

JAMMU RISING

NEWS P-3 NEWS P-5 NEWS P-12 NATIONAL P-8 SPORT P-7



Broad Daylight Heist to Police Custody: The Spectacular Fall of Greater Kailash Sensational Gold Shop Robbery Puzzle – Solved by Jammu Police, South Zone



Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Jammu Celebrates World Autism Awareness Day with Special Drawing Competition for Children with Special Needs



GCOE Jammu organises awareness rally themed "Stay away from drugs"



Sensex, Nifty recover nearly 1 pc ahead of US tariff announcements



Hockey India trims core group of women players from 65 to 40

Price: Rs.2 | Page 12 | Vol. No.: 15 | Issue No:79 Postal Registration No. JK-458/16-18 epaper.dailyjammurising.in RNI No: JKENG/2011/40494

BRIEF NEWS

Isolated Light Rain And Gusty Winds Expected In Jammu And Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir is expected to experience isolated light rain and thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds ranging from 40 to 50 knots in next 24 hours. Jammu travel guide

According to the Meteorological Department, thunder with gusty winds

■Turn to page 2

Armed Forces Should Prepare Dynamic Perspective Planning Addressing Various Challenges: Rajnath

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said the armed forces should prepare a "dynamic perspective planning" addressing both long-term and short-term challenges, keeping in mind the current dynamic

Cyber Police Identifies 200 Social Media Handles, 100 Operated From Abroad Spreading Extremist Content

Cyber Police Kashmir had identified 200 social media handles over the past three months allegedly spreading extremist content.

Police said the handles were identified in a major crackdown on online anti-national propaganda, radicalization, and the glorification of terrorism.

"The operation identified 200 adverse social media

■Turn to page 2

J&K ACB Registers Case Against Ex Sarpanch, Former BDC Chairman On Corruption Charges

Jammu and Kashmir Anti Corruption Bureau on Thursday registered a case against former Sarpanch and former BDC Chairman in corruption case. Jammu travel guide

The ACB spokesman said that a case has been registered against Darbar Chowdhary, former Sarpanch Dhanore Gorsian and former BDC Chairman, Block Rajouri, Dhanore Gorsian Rajouri under relevant sections.

He said that the instant case was registered on the outcome of a secret verification conducted by ACB Rajouri into the allegations of accumulation of assets disproportionate to known source of income by above named accused person.

■Turn to page 2

LG Sinha Addresses Balaji Foundation's 'Bharat Shiksha Summit'

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today addressed 'Bharat Shiksha Summit' organised by Balaji Foundation at Vignyan Bhawan, New Delhi. Brajesh Pathak, Deputy Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh also graced the occasion.

In his keynote address, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the importance of Ethics, Values and National Identity in education and pointed out that Ethics and Values, guides us for the welfare of society and nation-building.

He said the deliberations and exchange of



ideas during the Summit on overarching issues in education will explore challenges and opportunities and prepare a future roadmap for educational institutions.

"In the educational journey, students develop consciousness and their moral values become sharper. During this jour-

ney, students adopt life values like compassion, peace, truth, love, virtuous life, harmony and benevolence and collect all the experiences. All these physical, intellectual and emotional experiences together develop student's knowledge" the Lieutenant Governor said.

J&K Govt enhances marriage assistance for poor girls to rs 75,000



JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

The Jammu and Kashmir Government enhanced financial assistance under the State Marriage Assistance Scheme (SMAS) for poor girls from Rs 50,000 to

75,000 for the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) ration card holder families. Jammu travel guide

According to an order the assistance for Priority Household (PHH) ration

■Turn to page 2

Two suspected terrorists spotted in Udhampur, Search Operation Launched

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

Two suspected terrorists have been spotted in Majalta forest belt of Udhampur district in Jammu and Kashmir, prompting security forces and police to launch a cordon and search operation to track them down, officials said on Thursday. Jammu travel guide

According to sources, the two suspected terrorists took away food and a mobile phone from a family in a village in the dis-

trict. "Two suspects were spotted last night. Their sighting has been confirmed in the Chor Panjua area adjoining Kathua. A search operation has been launched," Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Udhampur Reasi range, Rayees Mohammad Bhat, told reporters in Udhampur.

He said since this area adjoins Kathua, security forces have been deployed for the past eight days. "Today, we have

dispatched additional forces as the suspects are believed to be hiding in the forested area there. We are confident of success." The DIG further said, "We are actively trying to locate them. This area is near the Kathua and Udhampur border, close to the Ujh river." He urged people to provide any information they have about suspected individuals to the police. "We are committed to en-

■Turn to page 2

Kathua combing operation enters 12th day to track down terrorists on the Run

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

The multi-tier operation to track down three infiltrating terrorists, who escaped three encounters and are believed to be hiding in a forested area in Kathua, has entered its 12th consecutive day with security agencies also cracking down on terrorist supporters and setting up ambushes.

Additional troops have been deployed to beef up the multi-tier cordon and set up ambushes over a 6-7 km radius in the region.

"The combing operation has



been going on. It is underway to track down terrorists on the run," said an officer. The search operation was in-

tensified with aerial surveillance, including the use of choppers, UAVs, and sniffer dogs. Teams comprising joint operations of the army, NSG, Police, SoG, CRPF, and BSF are combing all areas to cover the region, officials said.

They said additional troops have been deployed in the rugged terrain and dense forested areas to ensure that terrorists do not escape towards upper reaches.

The troops have established multiple ambushes in a large area to apprehend the terrorists. They have further expanded the

■Turn to page 2

Omar-Led Govt implementing poll promises at unprecedented speed: Gupta

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

Advocate Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), asserted that the Omar Abdullah-led government is swiftly delivering on its election promises, ensuring that commitments made to the people during the Assembly elections are being honored in record time.



He was speaking at a one-day convention organized by Anoop Gupta, Youth Leader and District President Kathua Urban JKYNC. At the beginning of the meeting, Anoop Gupta apprised the senior party functionaries about the hardships being faced by the youth of District Kathua due to the hollow policies of the earlier government. He emphasized

■Turn to page 2

Right or wrong?

R.C.BHAT

The Indian Lok Sabha's passage of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill has ignited a complex and often contentious debate, touching upon issues of minority rights, property law, and the secular nature of the Indian state. The bill, aiming to streamline and strengthen the administration of Waqf properties, has been met with both support and strong opposition.

Waqf properties, dedicated to religious or charitable purposes under Islamic law, hold significant economic and social value. The bill's proponents argue that it is crucial to protect these assets from encroachment and mismanagement, ensuring their benefits reach the intended beneficiaries, primarily the Muslim community. They highlight the necessity of updating existing legislation to

address contemporary challenges, such as illegal occupation and inefficient administration.

Key amendments within the bill focus on enhancing the powers of the Waqf tribunals, empowering them to expedite dispute resolution and reclaim encroached lands. The bill also seeks to improve the transparency and accountability of Waqf boards, mandating regular audits and the digitization of records. These measures, it is argued, will curb corruption and ensure that Waqf properties are utilized for their intended purposes, such as education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation.

However, the bill has faced considerable criticism, primarily from certain opposition parties and community leaders. Critics raise concerns about the potential for misuse of

power by Waqf boards and the perceived infringement on the rights of individuals or institutions holding properties adjacent to or intertwined with Waqf lands. Some also argue that the broad definition of Waqf properties might lead to unnecessary litigation and disputes.

Furthermore, some critics have claimed that the bill's provisions could create a parallel legal system, potentially undermining the uniform application of civil law. They express apprehension about the implications for secularism, suggesting that the bill grants undue privileges to a specific religious community.

The government, in response, has reiterated its commitment to safeguarding the interests of the Muslim community while ensuring fairness and transparency. They

emphasize that the amendments are intended to modernize the Waqf administration and prevent exploitation, not to discriminate against any group. They also argue that the bill aligns with constitutional principles and the rule of law.

The passage of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill has thus become a focal point for discussions on minority rights and the delicate balance between religious freedom and secular governance in India. The discussions surrounding the bill underscore the complexities of navigating diverse legal and religious traditions within a democratic framework. The future implementation of the bill and its impact on the ground will be closely watched, as it is poised to significantly influence the management of Waqf properties and the lives of those who depend on them.

CONTINUATION

FROM PAGE ONE

Isolated Light Rain And Gusty Winds Expected In Jammu And Kashmir
is expected at few places towards late afternoon on Thursday.

Over the coming days Jammu and Kashmir is likely to experience varying weather conditions, with light rain and snow expected in higher reaches.

MeT said Kashmir valley will witness generally cloudy skies with the possibility of light rain and snow in the upper reaches particularly North Kashmir and the Sonamarg-Zojila axis on Thursday.

The weather is expected to remain generally dry from April 4 to 7. However, on April 8, cloudy conditions are likely to return in the afternoon, bringing chances of light snow over higher reaches of North Kashmir and Sonamarg .

From April 9 to 10, many places in Kashmir and scattered areas in Jammu Division are likely to receive light rain or snow in the higher reaches.

On April 11, the Kashmir will see generally cloudy skies with isolated light rain or snow in the morning, followed by a gradual improvement in weather conditions.

Meanwhile, MeT said that day temperatures have been 4-5°C above normal in most parts of Kashmir Division and 2-3°C above normal in Jammu Division.

The night temperatures were 0-1°C below normal in Kashmir Division and 0-2°C below normal in Jammu Division.

The lowest night temperatures were recorded at the ski resort of Gulmarg 1.0°C in Kashmir and Banihal 6.1°C in Jammu Division.

Armed Forces Should Prepare Dynamic Perspective Planning Addressing Various Challenges: Rajnath

geostrategic changes and the ongoing global security scenarios.

In his address to the top brass of the Indian Army during the apex level biannual Army Commanders’ Conference being held here from April 1-4, he also said doctrinal changes whenever required should be made to make the armed forces future ready.

“The recommendation and suggestions made by the senior leadership in such a forum as the commanders’ conference should be deliberated upon, and be taken to a logical conclusion with mid-course review and modification, if required. The nation is proud of its army, and the government is committed to facilitate the army in their forward movement, on the road to reforms and capability modernisation,” Singh said.

In his address, he further said unconventional and asymmetric warfare, including hybrid war will be “part of the future conventional wars”.

Singh stressed upon the present geostrategic uncertainties and the complex world situation which effects everyone globally.

He said the present world is “an inter-connected world” and such incidents whether happening in “our neighbourhood or far off countries will effect everyone”.

During the course of the conference, the army’s apex leadership comprehensively deliberated upon all aspects of existing security scenarios, situation along the borders, in the hinterland and challenges for the present security apparatus, the defence ministry said in a statement.

Singh underlined that keeping in mind the present dynamic geostrategic changes and the ongoing global security scenarios, and with the uncertainties, “the armed forces should prepare a dynamic perspective planning addressing both the long-term and short-term challenges”.

