



J&K Witnesses Multiple Encounters, Attacks in First Three Months of 2025

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 02: The first quarter of 2025 saw a rise in encounters, militant attacks, and cross-border hostilities across Jammu and Kashmir, leading to multiple casualties.

The first quarter of the year was marked by many encounters between militants and security forces. In Zalooru Gujjarpati forest area of Sopore, an exchange of fire led to the killing of a soldier, Pangala Kartheek. A fierce gunfight in Krumhora Rajwar Handwara resulted in the killing of a foreign militant, while a police officer sustained injuries. In the Sanyal Hiranagar area of Kathua, an infiltration bid turned into an armed confrontation, leaving a minor non-local girl injured in the crossfire as militants managed to escape.

The most deadly encounter occurred in the Sufian forest area of Juthana in Kathua, where four policemen, including Head Constable Jagbir Singh and Selection Grade Constables Tariq Ahmad, Balwinder Singh Chib, and Jaswant Singh, were killed. Seven other security personnel were wounded, while two infiltrators were neutral.

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UN Office not Needed Anymore in Srinagar but MEA, Center Can Take the Call : LG Manoj Sinha

Says normalcy organic, not forced, all were on board to dismiss nationals

HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, APR 02: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has said that the decision to wind up the United Nations office in Srinagar rests solely with the Centre and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). However, he personally believes that the office is no longer needed in Kashmir.

In an interview to a national news channel, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—said, "To talk about the UN office in Srinagar doesn't fall in my domain. MEA and Centre have to take a call. I have my boundaries."

But the Lieutenant Governor quickly added that he personally feels that



the "office not needed any more in Srinagar."

Maintaining that the peace cannot be enforced but must be established, LG Sinha praised the efforts of the security forces for successfully creat-

ing a peaceful environment in the Union Territory. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a drastic transformation. There was a time when mothers used to mourn, and households struggled for survival," he said, adding, "Today stone-pelting and shutdown calls given on the directions of our neighbor have become a history. Businesses are thriving, and educational institutions, cinemas, and universities are fully operational. This is all due to peace."

Highlighting the change in public sentiment, he said, "The youth of Kashmir

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Pakistani Troops Violate Ceasefire in Poonch: Army

HT News Network

POONCH, APR 02: Pakistani forces violated the ceasefire agreement on Tuesday by firing at Indian positions in the Krishna Ghati (KG) Sector of Poonch. Troops of the Nangi Tekri Battalion, under the

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New Waqf Bill 'conspiracy against Muslims': JK politicians

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 02: Politicians in Jammu and Kashmir Wednesday said that the proposed changes made in the Waqf Amendment Bill are aimed to target Muslims and is an infringement with their faith.



Peoples Conference chairman and MLA Handwara, Sajad Lone in a post on X, as per news agency—said that the Waqf Bill is another right wing trespass.

"Waqf by definition is the custodian of proper

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Amit Shah to Visit J&K on April 7-8 to Review Security Situation

HT News Network



SRINAGAR, APR 02: Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to visit Jammu and Kashmir on April 7 and 8 to assess the security situation in the region, particularly in the wake of the recent gunfight in Kathua that left two militants and four police personnel dead.

Shah's visit is expected to focus on strengthening counter-militancy operations and reviewing security arrangements ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit on April 19. Modi is set to inaugurate the first train to Kashmir from Katra, making infrastructure security a top priority for law enforcement agencies.

During his stay, the home minister will chair a high-level security review meeting with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, top officials from paramilitary forces, intelligence agencies, the J&K Police, and civil administration. The discussions will center around counterterrorism measures, border security, and the protection of vital installations.

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NEWS BRIEF

16-yr-old boy shines in global tech, makes waves in int'l coding competitions

SRINAGAR, APR 02: In a remarkable feat, 16-year-old boy, Muhammad Abdul Raheem from central Kashmir's Ganderbal, a student of Hilltop Educational Institute, has emerged as one of Kashmir's brightest tech talents, making waves in international coding competitions and setting his sights on launching his own startup.

From an early age, Raheem displayed an insatiable curiosity for

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J&K, Ladakh get 59 MVUs under LHDCP: Centre

Srinagar, Apr 02: Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel on Wednesday informed Parliament that Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh have received a total of 59 Mobile Veterinary Units (MVUs) under the Livestock Health and Disease Control Program (LHDCP).

Of these, 50 MVUs are operational in Jammu & Kashmir, while 9 are functioning in Ladakh, providing essential veterinary services to farmers in remote areas.

As per the data, available with the news agency—, Jammu & Kashmir

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Gol helping J&K rural women to become entrepreneurs: Parliament told

Srinagar, Apr 02: Union Minister of State for Rural Development, Dr Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani on Wednesday informed the Parliament that the government has provided significant support to rural women entrepreneurs through different centrally sponsored schemes in J&K and Ladakh to boost economic growth.

The Minister, according to the news agency—said, "Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have witnessed key initiatives such as the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods

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India risks becoming digital colony without innovation push: LG Manoj Sinha at Sharda University Meet

HT News Network



SRINAGAR, APR 02: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha issued a stark warning on Wednesday, cautioning that India risks becoming a "digital colony" of technologically advanced nations unless its educational institutions and youth urgently prioritize innovation, particularly in artificial intelligence (AI).

As per the news agency—Correspondent, speaking at the Alumni Meet of Sharda University held at the SKICC in Srinagar, LG Sinha identified the need for self-reliance in technology and called for a transformative approach to education and research. In his speech, LG Sinha focused on India's lag in AI development compared to global leaders like the U.S. and China. He pointed to China's recent launch of the DeepSeek AI model as a wake-up call, questioning why India had yet to produce compa

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CS reviews ERA projects for their completion by extended deadline

New block of LD Hospital to be ready by Aug 2026

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 02: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high level review meeting where CEO of the Economic Reconstruction Agency (ERA), Aijaz Asad, presented a comprehensive update on the Jhelum & Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP).

This update comes after



the World Bank granted an extension to complete the remaining works.

Present in the meeting were Secretary, PWD; Commissioner, SMC; Chief Engineer R&B Central Kashmir besides other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon the ERA to

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Cancer cases surge in J&K: Over 67,000 diagnosed in five years

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 02: Cancer cases in Jammu and Kashmir have surged over the past five years, with the Union Territory recording over 67,000 cases between 2018 and 2024. The worrying trend has prompted discussions in the current session of the Rajya Sabha.

Responding to questions raised about the growing number of cancer cases, Prataprao Jadhav, the Minister

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Govt accords sanction to free additional foodgrains for AAY households in J&K

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 02: In a move to support poor households in Jammu and Kashmir, the government has sanctioned the provision of additional foodgrains free of cost to beneficiaries under the

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J&K's power demand drops to 18,439 MU in FY25, 3.77 lakh households electrified: Centre

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 02: The power requirements in the Union Territories of

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh have shown a steady decrease over the past two years, with the

energy demand dropping from 19,639 Million Units (MU) in the financial year

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75,000 people visit Tulip Garden on Eid days; footfall crosses 1.56 lakh mark

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 02 : Nearly 75000 people visited Asia's largest Tulip Garden, located at the foothills of the Zabarwan Mountains here, on first two days of Eid-ul-Fitr, while the number of total visitors since its opening on March 26 has crossed one and a half lakh mark.

In-charge Tulip Garden, Javid Masood while sharing the details with the news agency—said, "A massive footfall of 44651



visitors was witnessed on Tuesday (2nd day of Eid-ul-Fitr) while 30,000 to 35,000 people visited the Garden on Monday (Day 1st of Eid-ul-Fitr)," he informed.

Masood said in the last seven days since the garden was formally thrown open by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on March 26, it has recorded a footfall of 1,56,000 visitors.

"Since the rush is increasing with each passing day, we are expecting that the previous year's record will break this time," he said, adding, "Everything is going smoothly

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Sakeena Itoo reviews performance, functioning of JKBOSE

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, today chaired a meeting to review the performance and functioning of Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE). The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary Education and Chairman JKBOSE, Shantamanu; Director School Education Jammu /Kashmir, Special Secretary School Education department, Secretary JKBOSE and other concerned officers. The Minister evaluated key operational aspects of JKBOSE like examination processes, curriculum implementation and other IT interventions. She emphasized on strengthening board's infrastructure and streamlining administrative mechanisms to ensure smooth academic operations and oth-



er related activities of the board. She urged the JKBOSE to incorporate advanced technological solutions for better accessibility and efficiency in the working of Board. She also underlined the necessity of timely syllabus updates, improved teacher training programs and student-centric policies to meet the evolving educational needs. She directed the officers to declare the results of 10th, 11th and 12th classes by the end of this month so that they can join next classes without loss of any

academic activities. She called upon both the Directors to collaborate with JKBOSE for holistic development of education sector across J&K. Highlighting the need for robust and student-friendly educational framework across Jammu and Kashmir, Sakeena Itoo emphasized on continuous stakeholder engagement and proactive measures to uplift academic standards across the region. While reviewing other measures of JKBOSE, including Equitable and Inclusive Educa-

tion facility for Divyang and Children With Special Needs (CWSN), the Minister called upon both the Directors and JKBOSE authorities to create maximum awareness among these specially abled students about benefits being provided to them. These included flexibility in academics and assessment, exemption in exam fee for CWSN with 40% or more disability of permanent nature, relaxation of 5% in pass percentage in 10th to 12th class Board examination and others. She asked them to organise regular awareness camps, involving PRLs and other tools like mass media for maximising awareness among the target group. During the meeting, Secretary JKBOSE gave a detailed presentation on functioning of the board. She also informed the Minister about various IT interventions launched by the board for facilitation of students.

Commissioner SMC reviews Swachh Survekshan 2024

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 02: Commissioner SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmed, held an in-depth review today to evaluate the progress and preparations for the upcoming Swachh Survekshan 2024. During the meeting, Dr. Owais emphasized the critical importance of upholding high standards of cleanliness and sanitation throughout the city as part of the Swachh Survekshan initiative. Commissioner reviewed previous performance metrics and highlighted the necessity for continuous improvement in sanitation practices and public awareness campaigns. The officials were encouraged to prioritize sustainable waste management solutions and to cultivate a strong culture of cleanliness among the residents of the Srinagar city.



Dr. Owais reiterated that achieving a high ranking in the Swachh Survekshan not only demonstrates the city's commitment to cleanliness but also significantly contributes to the well-being and health of its citizens. The meeting concluded with actionable points aimed at enhancing the

city's sanitation efforts, ensuring that Srinagar stands out as a model city in the nationwide cleanliness survey. The meeting was attended by the Joint Commissioner (Adm) SMC, Secretary SMC and other senior officials of the Corporation.

Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz, Adil Fareed assume charge of ADCs Srinagar

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 02: Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz and Aadil Fareed Wednesday assumed the charge of Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs) Srinagar respectively. Prior to this, Mir Imtiaz served as the Deputy District Election Officer Srinagar and successfully conducted the elections for Lok Sabha and J&K Legislative Assembly. While, Adil Fareed was holding the charge of Assistant Commissioner Central in the Office of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir. After assuming the charges as ADCs Srinagar, both the Officers were welcomed by the senior Officers of District Administration Srinagar and other Officials with assurance of full cooperation for development of the District. Interacting with the Officials, the Officers stressed on adopting a coordinated approach to achieve goals set for development of the District, besides mitigating public issues on priority. Meanwhile, Umar Gulzar also joined as Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Srinagar. After assuming the charges as ADCs Srinagar, both the Officers were welcomed by the senior Officers of District Administration Srinagar and other Officials with assurance of full cooperation for development of the District. Interacting with the Officials, the Officers stressed on adopting a coordinated approach to achieve goals set for development of the District, besides mitigating public issues on priority. Meanwhile, Umar Gulzar also joined as Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Srinagar.

NHM J&K releases ranking of Public Health facilities on HMIS (JK e Sahaj) for Feb-2025

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 02: National Health Mission J&K today released ranking of Public Health facilities on Hospital Management Information System (HMIS) (JK e Sahaj) for the month of February, 2025. In the category of New GMCs of Associated Hospitals of Govt. Medical Colleges the first rank has been clinched by Govt Medical College, Kathua followed by Govt Medical College, Udhampur, Govt. Medical College Rajouri, Govt Medical College Doda and Govt. Similarly, in the category of District Hospitals first rank has been obtained by ASYM DH Budgam, followed by ASYM DH Pulwama, DH Ganderbal, DH Reasi and DH Poonch. Also, in the category of Community Health Centres (CHCs), first rank has been clinched by CHC Marh, Jammu followed by CHC Dooru, Anantnag, CHC Bijbehara, Anantnag, CHC Banihal, Ramban and CHC Surankote, Poonch. JK e-sahaj (Electronic System for Automation of Hospital Administration in J&K) initiative was formally launched on 4th November 2022 as part of Jashn-e-Sehat for different types of



facilities i.e. Tertiary care, District Hospitals, Community Health Centres. JK e-Sahaj has been integrated with Rapid Assessment System (RAS), 104 Centralised Health Helpline for out-bound calling and RCH portal of MoHFW, Govt. of India. Hospital Ranking has been assigned for different categories of facilities i.e. Associated Hospitals of Govt. Medical Colleges, District Hospitals and CHCs. The ranking has been done on the basis of registration, conversion of EMR (Electronic Medical Record), registration of IPD patients and Patient feedback uploaded on the portal of

JK e Sahaj for the month of Feb, 2025, on a real time basis. Similarly, in the category of District Hospitals first rank has been obtained by ASYM DH Budgam, followed by ASYM DH Pulwama, DH Ganderbal, DH Reasi and DH Poonch. Also, in the category of Community Health Centres (CHCs), first rank has been clinched by CHC Marh, Jammu followed by CHC Dooru, Anantnag, CHC Bijbehara, Anantnag, CHC Banihal, Ramban and CHC Surankote, Poonch. JK e-sahaj (Electronic System for Automation of Hospital Administration in J&K) initiative was formally launched on 4th.

Floriculture Deptt Kashmir cautions public against Illegal Photographers at Tulip Garden

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 02: Directorate of Floriculture Kashmir has cautioned general public and other visitors at Tulip Garden Srinagar against availing services of unauthorized photographers who manage to enter the Tulip Garden, Srinagar, clandestinely and charge visitors for photography services. In an official handout issued here, the public has been asked to stay away from such photographers, for they operate without official permission and mislead visitors for personal gain. Further, they have been advised to refrain from availing such photography services/ Social media reel making etc., from such unauthorized persons. In case any such activity is noticed, it should be immediately reported to the concerned officers viz. Assistant Floriculture Officer, Tulip Garden: 9906663555; Floriculture Officer, NMBC: 7006344500.

