competent to attain any objective in your life... be it your studies or business or any significant objectives as the case may be.

Discipline is actually being committed, punctual and regular in pursue of your objectives. Discipline has the power to move any obstacle in the path of your success which otherwise seems like an immovable mountain.

Discipline is having the strong dedication to one's pursuits in life. Discipline is the pledge of a person to his own self for not losing courage and dedication until the objective is attained. Discipline is not letting go no matter how hard it becomes to pursue one's endeavors.

Discipline is doing part of our job on regular intervals even if it is of little magnitude. Let's take the example of students. Students often study hard at the time of exams which increases their stress level and fear for writing



in the examination hall. Whereas, the disciplined students study on regular basis even if it is for half an hour daily. They prepare themselves fully with great ease until the examinations are near. Consequently, the do not have any fear or phobia for any level or standard of examination.

Similarly, people who go for gyms must be regular and punctual to their exercises to achieve the desired results. Just doing heavy weight exercise and practice for few days or on irregular basis do not guarantee any fruitful results. Here also doing light exercise in disciplined way is more important than lifting heavy weights and hitting machines harder in irregular and undisciplined manner.

A little effort applied on daily and regular basis can do more wonders than a lot of work done at a time. If we drop 2000 liters of water from a height of 100 meters at once it could have no impact on the concrete floor. But a little rain drop that falls down from rooftop on regular intervals on the same place makes a deep hole in the same concrete floor and we all have observed that in our houses or schools. Because that raindrop follows the rule of discipline and dedication and that shows its results in a crystal-clear way.

Discipline makes a person enough strong and competent to face any challenge in life and overcome it with great success. Discipline demands utmost patience and consistence from any person

and in return it fills a person with greater potential and power to achieve any milestone with amazing success.

Discipline gives a person separate and unique identity in the society. It is helpful in building a great image and reputation in the society. A well-disciplined man is highly loyal to his commitments and words and that thing is a vital part for acquiring success and reputation in life. He knows the value of his time and words and uses these things in a very careful and scrupulous manner. A well-disciplined person will never be interested in wasting his time and other valuable resources in unproductive and unnecessary activities.

Being disciplined helps a man to observe the things very keenly and

deeply and absorb implicit meaning from the incidents which take place around him on regular basis.

Discipline is like climbing the mountain step by step where every next step is harder than the former but every next step is a guarantee for dignity and elevation. Discipline teaches a man to focus on things that have long-term benefits and not just ephemeral pleasure.

Discipline enables us to utilize our significant but limited resources viz time, energy and finance etc., for attaining long-lasting and fruitful achievements in our life.

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The Decline Of Respect Towards Teachers

MUKHTAR AHMAD QURESHI

In the current fast moving world, where change is the only constant and expectations are constantly rising, one thing that must never change is our respect for teachers. Unfortunately, I believe we are moving away from this simple value.

When I glance around, I notice a disturbing trend the declining respect towards teachers, not just students, but from society in general. It is not only disappointing, but it is a threat to the very core of our educational system.

We all recall those days when teachers were next only to parents. They were taken to be words of wisdom and their deeds as guiding lights. For indeed, most of us are where we are today because some teacher at some point believed in us. But today, things are not what they used to be.

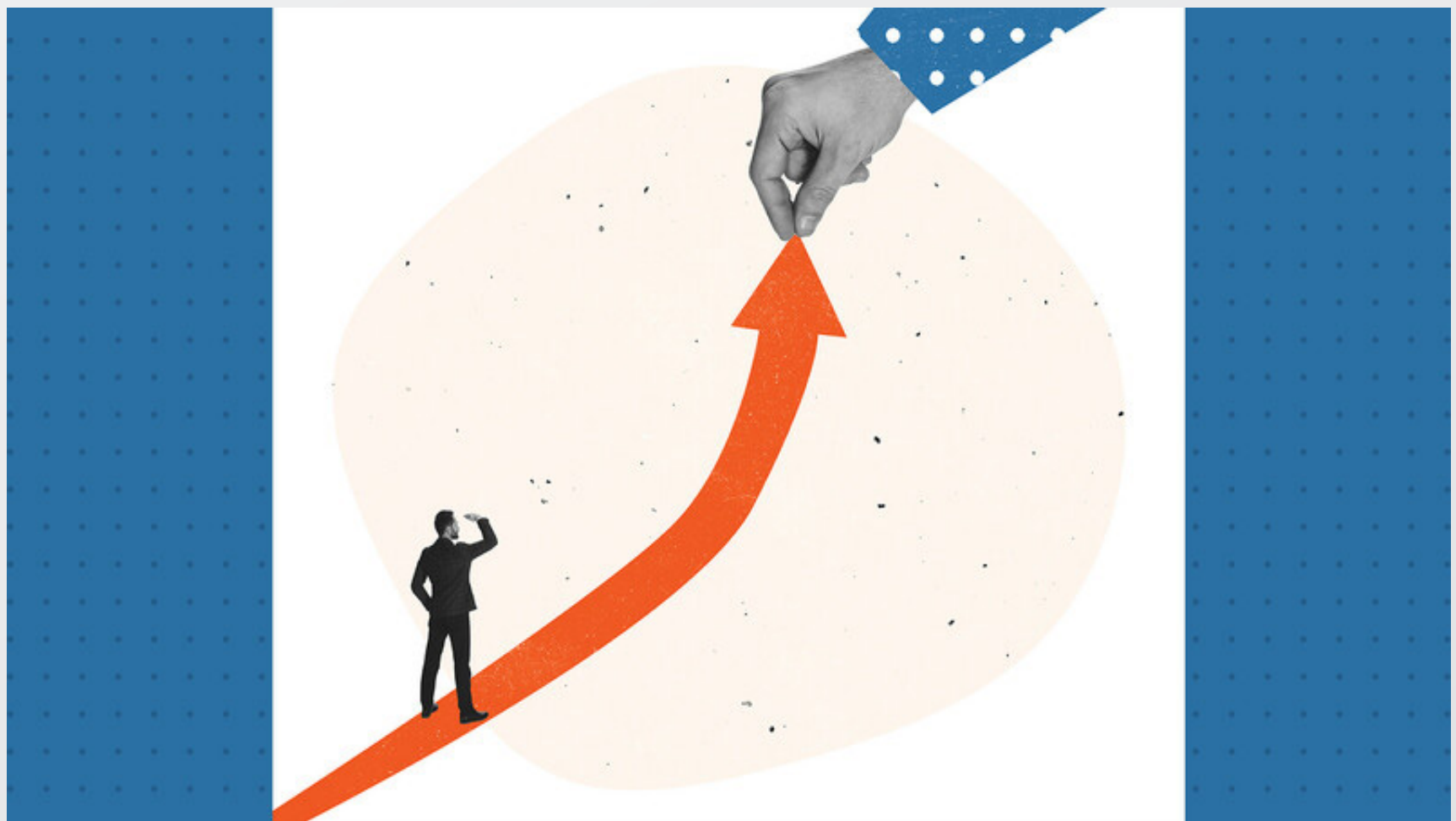
The respect that previously characterized the student teacher relationship is gradually being eroded and supplanted by criticism, complaints and even public humiliation. The society today is more inclined to have its eyes on the fault lines of teachers than to appreciate their work, sacrifices and commitment.