In the present global context, the importance of military intelligence, incorporating the modern technology, cannot be more stressed, he said.

In his address, Singh further said, “Unconventional and asymmetric warfare, including hybrid war will be part of the future conventional wars. Cyber, information, communication, trade and finance have all become an inseparable part of future conflicts. This necessitates that armed forces will have to keep all these facets in consideration while planning and formulating strategies.” On the current situation along the northern borders, Singh expressed full confidence in the troops and complemented the armed forces for standing “firm and vigilant” and said the same should continue.

He praised the efforts of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), which has led to a quantum improvement of road communication in the borders, both western and northern, while working under difficult conditions.

Referring to the situation along the western borders, he complimented the Indian Army’s response to cross-border terrorism, however the “proxy war by the adversary continues”, the statement said.

“I compliment the excellent synergy between the CAPF, police forces and the army in tackling the menace of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The synergised operations in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir are contributing to increased stability in the region, and the same should remain,” he said.

Singh acknowledged the forces for their high standard of operational preparedness and capabilities which he said, he has always been experiencing first hand during his visits to forward areas.

The defence minister also paid tributes to all the bravehearts for making the ultimate sacrifice in the defence of the motherland.

He complimented the significant contributions made by the army in military diplomacy to “further our national security interests by creating sustainable cooperative relationships with foreign armies and also emphasised upon the important role of defence attaches in achieving the same.” “We must deliberate on the reorientation of role of the defence attaches in line with the organisational aim,” he was quoted as saying in the statement.

The conference also focussed on issues pertaining to organisational restructuring, logistics, administration, human resource management, modernisation through indigenisation, induction of Niche technologies and assessment of impact of the various existing global situations.

A brief on the ‘Year of Reforms’ announced by the government earlier, was also given at the conference.

Singh reaffirmed the faith of the billion-plus citizens in the army, calling it “one of the most trusted and inspiring organisations in the country”.

“The Army is present in every domain from security, HADR (humanitarian assistance and disaster relief), medical assistance, to maintaining the stable internal situation in the country. The role of Indian Army is incomparable in nation building as also in the overall national development,” he said.

Singh emphasised that a regular interface of the armed forces with the emerging technologies is a must.

He lauded the initiative of discussions being done with ‘NITI Aayog’ on achieving the aim of ‘Viksit Bharat’, during this Army Commander Conference. (Agencies)

Cyber Police Identifies 200 Social Media Handles, 100 Operated From Abroad Spreading Extremist Content

handles engaged in spreading misinformation and extremist content, with 100 of these accounts managed from outside the country,” police said

“Several of the identified accounts have been blocked, and legal action has been initiated against key propagators, including multiple FIRs under relevant criminal laws,” they said, adding security proceedings have also been started against several individuals involved in such activities.

“At the same time, Cyber Police Kashmir remains committed to counter-radicalization efforts. Many individuals influenced by such online propaganda have been counseled and handed over to their families as part of a de-radicalization initiative,” police said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police reaffirmed their commitment to safeguarding national security in both physical and digital spaces.Jammu travel guide

“Cyber Police Kashmir will continue its proactive monitoring of online platforms to disrupt terrorism-linked narratives and prevent the misuse of cyberspace for extremist purposes,” police said.

The police has urged citizens to remain vigilant and report suspicious online activities to the authorities. (Agencies)

J&K ACB Registers Case Against Ex Sarpanch, Former BDC Chairman On Corruption Charges

The verification conducted had revealed that the above named public servant remained elected Sarpanch of panchayat Dhanore Gorsian, Rajouri in the year 2011 and also remained elected Block Development Chairman of Block Rajouri for the years 2019-2023.

During this period, he said that he has accumulated various moveable and immovable assets worth crores in his name as well as disguised in the name of his family members which includes multiple well furnished houses, multiple plots of land, shops, luxurious vehicles and other assets.

In this way, the public servant namely Darbar Chowdhary, former Sarpanch and former Block Development Chairman, Block Rajouri has enriched himself illicitly by indulging in corrupt practices and has acquired huge assets which are prima facie disproportionate to his known source of income.

Anti Corruption Bureau after registration of case under relevant sections of law, also conducted simultaneous searches with the help of local police in presence of Magistrates/Independent Witnesses at the premises of above named accused person.

Detailed and in-depth scrutiny of the seized record will be carried out during further course of investigation, he added.

LG Sinha Addresses Balaji Foundation's 'Bharat Shiksha Summit'

tion. “Three ‘H’- Head, Heart and Heritage- will help in this mission and they will also restore the broken moral link in the education system.

We need students who are proficient in algorithms, talented in their chosen field, sensitive towards social issues and also realise their duty towards nation building.

Our students should be a selfless individual as well as a skilled researcher, writer or artist, deeply connected to their roots. This perfect balance in personality could be transformative for students, educational institutions and the society,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that the teachers need to integrate moral values with skills needed in the modern world so that qualities like strong character and intellectual curiosity can be nurtured.

“Without unprecedented inventions, moral values alone will have no value. But it is also true that without ethics and values, cutting-edge education and skills would be aimless.

There should be conversations and not monologues in the classroom. There is a need to link innovation and growth with the ethical values of the society and integrate them with the course curriculum,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor further called for encouraging hands-on, experiential and project-based learning. The young minds should be exposed to challenges of the real world. Now the time has come to take education out of the lab and into the real world, he said.

During an interactive session, the Lieutenant Governor also spoke on the educational reforms taking place in J&K, under the guidance of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, in the past few years. He said the innovative programmes launched in the UT have ensured inclusive and quality education for all.

“The talent pool within Jammu Kashmir is being provided with better opportunities. Dedicated efforts have been made to promote multidisciplinary learning, and skill development of youth. We have also actively initiated campaigns to bring dropout students back to school. Through Mission Yuva, we have prepared a blueprint to foster entrepreneurship culture at college and university level.Jammu travel guide

Schools, colleges and universities are functioning without any disturbances. Earlier practice of hartals, strikes, stone pelting and bandhs are things of the past now. Today, J&K, with its full potential, is moving ahead towards a prosperous and brighter future,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

On the occasion, the prominent personalities and institutions are also conferred with the Bharat Shiksha Samman for their valuable contribution in the field of education.

Naveen Jindal, Member of Parliament; Dr Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General, Association of Indian Universities; Rajshri Rai, Chairperson, Balaji Foundation; educationists, experts, heads of various institutions, teachers and youth in large number were present.

J&K Govt enhances marriage assistance for poor girls to rs 75,000

card holders remains unchanged at Rs 50,000. New scheme will be effective from April 1, 2025.

The order also states that the financial aid will be directly transferred to the beneficiary’s bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) before the marriage.

The scheme applies only to eligible AAY and PHH ration card holders, ensuring that economically weaker sections receive support for marriage expenses.

Kathua combing operation enters 12th day to track down terrorists on the Run

area of operation to include Billawar, Bhaddu, Ghatti, and Kog-Mandli.

To dismantle the overground network supporting terrorists, security agencies are focusing on OGWs and cracking down on them to cut off the supply of food, shelter, and guidance in the hills, the officials said.

Over 27 individuals have been questioned for gathering information about the terrorists’ movements. Terrorists have entered two houses to get away with food too during the operations.

Security agencies emphasise that it is difficult for terrorists to survive without a network of overground workers who provide them with food, shelter, and guidance from the International Border (IB) to the hills of Kathua and other districts like Doda, Kishtwar, and Udhampur.

The forces have detained six individuals, including three females from a single family, for questioning. It is alleged that they provided assistance to terrorists operating in the region, officials said.

The detained persons belong to the family of suspected over ground worker Mohammad Latief, who is already in jail under the Public Safety Act (PSA) for aiding terrorists in Malhar during an attack on an Army truck last year, resulting in the deaths of six soldiers.

It is believed that the slain terrorist Abu Tala also stayed at Latief’s house.

Officials said the three terrorists are believed to be part of a group that first engaged security forces in the Nursery area near the International Border on March 23. All terrorists managed to escape after a brief encounter, during which a girl was injured.

Four days later, security forces encountered them in a forested area of the Sanyal belt in Kathua. Two terrorists were eliminated, while the rest escaped. During the exchange of fire, three policemen were martyred and three others were injured.

With the hiding terrorists constantly changing their locations in the jungle, security forces are maintaining a high level of pressure in a multi-agency operation to track them down. This led to an encounter with terrorists in the Panjtirthi-Juthana on March 31, but they managed to escape. (Agencies)

Omar-Led Govt implementing poll promises at unprecedented speed: Gupta

the urgent need for concrete measures to address unemployment and ensure better opportunities for the younger generation.

Rattan Lal Gupta highlighted the landmark welfare measures introduced by the NC government within the first five months of its tenure. These include free travel for women in J&K Government buses, 200 free electricity units for AAY households, 10 kg of free ration per person, per month AAY family, waiver of stamp duty for property transfers among blood relatives, and an increase in marriage assistance from ₹50,000 to ₹75,000.

The Provincial President emphasized that these initiatives reflect the NC’s unwavering commitment to the welfare of J&K’s citizens, particularly the youth and marginalized sections. He said that the Omar government has initiated the process towards providing one lakh jobs, as promised in the party

manifesto, by streamlining recruitment procedures, ensuring transparency and prioritizing merit-based selections.

Tejinder Pal Singh Aman, Provincial President of the Youth National Conference (YNC), underscored the NC’s unwavering commitment to youth empowerment. He emphasized the party’s continuous efforts in advocating for equal opportunities in political, educational, economic, and social spheres. He called upon the youth to unite and secure strong representation in the upcoming elections, reinforcing the party’s dedication to their progress and leadership in governance.

Vijay Lochan, Chairman of NC’s SC Cell, reaffirmed the party’s dedication to fulfilling its promises, particularly those aimed at marginalized communities. He highlighted several landmark initiatives that have significantly benefited vulnerable sections across the region. He emphasized that the NC has always prioritized the welfare and empowerment of the underprivileged, and these measures further solidify the party’s commitment to their upliftment.

Senior NC leaders Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Ajeet Kumar Sharma District President Kathua Urban, Sham Narian Mehta District President Kathua Rural and Mohinder Kumar Rana Joint Secretary Central Zone highlighted the significant contributions of the farming community to J&K’s economy and reiterated the NC government’s commitment to ensuring their welfare. They stressed the importance of farmer-friendly policies and promised that the NC would continue to advocate for their rights and better support mechanisms.

Addressing the gathering Neelam Sharma Senior leader, Pardeep Kousar and Ashu Rajput welcomed the decision of Omar Abdullah-led government in favor of Women folk and emphasized for empowerment to women.