Lieutenant General P K Mishra assumes charge as GOC 16 Corps

HT News Network

Srinagar, April 02 (KNS): Lieutenant General P K Mishra assumed command as the new General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 16 Corps on Monday. He succeeded Lieutenant General Navin Sachdeva, who served as GOC of the elite White Knight Corps (16 Corps) since January 1 last year. The Corps oversees the operational area of the Jammu region, south of the Pir Panjal range. "Lt Gen P K Mishra has assumed command of the White Knight Corps from Lt Gen Navin Sachdeva," the White Knight Corps said on X. The Corps Commander encouraged all personnel to maintain the highest standards of operational excellence and continue promoting peace and stability in the region. (KNS)

NC Leader Justice (R) Hasnain Masoodi Opposes Waqf Bill, Calls It Discriminatory

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 2 National Conference (NC) leader Justice (R) Hasnain Masoodi strongly opposed the Waqf Bill, stating that it is an act against the rights of Muslims and a step towards discrimination. He highlighted that the party had already made it clear that such a move should not be taken. Masoodi questioned the government's intent behind separating a section of the population and violating their rights, arguing that no such law exists elsewhere. He stated that reforms should not come at the cost of diluting the control of Muslim society. "This Waqf Bill should not be passed," he asserted. Drawing parallels with the Forum Laws, Masoodi reiterated that NC's stance remains consistent, opposing any legislation that undermines the rights of specific communities. He warned that this was just the beginning of discrimination and called for an effective opposition to the bill. "The law should be based on pluralism, respecting every individual and their rights. However, this bill disregards those principles," he said..

Altaf Bukhari calls Waqf Amendment Bill, an Interference in Religious Affairs

HT News Network

Srinagar, April 2 (KNS): Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari has strongly opposed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, calling it an attempt to strip the Muslim community of its control over Waqf assets and administration. He warned that the bill, if passed, would lead to government interference in religious matters. "The community will lose control over Waqf boards, allowing the government to take over their administration—an outright interference in the religious affairs of Muslims," Bukhari said. The Union government introduced the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, for discussion and passage on Wednesday. Bukhari criticized the proposed amendments to the existing Waqf Act, 1995, arguing that they were unnecessary. He maintained that improvements in administration and transparency could be achieved without amending the law. "The government claims that this amend-



ment is aimed at improving the administration of Waqf properties and ensuring transparency. No one opposes better management, but such legislation is not required," he stated. Bukhari further highlighted that the bill mandates Waqf boards to register their properties with district collectors for accurate valuation, while all board mem-

bers would be government appointees. He expressed concerns that such provisions would deprive the Muslim community of its rights over Waqf assets and their administration. Reiterating his opposition, Bukhari urged the government to withdraw the bill and safeguard the community's autonomy over Waqf affairs. "The community will

lose control over Waqf boards, allowing the government to take over their administration—an outright interference in the religious affairs of Muslims," Bukhari said. The Union government introduced the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, for discussion and passage on Wednesday. Bukhari criticized the proposed amendments to the existing Waqf Act, 1995, arguing that they were unnecessary. He maintained that improvements in administration and transparency could be achieved without amending the law. "The government claims that this amendment is aimed at improving the administration of Waqf properties and ensuring transparency. No one opposes better management, but such legislation is not required," he stated. Bukhari further highlighted that the bill mandates Waqf boards to register their properties with district collectors for accurate valuation, while all board members would be government appointees. He expressed concerns that such provisions would deprive the Muslim community of its rights over Waqf assets.

EDITORIAL

The Ever-Growing
Allure of Asia's Largest
Tulip Garden

The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, nestled at the foothills of the Zabarwan Mountains in Srinagar, has once again proven to be an unparalleled attraction for both domestic and international visitors. With nearly 75,000 people visiting the garden in just the first two days of Eid-ul-Fitr, it is evident that this floral paradise has become an integral part of the region's tourism landscape. The overall visitor count has already surpassed 1.5 lakh since its grand opening on March 26, and if trends continue, the previous year's record-breaking footfall of 4.5 lakh visitors could be shattered.

This surge in tourist influx reflects not only the natural beauty of the garden but also the meticulous planning and efforts of the authorities. The introduction of e-ticketing has significantly streamlined the entry process, ensuring a hassle-free experience for visitors. The garden's vibrant display of 1.7 million tulip bulbs, including new varieties imported from the Netherlands, is a testament to the dedication of over 100 gardeners and laborers who have worked tirelessly to create this spectacle.

The remarkable response on the inaugural day—17,259 visitors in a single day—set the tone for what is shaping up to be a landmark year for the garden. The continued popularity of this site underscores the broader significance of floral tourism in Kashmir, a region often celebrated for its breathtaking landscapes but also striving to expand its tourism offerings beyond its winter charm.

The success of the Tulip Garden is not just about numbers—it is about the experience it offers to visitors. The breathtaking scenery, combined with the structured management and cooperative public response, has turned this seasonal attraction into an annual pilgrimage for nature lovers. Furthermore, with around 2,000 foreign tourists already visiting, the garden has placed itself firmly on the global tourism map, further enhancing Kashmir's reputation as a must-visit destination.

Going forward, it is imperative for the authorities to continue maintaining and improving this treasure. Sustainable practices, infrastructural enhancements, and additional attractions within the vicinity could further elevate its global standing. Additionally, leveraging the garden's worldwide recognition—after earning a place in the World Book of Records (London) in 2023—could help market it as an international tourist hotspot, drawing even more visitors in the years to come.

As the garden remains open until the tulip bloom fades, one thing is certain: its magic continues to captivate hearts, reaffirming the unbreakable bond between nature and tourism in the Valley. The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden is not just a symbol of seasonal beauty; it is an emblem of Kashmir's cultural and environmental splendor, standing as a beacon of peace and prosperity for the region.



HARSH RANJAN
SENIOR JOURNALIST

With certain political entities and vested interest groups within the Muslim community deliberately spreading misinformation to stir unrest, the Waqf Amendment Bill 2024 has become a lightning rod for controversy. The bill, aimed at ensuring transparency, curbing corruption, and streamlining the administration of waqf properties, has been distorted beyond recognition by these groups, who seem more concerned with protecting their own privileges than the welfare of the community.

The Truth Behind the Amendment

The resistance to this bill primarily comes from those who have long benefited from the lack of transparency in waqf institutions. Historically, certain groups have held significant control over waqf assets, and their identities are well known. Their opposition is not driven by genuine concerns for religious rights but by a desire to maintain their hold over vast properties and financial resources that have

Decoding the Waqf Bill:
Myths vs. Facts Uncovered

been mismanaged for years. If their intentions were truly aligned with the welfare of the community, can they explain why the income from waqf properties has been consistently declining year after year?

One of the main distortions being peddled is the claim that the bill enables the government to seize legitimate waqf properties. In reality, the amendment merely empowers the District Collector to review misclassified properties, especially cases where government or private lands have been wrongly designated as waqf. This measure ensures rightful ownership and protects against fraudulent claims, benefiting both the community and the larger public interest.

Another widely circulated myth is that the bill abolishes the survey of waqf properties. On the contrary, it strengthens the process by assigning the responsibility to the District Collector, who will conduct surveys using established revenue procedures, thereby eliminating inaccuracies and potential manipulation by vested interests.

Exposing the Hypocrisy of Opponents

The most vocal critics of the bill, have long been the principal beneficiaries of waqf assets. Their opposition is a calculated move to safeguard their financial empires built on these properties. These organizations have historically monopolized waqf resources, diverting funds meant for the underprivileged sections of the community

towards their own agendas.

The hypocrisy is stark! While they claim to champion the cause of the Muslim community, they have, for decades, manipulated waqf boards for personal gains. Many waqf boards in India are staffed by individuals affiliated with these groups, who continue to exploit these endowments for political and financial leverage. It is this unchecked exploitation that the amendment seeks to end, making them the loudest opponents of reform.

Strengthening Waqf for the True Beneficiaries

Beyond breaking the monopoly of select groups, the bill enhances inclusivity by mandating representation from various Muslim sects, including Sunni, Shia, Bohra, Aghakhani, and backward Muslim communities, ensuring fair and democratic governance of waqf assets. Furthermore, the introduction of non-Muslim experts to the waqf boards does not threaten Muslim control but rather enhances accountability, bringing in external oversight to prevent mismanagement.

The bill also introduces financial audits and transparent accounting practices, preventing misuse of waqf funds. Periodic reporting requirements and the ability to appeal waqf tribunal decisions in High Courts will further strengthen legal oversight, ensuring that waqf properties serve their intended purpose, benefiting the needy and

preserving India's rich syncretic heritage.

The Need for Reform

The government's move to remove the 'Waqf by User' provision is another crucial step toward eliminating ambiguity in waqf property claims. This provision has been misused to illegitimately claim lands without formal waqf dedication, leading to endless legal battles and land encroachments. By streamlining registration processes, the amendment safeguards both private and public lands from wrongful claims, ensuring that only legally declared waqf properties receive recognition.

The Way Forward

The Waqf Amendment Bill 2024 is a progressive step toward ensuring the transparency and efficient management of waqf properties. Its provisions are designed to protect legitimate waqf assets, improve governance, and dismantle the entrenched interests that have long profited from these resources.

It is imperative for the Muslim community to see through the misinformation and recognize that those opposing this bill are doing so for their own benefit, not for the greater good. By supporting this reform, we can ensure that waqf properties are used for their true purpose—uplifting the underprivileged and preserving the cultural and religious heritage they were meant to serve.

The hidden danger of Kite Strings: Why
Manja thread must be avoided?

TIYMA BILAL

Kite flying, a beloved tradition across cultures, emblemizes freedom, festivity, and connection to the skies. Yet, the use of manja thread, a sharp glass-coated string, has turned this joyous activity into a silent threat to birds and ecosystems. Designed for strength and competitiveness in kite battles, this thread transforms into an invisible razor when airborne. As kites crisscross the sky, countless birds, like

pigeons, eagles, crows, and even migratory species, get entangled in these lethal strings. Birds mistaking it for foliage or prey, become ensnared mid-flight, suffering deep lacerations, severed wings or fatal infections. Birds get trapped in hanging or discarded threads, making it arduous for them to escape. Even those that escape, prompt injury face prolonged agony as wounds fester, often leading to starvation or predation. The vandalism extends beyond individual birds: nests are destroyed, habitats fragmented, and migratory patterns disrupted, destabilizing entire ecosystem. Threads tangled in power lines can electrocute birds that accidentally touch them.

The environmental persistence of manja thread exacerbates the crisis. Unlike biodegradable materials, it lingers for years, entangling wildlife long after festivals conclude. Discarded strings snag on trees, power lines, and water bodies posing risk to terrestrial and aquatic species alike. In India, where kite festivals like Makar Sankranti are deeply cultural, reports of bird injuries surge annually. Despite bans in multiple states, enforcement remains lax, with vendors illegally selling manja thread under different names. Similarly, countries like Brazil and Nepal face parallel challenges underscoring the global scale of the issue. In Kashmir too, we see that kite flying has recently become a popular hobby among people. However, this growing trend is causing serious harm to birds as many

of them get injured or killed due to the use of sharp manja (glass-coated thread). Transitioning to safer alternatives is not only possible but imperative. Cotton threads, though less durable, offer a cruelty-free option. While innovations like biodegradable synthetic strings balance strength and sustainability. Communities in Gujarat, India, have pioneered "Bird-Safe" kite festivals. Using these alternatives, providing that tradition and conservation can coexist. The government should take strict measures to stop the use of manja thread in Kashmir, too, in order to protect birds, humans and the environment. Public awareness campaigns, school programs and stricter penalties for violators are critical to driving change. Encourag-

ing the use of cotton or biodegradable threads for kite flying. Citizens can contribute by reporting illegal sales, participating in clean-up drives, and advocating for policy reforms. Preserving biodiversity need not come at the cost of cultural heritage. By rejecting manja thread, we honor both the spirit of kite flying and our responsibility to protect vulnerable species. Let's come together to stop flying kites made of manja threads and protect our birds, safeguard our people, and preserve the beauty of environment. A similar approach in Kashmir could help to protect bird populations while still allowing the tradition of kite flying to continue safely.

**Housing Colony Chanapora
College: GMC Srinagar**

The plight of HKRNL employees: Another fraud of the government system



PRIYANKA SAURABH

The condition of the employees working under Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited (HKRNL) is getting worse day by day. These employees are recruited on the basis of merit, but they neither get a proper salary nor job security. The government is using them as a temporary solution, but no care is being taken about their rights. The employees working under HKRNL have become just a "temporary solution" for the government. The government is garnering accolades by using them but is not taking any concrete steps towards

giving them permanent jobs. When it comes to filling vacant posts in government departments, the government is busy polishing the figures by showing these employees.

Government's arbitrary decree: HKRNL employees' jobs in danger

Recently, the government has issued such a decree, which has put the jobs of HKRNL employees in danger. The government is not only shying away from regularizing these employees but is now also taking steps towards removing them. This decision can push thousands of families towards unemployment. The government had earlier guaranteed security till 58 years, but in the month of January, hundreds of HKRNL employees working in various departments were removed. When the removed employees protested, even then the government did not listen to them. Now, the employees working in the Forest Department

were removed from their jobs by Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam, giving a big shock on the holy festival of Eid. The additional principal chief conservator of forests, Panchkula Headquarters, has issued an order to terminate the services of these employees with immediate effect.

Additionally, the government has also decided to remove hundreds of surplus teachers working in the education department. This decision is not only a big blow to teachers but can also have a negative impact on the education system. Teachers were dedicated to providing quality education to students for a long time, but now their jobs are in danger.

Main problems

HKRNL employees work like regular government employees, but they get only one-third of the salary. This situation is not only weakening these employees financially but also

lowering their morale. The problem of employees not getting salary on time is persistent. Many times the salary is stuck for months, forcing them to face a financial crisis. These employees are given more work than regular employees, but they are not given any stability. As a result, they are always forced to work in an environment of insecurity. Whenever the demand for filling vacant government posts arises in the Haryana Assembly, the government uses these employees only for juggling figures. The government tries to show that it has provided employment, but in reality these employees are kept only on short-term contracts. While regular employees get all kinds of leaves, HKRNL employees are not even given the facility of leaves. This affects their mental and physical health.

risk of losing job

As per the new order of the government, the process of

removal of HKRNL employees has been expedited. This decision is a big blow to thousands of employees who have worked hard for years on cheap wages. Exclusion from other government schemes These employees have not been given the right to any government benefits, insurance, pension or other facilities, due to which their future remains completely insecure. Due to job instability and uncertainty about the future, there is a lot of mental stress among the employees. This situation is not only affecting their standard of living but is also having a negative impact on their families.

Possible Solutions

HKRNL employees should be paid wages commensurate with their work. It is unjust that they receive much lower wages than regular employees for the same work. The government should ensure that these employees receive their wages on time so that they can

avoid a financial crisis. There should be a policy to make permanent employees who have been working for a long time. This will make them feel more secure and bring more efficiency to their work. Instead of putting an excessive workload on the employees, their work should be balanced with the work of regular government employees. The government should stop juggling figures and accept the reality and take concrete steps to protect the interests of HKRNL employees. The government should withdraw the Tughlaqi decree and ensure job security for these employees. If the government does not take steps in this direction, it will have a profound impact on the financial condition of thousands of families. HKRNL employees should also get the benefits of insurance, pension, and other government schemes like other government employees so that their future is secure.

If the government ignores their demands, these employees should take legal recourse and raise their voice in the court. It is a constitutional right that they get a fair price for their labor.