You and I know that nobody is perfect. There is every profession with its flaws and every professional has space to develop and have scope for improvement. But the extent of inquiry and judgment that comes to teachers today is relative and unjustified. Rather than providing solutions, we tend to nitpick at their errors.

We want them to be ideal knowledgeable, emotionally stable, disciplined, compassionate and always present yet we sometimes forget that they are human beings as well, with their personal problems, families and weaknesses.

Let's think for a moment. How many times have people complained, saying, 'Teachers don't work hard anymore, or Teaching is an easy job?' These phrases are not even near the truth.

As a close observer of the education system, I can safely state that teachers work tirelessly every day and sometimes even after school hours to plan lessons, grade assignments, deal with behavior problems and accommodate different needs of their students. During the pandemic, did we not see teachers learning new technology



overnight just to remain connected with their students? Did we give them enough respect? Not perhaps.

As a community, all of us share the responsibility of fostering a respectful climate for our teachers. Respect cannot be legislated but has to be nurtured. Parents need to instill their children with the importance of showing respect towards their teachers from a young age. When children listen to their parents belittling teachers at home, they take this disrespect to school. Conversely, when we, parents and guardians, praise teachers and tell our children to work with them, it fosters a culture of respect and appreciation.

Teachers, also, have their role to play. I appeal to those in authority to regard teachers as collaborative in the teaching mission rather than as subordinates to be frequently checked on and corrected.

At the time of policy making, teachers should be consulted. During the time of reviews, the process should be encouraging, fair and growth oriented, not fear mongering. Unfortunately, in most instances, even good, sincere teachers get demoralized because of a lack of appreciation or public appreciation from their seniors.

And also common people like you and me do have an important role to play. Teachers must be respected not only by students and schools, but also by every citizen. We need to realize that the teacher who educated us to read, write and think is as important as the doctor who heals us or the engineer who constructs bridges. Society needs to stop perceiving the teaching profession as a "last resort" career. Rather, we need to raise the profile of teachers to the height that they rightly deserve.

Now, you may wonder, what can we do to turn this around? It starts with small but significant actions. Thank a teacher. Share their work in community events. Stand up for them in school events. Speak out when they are unfairly criticized. Fight for higher pay and working conditions. When we elevate teachers, we elevate education and when education is elevated, society thrives.

Let us not forget that a nation's future is determined in the classroom. The minds that will lead, heal and innovate tomorrow are in today's classrooms. If teachers lose their passion because they feel devalued, the harm will resonate for generations. Disheartened teachers cannot motivate students. Disrespected teachers cannot build resilient learners. If we truly care about our children's education, then we must first care about those who teach them.

I want to say this directly to every reader, if you have ever had a teacher who impacted your life, take a moment today to remember them, thank them and speak well of them. If you're a parent, guide your children to treat their teachers with honour. If you are an officer, make space in your policies and decisions to appreciate and support your teachers. And if you are a student, understand this... your teacher is not merely imparting knowledge; they are shaping your destiny.

Respect for teachers is not merely a moral obligation it is a social investment. Let's revive that respect before it's too late. Because when we lose respect for teachers, we are not merely disrespecting persons we are undermining the very foundations of education itself.

(The author is a t and a columnist)

Our Progressive Farmers

of success inspire confidence in our mission and reaffirm our belief that change is happening, village by village, farm by farm.”

Reiterating his government's unwavering support, he affirmed that every scheme, every platform, and every rupee invested under HADP is aimed at directly benefiting the farmer. “Our government will continue to walk alongside our cultivators in this journey of growth and innovation,” he added.

Earlier, Mission Director Rahul Yadav presented a comprehensive overview of HADP's evolution, highlighting the preparation of 29 Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) within a record four-month period. He noted that the programme aims to transition agriculture in J&K from a low-growth, subsistence-based model to a vibrant, commercially-driven agri-economy.

The meeting also deliberated on strategies to address structural challenges in the sector, particularly the long-standing cycle of low productivity and income. The programme is anchored around key strategic levers of change, with 29 distinct, future-ready projects forming its foundation.

It was informed that an investment of Rs 1000 crore has already been made in research and innovation across these projects. The roadmap for implementation was also shared, comprising three phases: Phase-I – Outreach and Awareness, Phase-II – Onboarding and Seeding, and Phase-III – Grounding, Monitoring, and Evaluation.

Officials presented updates on major ongoing initiatives, including the Daksh Kisan programme, monthly district performance rankings, Knowledge Systems (KS) documentation, and the KS Output Tracking App.

The meeting spotlighted a range of innovative digital interventions, including the HADP Kisan Saathi Portal, AI-based Credit Scheme Advisor, and the Online DPR Generator Tool.

Further, the meeting discussed the Jammu & Kashmir Climate Innovation Platform (JKCIP), outlining its financing models, targeted beneficiaries, and geographical areas of intervention.

Since its rollout in April 2023, HADP has achieved notable milestones such as the development and multiplication of high-quality seeds, promotion of oilseeds and cash crops, technological advancements in sericulture, formation of 300 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), and the launch of the JK Soil & Land Resource Information System.

These initiatives, supported by research-backed strategies, have yielded tangible outcomes and are propelling the Union Territory toward the goal of a sustainable Rs 100,000 crore agri-economy by the year 2030.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister launched several digital platforms to enhance transparency, efficiency, and farmer engagement. These included the Credit Scheme Advisor App, Online DPR Generator App, KS Sathi Output Tracking App, and the Online JKCIP Dashboard.

He also released the inaugural edition of “HADP Insights”, a monthly newsletter, and launched the Kisan Sampark Abhiyan-JKCIP. Additionally, he e-inaugurated 1,842 Kisan Saathi Applications and conferred 10,765 Daksh Kisan Skilling Certificates.

During an interactive session, the Chief Minister engaged with progressive farmers from various districts who shared their success stories.

He enquired about different aspects of their businesses and appreciated their crucial role in driving agricultural transformation on the ground.

Dr Farooq Secretly

a prize for services rendered in 2019. Of course in national interest,” he wrote.

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader, Iltija Mufti said that it's clear that Farooq Abdullah chose to stay in Kashmir instead of the Parliament to help normalise gutting of J&Ks constitution & subsequent betrayal.

“Dulat sahab an ardent Abdullah supporter has shared how Farooq sahab agreed with Delhi's illegal move of abrogating Article 370. There were already doubts about what transpired between the Abdullahs & PM days before J&Ks special status was revoked. With this it's clear that Farooq sahab chose to stay in Kashmir instead of the Parliament to help normalise gutting of J&Ks constitution & subsequent betrayal,” she wrote on X.

'Cheap Stunts': Farooq

several inaccuracies in the book, including claims about his Cabinet size and alleged closeness to the BJP, calling them false and insulting.

“This isn't memoir—it's fiction,” he said, expressing betrayal from someone who claimed to be a friend.

Justice Arun Palli

Kashmir and Ladakh days following retirement of Chief Justice Tashi Rabistan. Justice Rabistan retired from service on April 9 and accordingly Justice Sanjeev Kumar has been serving as the acting chief justice since then.

On April 4, the Supreme Court Collegium led by Chief Justice Sanjeev Khanna had recommended Justice Palli of the Punjab and Haryana High Court for the position of Chief Justice of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

Born on September 18, 1964, Justice Palli graduated in Commerce and completed his Bachelor of Law from Chandigarh's Panjab University in 1988 and commenced his legal practice at the High Court of Punjab and Haryana.