Earlier, Tejinder Pal Singh Aman nominated Anoop Gupta as the District President Kathua Urban, YNC, after approval from the Provincial President, with the aim of strengthening the party’s organizational structure and enhancing youth participation at the grassroots level.

Among those present were included : K.K Bakshi, Sardar Harjeet Singh, Sagar Chand former MLA, Dharampal Kundal, Devinder Mehta, Shakeel Tony, Subash Chander Azad, Janak Raj, Sharief Din Bania, Qasim Bania, Hameed Choudhary , Nitish Gowsami , Jaseen Malik, Attal Singh Sunil Sharma Youth leaders, Raj Kumar Sharma, Karam Din Chopra, Sohan Singh, Anchal Singh, Rajinder Sharma Adv and others.

CM fulfils another Promise marriage assistance to ?75000 for AAY Category Girls

take effect from April 1, 2025.

To ensure transparency and efficiency, the financial aid will be directly transferred to the beneficiary’s bank account through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system before the marriage.

In another major welfare initiative, the J&K government has approved the distribution of additional food grains free of cost to AAY households with four or more members under the Public Distribution System (PDS).

This move aims to strengthen food security for the region’s most vulnerable families and fulfills a key commitment made in Budget 2025-26.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah hailed the initiative as a significant pro-people decision, emphasizing that the government is delivering on its promises. “We are committed to ensuring food security for our most vulnerable families. Under this initiative, all AAY households will receive additional food grains free of cost. Each beneficiary in a family with 4 or more members will get up to 10 kg of food grains, reinforcing our commitment to social welfare,” he stated.

Furthering his Government’s commitment to women’s empowerment, the Chief Minister had also flagged off the Zero-Ticket Travel Initiative—a free Government bus service for women—on April 1 from the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Center (SKICC).

Speaking at the launch event, CM Omar Abdullah said, “This initiative will create an environment where women feel empowered to travel freely, without financial constraints. It marks another step towards ensuring gender equality and mobility for women across Jammu and Kashmir.” The Omar Abdullah-led Government has fulfilled yet another promise by implementing Zero Stamp Duty on property transfers through Gift Deeds within blood relations. In this regard, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has issued S.O. 75, dated 27th March 2025, under Section 9(a) of the Stamp Act, 1977, to remit Stamp Duty on such transfers.Jammu travel guide

The term “Blood Relations” includes parents, siblings, children, and grandparents. This notification has come into force w.e.f. 1st April 2025.

Two suspected terrorists spotted in Udhampur, Search Operation Launched

suring peace and security. We appeal to the public to report any relevant information immediately.” According to sources, the two suspected terrorists fled with food and a phone.

It appears that these are the same terrorists who were spotted in the Panjtirthi area of Billawar (Kathua district), where security forces had a brief encounter on Monday night, they said.

Meanwhile, the multi-tier operation to track down three infiltrating terrorists, who escaped three encounters and are believed to be hiding in a forested area in Kathua, has entered its 12th consecutive day. Security agencies are also cracking down on terrorist supporters and setting up ambushes.

In the operation which commenced on March 23, two terrorists were eliminated, while the remaining escaped during an encounter with security forces in the Saniyal area of Kathua district. Four policemen lost their lives during the exchange of fire, and three others were injured on March 27. (Agencies)

Sensational Goldshop robbery solved

Broad Daylight Heist to Police Custody: The Spectacular Fall of Greater Kailash Sensational Gold Shop Robbery Puzzle – Solved by Jammu Police, South Zone

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

Jammu Police has successfully solved the sensational Greater Kailash gold shop robbery case, bringing the culprits to justice. The infamous daylight heist at Anand Jewelers, Greater Kailash, Fowara Chowk, Jammu, had sparked concerns among the Sawarnkar community and sent shockwaves throughout the City but the focused, professional and dedicated efforts of the police led to the identification and arrest of the criminals behind this highly planned crime.

? Case Background
On February 1, during noon time, two armed robbers stormed into Anand Jewelers, with a deadly weapon Toka to intimidate alone woman owner present inside the shop. By placing a sharp-edged weapon on her throat, they induced instant fear of death and looted valuable gold, cash, and a mobile phone (Vivo V20, SIM No. 9906015489) before fleeing the scene.

A case was registered under FIR No. 19/25 at PS Gangyal under Sections 309(3), 311, and 3(5) of BNS, and a highly skilled investigative team was deployed and investigation started.

? Formation of Special Investigation Team (SIT)

Taking cognizance of the gravity of the case, later SSP Jammu constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) under the supervision of SP City South and headed by SDPO City South, Jammu.

? Investigation of the case and Modus Operandi of culprits:

Police successfully arrested culprits involved in the crime, so far surfaced in the investigation. One of the main conspirator ?Rahul Sharma (Advocate) S/o Shashi Sharma, resident of Lower kanal, near Grameen Bank, Bishnah, the main kingpin of the crime is arrested alongwith 02 others (1. Sunil Sharma (26 years) – S/o Romesh Chander, R/o Bhagani Rafta, P/S Gharota, Tehsil Bhalwal, Distt. Jammu. 2. Tushar Kumar (22 years) – S/o Late Sewa Ram, R/o Lower Canal, Bishnah) who executed the plan and



committed the robbery on spot. The preliminary questioning revealed a shocking and disgraceful inspiration behind the robbery from a similar kind of gold robbery at Delhi, Samaypur Badli in the year 2023.

The successful resolution of this high-profile case showcases the unwavering professionalism and dedication of Jammu Police in tackling organized crime. Their focused investigative approach, intelligence and technology driven & dedicated efforts, and pursuit of justice for the victim ensured the apprehension of accused.

Jammu Police urges the public to remain vigilant and report such activities to the nearest Police Station or dial 100 and install CCTV cameras around their establishments. Keep the valuables locked and ensure that minimal is kept

for display. The swift and precise action in this case sends a strong message that crime will not be tolerated, and offenders will be brought to justice—no matter how elaborate their planning may be.

- Details of recovered Gold items:
- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Jhumka | 07 pairs and 01 single piece- Total 15 pieces |
| 2. Chains - | 09 pieces |
| 3. Chain set - | 01 pieces |
| 4. Bangles - | 30 pieces |
| 5. Rani Haar - | 02 pieces |
| 6. Ladies small set - | 07 pieces |
| 7. Rings - | 11 Pieces |
| 8. Locket without Chain - | 07 pieces |
| 9. Kante - | 49 pieces |
| 10. Tops - | 16 pieces |
| 11. Stone Ear rings - | 06 pieces |
| 12. Sterling Silver watch- | 01 piece |

LA Speaker inaugurates Royal Health, Wellness Centre at Srinagar

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, inaugurated the Royal Health and Wellness Centre at Poloview here today.

Speaking after the inauguration ceremony, the Speaker emphasized on the importance of accessible and innovative healthcare solutions. He lauded the initiative for bringing advanced wellness practices to the region. He expressed hope that the Centre would serve as a significant

step towards holistic health improvement for the community.

On the occasion, Owner of the Royal Health and Wellness Centre, Srinagar, Dr. Hamid Sofi, briefed the Speaker about the facilities being provided at the Centre.

Pertinently, the newly launched facility aims to provide advanced healthcare and wellness services to the patients, enhancing holistic well-being in the region.

The Centre has been equipped to offer modern medical services, diagnostics and specialized wellness pro-

grams, integrating traditional therapeutic techniques with contemporary healthcare solutions to cater to the diverse health needs of the community. One of the key highlights of the Centre is its range of therapeutic services, including cupping therapy and aromatherapy.

The launch of the Royal Health and Wellness Centre marks a milestone in strengthening healthcare infrastructure in Srinagar, offering the residents a dedicated space for preventive and therapeutic wellness services.

Sakeena Itoo conducts extensive tour of Shangus-Anantnag East Constituency

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, today conducted an extensive tour of Shangus-Anantnag East Constituency to assess the public healthcare facilities and educational infrastructure in the area.

MLA Shangus-Anantnag-East, Reyaz Ahmad Khan; MLA Anantnag-West, Abdul Majeed Bhat (Larmi); Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Syed Fakhruddin Hamid; Director Health Services Kashmir, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Social Welfare Kashmir besides other district officers also accompanied the Minister during the visit.

While inspecting the Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Shangus, Sakeena took stock of medical services, availability of essential supplies and overall patient care at the facility. She engaged with the hospital staff and enquired about the overall healthcare delivery at the hospital. She assured them that necessary interventions would be made for infrastructural and other advanced medical care services at the facility to provide world-class healthcare facilities to the public.

The Minister also interacted with the patients and had on-spot feedback from them about the services



being provided at the hospital.

Later, the Minister visited the Primary Health Centre (PHC) Nowgam, assessing its operational efficiency, availability of medicines as well as other facilities.

Meanwhile, Sakeena Itoo also inspected the Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Shangus, and took stock of its functioning.

She inspected the classrooms, lab-

oratories and other facilities at the institution. She also interacted with the staff and the students.

Interacting with the Principal and other staff, Sakeena Itoo stressed on the importance of ensuring a conducive learning environment in line with the NEP-2020. She assured them all possible support from the government for necessary infrastructure upgrades at the institution.

8 more Kashmir Crafts carve their way to GI Glory

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

In a landmark achievement securing the unique craftsmanship of artisans, 8 more traditional products of Kashmir have been granted the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) certificates by GI Registry, Chennai, based on their sources of origin.

GI registration provides legal protection against counterfeit products, prevents unauthorized use, boosts exports, and promotes economic prosperity for producers of goods associated with a specific geographical territory.

Giving details, a spokesman from the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, Kashmir, today stated that Kashmir Namda, Kashmir Gabba, Kashmir Willow Bat, Kashmir Tweed, Crewel, Kashmir Chain Stitch, Shikara and Wagguv have secured GI registration. With this, he said, the total number of GI registered crafts has reached 15, with 07 crafts having already been granted GI registration.

Highlighting the benefits of the registration, the spokesman exuded confidence that these 8 new products will provide much needed boost to exports and gain greater access in international markets, leading to increased demand. “The registration, followed by GI labelling, will also help prevent unauthorised use, ensuring consumers get access to genuine products,” he added.

Referring to the stiff challenges



faced by the department over a period of three years, the spokesman highlighted various steps taken for earning GI registration. “After filing of applications online, the department had to go through the onerous task of preliminary scrutiny and examination of the applications filed, followed by issuance of show-cause notices and publication in GI Journal. Only after no objections were received, the GI registration was granted by Geographical Indication (GI) Registry Chennai, in favour of the 8 new products,” he explained.

The spokesman further stated that the department shall now shift focus to 6 more crafts for GI registration, which shall go a long way in revival of certain lost crafts and also boost their saleability in niche global markets. These include Copperware (Kandkari), Silver-

ware, Houseboat, Tapestry, Kashmir Tilla and Aari Stapple Embroidery.