The way forward
HKRNL employees have become only a temporary solution for the government. They are promised full-time jobs, but in reality they are being pushed towards an uncertain future. If the government does not take this issue seriously soon, these employees may be forced to protest. Demands like fair wages, timely payment, permanentization, and job security should be given priority by the government so that these employees can get their rights. Apart from this, employees also need to take legal steps and fight for their rights.

(The author is a freelance journalist and poet.)

Defenders of Peace and National Security



ABDUL QUDDIR KUNDRIA

The soil of our homeland is imbued with a sacred essence that nurtures an unparalleled spirit of sacrifice in its people. Throughout history, whenever the sovereignty of our nation has been threatened, our brave sons have stepped forward without hesitation, offering their lives to protect the land they hold dear. Their unwavering courage, selfless valor, and supreme sacrifices have ensured that we continue to live in peace and security. It is because of these fearless warriors that our nation stands tall, its foundations strengthened by their blood, and time and again, the sinister designs of the enemy have been crushed beneath the might of our defenders.

While the entire nation was immersed in the joyous celebrations of Eid-ul-Fitr and Navratri, a tragic event unfolded, turning moments of happiness into grief and mourning. On March 27, 2025, in the dense forests of Juthana, Sufiyan in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, the police launched a high-risk counter-terrorism operation. At the helm of this daring mission was DSP Dheeraj Singh Katoch, leading his brave team with the singular aim of eliminating the enemy. This was not just another operation, it was a decisive battle against terrorism, a fight for

peace and justice, where our fearless officers stood at the front-lines, prepared to lay down their lives for the country.

A fierce and intense encounter ensued, shaking the silence of the valley. With indomitable courage, our officers engaged the terrorists in direct combat, displaying unparalleled gallantry. Their tactical acumen and battle-hardiness led to the neutralization of five terrorists. However, this victory came at a heavy price. Four of our bravest warriors named Tariq Ahmed, Jaswant Singh, Balwinder Singh and Jagvir Choudhary sacrificed their lives in the line of duty, embracing martyrdom while defending their motherland. Their loss is immeasurable, a wound that will never truly heal, yet their supreme sacrifice fills every heart with immense pride. They stood as a testament to the unyielding resolve of our armed forces, proving once again that our nation is never short of heroes ready to give their all for its security.

Terrorism is a scourge devoid of conscience or morality. Its sole purpose is to spread destruction, bloodshed, and fear. But against this darkness stands the unwavering light of our forces, forming an impenetrable shield against all threats. Because of the courage and sacrifices of our officers, we are able to sleep peacefully in our homes, send our children to school without fear, and lead normal lives in our cities, towns, and villages. If not for the swift and strategic response of our police forces, the terrorists could have wreaked unimaginable havoc, causing irreparable harm to innocent civilians.

Even in this moment of grief, we salute the valor of DSP Dheeraj Singh Katoch and SOG officer Bharat Chalotra, who were injured



in the operation. Despite their wounds, their unwavering determination remained intact, exemplifying the true spirit of our protectors. These men, who stand firm in the face of danger and fight till their last breath, embody the very essence of bravery. Their heroism ensures that our enemies can never succeed in their evil designs. Had our forces not acted with the precision and bravery they displayed, the consequences could have been far more devastating.

The sorrow of this loss has gripped every heart across the nation. Eyes are moist with tears, and hearts are heavy with grief, but along with this pain, there is also an overwhelming sense of pride. These warriors did not just sacrifice their today—they secured our tomorrow. Their bravery has reignited a flame of unity and determi-

nation across the nation, strengthening our collective resolve to eradicate terrorism once and for all.

It is imperative to acknowledge the swift and strategic coordination between senior officials such as the DGP, IGP, DIG, SSP, and other security agencies, whose leadership ensured that the situation was effectively managed. The role of the media in providing accurate reports also helped the nation witness the bravery and efficiency of our police force and administration. The vigilance and dedication of our police and armed forces form the cornerstone of our national security, and we must always honor their sacrifices by upholding their mission.

However, it is also crucial to address the shortage of police and security personnel in certain sensitive areas. The government

must deploy additional forces in these high-risk zones to ensure that potential threats are countered proactively. Terrorism is a persistent menace, and to dismantle its networks, a joint strategy involving the army, police, CRPF, BSF, and special commandos is essential. A unified and coordinated effort will ensure that no enemy can ever dream of destabilizing our peace.

The role of civil society in this fight is equally important. If the people stand united with our security forces, no adversary can succeed in its nefarious designs. The fight against terrorism is not just the responsibility of the police or the military—it is a collective battle that the entire nation must fight together. Until we all rise as one and stand against this menace, true victory will remain elusive. Every citizen must remain vigilant

and support our forces in their relentless mission to safeguard the nation.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Honorable Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, the Honorable Chief Minister, the district administration of Jammu, Reasi and Kathua, senior officers from Udhampur- Reasi Range and Jammu- Kathua Range, SSPs, Additional SSPs, DSPs, SHOs, and every single police officer who stood by the grieving families in this difficult time. Their support has been instrumental in uplifting the morale of both the security personnel and the public.

The sacrifices of our brave jawans and officers can never be forgotten. Their courage, resilience, and devotion to duty are etched in the annals of history. We must keep their legacy alive and ensure that their families are supported, for this is the least we can do to honor their supreme sacrifice. These martyrs are our true heroes, the protectors of our nation, and we will always hold them in the highest regard.

If we walk in their footsteps, carrying forward their mission, and prioritize the security of our homeland above all else, no enemy will ever dare to challenge us. It is now our solemn duty to take this mission forward, to stand united against terrorism, and to ensure that the peace and integrity of our motherland remain unshaken. This is not just a responsibility—it is a sacred duty, a duty we owe to those who gave their all so that we may live in peace. We salute our jawans, our police, and our armed forces for their unyielding spirit, their unmatched bravery, and their eternal commitment to the nation.

The writer is an eminent poet of Urdu, Dogri of Jammu and Kashmir

Celebration of Eid ul Fitr 1446 H Reward of fasting



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Eid ul Fitr is celebrated every year on the 1st of Shawwal. (Shawwal is the 10th month of the Islamic calendar.). Islamic months either contain 29 or 30 days. There is no month in the Islamic calendar with 31 days, and the Islamic year contains 355 days, so that is the reason Islamic festivals circulate throughout the year. Grand festivals Eid ul Fitr and Eid ul Adha are celebrated on the appearance of the moon. The appearance of the moon has great importance for the Muslim Ummah.

There are two grand festivals in the Islamic year that are Eid ul Fitr and Eid ul Adha.

Eid ul Fitr is celebrated on the 1st of Shawwal, or 1 can say after the completion of the fasting days of Ramdhan ul Mubarak.

Eid ul Adha, or the day of sacrifice, is celebrated in commemoration of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) on the 10th of Zil hajj. After 2 months and 10 days of Eid ul Fitr.

Ramdhan ul Mubarak has great and eminent religious importance for the Muslim world. This month is considered the grand month of the other 11 months and starts after Rajab month. Ramdhan ul Mubarak provides an immense chance for the Muslim to earn or credit good deeds in their account for

the day of judgement. The holy Quran mentions that Ramdhan al-Mubarak and the associated fasting from dawn to dusk are obligatory for every Muslim man and woman except for lactating mothers, those who have their monthly periods, those with health ailments that fasting may harm or who have to have medicine, and those who are travelling long distances through any mode of transport.

Importance of Ramdhan ul Mubarak

During this month, mentioned in the holy Quran, the devil and its associates are barred under the divine power of almighty Allah, and Muslims fast, worship with utter concentration, and acquire intrinsic peace for their soul and mind. The fasting of this month feels the starving anxiety of poor people and provides a great chance to spend in the way of the Almighty and be among the forgiven people.

Charity, alms of one rupee granted the reward 70 times. Sunnah prayer is granted the reward of obligatory prayers.

All the Muslim Ummah change their routine habits of eating, sleeping, and most of the time engage in worship like reading and understanding the holy book of miracle that is the Quran Shareef.

Ramdhan ul Mubarak provides a great chance to help financially downtrodden classes so that they may uplift in the society with dignity. All the well-off in class have the responsibility to help and contribute their share as per the assets they possess and have faith for the unexpected rewards hereafter.

Muslims believe that after death. We have to stand in front of the almighty and have faith that the almighty

will forgive our sins that we did intentionally or unintentionally. And believe that the pursuits of this world are temporary and death is certain and desire the life hereafter, where there is no death, no pain, no one will be poor, and no one will be shelterless; hereafter life in heaven is every Muslim's dream.

History of Ramdhan

Every year history repeats, and every Muslim extends their hand up in prayer for peace and prosperity. In this month every second is important. If one knows the importance he or she desires, that whole year should be the blessing of Ramadan. This month is the month of rewards and blessings.

3rd Ramdhan ul Mubarak is the day in Islamic history when Fatimah, the daughter of prophet Muhammad, left this world for heavenly abode in 11th hijri.

10th day of Ramadan ul Mubarak Hazrat Khadijah (razi allah anhu) on this day left for the heavenly abode. Hazrat Khadijah (razi Allah anhu) married Prophet Muhammad when she was 40 years old and the prophet was 25 years old. Hazrat Khadijah was a business tycoon of that era, and there were tycoons who offered her marriage, but she denied them and married Prophet Muhammad as she found him honest, loyal, kind, and humble for the whole humanity in all aspects. This sign indicates that there is no age difference in Islam.

17th day of Ramadan: Battle of Badr led Prophet Muhammad to fight between mushrikeen of Makkah with 313 companions and get victory over 1000 mushrikeen. This battle was fought in Badr, just near

the boundaries of Makkah in Saudi Arabia.

19th day of Ramadan ul Mubarak: martyrdom of Hazrat Ali (razi allah anhu), brave companion of Prophet Muhammad.

21 days of Ramadan ul Mubarak, the day of victory of Makkah in 8 hijri (hijri means Islamic era today, 28th of Ramadan and 1446 hijri).

There are 3 parts of Ramadan ul Mubarak.

1st 10 days The 2nd 10 days and the last 10 days.

During the last ten days, the night of power is better than a thousand months or 83.4 years. Lailatul Qadar on the 21st, 23rd, 24th, 25th, and 29th of the Ramdhan ul Mubarak.

celebration of Eid ul Fitr

After the completion, countable days of fasting are either 29 or 30 days. The whole Muslim Ummah celebrates the Eid with full fervor, enthusiasm, and energy in all corners of the world.

Muslims offer eid congregational prayers at grand masjid and eidgah and pray for peace, brotherhood, and prosperity in the world. Hug each other, wear simple and fresh traditional khaan dresses and round caps, distribute sweets, prepare different dishes with different tastes, and extend their hands to the needy people.

Suggestion: Eid celebration should be as the guidelines of the prophet Muhammad, and there should be no extravagant customs in the society.

Youth are requested to avoid crackers on these auspicious occasions and celebrate with simplicity and be among those who got forgiveness.

Eid Mubarak!

Govt's duty cut to US imports threatens Kashmir's farmers



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The Central government's decision to reduce or eliminate import duties on U.S. apples, walnuts, and almonds (bowing to American pressure) poses a grave threat to Kashmir's already struggling farmers and its fragile economy. According to the Economic Times, India currently imposes a standard 42-120% duty on almonds, 50% on apples, and 100-120% on walnuts. Lowering these barriers will flood the market with cheaper US imports, crushing Kashmir's horticulture sector, which contributes over 75% of India's apples and nearly 98% of its walnuts.

For decades, Kashmiri growers have battled policy neglect, inadequate marketing strategies, outdated technology, poor infrastructure,

climate change, high production costs, and unstable prices. Now, they are being forced into unfair competition with those farmers who thrive on subsidies, low-interest loans, and institutional support. Meanwhile, Kashmiri farmers, despite their resilience, are left to fight alone. How is this a level playing field? What happened to 'Vocal for Local' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'?

The consequences of this decision will be devastating. With cheaper foreign alternatives flooding the market, local farmers will be compelled to sell at a loss, leading many to abandon the sector altogether. This will trigger mass unemployment, affecting transporters, traders, labourers, and thousands of families dependent on horticulture. Economic distress will deepen, aggravating social problems like drug addiction and instabili-

ty. Mere anti-drug campaigns won't address the crisis when livelihoods are being systematically destroyed.

The government must protect domestic horticulture by maintaining fair tariffs, providing direct subsidies, and investing in modern infrastructure. Strengthening marketing support, ensuring MSP (Minimum Support Price), and boosting exports will help Kashmiri farmers compete globally.

If the government genuinely believes in 'Atmanirbhar Bharat,' it must stand with its farmers, not against them. A nation that cannot protect its own growers can never claim true self-reliance. Kashmir's horticulture is not just an industry; it's a lifeline for thousands. It must be defended.

The writer is the founder of valleybazaar.in

Chief Justice for collaborated efforts to fight drug abuse

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 02: Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice Tashi Rabstan, today called for a collaborated and integrated approach in fighting drug menace in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

He was speaking as chief guest in a seminar on the topic "DRUG USE; ADDICTION, EFFECTS AND SOLUTIONS: A CUE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING UNDER NASHA MUKTBHARAT ABHIYAN" organised by the J&K High Court Bar Association Jammu in collaboration with the Criminologists Society of J&K at Lawyers Chambers, Jammu.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar presided over the function. The Chief Justice congratulated Advocate Rameshwar Jamwal, Balbir Singh Manhas and their team for taking up such a noble cause.

Sharing his experience, the Chief Justice revealed that during his tenure as Chairperson of SALSA, he would educate students in schools and colleges through innovative methods like nukkad natak, skits and drama in addition to interactive sessions with a panel of lawyers.

Terming lawyers as backbone of the society, the Chief Justice called upon the legal fraternity to contribute in fighting the drug menace. He also emphasized that the new criminal laws will also be instrumental in creating deterrence in the society.

Principal District and Session Judge Jammu, Yash Pal Bourne, Registrar Judicial, Sandeep



Kour, Principal Secretary to Chief Justice, M K Sharma and a large number of Judicial Officers, Prosecution Officers and Advocates participated in the seminar.

Besides, prominent office bearers of both the organizations including Baldev Singh, Pardeep Majorotra, Anshu Mahajan, Rahul Agarwal Ajay Ganodtra, Sandeep Singh, RS Dur-

swal, Ashwani Kumar, Rajiv Khajuria, Amarveer Manhas, Hemant Uppal, Deepali Kapoor, Adeep Bandral, Chander Dev Manhas, Aman Sharma, Saksham Sharma, Hitesh Koul and

Sushil Kumar.

Advocate Balbir Singh Manhas Advisor Criminologists Society, presented the welcome address while the vote of thanks was presented by Advocate Ranjit Singh.