He gained expertise across diverse areas of law including civil, criminal, constitutional, revenue, industrial and labour law. He was appointed Additional Advocate General for Punjab on September 1, 2004, a position he held until March 2007.

Palli was designated as a Senior Advocate on April 26, 2007. He served as Amicus Curiae in various contentious matters before the High Court.

He dealt with diverse subjects and matters having important legal propositions before Division and Full Benches. He also appeared before the Supreme Court, Delhi High Court and also argued several important matters in the High Court of Himachal Pradesh.

He was elevated to the Bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court on December 28, 2013. He was serving as Executive Chairman of Haryana State Legal Service Authority from May 31, 2023 and was nominated as a Member of the Governing Body of

the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) on October 31, 2023, for two years.

CS Pushes For

the Steering Committee in deciding the future course of action to take up the CAMPA works during the year ahead.

She also made out that the Committee had an overarching role of monitoring the department's activities besides giving necessary directions for utilization of resources to achieve the desired goals.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Suresh Kumar Gupta, gave out that the scheme is being implemented smoothly in the UT, obtaining tangible results over the years. He said that installation and digitization of BPs around the forests had been achieved to a larger extent with the left out forests to be demarcated in the year or two ahead.

He asserted that the department has established strong internal and social audit mechanisms, including inter-range and inter-divisional checks, alongside monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting formats to monitor the outcomes of this CAMPA scheme.

Moreover, it was given out that the public transparency is being maintained through the e-Green Watch portal, where data from 3,410 projects (including geotagged coordinates) is accessible.

Elaborating further, CEO CAMPA, T. Rabi Kumar, revealed that the third-party evaluations show improved survival rates. The third party evaluation (2012–2019) reported a 50% survival rate and in the next phase (2019–2022), conducted by AFC India Limited, survival rates improved significantly to 62.70%, with Kashmir at 65.40% and Jammu at 60%.

Giving the financial overview of this scheme as on March 2024, it was divulged that a total of Rs 851.65 crore were available with an approved outlay of Rs 276.27 crore for FY 2024-25. It was further added that an expenditure of Rs 153.67 was booked during this year leaving a balance of Rs 727.66 crore available with the department.

As far as the outcomes over the past 15 years are concerned, the meeting was apprised that during 2010-11 to 2024-25, a substantial amount of forest land has been treated under CAMPA initiatives, with the total area afforested reaching thousands of hectares. A significant financial commitment of Rs 1369.76 crore has been made during this period.

In addition, it was given out that the CAMPA budget has seen consistent increase over the years, peaking at Rs 153.67 crore in FY 2024-25 with corresponding increase in year-wise plantation efforts. These efforts are aimed at enhancing green cover, improving biodiversity, and mitigating the impact of climate change.

The Annual Plan Outlay (APO) for the fiscal year 2025–26 was presented and approved, with a total proposed outlay of Rs 193.72 crore, of which, Rs 170.47 crore have been proposed under the forest sector activities and Rs 23.25 crore under wildlife conservation.

Regarding different components of APO, the Compensatory Afforestation has an outlay of Rs 12.71 crore, Additional Compensatory Afforestation Rs 7.27 crore, NPV (Forest) Rs 117.96 crore and NPV (Protected Areas) Rs 23.25 for the ensuing year.

The Committee also reviewed and approved several key targets for the upcoming fiscal year. These included Plantation & Assisted Natural Regeneration on 14,680 hectares, Soil & Moisture Conservation Works on 6,468 hectares, Forest Protection Works (Fencing etc.) on 8,087 hectares, Fire Protection Measures on 2,061 km (firelines), establishment of 163 Nurseries and plantation of 1.82 crore saplings to be planted generating 20.24 lakh casual labour man days across the UT.

Later, the Chief Secretary also released the ‘Annual Asian Water bird Census’ (AWC 2025) of 26 wetlands/ waterbodies of Kashmir valley. The Count was conducted simultaneously in all the major water-bodies along with lesser-known wetlands of the valley which included Hokersar, Shalabugh, Hygam, Mirgund, Wullar Lake, Badinambal, Narkara, Nigeen Lake, (6 associated wetlands, Anchar Lake, Dal Lake, and wetlands from Pampore viz., Manibugh, Kranchoo, Chatlum and Fashkhoori.

It was revealed that the activity was conducted by 160 volunteers including NGOs, Bird Lovers, students from Kashmir University and SKUAST-K along with the staff of Wetlands Division and North Division.

The survey culminated into recording a total of 13,43,506 number of birds belonging to 67 species in all the wetlands. Hokersar contributed 29.97% of the total birdcount followed by Shalabugh (29.44%) and other wetlands (40.59%).

On the occasion, the Chief Secretary launched two mobile apps pertaining to monitoring of CAMPA works and its nursery module for real time updation of data by the concerned to chase the targets on time.

Large Section Of

management of the Waqf property in much more efficient, transparent, and accountable manner. That is exactly what we have done it. Waqf properties in India are the largest Waqf properties in the world... And despite having the largest Waqf properties in the world, how come these properties are not being utilised for the welfare of the Muslim community,” Rijiju said.

“The purpose (of waqf) is charitable, pious, and religious purpose... Waqf properties are being mismanaged by few of the powerful people who are, very surreptitiously, mishandling the entire waqf properties, and few families are enjoying the fruits of these properties. What about the 90 per cent, the larger section of the Muslim community, the weaker sections, the children, the women? What we have done is we have made sure that the misuse will be prevented in future. And I must tell you, we knew it. We will have this kind of resistance because those powerful people who are misusing so much of Waqf properties will definitely not give up easily. They will resist. And that is what we are seeing. But what we are saying is, let people read the provisions of the act and tell us if there is any provision which harms the Muslim community. Muslims are also Indians. Shouldn't we think about the Muslim community? How can we leave aside one community and let all the irregularities keep on happening unchecked?” the minister asked.

Kiren Rijiju said government looks after the interests of every citizen of the country and wrong

notions are sought to be spread that government will snatch somebody's property.

“We are the Government of India. We have the responsibility to ensure that every citizen is taken care of, every community is looked after. So the people who are spreading this false news, all this, you know, unverified claims and just merely broadcasting around that the Waqf properties means the masjids, the dargahs, kabaristan (graveyards) these are going to be snatched away by the government. This country rules through law. We are governed by the Constitution. How can anybody snatch somebody's property like that?” he asked.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, passed by Parliament earlier this month after marathon debates in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, seeks to streamline the management of Waqf properties, with provisions to safeguard heritage sites and promote social welfare. The bill was later given assent by President Droupadi Murmu.

Parties of INDIA bloc strongly opposed the bill, terming it unconstitutional. The Parliament also passed the Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill, 2025.

The Waqf Act provides that no land belonging to members of Scheduled Tribes, under the provisions of the fifth schedule or sixth schedule to the Constitution, can be declared as Waqf.

Asked about its implementation in the north-eastern states, Rijiju said it will have a larger consequence in Assam and to some extent in Manipur.

“The other tribal states like Arunachal, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Sikkim, mainly the northeastern states, are insulated from this effect of the bill because we have put a provision. The creation of Waqf cannot be done on tribal land, which is any land falls in Sixth and Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. So it will not have impact the tribal areas... Assam and Manipur will have an impact, but impact means positive impact.