Identifying testing and QR labelling as a corollary to the GI registration of unique Kashmir products, the spokesman said the department has already submitted proposals for upgradation of its testing labs in IICT, CDI and Quality Control Division.

“In view of the increased demand for GI testing and labelling, the department shall upgrade its testing labs by acquiring state-of-the-art equipment like OFDA (Optical Fibre Diameter Analyzer), SEM (Scanning Electron Microscope) and high-resolution Digital Microscopes, which shall ensure genuineness of the products tested and weeding out sale of machine-made counterfeit products, which are sold in the garb of hand-made products,” he added.

Javed Rana lauds efforts of stakeholders in achieving target under ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ campaign

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

Jammu and Kashmir has successfully met its ambitious goal of planting 150 lakh seedlings under ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ campaign.

Lauding the achievement of Forest, Ecology and Environment, Javed Ahmed Rana credited it to the collective efforts of government agencies, village-level institutions, local people and other stakeholders.

“The aim of the campaign is to contain land degradation and promote restoration of degraded land for a sustainable future,” he said adding that the campaign aligns with the quest for sustainable development. He commended the efforts of Forest department in leading the campaign saying that tree plantation raises awareness about environmental sustainability and the importance of afforestation. “Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam” was launched across the country to encourage the people to plant a tree as a mark of love, respect and honour for their mothers and pledge to protect trees and earth.

The Forest Department led the campaign for planting 1,50,18,803 saplings in J&K, involving the students, NGOs, security forces, government departments, citizens and nature



lovers.

Under the initiative, the Forest department and its wings planted 91 lakh plants on forest and non-forest lands. Besides, it distributed 59 lakh plants among various stakeholders for planting at various locations throughout the Union Territory.

More than one lakh plants were planted by Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and about two lakh plants were distributed on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Javed Rana complimented various sections of the society for their contribution in achieving the target. He said that each stakeholder has made substantial contributions to this initiative,

demonstrating a collective commitment towards sustainability, green cover enhancement and fostering public engagement.

“It was heartening to see how enthusiastically people embraced the campaign, reinforcing the importance of environmental stewardship for the well-being of future generations. We would not have been able to achieve the target without the active participation of the local people” he said.

During the campaign, the forest department sensitised the locals about the importance of tree plantation in combating the climate change and enhancing greenery.

Girls’ Sports competitions held in Doda to promote Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

In line with the directives of the District Development Commissioner, Department of Social Welfare, in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services and Sports organized girls’ sports competitions under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative.

The event, held in two zones—Bhaderwah and Bhallessa—aimed to promote the empowerment of girls through sports and encourage their active participation in physical activities.

A total of 90 girls from different institutions and pan-chayats of twin zones participated in the competitions. Zone Bhaderwah hosted Kabaddi, while Zone Bhallessa organized a Volleyball competition, allowing young athletes to showcase their skills, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

The initiative emphasized the importance of providing



equal opportunities to girls in both education and sports, fostering confidence and leadership qualities among them.

The event not only celebrated the sporting talent of young girls but also served as

a platform to raise awareness about gender equality and the importance of empowering the girl child.

Encouraging participation in sports plays a crucial role in breaking stereotypes and inspiring young girls to pursue

their dreams fearlessly. The initiative was widely appreciated by the participants and community members, reinforcing the message of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and the role of sports in shaping a progressive society.

District Admin Ganderbal accords farewell to outgoing officers

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

The District Administration Ganderbal, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Jatin Kishore, today organized a heartfelt farewell ceremony to honor the services of Additional Deputy Commissioner Gulzar Ahmad; SDM Kangan, Nuzhat Qureshi, and Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Mohammad Altaf on their transfer.

The event was attended by senior officials, including the Chief Planning Officer, ACD, ACP, and other dignitaries.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Jatin Kishore lauded the contributions of the outgoing officers, acknowledging their dedication, professionalism, and commitment to public service. He extended his best wishes for their future assignments and expressed confidence in their continued excellence.

In his farewell speech, ADC Gulzar



Ahmad expressed gratitude to the district administration for its support during his tenure. SDM Kangan and ACR also shared their experiences, appreciating the cooperation and teamwork that contributed to their achievements.

Officials present at the event also

shared their reflections, praising the leadership and dedication of the outgoing officers.

The ceremony concluded with a token of appreciation being presented to the officers as a mark of gratitude for their invaluable service to the district.

ADDC Shopian kick-starts sale of Hi-Tech vegetable seedlings

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

Additional District Development Commissioner, Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone in presence of Chief Agriculture Officer, Shopian, Farooq Ahmed and other officials of the Agriculture department kick-started the sale of Hi-Tech vegetable seedlings at Shopian, today.

The sale of seedlings including Cauliflower, Cabbage, broccoli and other vegetables was held at Green House, Mini Secretariat, organised by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shopian.

The sale witnessed a overwhelming response of vegetable growers from Shopian and adjacent areas.

Interacting with the growers, ADDC said that the department is committed to promote the Kitchen Garden endeavour and aims at providing quality veg-



etable seedlings to the growers for better economic turnover.

He impressed upon the department to promote kitchen gardening in such a way that growers get more and more benefits.

On the occasion, it was emphasised

that vegetable cultivation has a good potential of employment generation and the unemployed youth of the district with the help of modern technology and suitable agro-climatic conditions for vegetable cultivation in the Valley can take it to new heights.

DC Kupwara chairs NCORD meeting to review measures for curbing drug menace

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired the meeting of the District Level Committee of Narco Coordination (NCORD) to review the measures put in place for curbing drug abuse in the district.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal from concerned officers regarding the present scenario of drug related occurrences, various issues related to menace of drug addiction, its control and rehabilitation and areas of concern.

Deputy Commissioner meticulously reviewed the implementation of the measures taken and progress achieved to eliminate drug abuse and its peddling.

She took feedback from the members of the Committee who presented the latest report related to action taken against drug-addiction and drug trafficking in the District.

DC also emphasized the Officers including Enforcement agencies for identification and close vigil of entry points, hot spots of drugs, public places and abandoned buildings.

She also laid thrust on further intensifying IEC campaigns at Schools and Colleges levels to sensitize students and common masses about ill-effects of drugs. She sought close coordination between Health, Police, Education and other line departments for consolidated efforts towards eradication of drug menace.

DC meticulously reviewed the functioning of Drug De-addiction Centre Kupwara and Addiction Treatment Facility Centre (ATFC) Handwara and stressed for upscaling of the therapeutic management and proper counseling of the drug addicts which can help the addicts to come out of the menace.

She also reviewed the progress of providing self employment opportunities to the drug victims who have been recovered so that they can live a dignified life in the society.

Nodal Officer for NMBA Campaign, Mudassir Ahmad also spoke and briefed the officers about the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abiyan Campaign which is set to be launched on April 7th in the district.



Further, she impressed upon all the

concerned departments to ensure their participation in the campaign for mass awareness among the people about ill effects of drugs. She directed the officers to take separate review meeting of their respective subordinate staff and field functionaries for smooth conduct of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Campaign.

The meeting was attended by SSP Kupwara, ASP Handwara, CMO, CEO, Medical Superintendent DH Handwara, Assistant Drug controller, Tehsildars, besides other concerned Officers.

CEO Shopian, who was the chief guest on the occasion, advised the students not to indulge in drug abuse and other social evils and instead be a role model in the field of education, sports and other activities.

Highlighting the harmful effects of drugs, he said that it starts merely as an amusement but ends up becoming addiction. The young generation is the most-affected section of drug addiction that needs to be eradicated completely from the society, he said seeking cooperation of all stakeholders.

LMD penalises E-Commerce Platform for Labelling Violations in Jammu

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

On the directive of Controller Legal Metrology J&K Anuradha Gupta, the field staff of Legal Metrology, Consumer Protection Unit, Jammu imposed a penalty of ₹1.50 lakh on a prominent e-commerce platform operating in the region. The step is a significant move to uphold consumer rights and ensure compliance with packaging regulations. The concerned e-commerce platform has recently expanded its services to Jammu by opening stores, including one in Jammu, primarily offering instant delivery of a wide range of products such as groceries, fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, stationery, bakery items, personal care, baby care, pet care products, snacks, and flowers.

The action was initiated following an inspection by the area Inspector, under the supervision of Assistant Controller

Consumer Protection Jammu. During the inspection approximately 1200 packages were seized for failing to meet mandatory labelling requirements as stipulated under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011.

The main violation includes non-declaration of exact net weight of pre-packaged fruits and vegetables for sale through the e-commerce platform.

Upon issuance of a show cause notice, the company acknowledged the offence and promptly submitted application for compounding of the offences which led to imposing a penalty and settling of case at department level on assurance of immediate corrective measures to align with the prescribed labelling norms.

Following the department's intervention, the e-commerce platform has removed the non-compliant products from its physical store shelves for re-

labelling and has unlisted the violating items from its online platform to prevent further consumer inconvenience.

A spokesperson from Controller Legal Metrology Department, J&K emphasized the department's unwavering commitment to protecting consumer rights and ensuring fair trade practices. This action is part of an ongoing initiative directed by the Controller Legal Metrology Department J&K to regulate e-commerce platforms, especially in light of evolving trade dynamics and technological advancements which has necessitated enhanced enforcement strategies.

Consumers are encouraged to remain vigilant and report any discrepancy related to product labelling or other unfair trade practices pertaining to Legal Metrology. The Legal Metrology Department assures the public of its dedication to fostering a transparent and consumer-friendly marketplace.

Doda celebrates Milestone in Education and Sustainability

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

In a groundbreaking achievement, Doda district has successfully delivered 5,000 recycled school desks to government schools across the region, marking a significant milestone in education and sustainability. This innovative initiative, implemented by Indian Pollution Control Association (IPCA), funded by SBI Cards and Payment Services Limited under their flagship CSR initiative MASS (Mantra for Advance Sustainable Solution) and supported by the District Administration Doda, showcases a pioneering approach to environmental conservation and resource utilization.

The culmination ceremony, held here in Community Hall, was attended by DDC Chairman Dhananther Singh

Kotwal; Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh; DDC Vice-Chairperson Sangeeta Bhagat; Founder & Director, IPCA Ashish Jain and Secretary IPCA Ajay Garg and other Officers of District Administration. The event featured a lamp-lighting ceremony, the inspection of a stall showcasing a skit on "Plastic Waste Management," and the release of a booklet titled "Shaping the Future of Waste Management."

In his address, DDC Chairman Dhananther Singh highlighted the need for better infrastructure in schools, calling this initiative a significant step towards enhancing the education system in Doda.

Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh praised the contributions of all stakeholders and emphasized the im-

portance of these steps in enhancing the education system in the district. "A student's bright future is our aim," he added.

The Director IPCA, while promising further collaboration, stressed on the need for plastic waste segregation and reuse to prevent soil and water pollution.