Advocate Nirmal Kotwal, President J&K High Court Bar Association Jammu highlighted the new criminal laws with special reference to dismantle terror and separatist infrastructure apart from providing strict punishment as compared to IPC. Rameshwar Singh Jamwal, President Criminologists Society, gave a detailed key note address through a PowerPoint Presentation, elaborating how people develop criminal behaviour and how the children of the addicts are affected by their behaviour both genetically and epigenetically. He highlighted the

logic and meditational techniques piloted by the Criminologists Society in the District Jail Jammu which have yielded 75% encouraging results. He sought the support of senior Judiciary and the Government to reach out at grassroots level to deal with this grave issue effectively.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, in his address, said that there are two major parties in the drug menace one is victim who consume it while the other who grow and peddle it. He advocated counselling and alternate therapies for the victims while suggesting deterrent punishment for the accused. He appreciated the role of some NGOs and Criminologists Society particularly and called upon the civil society to come forward to fight it in tooth and nail.

DDC inspects upcoming road, bridge, other projects in Block NSSB - Poonch

Participates in Greha Pravesh ceremony of PMAY-G Beneficiary

HT News Network

POONCH, APRIL 02: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Vikas Kundal conducted a comprehensive inspection of ongoing road connectivity and other projects in Block Nangali Sahib-Sain Baba (NSSB), here today.

The DDC inspected the progress of work on New Drungali Nala Bridge on NH144A, renovation of Old Drungali Nala Bridge and the Chandak to Dahlan PMGSY road.

The Officer Commanding GREF Ashish Ranjan provided a detailed briefing on the status of work on the twin bridges. The DDC emphasized on expediting the pace of work on the projects to ensure timely completion.

He specifically directed the OC GREF to prioritize the restoration of the Old Drungali Nala Bridge, while also urging the construction team to accelerate the work on the New Drungali Nala Bridge on NH144A.



In addition, the Deputy Commissioner instructed the concerned executive engineers of PMGSY to up-grade drainage system from the Main Chowk to Nangali Sahib and to address road maintenance by filling potholes.

Later, the DDC inspected the newly constructed Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) - Grameen Houses in village Kankote and participated in the Greha Pravesh ceremony of beneficiary Tariq Hussain. He lauded the

beneficiaries for effectively utilizing government support and expressed his satisfaction with the scheme's impactful grassroots outcomes.

Earlier, the DDC inspected the Panchayat Char and Common Service Centre (CSC) in the village. He directed the concerned officials to expedite the recruitment of the operator for the CSC and ensure its functionality, thereby enhancing the delivery of essential services to the local community.

Omer Abdullah sole Muslim Chief minister amongst all states; UT's, must act against Waqf bill- Sheeban Ashai.

HT News Network

Srinagar, 2nd April 2025: J&K People's Party Chief Sheeban Ashai today while addressing press lambasted Modi regime's high handedness vis-a-vis Waqf Amendment Bill. He said, "We all know what became of hundreds of amendments put forward by opposition party members in the Joint parliamentary committee. Opposition vociferously complained that its voice was not heard, Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill accepted only 32 out of the more than 500 amendments moved. With BJP and its allies having numerical majority, all amendments moved by them were accepted, those put forth by Opposition were downright rejected. Opposition members moved amendments to all the 44 clauses, specifically seeking to delete 28 of these to restore the law to the 1995 principal Act. Opposition members had moved amendments opposing the institution of separate Waqf Boards for Aghakhani and Bohra sects. They also moved an amendment to remove clause 9 that allows inclusion of two non-Muslim members to the Central Wakf Council. All the 11 Opposition MPs moved an amendment to remove clause 40, which seeks to delete the provision that allows non-Muslims to also donate property to Waqf, from the original Act. In a joint statement, 11 panel members from Opposition said they were stopped from placing their views on the amendment and that no discussion on clause by clause was permitted by the chairman. 95% of the stakeholders who deposed before the panel opposed the Bill. In grave departure from the established rules.

DDC reviews implementation of Holistic Agriculture Programme in Kishtwar

HT News Network



KISHTWAR, APRIL 02: District Development Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan today convened a meeting to review the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in the district.

The meeting aimed to assess the implementation status, address bottlenecks, and strategize for enhanced outreach and participation. Nodal Officer HADP/Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Amjad Hussain Malik, presented a detailed report on the programme's execution.

He provided insights into the initiatives undertaken, progress achieved and challenges encountered in the implementation process. During the review, the DC emphasized the need for effective coordination among departments to maximize the impact of the programme. He directed field officers to intensify efforts for better outreach, ensuring higher participation from farmers and stakeholders. The review also included an assessment of both physical and financial progress across key sectors, including Horticulture, Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry and Animal Husbandry. The DC instructed all allied departments to ensure that the pending approved beneficiaries are covered in the upcoming financial year. He further directed concerned officers to adhere strictly to the set targets to achieve top rankings within the Union Territory (UT).

Waqf amendment bill an unconstitutional assault on Muslim religious rights: Hakeem Yaseen

HT News Network

Srinagar, April 02: Hakeem Muhammad Yaseen, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) and former minister, has vehemently opposed the proposed amendments to the Waqf Act, terming them as a direct assault on the religious rights of Muslims and an infringement upon their faith.

He asserted that such amendments are unjustified and go against the secular ethos of the Indian Constitution.

"India is a secular country, and the Constitution guarantees freedom of



religion to all its citizens. Muslims

from Jammu and Kashmir and across the country have made immense sacrifices for India's independence, and the government must respect their rights and aspirations," PDF leader said.

Hakeem Yaseen expressed deep concern over the ruling government's claims of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas," highlighting that such moves only serve to create division instead of fostering national unity.

He questioned the rationale behind the selective targeting of Muslim religious institutions while other religious communities enjoy autonomy in managing their affairs.

PUBLIC NOTICE

MY NAME HAS BEEN WRITTEN WRONG AS MUSKAAN BANO D/O BASHIR AHMAD MIR ...WHERE MY CORRECT NAME IS RUTBA JAN D/O BASHIR AHMAD MIR ... WHICH ACCORDING TO MY SCHOOL CERTIFICATES NEED TO BE CORRECTED...IF ANYBODY IS HAVING OBJECTIONS REGARDING THIS...HE/SHE MAY FILE HIS/HER OBJECTION IN THE OFFICE OF AADHAR AUTHORITIES WITHIN SEVEN DAYS FROM THE PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE AFTER THE SEVENTH DAY OF NOTICE...NO OBJECTION WILL BE ENTERTAINED
NAME : RUTBA JAN
D/O : BASHIR AHMAD MIR
R/O : SIRAJPORA , MAGAM , HANDWARA , KUPWARA , J&K

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information to the general public that I want to apply for new fertilizer licence under name and style Ahmad Enterprises main chowk Kreeri if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She contact Chief Agriculture office Baramulla within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.
MANZOOR AHMAD MIR
S/O GHULAM AHMAD MIR
R/O KREERI

PUBLIC NOTICE

My son's name has been wrongly written as AATIF FAYAZ BHAT S/O FAYAZ AHMAD BHAT in school record while his correct name is AATIF AHMAD BHAT S/O FAYAZ AHMAD BHAT which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection he / she may file his/ her objection in the office of GOVT PRIMARY SCHOOL NAGIBHAT within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained
NameFAYAZ AHMAD BHAT
F/O AATIF AHMAD BHAT
R/O... NAGIBHAT

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written as NASIR AHMAD MIR S/O GHULAM NABI MIR in my aadhar card while my correct name is NISAR AHMAD MIR S/O GHULAM BAHMI MIR which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of Aadhar authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained
Name....NISAR AHMAD MIR
S/O GHULAM NABI MIR
R/O ...DOLIPORA

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is inform to all general public that i Bashir ahmad bhat s/o ab rashid bhat R/o singpora my Date of birth is 01-03-1985 now i want to obtain Dob certificate if any body have any objection regarding issuance of date of birth certificate she the context of BDOsingpora with in period of seven days

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my father's name MAQSOOD AHMAD NAJAR S/O GHULAM MOHD NAJAR ..Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 212040002480 wants to be registered on my name SUMARE MAQSOOD NAJAR S/O MOHAMMAD MAQSOOD NAJAR R/O VIZER Wagoora .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained
Name...SUMARE MAQSOOD NAJAR
S/O ...MOHAMMAD MAQSOOD NAJAR
R/O VIZER WAGOORA
DISTT..... BARAMULLA

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE HESILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.
PUBLIC NOTICE
The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of FIZA HILAL D/O HILAL AHMAD MIR R/O KREERI Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 30/07/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection . if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained
Executive Magistrate
1st Class KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM, KASHMIR

Subject: - Transfer of Registration Certificate of Paying Guest House/Home stay namely "Ok Residency" situated at Chana Mohalla, Harwan Srinagar.

Public Notice

Whereas, Mr Ghulam Nabi Teli S/o Late Mohammad Ramzan Teli R/o Chana Mohalla Harwan, Srinagar has approached this office for transfer of registration certificate of the above mentioned Paying Guest House in favor of her wife namely Mrs Tamjeeda W/o Mr. Ghulam Nabi Teli under the provisions of J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act/Rules 1978/82/2011;

Whereas, said Homestay is registered with this Department vide No JKPG00000655 valid up to 31/12/2026 with room strength (04) in the name of Mr. Ghulam Nabi Teli S/o Mr Lt. Mohammad Ramzan Teli R/o Chana Mohalla Harwan, Srinagar.

Whereas, the applicant has submitted the following documents for transfer of registration certificate of the above mentioned Homestay in favor of her wife namely Mrs Tamjeeda W/o Mr. Ghulam Nabi Teli R/o Chana Mohalla, Harwan, Srinagar.

1. Application.
2. Photocopy of Registration certificate.
3. Special Power of Attorney (Notary).
4. Adhar Card of Tamjeeda.
5. Domicile.

Whereas, transfer of registration certificate for the Paying Guest House is purely for the purpose of running operation management of the said unit and does not confer any right of ownership of the Homestay.

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under J&K Registration Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011 before the request of applicant for transfer of registration certificate is considered, the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/ Financial Institutions/Banks/Organizations, etc. that in case of any objection, the same should reach to this office within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice. Objections received beyond period of 7 days will not be entertained and necessary change will be effected in the registration records of this office in respect of the above mentioned homestay under rules after submission of all the requisite documents.

DIPK-22/25
Date: Apr 2 2025

Deputy Director Tourism
Registration

Eco-Parks thrive as local eco-Tourism Hubs in North Kashmir

■ **HT News Network**

BARAMULLA, APRIL 02: The Eco-Park initiatives undertaken by the Forest Department in North Kashmir are steadily transforming the region into a hub for eco-tourism. With a significant rise in local footfall, these eco-friendly parks are playing a crucial role in environmental conservation while boosting the local economy. These Eco-Parks, strategically established to provide sustainable recreational spaces, have become a beacon of community engagement. They offer both locals and visitors an opportunity to connect with nature while actively contrib-

uting to conservation efforts. Families, students, and nature enthusiasts are increasingly visiting eco-friendly parks such as Rajpora, Kandi, Kailwan, and Bagh-e-Tehseen, particularly during festive occasions like Eid-ul-Fitr. Highlighting the success of the initiative, Chief Conservator of Forests Kashmir, Irfan Rasool Wani, stated, "The Eco-Parks initiative is a part of the broader efforts to maintain Kashmir's rich ecosystem while also promoting tourism that is mindful of environmental impact. As more locals embrace these Eco-Parks, it underscores a growing trend toward eco-conscious living and an increased understanding of the region's natural



heritage." Providing further details on the impact of these initiatives,

Conservator of Forests North Kashmir emphasized that these eco-parks program have a dual

impact—promoting both environmental sustainability and community well-being. In addi-

tion to fostering awareness about conservation, the Eco-parks have also contributed to the local economy through employment opportunities and the development of small businesses catering to visitors, he added. In a bid to further environmental awareness, the Forest Department set up special conifer sapling distribution stalls on Eid, distributing approximately 37,000 saplings among stakeholders in north Kashmir. The success of these parks was further underscored by a cumulative footfall of 22,000 people on Eid day alone, reflecting the increasing recognition of the importance of preserving Kashmir's unique

biodiversity. With eco-tourism gaining momentum in the region, the Forest Department continues to enhance these initiatives, ensuring a sustainable and eco-conscious future for Kashmir's natural landscapes. In a bid to further environmental awareness, the Forest Department set up special conifer sapling distribution stalls on Eid, distributing approximately 37,000 saplings among stakeholders in north Kashmir. The success of these parks was further underscored by a cumulative footfall of 22,000 people on Eid day alone, reflecting the increasing recognition of the importance of preserving Kashmir's unique biodiversity.

DDC Baramulla chairs District Level Committee meeting, approves 1,280 cases across key sectors

■ **HT News Network**

BARAMULLA, APRIL 02: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired a District Level Committee meeting, and approved 1,280 cases under various beneficiary-oriented schemes in Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Sericulture, and Horticulture (Planning & Marketing). With this latest approval, the total number of sanctioned cases in the district has reached 30,205. Reviewing the progress, the DC noted that 95% financial progress has been achieved, emphasizing the



administration's commitment to ensuring timely disbursement of benefits. DDC also reviewed the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), and directed the concerned departments to accelerate efforts to max-

imize outreach and impact. During the meeting concerned officers provided updates on sectoral progress and discussed strategies for effective implementation of government schemes aimed at strengthening rural liveli-

hoods and the local economy. Meeting was attended by Dean SKUAST- Wadoora, Joint Director Planning Baramulla and Assistant Commissioner Development besides various other concerned officers.

Sand Mafia Ravaging Jhelum Banks in Lalepora Patal Bagh Pampore, BJP Leader Demands Immediate Action

■ **HT News Network**

Pulwama, April 02: The illegal sand mining mafia continues its rampant destruction along the banks of the Jhelum River in Lalepora Patal Bagh Pampore, pushing the region to the brink of an environmental disaster. Despite repeated assurances by Deputy Chief Minister Suresh Chaudhary, senior BJP leader Mohd Lateef Bhat has called his claims "baseless" and warned that the systematic exploitation of Jhelum under the guise of unemployment cannot be tolerated.

Raising serious concerns over the deteriorating condition of the riverbanks, Lateef Bhat emphasized that unchecked mining has destabilized the river's structure, threatening local livelihoods and the ecosystem. "The destruction of Jhelum is not an option. We must take immediate steps to curb illegal mining before irreparable damage is done," Bhat asserted. He urged the district administra-



tion to designate specific locations in Pampore where sand extraction could be regulated under strict government supervision. "If conducted properly, controlled sand mining can provide employment to local workers while ensuring that the natural integrity of Jhelum remains intact," he added.

Environmentalists and local residents have long been raising alarms about the depletion of Jhelum's banks

due to unregulated extraction, which has led to soil erosion, altered water flow, and increased flood risks. However, the administration's inaction has allowed the mafia to continue its operations unchecked.

With growing public pressure, all eyes are now on the authorities to see whether they will heed these warnings or allow the ecological destruction of Jhelum to continue.

DC Baramulla reviews implementation of PM Vishwakarma scheme, directs officers to clear pendency

■ **HT News Network**



BARAMULLA, APRIL 02: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired a review meeting on the implementation of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme in the district. During the meeting, the DC directed all concerned officers to clear pending cases to ensure the seamless execution of the scheme.

To streamline the process, the DC instructed the Principal ITI Baramulla to share the list of beneficiaries with the Lead Bank Office for the timely release of stipends. He also emphasized the need for increased outreach and awareness, directing officials to organize awareness camps to encourage more beneficiaries to apply under the scheme.