Answering a query, Rijiju said tribals are attached to “jungle, zameen” and the government has taken care of their concerns.

“There are instances which have come before us that Muslim men marrying tribal women and then getting converted and then finally creating that particular land owned by the lady as waqf property. And you know, once a waqf property is dedicated, it can't be reversed. That is why we have to be very careful in the tribal area. If the lands are declared as waqf property, then it will have a forever status change. So that is why we put this amendment in the Parliament. And now some people have challenged that provision also. So the tribals... will be raising their voice and I believe that some of them will be appealing in the Supreme Court that any protection given to the tribals should not be challenged. Tribal lands and tribal rights are protected by the constitutional provisions. It's not that we have just inserted on our whims and fancies. We have aligned with the constitutional provisions,” he said.

Answering a query, Rijiju said Waqf Amendment Act not only ensures justice to the needy people, but prevents wrongdoings and illegal acts of some people.

“For last nearly eight, nine months, I have been receiving numerous delegations from the Muslim community urging urgently to pass this Bill. And then finally we passed it. It's not that it just came out of the blue. And the consultation process has been widespread. Then who are the people who are protesting? Those political parties, which treat the Muslim community as vote banks. They create, you know, fear-mongering. They keep scaring the Muslim community. And from the time I have been witnessing these people, they don't want Muslim community to develop. They want to keep them isolated, create fear in their mind, and then make them anti-BJP. But many of the Muslim communities are now coming forward. I have met so many Muslim communities, even when I went to Kashmir also, so many, you know, common people, they came, the Muslim women, the influential people also came to me and they said very well done,” he said.

Waqf Amendment Act, he said, amends some provisions which were in existence.

“Since 1913, from the British time, the law existed. And post-independence, first law was enacted in 1954. The legislative process has been happening pre-independence. The last amendment was 2013. And that triggered the present step which we have taken. I don't need to elaborate on those things, but still I would highlight two important points. One is like, this work by user without the law of limitation being applied, any property can be claimed as waqf property on the basis of a claim made by an individual that some hundred years back or a few years back, we used to do certain things, namaz or whatever. You can do namaz anywhere, but that doesn't mean that that particular area becomes a waqf property. So we have not only checked it, but ensured that misuse or unverified claims must be stopped,” he said.

“What we have done is that you can create waqf through a deed, not by just oral claim. Because once waqf property means forever waqf. That is why you have to be extremely careful. So it has to be with a documentation process. The law is prospective. Whatever is a declared Waqf property cannot be disturbed. Whether it was Waqf by user or whatever. I'll just give you an example. If there was a waqf by user and a particular property has been declared a waqf property and a document has been created, thereby the state government or the District Magistrate has recognized that property and it is registered, then it is done. The case is settled. You are not going to reopen or change the status of that,” he added.

The minister said that cases which are pending or under dispute are to be decided by courts or appropriate authority.

“We can't take away the rights of the courts. It is prospective, not retrospective. However, if there are some kind of issues which are not settled, then state government will decide. So the power is not with the central government. Central government is just forming a central Waqf council which is headed by the minister,” he said.

Rijiju said there are six minority communities in India by definition. “By virtue of being the Minister for Minority Affairs, I presented the bill. By virtue of being the Minister, I became the Chairman of the Central Waqf Council. Minority ministry is not for Muslims. That is what I have been telling from the beginning. That the Congress Party had made the Minority Affairs Ministry as a Muslim Affairs Ministry. How unfortunate that is. And then, they are talking only about Muslims,” he said.

Answering another query about BJP not having a MP from Muslim community in Lok Sabha, Rijiju said he has been telling people in the Muslim areas to vote for BJP, send Muslim MPs, come to BJP and be part of the government. “If Modiji has got the

massive support from the people of the country, it is not anybody's fault.”

“Suppose if you don't get elected from Muslim community, what can you do? I can't make somebody elected with my own wishes. You know, I have to have a person who is elected by the people. So that is why the some of the objections, I mean, this very bizarre, you know, kind of argument, they said that the minister who presented the bill is not a Muslim.”

Rijiju said he feels fortunate to have done something good for the Muslim community. “Being the Minority Affairs Minister, I have the responsibility to look after the welfare measure for the six minority communities,” he said.

Rijiju replied to the marathon and fierce debates in the two Houses of Parliament on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025. The two Houses sate beyond midnight to clear the Bill.

A Joint Parliamentary Committee had examined the Waqf Amendment Bill, first introduced in the Lok Sabha in August last year. The revised Bill presented by the government incorporated suggestions of the committee. (ANI)

J&K Bank Registers

meaningful part of this significant spiritual journey”, he added.

Meanwhile, Pilgrims can register themselves in real-time at any of the designated Bank branches after undergoing Aadhaar-based biometric eKYC authentication which will enable yatrīs to obtain their RFid Cards without the need to wait in the long queues. The system-generated Yatra Permit is issued through the official NIC Portal <https://jksasb.nic.in>.

Those intending to undertake the Yatra and falling in the age group of 13 to 70 years as on the date of the pilgrimage, are required to submit the prescribed Compulsory Health Certificate (CHC) at the Bank's branches, the format of which along with the list of Doctors/ Medical Institutions authorized to issue it are available at Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board's website.

Notably, the Bank has urged all prospective yatrīs to complete their registration early to avoid last-minute inconvenience in obtaining their desired dates as Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board has allocated a limited quota of permits to the Bank.

Over 5 Lakh Tourists

mesmerising,” said Rajesh Sharma, a tourist from Delhi.

Another tourist, Neetu Raina, also from Delhi, said, “I had only heard about Kashmir's beauty. But being here is a dream come true. People are warm and welcoming.”

Locals are also happy with the tourist rush. Ishfaq Ahmad, a houseboat owner, said, “After a long time, we are seeing such occupancy in our houseboats. It feels like the old days.”

Mushtaq Ahmad, a shikara owner at Dal Lake, said, “There is life on the lake again. Tourists are enjoying shikara rides and clicking pictures. It's a good sign for all of us who depend on tourism.”

Basharat Ahmad, a cab driver from Kangan Ganderbal, said, “We have been busy since January. My bookings have doubled compared to last year. I am hopeful this trend will continue.”

The Director of Tourism said more cultural programmes and festivals will be organised this year to attract more tourists. “Our goal is to make Kashmir a top international tourist destination,” he said.

With such a strong start, 2025 looks to be a record-breaking year for Kashmir tourism—(KNO)

Rains lash Kashmir,

has issued yellow and orange alerts for the day.

On April 21, he predicted cloudy weather with possibility of light rain and thunder at scattered places. “From April 22 to 25, the weather conditions would remain generally dry,” he added.

In between April 26 & 27, the weather would again turn cloudy in the region, he said.

Moreover, the MeT in its advisory has stated that all concerned are advised to plan accordingly and follow administration and traffic advisory, according to the advisory, there is a possibility of landslides, mudslides and shooting stones at vulnerable places.

Meanwhile, the farmers have been advised to suspend the farm operations during April 18 and April 19—(KNO)

Kashmir's Walnut

reveal that the absence of a proper grading system and the failure to promote organic certification have further worsened the situation.