The flagship MASS Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative has successfully transformed low-value plastic waste into high-impact recycled products, promoting sustainable waste management practices and improving educational infrastructure.

Certificates were distributed to acknowledge the efforts of contributors and stakeholders, and a cultural program was held to celebrate this achievement.

DLSA, Srinagar organizes awareness programme on UTRC

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, organized an awareness programme on the Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC) at Central Jail Srinagar.

The initiative was conducted under the able guidance of Shazia Tabasum, Member Secretary of J&K Legal Services Authority, and under the chairmanship of Tasleem Arif, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and under the supervision of Sajad Ur Rehman, Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar.

The primary objective of the event was to educate jail inmates about the role and significance of the UTRC in safeguarding their rights and ensuring they are not unduly detained.

The programme witnessed the active participation of Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) from the Prison Legal Aid Clinic, alongside jail inmates.

Tasneem Kausar, Deputy Legal Aid Defense Counsel, served as the resource person and provided in-depth insights into the mandate of the UTRC.

She highlighted the committee's role in reviewing the cases of undertrial prisoners, ensuring that their legal rights are upheld, and emphasizing the importance of swift justice. The session also covered legal remedies available to inmates, the necessity of speedy trials, and their constitutional rights within the criminal justice system.

A key focus of the programme was to inform inmates about the upcoming 2nd UTRC meeting scheduled for 15th April



2025.

Tasneem Kausar urged the inmates to come forward with their cases, particularly those falling under the 15 specified categories eligible for review under the UTRC framework.

She reassured them that the legal aid system is committed to addressing their concerns and ensuring that deserving cases are brought before the committee for consideration.

The interactive session saw enthusiastic participation from the inmates, who engaged in discussions with the resource person and sought clarifications on various legal matters. Their involvement reflected

a growing awareness and willingness to exercise their legal rights.

The initiative reaffirmed the commitment of the District Legal Services Authority to upholding justice, promoting legal literacy, and ensuring access to legal aid for all, particularly those within the prison system.

DLSA Srinagar remains dedicated to its mission of fostering a fair and equitable justice system. Through such initiatives, it continues to address the challenges faced by inmates and strengthen the collaborative efforts of legal services authorities in ensuring justice for all.

MLA Sonawari, DC Bandipora visit Semi Ring Road Project site Shadipora to address public concerns

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03

In a significant step towards addressing public grievances and expediting infrastructural development, Member of Legislative Assembly for Sonawari Constituency of Bandipora District Hilal Akbar Lone, along with Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, today visited under construction semi Ring Road project site Shadipora sumbal.

The visit was aimed to assess the progress of the project, address concerns raised by local residents, and ensure timely completion of the project.

During the visit, the MLA and Deputy Commissioner interacted with the locals to understand their grievances regarding land acquisition, compensation, and road connectivity.

The MLA emphasized the importance of the project in enhancing transportation, reducing traffic congestion, and boosting economic activities in the area.

He assured the public that their concerns would be addressed in coordination with NHAI and other concerned departments.

Qadri, while reviewing the progress of the project, emphasized the adherence to the deadlines while maintaining

quality standards. He highlighted the administration's commitment to resolve any pending issues in a transparent and time-bound manner.

During the visit, engineers and officials of NHAI briefed regarding completion timeline, challenges faced, and measures required to ensure smooth execution of the project.

MLA and Deputy Commissioner urged the officials to expedite the work while ensuring minimal inconvenience to the public. They assured continued engagement with the stakeholders to facilitate the seamless completion of the project.

Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Jammu Celebrates World Autism Awareness Day with Special Drawing Competition for Children with Special Needs

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03
Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Jammu (Samba)-PDUNIPPD, New Delhi under DE-PWD, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MOSJE), Govt. of India marked World Autism Awareness Day by organizing a drawing competition for children with special needs (CWsN). The event, held on April 3 2025, was aimed at promoting awareness and understanding of autism while providing a platform for children with special needs to showcase their creativity. A total of 20 children, accompanied by their parents, participated in the event. The competition was organized with the support of parents and was divided into three categories based on the children's according their understanding and capabilities. The results of the competition were announced by the team of CRC Jammu, with the following winners in each category: Group A: First Prize: Chetanya Gupta, Second Prize: Dikshant Sharma & Third Prize: Kanishk Sharma Group B: First Prize: Aastha Kak, Second Prize: Eklavya Gupta



Group C: First Prize: Sonali Gupta, Second Prize: Saanvi Sharma & Third Prize: Dilbag Singh. The competition was conducted under the able guidance of the Dr. Rohnika Sharma, Director, CRC Jammu, ensuring a well-organized and engaging event that highlighted the talents of children with special needs. The initiative is

part of CRC Jammu's ongoing efforts to raise awareness about autism and support children with special needs and their families. CRC Jammu continues to promote inclusivity, awareness, and empowerment for children with special needs, encouraging them to pursue their passions and talents.

Fusion of Sanskrit and Modern Science: IIT Hyderabad and Central Sanskrit University's Summer School Program

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03
Under the joint aegis of IIT Hyderabad and the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) Cell of the Central Sanskrit University, a 21-day Summer School program is being organized from June 2 to June 22, 2025. This program aims to integrate traditional Sanskrit studies with modern interdisciplinary approaches, providing an enriching and in-depth academic experience. During the program, participants will have the opportunity to engage in workshops focused on research enhancement, problem-based learning, technical writing, and project-based research. Additionally, they will receive training in coding, digital media technology, and scientific writing to express Sanskrit knowledge in contemporary contexts. Special sessions on life skills and leadership development will also be conducted, emphasizing team building, communication skills, and time management. Interactive sessions and workshops will help participants understand modern research methodologies. Dr. D. Dayanath, the coordinator of the IKS Cell, stated that postgraduate students, researchers, and faculty members (including guest/contract faculty and assistant professors) will participate in this Summer School. The number of participants will be limited to 40, and selection will be based on a writing skills test and an interview. IIT Hyderabad will provide accommodation and meals for the selected participants. The last date to apply for the Summer School program is April 15, 2025.



Union Secretary, Food & Public Distribution visits J&K

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03
Union Secretary, Department of Food & Public Distribution, Sanjeev Chopra today visited Jammu and reviewed the functioning of Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and FCI here. He also assessed the status of implementation of schemes and other reforms across Jammu and Kashmir. Interacting with the officers of the FCS&CA Department, J&K and FCI, J&K, here, the Union Secretary hailed the efforts made by the department in making the Public Distribution System clean and efficient. He asked the officers to continue these efforts and take follow up actions on suspect beneficiaries, whose details are being shared by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India, with States/UTs. The Union Secretary while advising the Department to share details of savings made, subsequent to implementation of Optimized Route Plan, also instructed the FCI to make available food grains in different districts as per Route Optimization Plan. The Union Secretary also reviewed the operations of FCI, J&K region. While reviewing the wheat procurement in the J&K region, he



emphasised that FCI and FCS&CA J&K should make all out efforts to ensure procurement of wheat and try achieve the target fixed by GOI in RMS 2025-26. Earlier, in his presentation, Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA, Zubair Ahmad presented an overview of the functioning of the department with stress on new initiatives and issues flagged by Central Government. He informed the Union Secretary that the Department is presently providing free and subsidised food grains to 24.76 lac households, comprising 98.81 lac beneficiaries in J&K. While 67 lac beneficiaries are provided free foodgrains every month under PMGKAY, another 31.75 lac beneficiaries are provided food grains at highly subsidised rate in NPHH group.

He also said that the distribution network across J&K is built around 6622 sale outlets and 6390 such outlets are presently working in an online mode. He added that Aadhaar authentication rate of 95% has been achieved in distribution process by now. He also informed that after achieving 100% Aadhaar seeding, the Department has completed e-KYC of 87% beneficiaries under NFSA and 75% of beneficiaries in Non Priority Households group. He also apprised the Union Secretary that the department has started implementation of Route Optimization Plan in eight districts of J&K on trial basis and complete implementation across all the districts would commence in the month of June, 2025. The Union Secretary was also

apprised about the status of implementation of SMART PDS in J&K. Regarding One Nation-One Ration Card (ONORC), the Union Secretary was informed that till now 1.66 lakh interstate and 29.33 lakh intrastate transactions were made under NFSA alone, taking J&K to 9th position in the country. Later, Sanjeev Chopra also visited Fair Price Shop at Jhajjar Kotli and interacted with the dealer and the beneficiaries. He advised the officers to undertake updation of mobile numbers of beneficiaries and also emphasized on enhancing the viability of FPSs. The Union Secretary was accompanied by Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA, Director, FCS & CA Jammu, Rifat Kohli; General Manager, FCI, L. Chatru Naik and other officials of the Department.

GBSA Organizes Convention in Rajouri to Announce District Team and Address Student Issues

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03
The Gujjar Bakerwal Students Alliance (GBSA) held a convention in Rajouri to announce its district team and highlight the challenges faced by students in the region. The GBSA state team, led by Chief Patron Bilal Rashid, newly appointed State President Sakib Zubair, Chief Spokesperson Amir Chowdhary, Chief Advisor Rafaqat Chowdhary, Provincial Spokesperson Ashraf Chowdhary, Jammu University President Irfan Chowdhary, former District Rajouri President Ifitikhar Lodhi, and PG College Rajouri President Abrar Awana, received a warm welcome from the local team. The event's chief guest was former GBSA President Shahid Ayoub, recently appointed as an Assistant Professor at Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad. He emphasized the importance of education for students and urged them to remain dedicated to their academic pursuits. The awareness program focused on student issues in remote areas of Pir Panjal, particularly their participation in CUET, NEET, and other competitive exams. Student representatives voiced their concerns, and the state team assured them that their grievances would be addressed on priority. Students from various colleges and Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU) participated in the convention, highlighting critical issues such as inadequate transport facilities, the absence of special fare concessions for students across Rajouri and Pir Panjal, and the recent fee hikes imposed



by the University of Jammu and other institutions. The discussion also covered concerns related to Gujjar Bakerwal hostels in Jammu and Kashmir and the removal and appointment of the Registrar at BGSBU. As part of the convention, GBSA announced its district Rajouri team, appointing Tahib Mahmood as President, while Sohail Taj, Mudassar Muneer, and Nargis Jameel were named Vice Presidents. In his welcome address, Spokesperson Amir Chowdhary elaborated on GBSA's manifesto, stressing the need for a tribal university in Rajouri, career counseling initiatives, and efforts to counter societal biases against the community. Provincial Spokesperson Ashraf Chowdhary underscored the urgency of addressing the fee hike issue and the daily transport struggles students endure. Jammu University GBSA President Irfan Chowdhary reaffirmed the alliance's commitment to supporting Pir Panjal students, assuring cooperation from the university platform. Newly appointed district President Tahib Mahmood expressed gratitude to the GBSA leadership for their trust in him and pledged to work diligently for students across Rajouri. State President Sakib Zubair acknowledged the efforts of the outgoing president, Shahid Ayoub, and highlighted GBSA's achievements over the past year and a half. Chief Patron Bilal Rashid addressed organizational matters, emphasizing the need to enhance the academic standards of BGSBU through collaboration with civil society. He also encouraged students to prioritize their education and seek admission in higher learning institutions. Chief Guest Shahid Ayoub thanked GBSA for the invitation and urged students to focus on academics, assuring them of support when seeking admissions and preparing for competitive exams outside Jammu and Kashmir. He also cautioned students against engaging in anti-social activities and substance abuse. The event concluded with a vote of thanks from Amir Chowdhary, followed by the formal announcement of the district Rajouri team, with responsibilities assigned to various members. The state team pledged full support to the newly appointed district leadership in their efforts to advocate for student rights and welfare.