Furthermore, the DC stressed the importance of regular monitoring and directed that at least one meeting per month be conducted to clear pendency at Stage 1 at both the Panchayat and Urban Local Body (ULB) levels. The meeting was attended by Joint Director Planning Baramulla, Javed Ahmad besides other senior officers from various departments, including representatives from the ITI, banking sector, and other key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the PM Vishwakarma scheme.

Waqaf Amendment Bill unacceptable: Retirates Aga Syed Hassan

■ **HT News Network**

Srinagar April 02 (KNS): Jammu and Kashmir Anjum-e-Sharie Shian President Aga Syed Hassan Mosavi Al-Safavi has reiterated that Waqaf Amendment bill in its current form, the amendment removes the spirit of the Muslim endowment/wukuf/awqaf concept. It is a clear and motivated encroachment into religious practice and an assault on the religious institution, which has existed for about 14 centuries.

Chairperson DDC Baramulla distributes relief among fire affected families, appeals for further support

■ **HT News Network**

BARAMULLA, APRIL 02: Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC) Baramulla, Safina Baig, today visited Old Town Baramulla to provide aid to families affected by the recent fire in Mohalla Jalal Sahib. During her visit, Safina Baig personally distributed two months ration kits, blankets and clothes to 31 fire victim families, contributing from her own resources. She expressed her concern for



the affected families, and urged all stakeholders to come forward and help these families rebuild their lives. She further appealed to the Lieutenant Governor of UT Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister of UT Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, to provide support for the rehabilitation of these families, so they can recover from this devastating loss. Today's visit marks the second visit by Safina Baig to Old Town Baramulla following the fire, underscoring her continued commitment to assisting the affected community.

DDMEO, NITI Aayog visits Govt ITI Baramulla for Evaluation Study

■ **HT News Network**

BARAMULLA, APRIL 02: Director, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation office, NITI Aayog, Sanjeev Kumar along with his team and representatives from IPE Global Limited, visited Government ITI Baramulla today as part of an ongoing evaluation study and impact analysis of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs).

The visit aimed to assess the effectiveness and impact of various CSSs initiatives in the skill development sector. The team interacted with officials, faculty, and trainees at ITI Baramulla to gain insights into the implementation and outcomes of the schemes.

As part of their study, the team will visit other Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Training Centers (TCs) across District Baramulla in the coming days.

The evaluation exercise will also extend to Udhampur and Ganderbal districts to ensure a comprehensive assessment.

The study will help in identifying best practices, addressing implementation challenges, and formulating strategies to enhance the effectiveness of skill development programs under CSS. The study will help in identifying best practices, addressing implementation challenges, and formulating strategies to enhance the effectiveness of skill development programs under CSS.

CSIR-IIIM Field Station Pulwama hosts Tulip Show Indigenous Tulip Cultivation gains momentum, aim is to reduce Import Dependency

■ **HT News Network**

PULWAMA, APRIL 02: In a significant step towards revitalizing the floriculture sector in the district, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Field Station Bonera, Pulwama organized a grand Tulip Show today. CSIR-IIIM has initiated a strategic programme for indigenous tulip bulb production under the overall supervision and mentorship of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister for Science and Technology and Minister of Earth Sciences.

As part of this strategic intervention, over one lakh tulip bulbs have been successfully cultivated on 12 kanals of land at the Field Station. The programme is aimed at reducing import dependency, promoting domestic tulip cultivation and fostering an agritech ecosystem. The Field Station was opened to the public today, allowing visitors to



witness the breathtaking bloom of tulips. The event witnessed an over-

whelming response, with a large number of people, including children and students, attending the festival. The event showcased breathtaking displays of tulips in full bloom, offering a glimpse into the region's floricultural potential and the success of indigenous innovation.

This step aligns with the national mission of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', reducing reliance on imported bulbs while creating economic opportunities for local farmers," said a scientist from CSIR-IIIM.

CSIR-IIIM officials emphasized the importance of scientific intervention and innovation in agriculture, stating that this initiative will pave the way for self-sufficiency in tulip production, benefiting both local farmers and the economy at large. The initiative is expected to strengthen the floriculture industry, providing new opportunities for research, commercial cultivation and employment generation in the sector.

Women in J&K Hail Free Bus Service, Men Seek Similar Benefits

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 2 : The introduction of a free bus service for women in Jammu and Kashmir has been met with widespread appreciation, with women from various walks of life hailing the initiative as a much-needed step towards empowerment. The service, inaugurated by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, aims to ease commuting difficulties for women, particularly students and working professionals.

Many women expressed their gratitude for the scheme, calling it a game-changer in terms of accessibility and financial relief. "This initiative has made travel so much easier for us. Earlier, we had to think twice before taking a bus due to high fares, but now we can commute without financial stress," said Humaira Jan, a college student from Srinagar.

Working women, too, see this move as a boost to their independence. "Women often have to compromise on opportunities due to travel expenses. This scheme not only supports us financially but also encourages more women to step out for work and education," said Rubeena Akhtar, a private school teacher in Srinagar.

However, while the initiative has been widely appreciated, some male members of society feel that the government should also consider relaxation for them, especially for economically weaker sections. "It's a commendable step, but the government should also introduce schemes that benefit men who are struggling financially. Many daily wagers and students face difficulties too," said Irfan Ahmad, a shopkeeper from Baramulla.

Another commuter, Bilal Hussain, echoed similar sentiments, stating, "We fully support this initiative, but men from underprivileged backgrounds should also receive some travel benefits. A subsidized fare system for them would be a fair approach." [KNT]

Mirwaiz Expresses Disappointment Over Waqf Amendment Bill

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 2, KNT: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, has expressed disappointment over the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) failing to address concerns raised by Muslim scholars from the Union Territory regarding the Waqf (Amendment) Bill. In a post on X, Mirwaiz criticized the ruling party for defending what he termed as an "indefensible" bill in Parliament. He lamented that not a single reservation put forth by Muslim organizations, including the Muttahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU), which he leads, was taken into account by the JPC during deliberations in New Delhi.

He further stated that millions of Muslims across India are witnessing the erosion of their rights and institutions without being able to intervene.

"Today, crores of Muslims in India, like mute spectators, are haplessly watching their rights and institutions being blatantly undermined and feel greatly let down," he remarked.

Joggers Park in Raj Bagh Defaced by Stray Dogs, Floriculture Dept Silent

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 2 : The Joggers Park in Raj Bagh has been left in shambles as stray dogs freely roam and dig up its green spaces, turning the once-pristine area into a mess. Despite thousands of people visiting the park daily, the Floriculture Department has failed to maintain its beauty, raising serious concerns about accountability. The park, known for its lush lawns and well-maintained walking tracks, now presents a sorry picture with deep pits dug by dogs, damaged flower beds, and an overall neglected appearance. The presence of a watchman's quarter inside the park has done little to prevent the deterioration.

MLA Dr. Narender Singh, Commissioner JMC visit Sainik Colony Address civic issues, hand over street lights

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 02: Member Legislative Assembly Dr. Narender Singh and Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation Dr. Devansh Yadav today visited Sainik Colony and held a significant meeting with the Sainik Colony Management Committee to discuss key civic issues affecting the area.

During the meeting, local residents submitted a memorandum to the Commissioner, outlining pressing concerns such as drinking water supply, street lighting, drainage systems, and the development of local parks. Acknowledging the grievances of the community, Dr. Yadav assured the Sainik Colony Management Committee that necessary actions would be taken at the earliest to address these concerns. MLA Dr. Narender Singh emphasized the importance of public cooperation in ensuring the effective implementation of civic projects. He urged the local community to work in tandem with the authorities to



facilitate smooth and efficient development initiatives.

Furthermore, Dr. Singh stressed the need for elected representatives to collaborate closely with government departments, ensuring that developmental projects in their respective areas should be taken up expeditiously and efficiently. He reiterated his commitment to delivering quality

infrastructure and services, ensuring that the citizens do not face any inconveniences.

The meeting marked a constructive step towards resolving civic issues in Sainik Colony, reinforcing the dedication of the local administration and public representatives toward the welfare of the community.

Later, the Commissioner handed over 50 street lights to the Sainik Colony Management Committee in presence of MLA.

The initiative aims to enhance street lighting in the area, ensuring better visibility and security for residents.

Speaking at the occasion, the MLA commended the efforts of JMC in addressing civic needs and reaffirmed the commitment to further infrastructural development in the region.

The Commissioner highlighted the importance of well-lit streets in fostering a safer environment and improving the overall quality of life. "This initiative is part of our broader effort to enhance civic amenities across Jammu. We remain dedicated to implementing projects that directly benefit the residents," the Commissioner stated.

Among others, Deputy Commissioner (South) Lal Chand, Joint Commissioner (W) Firdous Ahmad Qazi, Executive Engineers, (E), works, other senior officers of JMC, besides former Corporator and locals were present on the occasion.

IRS to augment disaster response on ICS pattern in US CS takes stock of preparedness for its introduction

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 02: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting of the concerned officers to take their inputs for implementation of the Incident Response System (IRS) for efficient disaster response in the UT. Besides Principal Secretary, DMRR&R, the meeting was attended by Financial Commissioner (Revenue); Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and Jammu besides other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary enquired from each of the participants about the effective method of its implementation. He asked about the roles and responsibilities of different government departments and law enforcement agencies as well.

Dulloo observed that this system has an added significance for our part of the globe is prone to certain disasters. He further noted that since the UT has diverse topography and climatic conditions across its divisions it is



imperative to strategize and plan keeping these challenges in mind. He called upon all to give it a considerate thought so that a best possible response mechanism is put in place with a right mix of professionals to deal with the circumstances. He stressed on adoption of 'whole of the government approach' in creating

such plans as most of the disasters are incidental in nature.

Financial Commissioner (Revenue), Shaleen Kabra, while giving his insights about the adoption of IRS in the UT, remarked that there should be a disaster and location specific plans for smoothly steering the response mechanisms at the times of eventualities.

He made out that different States/UTs shall be having their own response systems based upon their susceptibility to disasters. He also suggested certain roles and responsibilities for different government officers based upon the nature and location of the disasters.

Principal Secretary, DMRR&R, Chandraker Bharti, while giving introduction of Incident Response System (IRS), said that it is a structured approach designed to streamline disaster response by integrating facilities, equipment, personnel and communication systems under a unified command.

JKDMA issues 'very high forest fire risk' for Bandipora, Srinagar

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 02: The Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) has issued a pre-fire alert warning of a 'Very High Forest Fire Risk' over marked forest areas in Bandipora and Srinagar.

The alert, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), is valid for the next three days, which started on April 1 and will end on April 3. The authorities have advised to take necessary precautions and report any fire incidents immediately by dialling 112.

Given the heightened fire risk, authorities have also outlined several do's and don'ts to prevent forest fires and ensure public safety.

Among the do's list, it has asked to close windows, vents, and other openings to prevent embers from entering. "Move animals and valuable goods to safer locations. After adventure activities, ensure that no bonfire or flame is left unattended," reads the guidelines.

While among the don'ts, it has asked to avoid smoking near vegetation or forested areas and not to panic in case of a sudden fire. Refrain from entering the forest during a fire incident. With regard to prevention and preparedness measures, it has asked to keep emergency contact numbers of district fire services and forest authorities readily available.

J&K gets Rs 3520 cr, Ladakh Rs 318.91 cr for Panchayat development in 2024-25

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 02 (KNO): The Government of India has allocated significant funds for the development of Panchayat infrastructure in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh under the Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) and the Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSAA).

The information as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) was provided in response to a question in the Lok Sabha by Manju Sharma.

In Jammu & Kashmir, 970 Panchayat Bhawans have



been approved for the current year (2024-25), while in Ladakh, 3 Bhawans have been sanctioned.

Also, J&K has received a significant number of 1000 computers for enhancing digital infrastructure at the Panchayat level in the past year, with further allocations planned. Regarding the Fifteenth

Finance Commission Grants, Jammu & Kashmir received Rs 2819.24 Crore in 2023-24, with Rs 3520 Crore allocated for the current fiscal year.

In Ladakh, Rs. 318.91 Crore was allocated in the last fiscal year, and the state has been included in the efforts to strengthen Panchayat institutions under the central schemes.

"The government's commitment to strengthening local governance through infrastructure and capacity building aims to improve governance standards and empower the Panchayats in these regions," he said—

Sgr bustles with Eid festivities as crowds flock to Mughal Gardens, others places

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 02: The Boulevard Road along with other major roads of Srinagar city remained choked with traffic for the past three days as people from across the valley flocked to the Mughal Gardens to celebrate Eid. With the conclusion of festivities, normal life is gradually returning to routine. The news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the roads were packed with autorickshaws, cars, private hired vehicles, and bikes, as families and friends stepped out to make the most of the holiday.

The Mughal Gardens, the favourite Eid destination, saw a massive footfall, with visitors enjoying the pleasant weather and scenic beauty. To add joy to the fest, the Tulip Garden of Srinagar, Asia's largest Tulip garden, also attracted people, making roads clogged with vehicles.

Adil Ahmad, a visitor from Baramulla,

said, "It is a tradition for us to visit these gardens after Eid prayers. This year, the crowd was overwhelming."

Shopkeepers and street vendors along the Boulevard also saw brisk business during the celebrations. "Eid brings people out, and that's good for us. Sales were excellent over the last two days," said a street vendor selling snacks.

Notably, as the holiday mood fades, businesses, offices, and daily routines are gradually resuming, marking the end of another festive Eid in Kashmir—Shopkeepers and street vendors along the Boulevard also saw brisk business during the celebrations. "Eid brings people out, and that's good for us. Sales were excellent over the last two days," said a street vendor selling snacks.

Notably, as the holiday mood fades, businesses, offices, and daily routines are gradually resuming, marking the end of another festive Eid in Kashmir—(KNO)

Satish Sharma inaugurates photo exhibition on Ambaran "Buddhist Citadel" in New Delhi

Reiterates government's commitment to promote Akhnoor on tourist map of India

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APRIL 02: Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Information Technology, Science and Technology, ARI and Trainings, Satish Sharma, today inaugurated 40 day long photo exhibition on Ambaran "The Historical Buddhist Citadel" at Ajanta Hall of National Museum in New Delhi.

The exhibition was jointly organised by the National Museum of India and Centre for Himalayan Asian Studies and Engagement (CHASE) New Delhi. The photographs have been clicked by veteran photographer Vijay

Kranti and his son Akshat Kranti.

While speaking on the occasion, the Minister remembered the efforts of his father late Madan Lal Sharma, who was also Member Parliament, in preserving his historic site which has religious significance to Buddhists. Satish Sharma said that the photographers of this exhibition acknowledge years of dedicated efforts of former MP late Madan Lal Sharma and his efforts at putting Ambaran and Akhnoor on the national map of Buddhist tourism.