To revive the industry, the horticulture department has launched new initiatives aimed at supporting the annual production of 2 lakh metric tonnes across 70,000 hectares. Key measures include establishing processing units, securing organic certification and Geographical Indication (GI) tags, improving marketing efforts, and implementing a stronger grading system.

District-wise production figures highlight significant disparities, with Anantnag leading at 11,915 metric tonnes, followed by Kupwara at 8,824 metric tonnes and Ganderbal at 5,454 metric tonnes. Other districts like Pulwama, Budgam, Kulgam, Shopiya, and Srinagar contribute smaller but notable quantities.

Wholesale traders like Abdul Rahim Banday from South Kashmir's Pulwama pointed out additional challenges, noting that nearly 10% of Kashmiri walnuts turn out empty upon cracking, and their smaller size makes them less appealing compared to the larger kernels of Chinese walnuts. The harder shell of Kashmiri walnuts has also contributed to declining demand.

Efforts, as per the officials, are underway to boost production through research on high-yielding mountain varieties. Under the Krishi Samagra Vikas Yojana, the government is promoting walnut cultivation and plans to provide farmers with essential facilities, including processing units. The department is also working on obtaining GI tags to enhance the marketability of Kashmiri walnuts once processing improves—(KNO)

Move protest against Wakf Act to New Delhi: CM Banerjee tells Bengal Muslim leaders

IAN S

KOLKATA : West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday requested Muslim religious leaders to shift the protest against the Waqf (Amendment) Act from the state to Delhi.

"Maintain peace in your localities in West Bengal. There is no point in carrying out the movement on this issue here in West Bengal. Shift the protest movements to New Delhi. Do not create tension in the state after being provoked by the BJP. Instead, approach those who are creating tension," the Chief Minister said while addressing a meeting with the Imams, Muezzins, and religious leaders from the Muslim community in the state.

The meeting was reportedly convened to discuss the way ahead to oppose the Waqf (Amendment) Act.

CM Banerjee also insisted that there was a necessity to fight the Waqf (Amendment) Act in the legal way.

"That is why I am saying that we have to fight the battle in New Delhi and not



in West Bengal," the Chief Minister said.

She also advised religious leaders from the Muslim community to approach the office of President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and convey their objections to the Act there.

She also said that in the National Capital the members of the Trinamool Congress Parliamentary team would also be backing any movement on this issue.

"The new Waqf Act is against the Indian Constitution and the Indian federal structure of democracy.

Article 18 and Article 35 of the Indian Constitution speaks of the right of the state government over any property. The new Waqf Act is against that and hence against the federal structure of Indian democracy," the Chief Minister said.

CM Banerjee also said that Article 26 of the Indian Constitution speaks of the right to practice any religion in the country and based on that get the right of property inheritance and maintenance.

"You have snatched away those rights of the

people. The rights of both Ram and Rahim have been snatched away," CM Banerjee said.

Earlier, CM Banerjee had announced that the new Act would not be implemented in West Bengal and had assured the people from the minority community that she would always be there to protect their interests and property.

The BJP had claimed that a Chief Minister does not have any right to say that a Central Act will not be implemented in their state.

Adani Electricity observes Fire Service Week across power distribution area



IAN S

MUMBAI : In a bid to promote fire prevention, Adani Electricity on Wednesday said it is observing 'Fire Service Week' from April 14-20, throughout its power distribution area.

During the week, various fire safety workshops are being organised for Adani Electricity's power workers. The theme for this year is 'Unite to Ignite, a Fire Safe India,' emphasising the significance of community involvement, education, preparedness and innovations in fire safety.

The 'Fire Service Week' is observed nationwide under the guidance of the Fire Adviser, Ministry of Home Affairs, from April 14-20.

This observance is in remembrance of the lives lost in the devastating fire and the explosions that followed on April 14th, 1944, at the Victoria Dock in Mumbai Port, and to promote fire prevention across all industries.

Last month, Adani Electricity observed the 'National Safety Week 2025' from March 4-10, maintaining high safety standards as India progresses

towards development.

The objective was to raise awareness and encourage the adoption of safety measures across its power distribution area and various work sites, according to Adani Electricity, which is the leading power distribution company serving over three million customers in Mumbai.

Towards this, Adani Electricity employees participated in the workshop organised by the safety team of Adani Electricity.

With an aim to foster students' learning abilities and enhance learning outcomes, Adani Electricity

and Adani Foundation celebrated the third edition of their annual 'Utthan Utsav' event last month.

The programme has positively transformed the learning outcomes of over 25,000 students across 83 BMC schools located at Malad, Dahisar, Borivali, Chembur and Kurla, according to the company.

'Utthan' entails adopting government primary schools, tutoring 'Priya Vidyarthis' (progressive learners), addressing dropout rates and collaborating for staff capacity building.

Delhi: One-day-old baby stolen from Safdarjung Hospital rescued; woman held

IAN S

NEW DELHI : In a remarkable operation, the Delhi Police traced and rescued an abducted newborn baby within hours of the incident, an official said on Wednesday. The one-day old baby was stolen from the city's Safdarjung Hospital on Tuesday.

The infant was united with the family and a woman accused of committing the crime was apprehended. The baby was abducted in broad daylight, leaving the parents and hospital administration panicked.

However, a quick operation by Safdarjung Enclave police station helped crack the case within hours of the incident. A 27-year-old woman accused, identified as Pooja, a resident of Malviya Nagar, was arrested.

On Tuesday, the aggrieved parents, hailing from Uttar Pradesh's Basti and currently living in Chanayakapuri's Yashwant Place, made a PCR call and reported the theft of their newborn baby girl

from the hospital.

Shyam Narayan, father of the baby, told police that his wife gave birth to a girl child on April 14 at Safdarjung Hospital. Following delivery, she was shifted to Ward No. 5. A day later, at around 3.15 p.m., their newborn child went missing. They began searching the area but were unable to locate the missing child and subsequently made the PCR call.

A police team comprising sub-inspector Sunil Gaur, Satyender Gulia and Surender Das, Assistant Sub-inspector Jai Prakash, Head constables Anil, Puspender, Rajender, Harchand, Pramod, Sunil, Shakti and Dharam Raj was constituted under guidance of ACP Ranbir Singh, who swung into action and nabbed the abductor within four hours.

Upon scanning the CCTV footage of Safdarjung Hospital, they found a woman of healthy build and short height interacting with other female patients on the same floor. She had her face partially

covered with a stole/dupatta. From further analysis of CCTV footage, it was revealed that the accused lady boarded the Metro train from AIIMS Metro Station and took away the infant with her.

She was tracked down to Gulak Wali Gali in Malviya Nagar and the newborn was recovered.

According to police, the woman changed metro trains multiple times to mislead the police and avoid being caught via CCTV cameras, but the police team was successful in tracking her down.

During questioning, Pooja disclosed that she deceived her husband Pinku on the pretext of being pregnant and got admitted at Safdarjung Hospital.

On April 15, she came to her house with the infant claiming to be her child. She got married seven years ago.

"As she had no child of her own, she decided to kidnap an infant from the Safdarjung Hospital," she was cited as telling the police.

Caste census: We will not allow injustice to any community, says K'taka CM Siddaramaiah

IAN S

KALABURAGI : Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday stated that the caste census survey was a socio-economic one, and the Karnataka government would ensure that no community faces injustice.

CM Siddaramaiah was speaking to the media at the Kalaburagi airport on Wednesday.