DC Pulwama reviews NEET (UG) Examination arrangements

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03
Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom chaired a preliminary meeting today regarding NEET (UG) Examination arrangements at the Administrative Complex Pulwama. The meeting focused on assessing logistical support, security arrangements and infrastructure readiness to ensure the seamless and fair conduct of the examination across designated centres in the district. During the session, the representatives from designated NEET centres briefed the chair on their preparations, including infrastructural and logistical arrangements, surveillance measures and security protocols. The Deputy Commissioner directed strict adherence to all prescribed protocols and guidelines to ensure transparency and fairness in the examination process. The Police Department provided an overview of security arrangements, informing that special Police Nodal Officers will be designated for each centre to oversee security measures. In addition, proper escort services will be deployed to ensure the safe and secure transportation of examination materials. The DC stressed the importance of maintaining strict law and order in and around the examination centres. Dr. Qayoom further instructed the concerned departments to facilitate seamless transportation, uninterrupted power supply and other essential services on the day of the examination. Emphasizing the need for inter-departmental coordination, the Deputy Commissioner called for a collaborative effort to create a conducive atmosphere for candidates appearing in the NEET examination.



MD JJM directs officials to upload data of works on PM Gati Shakti portal

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, APR 03
Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), J&K Khurshid Ahmad Shah urged the Jal Shakti (PHE) Divisions of J&K to speed up the process of mapping the pipelines laid under JJM and uploading the same on PM Gati Shakti portal. He gave these instructions today while chairing a preparatory meeting which was attended by Chief Engineers, Jal

Shakti (PHE) Departments Jammu/Kashmir, Superintending Engineers (Hydraulic) Circles J&K and Executive Engineers of Civil as well as Mechanical divisions of the UT of J&K. The meeting was held in virtual mode and all the officers attended the meeting from their respective stations. On the occasion, he enquired about the progress achieved in uploading the pipeline and

Water Testing Infrastructure created under JJM on PM Gati Shakti portal. He urged the executive engineers to ensure that the targets set in this regard are achieved well in time. The chair also directed the officers to rectify the errors related to data (Dump data) uploaded on IMIS portal of Jal Jeevan Mission so that a clear picture of work done is uploaded and put in the public domain.

EDITORIAL

Jammu & Terrorism

The recent surge in terrorist activities in the Jammu region presents a stark reminder of the persistent security challenges facing India. While the nation has made strides in combating terrorism, the resurgence of violence underscores the need for a comprehensive and unwavering approach.

The geographical complexities of the region, coupled with cross-border infiltration, create a fertile ground for terrorist organizations. The targeted attacks on security personnel and civilians aim to destabilize the region and sow fear, disrupting the delicate peace that has been painstakingly cultivated.

A multi-pronged strategy is essential. First, enhanced intelligence gathering and proactive security measures are crucial to preempt attacks and neutralize terrorist networks. This includes strengthening border security to curb infiltration and equipping security forces with advanced technology and training.

Second, a robust counter-narrative is needed to address the radicalization of vulnerable youth. This involves engaging local communities, promoting inclusive development, and addressing socio-economic grievances that can be exploited by extremist elements.

Third, sustained diplomatic pressure on neighboring states to dismantle terror infrastructure within their borders is vital. International cooperation is indispensable in combating transnational terrorism.

Finally, the resilience of the people of Jammu is paramount. Their unwavering spirit in the face of adversity is a testament to their strength and determination. The government must ensure their safety and security while fostering a sense of trust and confidence. Long-term solutions demand a holistic approach, encompassing security, development, and political dialogue, to achieve lasting peace in the region.

Bollywood Khans: Ruling the waves at 60

NAMRATA JOSHI

A notable thing about time is that it truly flies. Wasn't it just yesterday that a bunch of us would hire a VCR (video cassette recorder, for those born after its demise) during summer vacations to organise a watch-party for the très à la mode tragic-romantic musical Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak (1988)? Its boy-next-door lead found a way to our youthful hearts by strumming the guitar and singing 'Papa kehnte hain bada naam karega'. This March 14, I found myself wishing him good health and happiness on his 60th birthday while ruminating on how far we—an entire generation of artistes, viewers and scribes—have come.

Along with Aamir Khan, the other two members of Bollywood Khandom—Shahrukh and Salman, who also endeared themselves to the audience around the same time, one with Fauji (1989), a charming TV series on young army commandoes, and the other with the wholesome family blockbuster Maine Pyar Kiya (1989)—will also be celebrating their 60th birthdays this year, on November 2 and December 27, respectively. But the milepost appears to be more of an arrival into the next fecund phase of life.

Along with Big B, the Khans continue to be the last great superstars of Hindi cinema, their popularity sustaining and growing now for more than 35 years. What's more, it has been a shared reign, one in which they have created their own distinct niches, more in complement than be competition.

If Salman has been speaking to the masses, Aamir has catered to the middle class and its expectations of "issue-based, quality commercial cinema". If SRK opened the floodgates of NRI nostalgia to consolidate



an overseas box office territory for Bollywood, Aamir took India close to the Oscars with Lagaan and later, with 3 Idiots, helped build fandom for the industry in a country like China.

This personal distinctness holds true not just for the characters they have played, but their off-screen personae as well. Even for a journalist like yours truly, they have brought their own unique touch to the several interactions and interviews—be it a spontaneous, charming and flamboyant SRK, or a studied, earnest and methodical Aamir. However, a one-on-one with Salman has eluded me, the closest to it being a 3 am phone call to catch him in America.

Filmmaker Karan Johar once told me he found the individual trajectories of the Khans very illuminating. While SRK started with a clutch of arthouse films to move into playing characters with shades of villainy, to eventually cross over to and embrace the feel-good, romantic and family fantasies, Aamir has been trying to create alternative narratives within the confines of the mainstream.

Salman has and will always be a star towering way above the actor—one who made a whole generation of young men take to body building.

But the 35 years haven't just been a bed of roses; there has been a fair share of thorns as well. The brash but supposedly sensitive and generous Salman has been at the receiving end for his alleged involvement in a hit-and-run case in Mumbai, and hunting for black-bucks in Rajasthan.

SRK son's Aryan got embroiled in an investigation into an alleged international drug racket. And Aamir had to face a backlash over a statement on the growing intolerance. Some of the films of the three have also encountered the threat of boycotts.

This despite the fact that their stardom is often seen as emblematic of the idea of India. All of them have multicultural families. Unlike Dilip Kumar and Meena Kumari in the past, they didn't adopt Hindu screen names, but wielded their surnames with pride.

However, in the last few years,

when polarization has been growing the world over, Bollywood hasn't been left untainted. For a while, it seemed that the Khans would fall prey to the antagonism too, added to which were the flop shows—Laal Singh Chaddha, Thugs of Hindostan, Fan, Dilwale, Zero, Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan. But they seem to have a way of rising from the ashes with the success of Pathaan, Tiger 3, Jawan and Laapataa Ladies. Each peak makes you certain that a trough shall follow, but the lows have often led to newer highs.

Much of it is because they have channelled their stardom into business and philanthropy—branching into producing films, SRK owning an IPL team Kolkata Knight Riders, Salman starting Being Human, and Aamir backing Paani Foundation in rural Maharashtra.

The three refuse to get off the news cycle, or rather, news refuses to let go of them. As I write this piece, SRK's red passport, Aamir's new YouTube channel and Salman sport-ing a Ram Janmabhoomi edition watch are grabbing headlines.

So, what lies ahead for them? In ageist, sexist Bollywood, the Khans' staying power is linked to the privilege of being men, while the contemporary heroines their age—be it Madhuri Dixit or Juhi Chawla—have faded into character roles, that too few and far between. It's also interesting to figure what turn they will take now that their own kids—Aamir's son Junaid, and SRK's son Aryan and daughter Suhana—are also trying to make a strike at the marquee. Will the new generation of Khans complement as their parents did? As we ponder that, the dream of seeing them together in a film also waits to get realised.

Who gets to impose Uniform Civil

KAPIL SIBAL

Today, let's explore whether any state in the Union of India has the authority to enact and enforce a Uniform Civil Code.

Article 44 of the Constitution is part of the Directive Principles of State Policy. At the time of framing of the Constitution, there was no Uniform Civil Code in place. Given the diversity of India, there were several laws and customs of communities, including religious communities, in place. It is in this context that Article 44 was drafted, mandating, "The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India."

There are three expressions in this provision that require attention. First is the word "State", second is the expression "endeavour to secure" for its "citizens", and the third is the "Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India".

The "State" here means not a state government, but the Union of India, since such a law, if framed by the Union, will be applicable throughout the territory of India. That cannot happen if the law is framed by a state government. The second clue that the State means the Union of India comes from the expression "citizens". We all know that the status of citizenship is granted only by the Union. Those residing within a state are not its citizens.

Article 44 further mandates that the "State", meaning the Union of India, shall endeavour to enact a Uniform Civil Code. It seems clear to me that a state government cannot, under its legislative powers, enact a law pursuant to the mandate under Article 44 of the Constitution.

It is, therefore, clear that any provision under the Uniform Civil Code, Uttarakhand, 2024, which applies to the residents of Uttarakhand, exclud-

ing tribals, would fall foul of the laws framed by the Union of India.

Even though the law has received presidential consent, it still falls foul of both parliamentary statutes and the personal law of religious communities. For example, if a marriage or a divorce is recognised under a parliamentary statute, it may not be recognised under the Uttarakhand Civil Code, because, in Uttarakhand, an enquiry may be conducted which may not recognise such a marriage or a divorce. The sub-registrar, under the Uttarakhand Civil Code, has been conferred with such powers.

In addition, many of the provisions fall foul of the right to privacy recognised by the Supreme Court as a fundamental right. This allows for vigilantes to get into the act of questioning all forms of marriages and divorce, including inter-caste and inter-faith marriages.