The Minister said that the site is known for its terracotta figures that included Buddha heads of various sizes and ornately dressed



male and female statues, with clearly seen influences of the Graeco-Buddhist and Gandhara schools of art. The Minister, while sharing the message of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, asserted that the government has placed special emphasis on promoting the rich cultural heritage of J&K and its tourism. Satish Sharma said that Akhnoor is blessed with five extraordinary cultural historical natural and technological specialities which are the Buddhist Monastic site of Ambaran, the Akhnoor fort, the Jia Pota Ghat, Chenab river and peaceful facet at Akhnoor. It is government's commitment to promote and place Akhnoor on the tourist map of India,

he added. Satish Sharma also informed that similar kind of photo exhibitions will also be held in Jammu and Srinagar after the conclusion of this exhibition. The Minister concluded that this exhibition is a photographic tribute to the archeologists of India and people of Akhnoor. Pertinent to mention that, Ambaran is one of the latest historical findings of Archeological Survey of India and the oldest Buddhist site found so far in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh which is situated at the bank of Chenab river. The highest spiritual leader and head of Tibetan Buddhism, 14th Dalai Lama had visited this ancient site in November 2012.

Over 300 projects receive forest clearance in J&K Javed Rana asks for aggressive compensatory afforestation

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 02: In a significant push to infrastructure and economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir, over 300 development projects, pending clearances at different stages, have received forest clearances.

From key road networks to water supply schemes, tourism, defence and 4G saturation, these approvals will pave the way for enhanced connectivity, economic progress and improved public services. A total of 302 cases have received final approval and 84 cases have received In-Principle approval from the government between January to March this year. The signifies government's broader vision of development, prioritising projects that address long-standing infrastructural gaps and further improve the public services.

Delay in land acquisition and forest clearances were some of the reasons for these projects being stalled or running behind schedule and at times leading to cost



overruns. A number of projects related to road development have been granted approval, enabling timely implementation of key initiatives.

The diversion of forest land will support construction and improvement of roadways, including highways and local roads.

These roads are vital for enhancing connectivity and facilitating the movement of people and goods across Jammu and Kashmir.

Major road and highway projects approved recently included clearance of the remaining patch of Package-17 of Delhi-Katra Expressway in Jammu, Kishtwar-Nildori-Bangus-Gali-Lokut-Bangus Dangiari Road in Kupwara district by BRO, Jallary to Badharket Khaitan road by PWD in Poonch district.

Additionally, the forest land has been cleared for establishment of various water supply schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission. These projects aim to provide safe and adequate drinking water to every household, especially in rural and remote areas.

The approval for these schemes will contribute significantly towards improving the water infrastructure, making water more accessible to the residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

Across the UT of J&K, in the past three months, 271 Water Supply Schemes have been approved in 7 districts of J&K includ-

ing Baramulla, Budgam, Doda, Jammu, Kishtwar, Ramban and Udhampur.

Further, in order to ensure 4G Saturation under USOF, 11 proposals for construction of communication towers and 4 proposals for laying of OFC have been approved recently across 8 districts of J&K.

In line with the Forest (Conservation) Act, compensatory afforestation will be undertaken for the forest land diverted for these projects. This will include reforestation of degraded forest land to maintain ecological balance and mitigate any potential environmental impact caused by these developmental activities.

These environmental clearances have been approved following a high level meeting between J&K Minister, Javed Ahmed Rana and Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, in New Delhi in January 2025.

Rana had urged the Union Minister to expedite clearance of over 400 pending cases under the Forest Conservation Act related to various projects, which were awaiting approval at the regional office.

Poonch: DLC approves 2 CLU cases

HT News Network

POONCH, APRIL 02: District Development Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee for Change of Land Use (CLU) to review the cases received.

A total of 11 CLU cases were discussed in the meeting. Out of these, 02 cases received approval from the committee, while 07 cases were reverted for further review, and 02 cases were rejected after extensive deliberation concerning compliance with existing policy.

The DDC stressed the importance of timely issuance of No Objection Certificates (NOCs) and instructed the members to ensure thorough verification of all documents related to submitted CLU applications. He emphasized the need for all departments to process each case with due diligence to avoid delays in approvals.

KVK employees meet Dy CM; highlight service issues, seek resolution

HT News Network



JAMMU, APRIL 02: A delegation of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) employees from SKUAST Jammu today met with Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, apprising him of their issues and concerns.

They highlighted several challenges being faced by them which inter alia included significant cuts to essential allowances such as medical, transport and employer's contribution to the National Pension Scheme (NPS).

The delegation explained that these reductions have caused financial strain for KVK staff, who work tirelessly in rural areas to promote agricultural innovation and support farmer welfare schemes. They urged the university to address these disparities by ensuring timely promotions and releasing the pending allowances, including the NPS contributions.

The Deputy Chief Minister assured the delegation that he would raise the matter with the Agriculture Minister to seek a resolution.

Road checking drive conducted on Thanamandi-Berote NH

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 02: On the directions of the Transport Commissioner Visheshpaul Mahajan, and Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma, a comprehensive road checking drive was conducted today by the ARTO Rajouri Rajesh Gupta, at Thanamandi-Berote road.

The road checking aimed to reinforce compliance with traffic regulations and ensure road safety. A total of 170 vehicles were checked during the drive, and 27 were issued E-challans for violation of the Motor Vehicles Act and the Rules framed thereunder. The amount expected to be collected from these E-challaned vehicles is Rs. 67,000 (Sixty-Seven Thousand Rupees).

Additionally, 8 vehicles were seized for serious violations, as per the relevant provisions of the law.

This initiative is part of the ongoing efforts by the district administration to improve road safety, enforce traffic discipline and ensure smooth movement of traffic in the region.



District Administration Poonch accords farewell to outgoing ACR

HT News Network

POONCH, APRIL 02: District Administration Poonch organized an impressive function today in the conference hall of the DC Office to bid farewell to the outgoing Assistant Commissioner Revenue Qadeer Ul Rehman.

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal extended best wishes to the officer for his future endeavors.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik, specifically recognized the hard work and dedication of ACR Rehman, emphasizing the positive impact he made while serving the community.

Other officers also appreciated his commendable efforts as Returning Officer in the recent elections, underscoring his dedication and commitment towards his job. The outgoing ACR expressed his gratitude for the support and collaboration he received from the district administration, officers and staff members during his tenure. Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik, specifically recognized the hard work and dedication of ACR Rehman, emphasizing the positive impact he made while serving the community.

Other officers also appreciated his commendable efforts as Returning Officer in the recent elections, underscoring his dedication and commitment towards his job. The outgoing ACR expressed his gratitude for the support and collaboration he received from the district administration, officers and staff members during his tenure.

DC reviews stock supply position, working of FCS&CA Department in Poonch District

HT News Network

POONCH, APRIL 02: District Development Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to assess the working of the Food Civil Supplies and Consumers Affairs Department, including stock and supply position in the District.

Assistant Director FCS&CA Adil Shabir and all Tehsil Supply Officers (TSO) of the district attended the meeting.

At the outset, the Assistant Director FCS&CA gave a detailed presentation regarding the functioning of the department. He said that the district boasts ample reserves of essential commodities including



wheat, rice, LPG, petrol and diesel. "To ensure widespread accessibility, the department utilizes seven stores and 167 fair price shops and 20 Government sale depots for ration distribution," he added.

A thorough discussion

ensued and the DDC reviewed the implementation of e-KYC/e-Shram/NFSA/Non-NFSA & PMFSS schemes focusing on three categories of Non-Priority Households (NPHH), Priority Households (PHH) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana

(AAY). He reviewed the current status and issues faced by the TSOs in their respective zones.

The DDC reviewed E-KYC reports from each zone and asked the TSOs to complete the E-KYC registration in their jurisdictions. He also discussed issues related to online transactions, instructing officers to only provide ration through online mode. Manual or offline ration provision is not permitted only in areas having network issues. The Assistant Director was asked to review the network location of the offline PoS Machine again. The DDC reviewed E-KYC reports from each zone and asked the TSOs to complete the E-KYC registration in their jurisdictions.

DM Jammu pushes for strict enforcement of traffic rules at RTA meeting

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 02: District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya today chaired a meeting of the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) and issued a string of directives aimed at improving traffic management and road safety in the district. Emphasising the need for strict enforcement of traffic rules in rural areas, the DM instructed concerned departments to conduct rigorous drives to curb violations. He further directed the School Education Department and Traffic Police to intensify awareness campaigns on road safety, particularly targeting students and young drivers. In a move to ensure adherence to safety regulations, the DM instructed the Regional Transport Officer to convene a meeting with petrol pump owners. He mandated that fuel should not be dispensed to riders and drivers who fail to comply with basic



traffic rules, such as wearing helmets and seat belts. Addressing the issue of road maintenance, the DM ordered the prioritisation of pothole repairs on national highways. He stressed that the roads requiring urgent attention should be identified and incorporated into budget allocations for timely repair. He also emphasised the swift execution of road construction and maintenance projects to alleviate traffic congestion. In an effort to enhance safety in school transportation, the concerned officers were directed to ensure the installation

of CCTV cameras in all school buses. Additionally, the DM underscored the importance of innovative public awareness campaigns on traffic rules, through innovative media to educate youngsters effectively. The meeting was attended by SSP Jammu Joginder Singh, SSP Traffic Faisal Qureshi, ADC Ansuya Jamwal, ADC Rakesh Kumar, CMO Dr. Harbaksh Singh, as well as Executive Engineers from the Public Works Department, officers from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and other concerned officials.

District administration Jammu hosts training session for Resource Persons under Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 02: Additional District Magistrate Ansuya Jamwal today chaired a training session for resource persons under the Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan, aimed at intensifying anti-drug awareness efforts in urban local bodies across the district.

The initiative is part of the administration's broader strategy to combat drug abuse through education, counselling and community-driven interventions. During the session, the ADM highlighted the critical role of trained personnel in educating communities about substance abuse and promoting a drug-free society. She urged resource persons to actively engage with local stakeholders to ensure effective outreach.

The session was attended by SDMs, Tehsildars and officers from the Police and Social Welfare Department, along with other concerned officials. The initiative is part of the administration's broader strategy to combat drug abuse through education, counselling and community-driven interventions.

During the session, the ADM highlighted the critical role of trained personnel in educating communities about substance abuse and promoting a drug-free society. She urged resource persons to actively engage with local stakeholders to ensure effective outreach.

DC presides over Weekly Block Diwas programme at Battal Ballian- Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 02: Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai today visited Panchayat Battal Ballian and interacted with the local residents at the weekly Block Diwas program. The DC patiently listened to numerous public grievances and developmental demands raised by the local

people. The event was attended by DDC Member Udhampur-1 Puran Chand; Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajinder Singh; Programme Officer Poshan Subash Dogra; General Manager District Industries Centre Kishore Singh Katoch along with other district officers, former Sarpanches, Panches and a large number of people from



adjoining panchayats.

During the interaction, the local

people highlighted several key issues

and demands including Education

& Infrastructure, Additional accommodation, construction of a boundary wall and an underground water tank at GHSS Battal Ballian, installation of solar lights, addressing acute drinking water shortages, installation of transformers and electricity poles and repairing of hand pumps and the filtration plant, blacktopping and upgradation of the local roads and the development of Balltal Chowk to

ease traffic congestion, bifurcation of ration cards, clearance of pending liabilities under MGNREGA, construction of playgrounds etc. The DC assured the public that all genuine concerns would be addressed in a time-bound manner. She directed the concerned officers to work with dedication and commitment to ensure the timely resolution of public grievances.

Controversial Waqf Amendment Bill introduced in LS amid pandemonium

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, APR 2

Amid uproar, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday introduced the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, as reported by Joint Committee and The Mussalman Waqf (Repeal) Bill, 2024 in the Lok Sabha and stated that the Bill does not aim to snatch land and mosques and religious places of the minority community.

He said the Bill is in the interest of the Muslim children and women. While moving the Bill, Opposition members resorted to sloganeering and tried to disrupt the proceedings of the House.

Rijiju rebuffed Congress



Deputy Leader Gaurav Gogoi's allegation that this Bill is aimed at defaming, disfranchising the minorities and dividing the country.

The aim of the Bill is to provide better management of Waqf property, the Minister said.

He said the amendments in the Bill were required to

make change in the legislation, which were passed during the UPA government.

Targeting the Congress, the Minister said that 123 properties were handed over to Waqf Board by the previous government.

"If we would have not introduced this amendment, even the Parliament

building could have been claimed as Waqf property," he said.

Giving details about the provisions of the Bill, Rijiju said that in the Waqf council, there would be upto four non-Muslim members besides two women. The role of Waqf Board is to supervise the management of Waqf properties by Mutawallis, adding that Waqf board in no way will manage these properties.

Rijiju said that the government wants "a secular and an inclusive Waqf Board" with non-Muslim members as well as women.

The Bill allows up to four non-Muslim experts in the Central Waqf Council, besides two women members.

BJP policies and intentions "flawed": Akhilesh on Waqf Amendment Bill

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, APR 02

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav strongly criticised the BJP in the Lok Sabha over the Waqf Amendment Bill, accusing the ruling party of having neither the right policies nor the right intentions.

Speaking in Lok Sabha over the Bill, Yadav said, "BJP's policies and intentions are flawed. This is a conspiracy to snatch homes and shops from crores of people in the country."

Yadav slammed the government and said that the contentious Waqf Amendment Bill has been made to hide the failures of the current regime.

"Whenever the BJP introduces a new bill, they are hiding their failure," he said.

Taking a jibe at the BJP's leadership election process, he said, "A



party that claims to be the biggest political party in the world has still not been able to elect its own national president."

Responding to Yadav's jibe, Home Minister Amit Shah said, "Parties like yours have to pick a president from just five members. There's never a delay. I say this to you—you will remain president for the next 25 years."

Earlier, BJP MP from Bihar Ravi Shankar Prasad while speaking during a discussion in Lok Sabha said Waqf is not a religious

body but a statutory body.

"A Congress leader said in the House that they are not against amendments to the Waqf Bill. Then why are they opposing it? I will tell you why because political appeasement is forcing the party to take this stance," Prasad said.

Prasad said how many schools and hospitals have been built on its properties, challenging its role in serving the community.

Speaking over the Bill, Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Kalyan Banerjee accused the government of

"attempting" to take over Waqf properties through the proposed Waqf Bill.

"Waqf Bill is a bid to occupy Waqf properties by government bodies. The changes proposed are unwarranted. Waqf property represents the backbone of the Muslim community," he said.

Banerjee criticised the bill, alleging that it aims to introduce classifications within Waqf boards based on sects, which he claimed was indicative of the ruling party's "evil intention".

"Under the guise of the Waqf Amendment Bill, the government is attempting to create different classifications of Waqf boards based on sects. If the title speaks of unification, then why does the bill seek to divide? Classifications within Waqf boards based on sects are indicative of the ruling party's evil intention," Banerjee asked.

Waqf Amendment Bill will undermine religious autonomy of Muslims, Stalin urges PM to withdraw it in toto

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, APR 2

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M K Stalin on Wednesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to withdraw the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, in toto as it would severely harm the interest of Muslim community and undermine their religious autonomy.

The Amendment Bill was introduced in Parliament today amid strong objections from the Opposition parties.

In a Demi-Official letter to Mr Modi, copies of which were released to the media here, he said the amendments proposed to the Waqf Act will weaken the powers and responsibilities of Waqf Boards in the management and protection of Waqf properties.