Responding to a question regarding Channagiri Congress MLA, Basavaraju V Shivaganga's statement that Lingayat MLAs should resign over the caste census issue, CM Siddaramaiah said that a separate Cabinet meeting has been convened on April 17 to discuss the social and economic survey.

"MLAs have expressed their views, and a final decision will be made tomorrow," he added.

CM Siddaramaiah clarified that the survey was a socio-economic one, and the government will ensure no community faces injustice.

The caste census report submitted by the Back-

ward Classes Commission to the Congress-led government in Karnataka has pegged the Muslim population in the state at 18.08 per cent and recommends 8 per cent reservation for the community, sources stated.

In a major development, the Karnataka Vokkaliga Association has announced that the community will oppose the caste census report, along with the Lingayat and other aggrieved communities.

Speaking about the charge sheet filed in the National Herald case, Siddaramaiah claimed that the BJP was acting with political motives.

"The National Herald newspaper wasn't started yesterday or the day before. Targeting Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi by seizing their assets and filing charge sheets is being done purely out of political vendetta," he said.

By CM Shivakumar, too, stated to the media on Wednesday that, "It's a great injustice. Nowhere has the Gandhi family benefited out of the insti-

tution. It is the property of the Congress party and they are heading it. What's wrong with it? They are taking action illegally against them."

Meanwhile, reacting to the recent incident in Davangere where a woman was assaulted in public over allegations of an illicit relationship, CM Siddaramaiah warned, "Whoever has committed the offense, no matter how influential they are, if they have violated the law, they will face strict action."

CM Siddaramaiah further stated that it is the government's firm commitment to provide employment opportunities to the youth by organising job fairs.

"A divisional-level job fair is being held in Kalaburagi today. Similar job fairs are being organised in Mysuru and Hubballi-Dharwad as well. The Yuva Nidhi scheme has been implemented to address the issue of unemployment. The government is taking steps to provide jobs," CM Siddaramaiah said.

Jagdambika Pal calls for President's Rule in West Bengal over Waqf protests

IAN S

NEW DELHI : BJP MP Jagdambika Pal on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, citing the recent unrest in Murshidabad district over the Waqf (Amendment) Act.

Pal claimed that the law and order situation in the state had worsened and imposition of President's Rule was necessary.

His remarks came on a day when amid protests over the amended Waqf legislation, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee held an urgent meeting with Muslim intellectuals and religious leaders at Kolkata's Netaji Indoor Stadium and asked them to take the protests over the Waqf Act to New Delhi and approach President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the issue.

Speaking to IANS, Jagdambika Pal criticised Banerjee for her silence on the

violent incidents and alleged that she was deliberately inciting protests.

"There has been violence in Murshidabad, but as the Chief Minister, she has failed to address the issue. She has not taken any action against the protestors. Instead, she met Muslim religious leaders to oppose a law that has already been passed by both Houses of Parliament and approved by the President of India," Pal said.

He accused the West Bengal Chief Minister of appeasement politics aimed at consolidating Muslim votes ahead of the upcoming elections.

"She is openly defying a central law and provoking communities. This is not an allegation; it's the truth. The police administration is inactive, and even they are coming under attack. Bangladeshi nationals and Rohingyas are being issued Aadhaar cards and added to voter lists. She is risking the state's law and order for vote-bank politics," he claimed.

Reacting to CM Banerjee's statement about the INDIA Bloc uniting over the Waqf Act, Pal questioned her understanding of constitutional law.

"If she respects the judiciary, she should know that the Supreme Court will determine the merit of any law. Protests and emotional outbursts cannot dictate legal outcomes. The country functions based on constitutional principles, not statements by religious leaders," he said.

Pal further emphasised that the central government is prepared to enforce the law across all states and will not back down under pressure.

"Even if some religious leaders oppose the law, the government stands by the Constitution and the judiciary," he concluded.

Earlier in the day, Mamata Banerjee accused the Union government of being responsible for the recent tension and violence in the minority-dominated Murshidabad district during protests against the Waqf Act.

National Herald belongs to freedom fighters, not personal property of any family: Rajasthan BJP chief

IAN S

JAIPUR : Rajasthan BJP chief Madan Rathore on Wednesday lashed out at the Congress over the National Herald case, saying that the institution belongs to the freedom fighters, and it is not the personal property of any family.

"The National Herald was started in 1937 with 5,000 shareholders. This institution belongs to the freedom fighters of India. It is not the personal property of any family. Even at its inception, leaders like Sardar Patel questioned how funds were being raised. Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrabhan Gupta also contributed to its funds. Sadly, the legacy of our freedom fighters has now been turned into the private asset of one family," said Madan Rathore during a press conference.

On the Congress party's announcement of nationwide protests, the BJP chief said that the right to protest

is democratic, but it does not give anyone the right to loot public land and funds.

Rathore further alleged that the publication of National Herald ceased operations in 2008, after which the Congress party provided it with Rs 90 crore.

"A political party is not legally permitted to give loans to a private body. When Associate Journals Limited, the company running National Herald, failed to repay the amount, a company called Young Indian was formed in a corporate conspiracy to transfer the assets to the Gandhi family," he alleged.

He claimed that Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi held 38 per cent shares each in Young Indian, while the remaining shares were held by Motilal Vora and Oscar Fernandes.

"Shares worth Rs 9 crore were transferred for just Rs 50 lakh. The mother-son duo held 76 per cent of Young Indian, and through this, property worth thousands of crores in Delhi,

Mumbai, Lucknow, and Bhopal was transferred to this entity. Meanwhile, the Rs 90 crore given by Congress was written off," he alleged.

He also said that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) questioned Motilal Vora, Pawan Bansal, Sonia Gandhi, and Rahul Gandhi, but none could provide satisfactory answers.

"This is the Gandhi family's model of development, where property worth crores is transferred to an anonymous company for a pittance. The ED has submitted its report under Section 8, and the court is set to hear the matter on April 25. If Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are on bail and the court hasn't granted them relief, then why all the hue and cry?" Rathore added.

"Should the law not function in this country? Should we remain silent when such a massive conspiracy unfolds before us? Under the Modi government, the law is working and will continue to do so," he said.

'What message she wants to convey': BJP questions Mamata's meeting with Muslim leaders over Waqf protests

IAN S

NEW DELHI : Amid multiple incidents of arson and violence in Murshidabad over the Waqf Act, West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee held a meeting with Muslim clerics, imams and Ulemas at the Netaji Indoor Stadium and urged them to co-operate in restoring peace. The move has drawn sharp criticism from the BJP.

Senior BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi questioned the intent behind Banerjee's outreach to Muslim clerics and questioned her lack of sensitivity towards the other community that bore the brunt of violence.

Speaking to IANS, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said, "There is unrest in several areas, especially in West Bengal, which is deeply concerning. It appears that the state government has surrendered to criminal and communal forces. And now, by organising a meeting involving the same elements, what message is Mamata Banerjee trying to convey — one of trust, or of fear?"

Naqvi alleged that the constitutional machinery in the state has collapsed, pointing to the large-scale

migration of people from the affected areas as evidence of administrative failure.

"People are fleeing right under the nose of a constitutional government. This shows how governance has collapsed," he added.