Article 254 of the

Constitution stipulates that if there is any inconsistency between laws made by parliament and those made by the legislatures of states, such of the provisions of state laws that are inconsistent with the law made by parliament would be repugnant, and therefore, would be declared void to the extent of the inconsistency.

Marriage of Hindus under the Hindu Marriage Act 1955 cannot be questioned under any state legislation. Interfaith marriages under the Special Marriage Act 1954 also cannot be questioned under state legislation, since the rights acquired under a parliamentary legislation cannot be taken away through burdensome state laws.

Even more surprising is that Uttarakhand's Uniform Civil Code seeks to legislate on live-in relationships. There is no provision in the Constitution which entitles the state legislature to enact a law seeking to

regulate live-in relationships. The legislative remit of a state legislature is confined to what is included in Entry 5 of the Concurrent List, and that too as long as the laws made by a state legislature are consistent with the laws made by parliament.

The subject matter of Entry 5 of List III is: Marriage and divorce; infants and minors; adoption; wills, intestacy and succession; joint family and partition; all matters in respect of which parties in judicial proceedings were immediately before the commencement of this Constitution subject to their personal law.

It is clear from this entry that state legislatures do not have the legislative competence to deal with matters relating to live-in relationships, which according to the legislature is akin to a marriage. Such a power, if at all, would reside with parliament under Entry 97 of List I, a residual entry that empowers parliament

to legislate on matters not covered specifically under lists II and III. Parliament has passed no such law. Therefore, the entire chapter dealing with the regulation of live-in relationships is without authority of law.

The desire to enact a Uniform Civil Code has been a part of the BJP's agenda, reflected in its various manifestos of 1989, 1996, 1998, 2009, 2014, 2019 and 2024.

It is also interesting to note that no non-BJP ruled state has made any public announcement to enact such legislation. So the endeavour of the BJP in various states where they are in power is to politicise the issue, and target the minority community with the intent to bring their laws in conformity with the laws applicable to the majority community. It is yet another way of polarising the polity and raising issues which are divisive in nature instead of those which need to be addressed.

Aurangzeb's Grave is a Blot on Secularism

RAVI SHANKAR

The only universal emotion common to man and beast is fear of death. Except for rare individuals like Oscar Wilde who always wanted the last word—"My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or the other of us must go"—the general emotion the Grim Reaper evokes is fear. Fear's subsequent consequence is reverence. Hence we build monuments to dead rulers, reliquaries for the wealthy and powerful, and memorials to fallen heroes. Hindus are the general exception unless you consider statues and paintings as tributes. The whole world is a graveyard that unites mankind. Or divides, as is the case with statues of pro-slavery Confederate generals in America's Bible Belt and Aurangzeb's tomb in Maharashtra.

BJP neta Nitish Rane has called for the destruction of the Mughal emperor's grave. The Great Bigot who died in March 1707 is buried in Khuldabad. His tomb is protected as a Monument of National Importance by the Archaeological Survey of India under a 1958 law, which prohibits it from demolition. If any



Mughal criminal was the worst for the dynasty's PR, it is Aurangzeb. Though Mohan Bhagwat disapproved of the prevalent North Indian practice of the saffron species of finding shivlings under old mosques, Rane has a point. Honouring Aurangzeb's tomb is like placing flowers and snapping Nazi salutes at Adolf Hitler's grave. (Fortunately the Soviets took care of it.) Or erecting a memorial pillar on Idi Amin's grave. The legacy of

Aurangzeb aka Muhi-al-Din Muhammad does little credit to his forebears like Emperor Akbar. Nor is it a credit to democratic India.

Scholars have argued that India's last powerful emperor was a pragmatist, not a fanatic. He forged alliances with Hindu kings and gave jobs to Rajputs in his administration. These actions do not necessarily prove his secular credentials, because it is what any ruler of a vast empire would do: hold your friends

close, hold your enemies closer, as Michael Corleone remarked in Godfather II.

The American historian Will Durant's decryption of Aurangzeb in his book, Our Oriental Heritage is telling: "Aurangzeb cared nothing for art, destroyed its "heathen" monuments with coarse bigotry, and fought, through a reign of half a century, to eradicate from India all religions except his own." His two driving forces were Islam and power; it is too well known he reintroduced jaziya, tax on Hindus. With joylessness disguised as piety, he banned alcohol, music and dancing on royal premises. He led his armies on conquests, spreading famine and death by ravaging the countryside, while he knitted skull caps and copied the Koran in his spare time. Maasir-i-Alamgiri, the account of Aurangzeb's reign composed by Saqi Musta'd Khan, describes the destruction of the birthplace of Lord Krishna, upon which he built the Shahi Idgah mosque. He tortured Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur and threw him in an iron cage. When the Guru rejected the offer to convert to Islam, Aurangzeb ordered his beheading.

Jaiswal to move from Mumbai to Goa for 2025-26 domestic season



MUMBAI, APR 3

Yashasvi Jaiswal has switched states and will move from Mumbai to Goa for the 2025-26 domestic season. It is learned that the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) found it "surprising" when Jaiswal wrote to them about the transfer but issued a no-objection certificate (NOC) immediately.

Goa Cricket Association (GCA) secretary Shambu Desai confirmed to ESPNcricinfo that it was GCA which approached the India opener, who is counted among the best players in both international cricket as well as IPL where he plays for Rajasthan Royals. "We are developing a good squad for Goa and want to get the best talent available and hence we approached him (Jaiswal) recently," Desai said.

Jaiswal, 23, has represented Mumbai since his Under-19 days and is one of the most sought-after players from the younger crop. He made his first-class debut for Mumbai in 2019 and has since

played ten first-class games for them, scoring 863 runs at an impressive average of 53.93, which includes four centuries, two fifties and a highest score of 181 against Uttar Pradesh in 2022.

In the 2021-22 season, he had smashed hundreds in three successive innings in Mumbai's run to the final, where they lost to Madhya Pradesh. He has also scored 1296 runs across 25 List A games for Mumbai at an average of 58.90, along with 648 runs in 28 T20s at a strike rate of 136.42.

Jaiswal last played for Mumbai against Jammu and Kashmir in the 2024-25 Ranji Trophy season where he managed scores of 4 and 26. He was due to play in Mumbai's Ranji Trophy semi-final against Vidarbha in February, but was ruled out after injuring his right ankle during training ahead of the game. Jaiswal follows in the footsteps of Siddesh Lad and Arjun Tendulkar, both of whom made a switch from Mumbai to Goa during their careers.

Jaiswal made his India debut in July 2023 against West Indies where he thrashed 171 in his maiden innings and also added 209 against England the following year. While Jaiswal is a regular feature in India's Test and T20I squads, he has only played a solitary ODI so far. More recently, he was excluded from India's Champions Trophy squad but was part of the list of non-travelling substitutes.

The 23-year-old is currently playing in the IPL where he is part of the RR side.

Hockey India trims core group of women players from 65 to 40

BENGALURU, APR 3

Hockey India on Wednesday trimmed the senior women's core group for the ongoing national camp to 40 from 65 after evaluating the performances of the players over the past two weeks.

The camp began at the Sports Authority of India centre at Bengaluru on March 23.

While 28 senior players have retained their spots, 12 new players have been selected in recognition of their impressive performances in the 15th Senior Women's National Championship and their efforts in the first phase of the national camp.

The goalkeeping department has four familiar names in Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam, Bansari Solanki, and Madhuri Kindo.

They are joined by Samiksha Saxena from Assam, who has been rewarded for her strong performance in the national championships.

In defence, eight players from the existing core group - Mahima Chaudhary, Nikki Pradhan, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Udit, Ishika Chaudhary, Jyoti Chhattri, Jyoti, and Akshata Abaso



Dhekale -- have been retained.

Besides, Anjna Dungdung from Bengal and Suman Devi Thoudam from Manipur have also been included in the group.

The midfield continues to feature experienced names like Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Neha, Salima Tete, Manisha Chauhan, Ajmina Kujur, Sunelita Toppo, Lalremsiami, Sharmila Devi, and Baljeet Kaur.

Four new players -- Sujata Kujur from Bengal, Mahima Tete and Albela Rani Toppo from Jharkhand, and Pooja Yadav from UP -- have been inducted following their standout performances.

Deepika Soreng, Navneet Kaur, Sangita Kumari,

Deepika, Rutuja Dadaso Pisal, Beauty Dungdung, and Mumtaz Khan, who have consistently delivered strong performances, have been retained in the forward line.

They will be joined by five new strikers -- Dipimonika Toppo from Odisha, Hritika Singh from Madhya Pradesh, Annu and Chandana Jagadish from Karnataka, and Kajal Sadashiv Atpadkar from Maharashtra.

"We have had some really grand sessions and testing. The selectors and the team have done a good job short-listing the best 40 players available. After watching the National Championships, we believe we have identified some good talent and I'm sure they are going to serve

the country well over the long-term," Indian women's hockey team chief coach Harendra Singh said about the selection.

"I am really excited to see how these young girls are going to perform now in the camp and take one big step for their future."

Indian women's hockey team new 40-member senior core group:

Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam, Bansari Solanki, Madhuri Kindo, Samiksha Saxena.

Defenders: Mahima Chaudhary, Nikki Pradhan, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Udit, Ishika Chaudhary, Jyoti Chhattri, Jyoti, Akshata Abaso Dhekale, Anjna Dungdung, Suman Devi Thoudam.

Midfielders: Sujata Kujur, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Neha, Salima Tete, Manisha Chauhan, Ajmina Kujur, Sunelita Toppo, Lalremsiami, Sharmila Devi, Baljeet Kaur, Mahima Tete, Albela Rani Toppo, Pooja Yadav.

Forwards: Dipimonika Toppo, Hritika Singh, Deepika Soreng, Navneet Kaur, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Rutuja Dadaso Pisal, Beauty Dungdung, Mumtaz Khan, Annu, Chandana Jagadish, Kajal

Indian boxer Jadumani Singh moves to World Boxing Cup semis, 3 others exit



NEW DELHI, APR 3

Indian boxer Jadumani Singh Mandengbam punched his way into the 50kg semifinals but three others made opening round exits from the World Boxing Cup in Fofo do Iguaçu, Brazil.

The 20-year-old reigning national champion edged past last year's World Boxing Cup silver medallist Ellis Trowbridge of Great Britain with a hard-fought 3-2 split decision win in the 50kg quarterfinals late Tuesday night.

He will now face former Asian U-22 champion Asilbek Jalilov of Uzbekistan in the semifinals.

Meanwhile, Asian Games medalist Narender Berwal (+90kg), Nikhil Dubey (75kg), and Jugnoo (85kg) bowed out of the tournament after quarterfinal defeats.

Narender, a bronze medallist at

the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games, put up a strong fight against Kazakhstan's Saparbay Daniyal but lost 2-3 in a close contest despite winning unanimously on the first board.