The large-scale modifications proposed across wide range of sections in the existing Act will dilute the very spirit of the Act itself, he noted.

As there was clear cut provision in the existing Waqf Act, 1995 to safeguard the interest and properties of Waqfs, there



was no need for such far reaching amendments to the existing Act, he said and urged Mr Modi to withdraw the Waqf Amendment Bill completely.

Stating that Tamil Nadu was in the forefront of protection of the rights of Minorities, who live in harmony and religious amity in the State, the Chief Minister said the Constitution of India grants every citizen the right to follow their respective religions and it is the duty of the elected Governments to uphold and protect this right.

"However, the proposed amendments to the Waqf Act, 1995 have not taken into consideration the constitutional protection given to Minorities and are bound to severely harm the interest of Muslim community", he said.

"The provisions in the existing Waqf Act are time tested and they provide protection to the properties of the Waqf", Mr Stalin said, adding, the amendments proposed to the Waqf Act will weaken the powers and responsibilities of Waqf Boards in the management and protection of Waqf properties.

Pointing out that the large-scale modifications proposed across wide range of sections in the existing Act will dilute the very spirit of the Act itself, he said for example, the proposed mandatory inclusion of two non-Muslim members in State Waqf Boards will undermine the religious autonomy of the Muslim community's ability to manage its religious and charitable endowments independently;

Removal of the "Waqf by user" provision threatens the status of many historical Waqf properties.

He also said the stipulation that the individuals who practiced Islam for at least five years only can donate properties to Waqf will prevent Non-Muslims from donating properties to

Waqf which will hinder the syncretic culture of the country.

"Since the existing Waqf Act, 1995 is adequate and has clear-cut provisions to safeguard the interest and properties of Waqfs, it is our view that there is no need for such far reaching amendments to the existing Waqf Act, 1995", he said.

Recalling the unanimous Resolution passed in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on March 27 urging the Union Government to completely withdraw the proposed Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, Mr Stalin also enclosed a copy of the Resolution and sought Mr Modi's personal intervention in protecting the interests of Muslim minority people and preserving the Waqf institutions.

Myanmar to allocate some 240 mln USD for earthquake relief

AGENCIES
YANGON, APR 2

Myanmar's government will allocate 500 billion kyats (about 238.09 million U.S. dollars) for earthquake relief and rehabilitation efforts, State Administration Council (SAC) Chairman Min Aung Hlaing has said.

The Myanmar leader made the statement at a cash donation ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday, where well-wishers donated 104.44 billion kyats (49.71 million dollars) in cash and non-cash items worth 12.4 billion kyats (5.9 million dollars), state-owned daily The Global New Light of Myanmar reported.

The contributions were received by the chairman of the national disaster management committee, the SAC vice chairman, council members, and other relevant officials, it



added.

Following a 7.9-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar Friday, Min Aung Hlaing called for international assistance. In response, rescue teams, medics and nurses from 16 countries and regions have arrived in Myanmar with humanitarian aid and medical

supplies as of March 31, it said.

Among the 18 powerful earthquakes that have struck Myanmar, the 7.9-magnitude quake was the second strongest, following an 8.0-magnitude earthquake that hit the country in 1912, according to the local daily Myanmar Alinn.

Six killed, over 24 injured in road accident in Maharashtra

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, APR 2

Six people were killed and more than 24 injured in an accident involving three vehicles in Maharashtra's Buldhana district on Wednesday morning.

As per the information, the accident occurred on the Shegaon-Khamgaon highway at around 5:30 am. The accident occurred when a speeding SUV car collided with a state government run passenger bus. Moments later, a private passenger bus approaching from behind rammed into the already damaged vehicles. Authorities rushed the injured to nearby hospitals, and rescue operations were carried out immediately.

The impact of the collision was so severe that vehicles were mangled, and the highway remained blocked for hours.

SC transfers PIL on Bihar bridge collapses to Patna HC

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, APR 2

The Supreme Court on Wednesday transferred to Patna High Court a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking the formation of a high-level committee to investigate the recurring collapses of bridges in Bihar.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar was hearing the PIL, which sought directions for a thorough structural audit and the establishment of an expert committee to assess weak bridges requiring demolition or reinforcement.

After reviewing the details provided in Bihar's Counter Affidavit, the bench decided to transfer the case to the Patna High Court.

"We have gone through the counter, and we are transferring it to the Patna High Court. The affidavit contains details of the inspections and measures being undertaken," observed CJI Khanna.

During the proceedings, the petitioner's counsel emphasized that multiple bridge collapses had occurred without any third-party inspection.



Justice Kumar expressed concern over the situation, stating, "Three under-construction bridges collapsed! The concerned officials were suspended temporarily and then reinstated. Everyone seems to be complacent."

The Bihar government's counsel countered by stating that departmental proceedings had been initiated against the responsible officials. Additionally, he informed the bench that over 10,000 bridges had already been inspected.

The Supreme Court subsequently passed an order stating: "Having regard

to the nature of the controversy and the Counter Affidavit, we believe that this writ petition should be transferred to the Patna High Court, which can conduct expeditious and appropriate hearings at regular intervals.

The registry is directed to transfer the files within four weeks, and parties are to appear before the High Court on May 14, 2025."

Earlier, in July 2024, a Supreme Court bench led by then-CJI D.Y. Chandrachud, along with Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, had issued a notice in the matter.

The PIL was filed following reports of at least nine recent bridge collapses in Bihar, including under-construction structures.

The petition raised serious concerns about bridge safety and infrastructure integrity in the flood-prone state.

The PIL seeks not only an audit but also the formation of a high-level expert committee for continuous assessment and monitoring of bridges to ensure public safety. It highlights multiple collapses in river-adjacent areas, particularly in Araria, Siwan, Madhubani, and Kishanganj districts.

"It is a matter of grave concern that Bihar, being India's most flood-prone state with 73.06% of its geographical area affected by floods, is witnessing frequent bridge collapses.

This endangers public safety and requires urgent judicial intervention," the petitioner stated.

The petitioner also called for real-time monitoring of bridges based on methodologies developed by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, as outlined in its policy dated March 4, 2024, for the preservation of National Highways and Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

MP CM announces aid to his state labourers killed in Gujarat blast

AGENCIES
BHOPAL, APR 2

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Wednesday announced that financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh each will be provided to the families of all the labourers from MP, who lost their lives in the fireworks factory accident in Deesa area of Banaskantha, Gujarat.

The CM said that the injured workers will receive Rs 50,000 each as aid. Dr Yadav stated that the Minister for Scheduled Caste Welfare, Nagar Singh Chauhan, and police and administrative officials have been sent to the accident site in Banaskantha for coordination.



The CM assured that the government stands firmly with the affected families in this time of distress and is committed to providing them with all possible assistance, and every necessary support will be extended to the victims and their families.

All the 18 labourers who were killed in the deadly

blast inside the illegal fire-cracker factory in Gujarat on Tuesday were from the Harda and Dewas districts of MP.

Ten of the deceased were from Sandalpur and Khathegaon areas in Dewas, while eight hailed from Handia in Harda district.

The deceased from Harda district included

a mother and her three sons, identified as Guddi Bai (30), Vijay (17), Ajay (16) and Krishna (12).

Amongst the 10 deceased from Dewas district, six were from one family of Sandalpur area and four were from another family of the Khathegaon area.

The six from Sandalpur were identified as Laxhan Bhopa (24), his wife Sunita (20), mother Keshar Bai (50), sisters Radha and Rukma, and brother Abhishek.

The four deceased members of the family from Khathegaon include Rakesh (30), his wife Lali (25) and daughter Kiran (5), and his brother Pankaj (40).

Makeup Tips To Illuminate Your Look this Spring Look



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Spring is here and we are ready to play with a little more colour in our makeup routines. As the chill of winter fades and the warmth of spring approaches, it's a new season in full bloom.

With its longer sunlit days and vivid blooming flowers, a freshness hangs in the air which lightens up your mood.

Spring combines warmth with brightness in tune with rays of sunshine and blossoming nature.

Think of spring, and you immediately think of fresh florals and vibrant blooms. It's all about embracing color in new and exciting ways.

Just like the blooming flowers, your beauty products need a seasonal update.

Spring is a great time to refresh and revive your makeup style and try new trends and looks that you have been eyeing for a long time.

1---Playful Eyes---

It's all about the eyes this spring.

As soon as the sun comes out, it's time to switch up makeup routine, especially when it comes to eyes.

Eye makeup deserves special attention, as our eyes remain our most expressive feature. Instead of using the typical black eyeliner/black liner, you must try slightly bold, colored liner to add a pop of color to the look.

Spring is favorite time to try all those colorful eye makeup looks and pick warm berries and nude eyeshadow.

Give darker, dramatic color palettes a miss and instead opt for playful combinations of textures that make your eyes pop.

"Primer is a must. Apply a tiny amount all over the lid, going up to the brow bone and allow it to dry naturally

It will prevent your eye makeup from creasing, feathering, smearing and looking like an unmade bed.

Apply a base color to the lids, preferably an eyeshadow that is close to your skin tone.

Take the Wet/Dry Eye Brush again and apply eyeshadow on the lid, taking it into the crease area.

Now, using the same blending brush, smooth out the edges by blending with eyeshadow.

Add some color by applying eyeliner. Take Eye Liner Pencil directly onto the upper lash lines. Next, smooth out the lines using the Eye Brush and wing the liner out.

Finish the eye look with some mascara. For dramatic lashes, apply 3 to 4 coats of Mascara.

Eye makeup in spring should reflect the season's playful and light-

hearted spirit.

2---Hair Color and Style

It's time to start thinking about the best spring hair colors makeover. Give one of the trendy spring and summer hair colors from a smokin' hot fiery red to a cool silvery blonde try this season.

Warmer weather is a good reason to consider a hair refresh.

A refresh can be a daring new color or a dramatic new cut, but it can also be a subtle enhancement to what you're already working with—think adding a little fullness with extensions or playing with new hair accessories.

Light hair colors with soft undertones, such as honey blonde or light auburn, can complement your spring palette. Hairstyles that embody the season's breezy and carefree nature, like loose waves or casual braids, can add to the overall effect, creating a look that is both stylish and effortless.

This spring season is all about subtle but statement-making color that doesn't require constant upkeep. That means low-maintenance color in extra eye-catching shades.

Off-black shades, like deep espresso or dark chocolate, provide a softer alternative to true black. These off-black shades retain the depth and richness of black hair while being less dramatic, making them easier to wear for many people. The result is a luxurious, velvety tone that's just as striking but with a bit more softness and dimension.

Once you've achieved your new spring hair color, prevent it from

fading by opting for a gentle shampoo and conditioner that has been specifically formulated to keep your color fresh and vivid for longer.

Mild shampoos work by deeply nourishing and protecting the hair shaft to keep your color locked in. It is also a good idea to limit how often you wash your hair because it speeds up color loss—consider using a dry shampoo from time to time. Before styling, always apply a heat protection spray and lower the temperature of your styling tools, as too much heat can dull your color.

3---Lips---

The skin on the lips is thinner, delicate and sensitive than other parts of the skin. Because there is no sebaceous gland and there are many wrinkles on lips.

Due to these skin properties, it is easier to lose water than other parts of the skin. Severe thirst, dry air, product irritation, and even saliva can cause skin dehydration. And because it is a part of everyday use, such as eating, drinking and talking, it is also a slower on curing once you have a problem.

For most, lip balm is a worthy ally in the fight against chapped lips. But some people can't take fragrances, flavours and preservatives found in popular balms.

Our lips are not protected from weather onslaught as they can't be covered with clothes, mittens, and toboggans like any other parts of the body.

Since our lips are always exposed to weather conditions and so we have to be extremely sensitive about our daily routine for lip care.

Chapped lips are not only unsightly, but also a breeding ground for germs that can cause inflammation or a bacterial infection. The good thing is there are plenty of things that you can do to repair your lips and get ready for the warm spring weather.

Some ingredients like Castor seed oil, Shea butter, White petroleum jelly, titanium oxide / zinc oxide, Hemp seed oil, Ceramides and Dimethicone can help maintain natural hydration level in the lips while ingredients like Camphor, Eucalyptus, Cinnamon, citrus, mint, Lanolin, Menthol, Phenol and Salicylic acid can be especially irritating to lips during spring time. Paperclips, jewelry, and other everyday products made of metal can irritate your already sensitive lips.

If you drink carbonated beverages or coffee instead of water, when you feel thirsty. It can be a source of dryness of your lips. It is advised to avoid carbonated beverages as much as you can!

We generally wipe our lips with a napkin after meals and snacks. However, because lips are very sensitive and fragile parts, applying strong friction will instantly evaporate to moisture and dry lips rapidly. Do not put the tissue directly on the lips, but you should roll the lip balm in your hand and gently wipe it off.

When purchasing your lip product, look for ingredients such as shea butter, vitamin E or natural oils that will nourish your skin. Synthetic products will only lead to build-up on your lips that will make the problem worse. Chapstick, sunscreen

and mild exfoliant will help you to fight off the effects of the weather. Look for a lip balm that includes an SPF of 30 or higher. (You will also want to use sunscreen on the rest of your face, so don't forget to get a facial moisturizer with SPF 30 too!)

4---Jewelry---

If you're a jewellery fanatic and deep into current trends, you know that every season calls for something a bit different in your jewellery box.

Spring jewellery is all about embracing the beauty of the season. Spring calls for jewelry that is light and delicate, mirroring the gentle beauty of the season. It's not just the season that's changing—it's the ideal moment to give your jewellery collection a little refresh as well.

During spring in India, jewelry trends lean towards light, airy pieces with nature-inspired designs, floral motifs, and pastel gemstones, reflecting the season's fresh and vibrant energy. Opt for pieces in silver, white gold, or rose gold, which reflect the soft hues of spring. Mixing matching jewellery with outfits is a trendy fashion game during the spring season. You can also go minimal with simple crystal or charms pendants with chains in rose gold plating to contrast the colourful spring outfits.

Dainty necklaces, thin bangles, and simple earrings with pastel gemstones like rose quartz, aquamarine, or moonstone can add a subtle sparkle that complements the freshness of your spring makeup.

The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

Study of cardiac cells in space to help repair heart damage on Earth

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

A new study of cardiac cells at the International Space Station (ISS) is set to pave the way for repair of the heart damage on Earth.

Researchers from Emory University looked at cancer cells that proliferate -- grow and divide to produce more cells -- much more quickly in microgravity. Spaceflight also triggers cancer cell survival mechanisms, helping the cells better cope with the stressful environment.

In the paper, published in the journal Biomaterials, the researchers hypothesised that heart cells might exhibit similar behaviour.

This would address two current roadblocks in developing cell-based



Xu said "Our research on the ISS could allow us to develop a new strategy to generate cardiac cells more efficiently with improved survival when transplanted into damaged heart tissue, which would greatly benefit patients on Earth," she added.

The heart is a powerful muscle that pumps oxygen-rich blood throughout the body, but once heart muscle tissue is damaged, it becomes scarred and cannot regenerate. This makes it difficult for the heart to pump enough blood to meet the body's requirements.