Mamata administration has come under fire for not rising to the occasion and confronting the radicals and extremists in unleashing mayhem and horror on streets, particularly in Murshidabad, leading to loss of three lives. BJP has accused TMC government of pursuing appeasement politics for political gains.

Naqvi also reacted to the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) action in the National Herald case, where Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi have been named in a chargesheet.

Reacting to Congress's sharp criticism of the chargesheet, Naqvi said, "The Congress is trying to portray corruption as a revolutionary act. They carry this act of fraud like a badge of honour, claiming victimhood. But this is not about political vendetta — it's a matter that has already been investigated and guided by court orders."

No one above law: K'taka BJP chief on ED's charge sheet against Sonia, Rahul

IAN S

BELAGAVI : A day after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filed a charge sheet against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case, Karnataka BJP president and MLA B. Y. Vijayendra on Wednesday said they must face the consequences of their actions.

Speaking to the media in Belagavi, he said the ED is conducting a comprehensive investigation into the case, in which Sonia Gandhi is the first accused and Rahul Gandhi is the second.

"They must face the consequences of their actions. No one is above the law, and they will have to deal with it," Vijayendra stated.

He claimed the Congress government and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah have been rattled by the impact

of the Janakrosh yatra. "We are consistently exposing the anti-people policies of the Congress government to the public. Due to the price hikes and the high cost of governance, people are suffering, frustrated, and angry," said Vijayendra.

Responding to a question, he said, "The belief that guarantees have made the state prosperous is the CM's delusion. When our MLAs approach Siddaramaiah seeking funds, the latter says, 'We have already given guarantees'. "Since Siddaramaiah's government came to power, diesel prices have risen by Rs 5.50 and petrol by Rs 3. Has this people-friendly government done anything to stop it? Milk prices have been hiked by Rs 9. Is that a pro-poor decision?" he said.

Hajj-2025: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir reviews arrangements

Directs all DCs to activate Hajj Cells, instructs Health Deptt., KPDCCL, PHE, JK Bank, Immigration to render adequate services to intending pilgrims, maintain close coordination to ensure smooth departure of Hajj flights

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today directed all the concerned Departments and agencies to work in synergy for making the Hajj-2025 a hassle free and seamless experience for the intending pilgrims.

Chairing a high level meeting to review the arrangements made for this year's Hajj pilgrimage, the Divisional Commissioner issued a slew of directions to the officers and instructed them to intensify preparations for the foolproof arrangements for the intending pilgrims and ensure their smooth departure.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners of almost all the districts of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh UTs, Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Director Airports Authority of India besides officers and representatives from various line departments including Police, Emigration & Customs, R&B, PHE, KPDCCL, MED, Traffic, Transport, Information, Hospitality & Protocol, Health, Haj Committee, Police, CISF, Airforce, J&K Bank and other concerned Agencies.

While highlighting the significance of Hajj, the



Div Com urged the DCs to immediately activate the Hajj Cells in their respective offices to monitor all the preparations with respect to facilitation of pilgrims in their respective districts. He directed the Health department to establish medical camps for timely vaccination of pilgrims in their respective districts so that all the selected pilgrims are pro-

tection and certificates of vaccination are issued in their favour well in time. The meeting was informed that this year Hajj flights are scheduled to begin from May 4, 2025, from Srinagar to Saudi Arabia, with the final flight carrying pilgrims set to leave on May 15, 2025. Underlining the need of sufficient Foreign Exchange at Banks, Haj

House Bemina and Srinagar Airport, the Divisional Commissioner directed the J&K Bank authorities to ensure availability of adequate forex so that pilgrims don't face any inconvenience in obtaining Saudi currency. The Div Com also directed PHE, KPDCCL and SMC to ensure uninterrupted civil amenities at Haj House including electricity,

sanitation & water supply. He also directed immediate repairs of interior roads for smooth riding surfaces. He also directed officials to make sufficient arrangements for boarding & lodging facilities at Haj House for the pilgrims from Jammu and Ladakh while factoring in road and weather conditions.

The Div Com asked the Customs & Immigration Departments to make special arrangements at the Airport for hassle-free clearance of the intending pilgrims by timely installation of adequate X-Ray machines and technical staff at Haj House.

To facilitate seamless movement of Haj Convoy vehicles, the Div Com directed the Traffic Department to chalk out a meticulous plan for smooth movement of pilgrim buses & luggage vehicles from Haj House Bemina to Srinagar Airport. He also instructed SSP Traffic Rural to ensure smooth movement of vehicles ferrying Haj pilgrims from Ladakh to Srinagar Haj House.

To ensure close coordination & synergy among departments, Div Com directed creating a dedicated Whatsapp group of the concerned officers for timely dissemination of information and updates regarding flights & other advisories.

DSEK conducts extensive tour of Kupwara, visits many schools



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director School Education Kashmir, Dr. G. N. Itoo Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of District Kupwara, visiting many schools and taking stock of the facilities available in these institutions.

During the tour, the Director also participated in a comprehensive district-level Guidance and Counselling session held at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Sogam, witnessing the active participation of various stakeholders from the education sector of district Kupwara.

Director spent the day interacting with Public Representatives, Principals, Zonal Education Officers, Teachers, Zonal Coordinators, and most importantly, the students of the district. He lauded the efforts of Chief Education Officer Kupwara and his dedicated team for organizing such vibrant and impactful counseling sessions in the district.

Dr. Itoo emphasized the pivotal role of teachers in shaping the future of students and guiding them towards meaningful career paths. Joint Director North Kashmir, Hakeem Tanveer also addressed the gathering.

Deputy Chairman DDC Council, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir, and DDC Sogam, Nasir Lone, highlighted the consistent efforts of the education department under the present leadership. They emphasized the significance of such sessions in guiding students and building a progressive academic atmosphere in future.

Mohammad Iqbal Shah, DEPO Kupwara conducted a detailed session on Emotional Intelligence and Career Exploration. The second session was conducted by Mohammad Abbas Gojri, Teacher at UPS Machipora, who enlightened the students about various Career Options and Pathways to Possibilities.

Earlier, CEO Kupwara, Mehraj ud din Shah presented a comprehensive

overview of the ongoing initiatives and progress made by the education department at the district level.

Prior to the main event, the Director visited BHSS Unisoor during the morning assembly and stressed the principal and staff for ensuring excellent enrolment and attendance besides the moral education.

On the sidelines of the event, the Academic Calendar of GHSS Sogam was unveiled in the presence of Director School Education Kashmir. The event also included a session for officers of the department, staff members of GHSS and BHSS Sogam, as well as zonal coordinators, focusing on strengthening the academic framework and enhancing collaborative efforts.

Apart from this, DSEK also participated in a plantation drive held at HSS Behnpora which falls in Zone Rajwar. The event was attended by officers, teachers and students in large numbers.

WORLD HERITAGE DAY Govt announces free entry to SPS Museum, Dogra Art Museum

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Department of Archives, Archaeology & Museums, in collaboration with the district administration, Tourism and Education departments, is going to celebrate World Heritage Day on 18th of April, 2025 in both the divisions of Jammu and Kashmir.

In Kashmir division, an early morning cleanliness drive will be held at Hari Parbat Fort, Srinagar followed by Pledge and Heritage Walk. Similarly, in Jammu Division, an early morning cleanliness drive will be held at Samba Fort in Samba District, followed by Pledge for Preserving Cultural Heritage and Heritage Walk.