The only option for people with end-stage heart failure is a heart transplant, but the number of people in need of a transplant far outnumbers the donor hearts available.

therapies for heart disease, said Chunhui Xu, a professor in the department of paediatrics.

After successfully testing the theory in a ground-based study using simulated microgravity, Xu and her team conducted two spaceflight investigations.

The first examined how stem cells differentiate into heart muscle cells, while the second looked at the maturation of heart

muscle cells into tissue-like structures.

The insight gained from the team's space-based research could significantly advance methods to produce cardiac cells for regenerative therapies, helping to transform the landscape of heart disease treatment.

"The space environment provides an amazing opportunity for us to study cells in new ways,"

Aerobic exercises, resistance training key to reduce breast cancer recurrence: Study

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

Indulging in moderate-to high-intensity aerobic exercises twice to three times weekly, with resistance training added in a few times per week, may potentially reduce the recurrence rate of breast cancer, according to new research.

While aerobic exercises like swimming, running, and climbing stairs, resistance training includes pushups and bench presses.

Researchers from Edith Cowan University (ECU) in Australia said that despite the advances made in breast cancer treatment, recurrence remains common and continues to contribute to higher mortality risks.

In more aggressive cancers, the risk of recurrence



Bettariga said. While the exact mechanisms behind the reduction in inflammation are still being examined, Bettariga noted that one theory being examined is that exercise results in the body's muscles releasing a chemical that could reduce inflammation.

can be as high as between 20 per cent and 30 per cent.

The study found that a combination of resistance exercise and aerobic exercise could reduce pro-inflammatory biomarkers caused by various cancer treatments.

"The treatment of breast cancer, which can include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or endocrine therapy, could increase inflammation in the body. Chronic inflammation may increase the risk of the recurrence of breast

cancer, as inflammation may promote cancer cell progression and development," said Francesco Bettariga, ECU doctoral student.

In the paper, published in JNCI: Journal of the National Cancer Institute, Bettariga and team investigated the effects of exercise in women with non-metastatic breast cancer.

"Our research found that three markers of inflammation were significantly reduced by consistent exercise, which is a very encouraging result," Bettariga said.

Another working theory is that the reduction in inflammation markers could be a result of increases in muscle mass and reductions in the body, as both could contribute to modulating inflammation.

"While there are currently no guidelines on how much exercise to do, we would suggest moderate- to high-intensity aerobic exercises twice to three times weekly, with resistance training added in a few times per week," Bettariga said.

Women's safety in India improved with legal measures, financial allocations, support services: Govt

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Women and Child Development on Saturday said that the government has made remarkable strides to ensure the safety and security of women across the nation with legal measures, financial allocations, and support services.

This includes the Nirbhaya Fund, a women's helpline (181) number, one-stop centers (OSCs), an emergency response support system (ERSS -112), SHe-Box, and women help desks that provide legal, medical, and psychological assistance to women.

"A multi-pronged approach integrating law



enforcement, helplines, rehabilitation, and mental health support is crucial for creating a safer and more empowering environment for women," the Ministry said.

The Ministry noted that Rs 7,712.85 crore was allocated under the Nirbhaya Fund in the financial year 2024-25, of which Rs 5,846.08 crore have been

utilised -- nearly 76 per cent.

The fund supports various projects and schemes such as OSCs, ERSS, women helpline, fast track special courts (FTSCs), anti-human trafficking units (AHTUs), women help desks, cyber forensic cum training labs, safe city projects, rail and road transport safety ini-

tatives, and the Central Victim Compensation Fund (CVCF) to enhance women's safety and security.

Notably, the government also provides support for women's mental health, impacted by domestic and gender-based violence.

"Violence, especially domestic and intimate partner violence, can lead to depression, anxiety, PTSD, panic disorders, and suicide risk," the Ministry said.

"There is a need for these services to be sensitive to the psychological needs of women facing violence and to be able to provide culturally informed and effective interventions that are context-specific," it added.

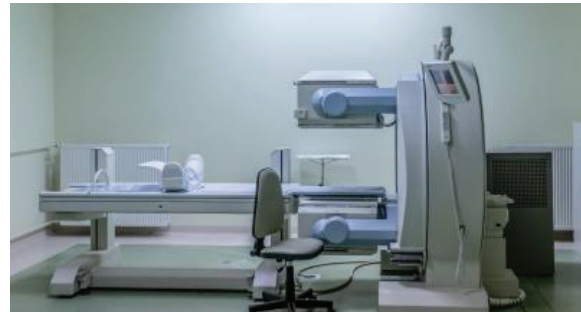
India's diagnostic imaging market to surpass \$7 bn by 2033: Report

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

India's diagnostic imaging market is poised for substantial growth, and is set to exceed \$7 billion in 2033, according to a report. The growth at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 7 per cent will be driven by rising healthcare expenditure, increasing chronic disease burden, and a growing demand for accessible diagnostic solutions.

The report by GlobalData, a data and analytics company, revealed that in 2024, India accounted for around 20 per cent of the Asia-Pacific (APAC) diagnostic imaging devices market.

The increased adoption of portable imaging solutions is expected to be a key driver of market



expansion, especially in underserved and rural regions where traditional infrastructure is limited.

"Portable imaging devices are transforming healthcare delivery in India. In emergency and trauma situations, these devices enable rapid on-site diagnostics, reducing the need for patient transfers and enhancing care delivery," said Rohit Anand, Practice Head - Medical Devices at GlobalData.

"Moreover, for smaller

healthcare centres, they may offer a cost-effective alternative to full-scale imaging setups, improving access without substantial capital investment," he added.

The recent technological advancements are further propelling the clinical impact of portable imaging.

Innovations such as AI-powered image analysis, miniaturisation, and wireless connectivity are improving diagnostic accuracy and data sharing.

In addition, portable MRI and CT systems, enhanced by technologies like photon counting and compact MRI magnets, are delivering higher resolution and lower radiation exposure.

"The integration of portable imaging into point-of-care settings enhances early disease detection and supports real-time diagnostics, leading to timely interventions and improved patient outcomes," Anand said.

"This is particularly vital for extending healthcare access to remote and resource-constrained communities," he added.

However, the widespread adoption of portable imaging in India still in nascent stage. High ownership costs, complex import regulations, and limited-service infrastructure are the key barriers.

KKR face SRH in redemption brawl at Eden Gardens

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, APR 2 (UNI)

Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) will lock horns in the 15th match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 at Eden Gardens on Thursday, with both sides seeking a much-needed turnaround in form.

KKR's batting has been a major concern this season, with their middle order failing to click. Quinton de Kock has been the only consistent performer, while Sunil Narine is still adjusting to his role as an opener.

Venkatesh Iyer, Rinku Singh, and Andre Russell have struggled to deliver impactful innings. The team's most recent defeat against Mumbai Indians, where they were bundled out for just 116, has further exposed their vulnerabilities.

On the other hand, SRH boasts a powerful batting unit that has the potential to take the game away in a matter of overs. However, their aggressive approach has backfired in the last two matches, leading to unexpected collapses.

Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma will be



crucial at the top, while Heinrich Klaasen and Aniket Verma have shown their ability to accelerate in the middle and lower order.

Adding to the intensity of the contest, SRH will be eager to settle scores after their heartbreaking loss to KKR in the IPL 2024 final. The memory of that defeat will serve as extra motivation for Pat Cummins' side, who will look to dominate the match from the outset.

Despite their batting woes, KKR's bowling attack remains a strong point. Sunil Narine and Varun Chakaravathy will be crucial in the middle overs, with Narine's record at Eden Gardens—71 wickets in 60 games at an economy of 6.33—making him a formidable threat.

The pace trio of Spencer Johnson, Vaibhav Arora, and Harshit Rana has also

shown promise in containing opposition batsmen.

While SRH's batting has been their biggest strength, their bowling attack has struggled for consistency. Mohammed Shami and Pat Cummins need to find their rhythm early to prevent KKR from building momentum. Young leg-spinner Zeeshan Ansari, who impressed in the last game, could prove to be a key player on the Eden Gardens pitch.

Harshal Patel has been the only consistent performer, using his variations effectively in the death overs. However, Adam Zampa's struggles with length and execution have been a concern for SRH.

Eden Gardens has traditionally favoured batsmen, with an average first-innings score of 167. However, recent high-scoring

matches suggest teams batting first should aim for a total in the 190-200 range. The shorter boundaries provide an added advantage for power hitters. Weather conditions are expected to be warm with no rain interruptions.

With both teams desperate for a win, the contest is expected to be closely fought. If KKR can contain Head, Abhishek Sharma, and Klaasen early, they stand a strong chance of bouncing back. However, if SRH's batting finds its rhythm, they could emerge victorious.

SRH Predicted XI: Travis Head, Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Heinrich Klaasen (wk), Aniket Verma, Abhinav Manohar, Pat Cummins (c), Zeeshan Ansari, Harshal Patel, Mohammed Shami

Impact Player: Adam Zampa/Wiaan Mulder

KKR Predicted XI: Quinton de Kock (wk), Sunil Narine, Ajinkya Rahane (c), Venkatesh Iyer, Rinku Singh, Andre Russell, Ramandeep Singh, Spencer Johnson, Harshit Rana, Vaibhav Arora, Varun Chakaravathy

Impact Player: Angkrish Raghuvanshi

LSG bowler Digvesh Singh fined for breaching IPL Code of Conduct

AGENCIES

LUCKNOW, APR 2 (UNI)

Lucknow Super Giants bowler Digvesh Singh has been fined 25 per cent of his match fees and has also accumulated One Demerit Point for breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during his team's match against Punjab Kings at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium here on Tuesday night.

Digvesh Singh admitted



to the Level 1 offence under Article 2.5 and accepted the Match Referee's sanction. For Level 1 breaches of

the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding. Meanwhile, Punjab

Kings delivered a commanding performance to defeat Lucknow Super Giants by eight wickets, chasing down a target of 172 in just 16.2 overs.

Prabhsimran Singh and Shreyas Iyer both struck fluent half-centuries to ensure a comfortable victory with 22 balls to spare.

With this win, Punjab Kings extended their unbeaten streak in the league, asserting themselves as strong contenders early in the season.

Mitchell Hay praises New Zealand's fresh outfit after series win over Pakistan

AGENCIES

HAMILTON, APR 2 (UNI)

After the Black Caps secured ODI series win against Pakistan, Mitchell Hay was full of praise for the young New Zealand side.

Extending their dominant run in white-ball cricket, New Zealand gained an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series with an 84-run victory over Pakistan here.

With several first team regulars away on franchise duty, the Black Caps fielded a relatively inexperienced group for the match. However, Hay emphasized that while some players may lack international caps, the team is well-rounded.

"There's some pretty experienced guys here, both



internationally and domestically, which have been great to talk to and learn from," Hay told reporters after the second ODI.

"Yeah, probably on paper, guys haven't played a lot of international cricket, but there's some experienced guys in the group still with some great knowledge to tap into, which has been

really cool," he said.

"It's awesome that there is good competition for spots, and I think it's a good place for New Zealand cricket to be in. Hopefully, just keep pushing each other to get better and keep trying to win games for New Zealand, which is really cool," Hay said.

Hay fell just one run short

of his maiden international century, scoring a blistering 99 off 78 balls to pave way for New Zealand's win the second ODI. His partnership with Muhammad Abbas proved to be a game-changer for New Zealand, stabilizing the innings after a challenging start with the bat.

Hay acknowledged the challenging start, emphasizing the importance of absorbing pressure before taking a counter-attacking approach.

"Yeah, it was pretty tough out there to start with. It was just a time that me and Mo talked about trying to absorb a bit of pressure and then hopefully be able to apply it a bit later on," he said.

Real Madrid reach Copa del Rey final after eight-goal extra-time thriller

AGENCIES

MADRID, APR 2 (UNI)

Real Madrid kept their Treble hopes alive in extraordinary fashion after Antonio Rudiger headed home an extra-time winner against Real Sociedad to book their place in the Copa del Rey final.

Substitute Rudiger climbed highest to meet Arda Guler's 115th-minute corner to flick a header beyond visiting keeper Alex Remiro, sparking wild celebrations from the home fans, the BBC reported.

In a terrific end-to-end second half, five goals were scored in 21 minutes as both sides looked to confirm their spot in the Seville showpiece.

With a 1-0 deficit to overcome from the first leg, Sociedad struck in the 16th



minute through Ander Barrenetxea.

But teenage Brazilian striker Endrick put the Madrid outfit back in front on aggregate with a fine chip for the 30th-minute leveller.

A David Alaba own goal in the 72nd minute again put the visitors ahead on the night and sparked an incredible scoring spree in an amazing climax.

Mikel Oyarzabal made it

3-1, and 3-2 on aggregate, to Sociedad eight minutes later with a low drive that also struck Alaba, but England midfielder Jude Bellingham restored parity moments later with a lovely volleyed finish.

Aurelien Tchouameni thought he had headed Carlo's Ancelotti's side into the final in the 86th minute after a horrible attempt to save from goalkeeper Remiro.

The drama was not finished there as Sociedad captain Oyarzabal rose highest to power in a header in added time to put his side back ahead, forcing extra time at the Bernabeu.

But Rudiger broke their hearts in the extra period to make it 5-4 on aggregate.

Madrid's pursuit of a first Treble still remains possible as they sit three points behind La Liga leaders Barcelona, face Arsenal in the Champions League quarter-finals and are looking to win the Copa del Rey for a 21st time.

Barcelona visit Atletico Madrid on Wednesday to determine who will play Real Madrid in the final, with their last-four tie also finely poised after an enthralling 4-4 first-leg draw.

500 days to go until next FIH Hockey World Cup

AGENCIES

LAUSANNE (SWITZERLAND), APR 2

In exactly 500 days, the very first match of the 2026 FIH Hockey World Cup will open the show for FIH's most prestigious global hockey event.

This edition, that will combine the Women's and the Men's World Cups, will be co-hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands.

In addition to the host countries, the teams of Germany (women) and Australia (men) won their ticket to the World Cup via the FIH Hockey Pro League last season. It is also thanks to the Pro League that the next two teams will qualify (a women's team and a men's team).



The five Continental Championships - which will take place between July and September - will enable 5 other teams per gender to qualify.

The remaining 7 participating teams - from 16 in total per gender - will come from the World Cup Qualifiers which will take place next year, currently sched-

uled from February 28 to March 8, 2026.

The draw to determine the 4 pools per gender for the group stage of the World Cup will happen shortly after these Qualifiers.

FIH President Tayyab Ikram said: "The FIH Hockey World Cup is the most prestigious of our

events. This is where legends are made. A fantastic window for our top athletes to showcase their amazing skills, for the greatest delight of all hockey fans around the world. We look forward to a fantastic edition in Belgium and the Netherlands, two of the greatest hockey powerhouses, that will involve the world's most talented female and male hockey players."

"On this symbolic day, the World Cup becomes more real than ever. With further teams qualifying soon, it really is taking shape, and I already invite all hockey fans to pencil the tournament dates in their agendas and plan a trip to Belgium and the Netherlands in 500 days," he said.

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