On the eve of World Heritage Day, the Depart-

ment has announced Free entry for all to SPS Museum, Srinagar and Dogra Art Museum, Jammu with an aim to facilitate all sections of society to have glimpse of the Rich Cultural Heritage and symbols of Historical Importance.

Further, the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums is organizing day long Archival exhibition at Archival Repository in Jammu and at Art Gallery Museum, Old Assembly Complex, Srinagar, in order to have glimpse of historical monuments of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Department has urged all to participate in the World Heritage Day Celebration, visit the Exhibitions being organized and avail the incentive of free entry to Museums.

DC Kupwara visits Deedikoot, lauds innovative farmer

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan Wednesday visited Deedikoot village to inspect a Hi-Tech Poly Green House established under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) by progressive farmer Ayaz Ahmad Khan.

Ayaz Ahmad Khan has implemented an integrated farming system on his

farm, generating employment for five local youth and providing a seedling nursery to the community. His innovative efforts yield an income of Rs. 5-6 lakh per season.

DC appreciated the farmer's entrepreneurial spirit and urged other farmers to adopt modern techniques and leverage government schemes like HADP to boost agricultural productivity and income.

Vaccination to begin from April-21 for Hajj Pilgrims of B'la

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: In view of the Hajj Vaccination programme in District Baramulla, all the selected Hajj Pilgrims of District Baramulla are asked to get vaccinated at Vaccination Section, Associated Hospital GMC Baramulla as per the date and time schedule for given serial numbers.

For Serial No 1-96, the vaccination shall be held

on 21 April, 2025 from 10AM to 1PM. Also, pilgrims falling within Serial No 97-183 shall get vaccinated on 21 April, 2025 from 1PM to 4PM.

Similarly, pilgrims from Serial No 184-281 shall get vaccinated on 22 April, 2025 from 10AM to 1PM. Further, the pilgrims falling in between Serial No 282-369 shall be scheduled to come for vaccination on 22 April, 2025 from 1PM to 4PM.

GCET organises Blood Donation Camp

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Government College of Engineering & Technology Jammu, in collaboration with the J&K Thalassemia Welfare Society, organized a successful blood donation camp at GCET campus Wednesday.

The event highlighted the spirit of community service and underscored the importance of collective efforts in promoting health and well-being.

The camp was inaugurated by Prof. Sameru Sharma, Principal of GCET, who emphasized the life-saving potential of blood donation. Addressing the students, she stated, donating blood is a healthy process. The human body can replenish the donated blood within 4 to 8 weeks, while plasma is restored within 48 hours. A single donation can save up to three lives. She further added that regular blood donation helps reduce harmful iron deposits in the body, lowering the risk of heart diseases. Prof. Sharma congratulated the young donors, calling them "life savers" and encouraged them to continue donating every six months.



The event saw enthusiastic participation, with 65 students and staff members donating blood, and around 80 individuals undergoing hemoglobin and blood group tests. Er. Sudhir Sethi, President of the J&K Thalassemia Welfare Society, along with executive members Mr. Puneet Gandotra and Mr. Shammi Kapoor, also graced the occasion and commended the initiative.

The smooth conduct of the camp was ensured by coordinators Prof. Bhawna Sharma, Er. Sanjeev Gupta, Er. Sheetal Gandotra, and Dr. Raman Gupta, who congratulated the donors for their selfless contribution and advocated for building a culture of regular blood dona-

tion. Medical supervision was provided by Dr. Rubina and her expert technical team from GMC & SMGS hospital Jammu, ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants. The event also received commendable support from student volunteers Dhanush, Arnab, Oshan, Mehak, Aneesh, Ritesh, Vinyak and Anubhav along with senior staff members, who worked tirelessly to ensure the event's success.

The coordinators expressed their gratitude to all the donors and urged more students and faculty members to participate in future blood donation drives, reiterating the importance of such humanitarian efforts.

DC Srinagar reviews progress on Major Drainage Projects



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Wednesday chaired a meeting of Officers at DC Office Complex here to review the progress of ongoing major drainage projects under execution in the district.

The major drainage projects are aimed to strengthen the existing drainage network system and upgrade the system to protect the City from water logging and potential flood-like situations.

At the outset, DC took a comprehensive review of ongoing major drainage

projects across the district, emphasizing the urgent need for solution-oriented strategies to protect City from water logging and potential flood-like situation during any inclement weather conditions.

During the review meeting, DC directed the concerned to expedite works on the drainage projects and ensure timely completion of critical drainage infrastructure. He highlighted the importance of sustainable and long-term planning to enhance the City's flood resilience, especially in light of past weather-related challenges.

Dr Bilal urged the Officers to prioritize inno-

vation and efficiency in project execution, while also coordinating closely to address bottlenecks and streamline processes.

DC reiterated the Administration's commitment to improving urban infrastructure and protecting Srinagar residents from environmental vulnerabilities. He said that all works taken up must be in accordance with need-assessment.

On the occasion, DC was given a detailed appraisal of major vital projects including new projects and ongoing works for upgradation and augmentation of drainage networks system in the district.

28 companies offer over 1000 vacancies to local youth at Baramulla job fair

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: In a significant initiative to enhance employment avenues for the youth of Baramulla, District Administration Baramulla, in collaboration with the Dagger Division of the Indian Army and District Employment and Counselling Centre Baramulla today organized a Mega Job Fair at the Chinara Yuva Centre, Baramulla.

The event witnessed overwhelming participation from hundreds of job aspirants hailing from various parts of the district.

The event was attended by Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Baramulla, Javed Hassan Baig; Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa; senior Army officers, district-level officers,



representatives of participating companies, and a large number of enthusiastic job aspirants.

A total of 28 reputed companies from sectors

such as hospitality, automobile, education, banking and other service industries participated in the job fair.

The companies collec-

tively offered 1,024 vacancies, with many conducting on-the-spot interviews and some issuing provisional appointment letters during the event itself. This direct engagement between employers and job seekers made the fair a highly productive and impactful platform.

Alongside private companies, several line departments of the district administration also set up awareness stalls to disseminate information about key livelihood and self-employment schemes, including MUMKIN, Tejaswini, PMEGP, Mission YUVA and NRLM. These stalls aimed to encourage entrepreneurship and guide youth towards government-backed opportunities for self-sustenance and growth.

Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Baram-

ulla appreciated the efforts of the District Administration and the Indian Army for jointly organising the fair.

Speaking on the occasion, he said, "This initiative reflects the growing commitment of our institutions to the future of our youth. Such collaboration between civil administration and defense forces is commendable and essential for building trust and development at the grassroots level. I congratulate the District Administration for creating meaningful opportunities for our young generation."

On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla handed over appointment letters to two selected candidates and interacted with job aspirants and company representatives. Addressing the media, he expressed

satisfaction over the success of the fair and the high level of participation.

"Our aim is to empower the youth of Baramulla by connecting them with real opportunities," said DC. "This job fair is more than just a recruitment drive. It is a step toward building confidence among our young population and encouraging them to pursue careers, skills, and entrepreneurship with the full backing of the administration and the private sector."

The DC also appreciated the companies and departments that participated in the fair and encouraged youth to continue engaging with similar initiatives. "Baramulla's youth are talented and eager to contribute to society. We will keep creating platforms like this where they can thrive and grow," he added.