Nikhil suffered a 0-5 loss to local favourite Kaue Belini, while Jugnoo was on the wrong end of a 1-4 split decision against France's Abdoulaye Traore.

India's campaign continues on Wednesday with Manish Rathore (55kg) set to face Paris Olympian Yusulf Chothia of Australia, Hitesh (70kg) taking on Italy's Gabriele Guidi Rontani, and Abhinash Jamwal (65kg) up against Germany's Denis Bril.

India has fielded a 10-member men's squad in the tournament, with Lakshya Chahar (80kg) exiting on the opening day.

BCCI fines LSG bowler Digvesh Singh Rath for 'letter-writing' send-off to Priyansh Arya

LUCKNOW, APR 3

Lucknow Super Giants spinner Digvesh Singh Rath was fined 25 per cent of his match fees and handed a demerit point for his unusual 'letter-writing' celebration after dismissing Punjab Kings batter Priyansh Arya.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India penalised Rath for "breaching the IPL Code of Conduct" during LSG's match against PBKS at the Ekana Stadium in Lucknow on Tuesday. PBKS won the game by eight wickets.

"Digvesh Singh admitted to the Level 1 offence under Article 2.5 and accepted the Match Referee's sanction," an IPL media advisory stated.

"For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding." The controversial celebration took place on the penultimate ball of the third over during PBKS' chase of 172.

Digvesh bowled a short and wide delivery, which Arya attempted to pull without much foot movement, only to top-edge the ball.

Shardul Thakur sprinted from mid-on

and completed a running catch.

As Arya walked back to the pavilion after scoring eight off nine balls, Digvesh, his teammate from the Delhi T20 League, mimicked writing a letter - an act seemingly directed at Arya.

The umpires took note of the gesture and had a word with the bowler as it also drew immediate comparisons to West Indies pacer Kesrick Williams, who popularised the 'notebook' celebration after dismissing opponents, including a famous spat against Virat Kohli during a 2019 bilateral series.

Cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar and Mohammed Kaif, while doing commentaries, did not appreciate Digvesh's antics.

The leg-spinner was the pick of the LSG bowling lineup, picking up 2/30 runs in his four overs.

However, the rest of the LSG bowling attack failed to make an impact as PBKS chased down the 173-run target in just 16.2 overs.

The win propelled PBKS to second place in the IPL 2025 points table. PBKS, RCB, and DC currently have four points each, having won their first two matches.

"Big Shock": Rs 27 Crore buy Rishabh Pant's flop start in IPL 2025 decoded by Ex-India Star



NEW DELHI, APR 3

Rishabh Pant, the costliest player in the Indian Premier League history, has had a forgettable start to the 2025 season. Around four months ago, the wicketkeeper-batter scripted history at IPL 2025 auction after Lucknow Super Giants bought him for a whopping sum of INR 27 crore. Not only in the IPL auction history, but also in the entire event, this was the first time that a player was signed for such a massive salary. However, has failed to live up to the expectations of the franchise so far, returning scores of 0, 15 and 2 in his three innings in IPL 2025 so far.

Given he is also the captain of the LSG franchise and that the side has lost two of its first three matches, the

troubles have only increased for Pant. Reacting to the batter's performance in his most recent outing against Punjab Kings in Lucknow, former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh said that the team needs to sort out the issue.

"Rishabh Pant wasn't able to do much. His bat has been quiet. They will have to do something about him, (he is) getting out early. He has been a big shock for the team," said Harbhajan on his YouTube channel.

In the match, Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer won the toss and opt to bowl. Nicholas Pooran top-scored with 44 off 30 as LSG posted 171 for 7 in their stipulated quota of 20 overs.

The chase was a cakewalk for PBKS, thanks to Prabhsimran Singh's 69 off 34 and captain Iyer's unbeaten 52 off 30. Nehal Wadhwa's 43 not out off 25 also helped PBKS' cause as the side registered its second win in as many matches in IPL 2025.

"LSG got stuck. After losing the toss, they didn't score much runs and disappointed themselves. Nicholas Pooran played brilliantly but he was trapped by Yuzvendra Chahal. So when Pooran got out, LSG's back was pretty much broken. Ayush Badoni and Abdul Samad provided some fireworks towards the end got them to a total, which was worth fighting for but very tough to defend given just how strong Punjab's batting is," said Harbhajan.

"To beat Lucknow in Lucknow shows they've played brilliant cricket. Punjab is finally resembling a team, a unit that is fighting. This team is showing traits of going all the way. Ricky Ponting is kind of a coach, who encourages the team," he added.

New Zealand beats Pakistan by 83 runs and leads the 3-match series 2-0

HAMILTON (NEW ZEALAND), APR 3

Ben Sears took 5-59 as New Zealand bowled out Pakistan for 208 to win the second one-day cricket international by 84 runs Wednesday, taking an unsailable 2-0 lead in three-match series.

Faheem Ashraf top-scored for Pakistan with 73 and put on 60 for the ninth wicket with Naseem Shah, who made 51. Both posted their maiden ODI half centuries as Pakistan was dismissed in 41.2 overs.

Will O'Rourke softened up the Pakistan batters with an outstanding opening spell of 1-8 from six overs on a lively pitch at Seddon Park.

He twice hit Pakistan captain Mohammad Rizwan, once on the top hand and once on the biceps, and he later hit Haris Rauf on the helmet with a searing bouncer. Rauf retired hurt after failing a concussion test and was replaced by Naseem.

"We didn't do well as a batting group because the start of the batting we didn't utilize the swing and New Zealand bowled very well," Rizwan said. "Later on Faheem and



Naseem batted very well on a disappointing day for us."

Jacob Duffy and Sears reaped the rewards. Duffy took 3-35 and Sears snared a five-wicket haul on his ODI debut.

Earlier, Mitch Hay was left stranded on 99 as New Zealand made 292-8 after being sent in. Hay hit 22 runs from New Zealand's final over, including two sixes and two fours, as he chased a maiden ODI century.

Wasim took 1-15 and

Sufiyan took 2-29, bowling tandem seven-over spells which seemed to have limited New Zealand's total after it was 97-2 at the end of the 15th over. But Hay helped New Zealand to a highly competitive score, reaching his half century from 61 balls, then adding 49 from 17 deliveries.

New Zealand started well and the new-look opening partnership of Rhys Mariu, who made 18 in his first ODI, and Nick Kelly, who made 31

in his second, put on 54. Daryl Mitchell (18) kept up the momentum until wickets began to fall and run-scoring became increasingly difficult.

Newcomer Muhammad Abbas, whose 50 from 24 balls in he ODI series opener was the fastest half century on debut in ODI history, produced a contrasting innings notable for its slowness. He made 41 from 66 balls.

Pakistan struggled even more against New Zealand's four-pronged pace attack, losing Abdullah Shafique, Imam-ul-Haq and Babar Azam with only nine runs on the board. Rizwan battled courageously against O'Rourke's pace but made only 5 runs from 27 balls.

"It's challenging conditions here," Rizwan said. "If you look at their bowlers, they get swing and bounce, which is different from the Asian conditions. But we don't make excuses."

New Zealand won the first match at Napier by 73 runs. The third match is scheduled for Saturday at Mount Maunganui. New Zealand won the preceding Twenty20 series 4-1.

Samson to return as RR captain after being cleared to keep wicket

NEW DELHI, APR 3

Rajasthan Royals (RR) captain Sanju Samson has been cleared by the Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru to return to wicketkeeping after having played the side's first three games in IPL 2025 as a specialist batter. Samson, who had undergone finger surgery last month, has now recovered to take back the captaincy from Riyan Parag and also slot in as keeper.

In his absence - Samson had played as an Impact Player in RR's first three games this season - Parag had stood in as captain while Dhruv Jurel kept wicket.

"With this positive development, Samson will return to his full leadership role and resume captaincy from the team's next match against the Punjab Kings," RR said in a statement. "The franchise is encouraged by Samson's progress and looks forward to having him back in action behind the stumps and leading the side."

Under Parag, RR lost their first two games, against Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) and Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), but bounced back to beat Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in Guwahati on March 30. With Samson back as captain and keeper for their next match, against Punjab Kings (PBKS) in Mullanpur on April 5, RR can be more flexible



with their Impact Player strategy.

For example, against CSK, after Samson had been dismissed for 20, RR brought in Kumar Kartikeya as an Impact Player in the first innings and he ended up bowling just a solitary over in RR's successful defence of 182.

Samson has scored 99 runs in three innings so far in IPL 2025 at a strike rate of just under 155. RR are currently second from bottom on the table, with two points.

Sensex, Nifty recover nearly 1 pc ahead of US tariff announcements

MUMBAI, APR 3

Stock markets recovered on Wednesday with benchmark Sensex closing higher by nearly 593 points on strong macro data and value buying by investors after recent free-fall ahead of US tariff announcements.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rebounded 592.93 points or 0.78 per cent to settle at 76,617.44. During the day, it surged 655.84 points or 0.86 per cent to 76,680.35.

The NSE Nifty climbed 166.65 points or 0.72 per cent to 23,332.35.

Value buying in select auto, banking and IT shares, and India's manufacturing sector growth rising to an eight-month high in March powered the recovery in the domestic stock markets. Sensex had tanked 1,390 points or 1.80 per cent and Nifty plunged by 353 points on Tuesday due to FII selling ahead of US tariff announcements on Wednesday.

From the Sensex pack, Zomato jumped nearly 5 per cent, followed by Titan which climbed almost 4 per cent.

IndusInd Bank, Maruti, Tech Mahindra, Adani Ports, Bharti Airtel and HDFC Bank



were also among the gainers.

However, Nestle, Power Grid, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv and Larsen & Toubro were among the laggards.

"This optimism was largely driven by expectations that the tariffs would have a minimal impact on the domestic economy, given the positive progress in India-US trade negotiations. Sentiments were further reinforced by India's manufacturing PMI for March, which reached an eight-month high, hinting at a recovery in Q4FY25 corporate earnings," Vinod Nair, Head of

Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

In Asian markets, Tokyo and Shanghai settled in the positive territory while Seoul and Hong Kong ended lower.

European markets were quoting mostly lower. US markets ended mostly higher on Tuesday.

India's manufacturing sector growth rose to an eight-month high in March, driven by quicker increases in factory orders and production amid buoyant demand conditions, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) was at 58.1 in March, up from 56.3 in February, indicating a substantial improvement in the health of the sector that was above its long-run average.

"Despite mixed global cues surrounding the impending US tariffs, the domestic market experienced steady gains. This optimism was largely driven by expectations that the tariffs would have a minimal impact on the domestic economy, given the positive progress in the India-US trade negotiations," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Sentiments were further reinforced by India's manufacturing PMI for March, which reached an eight-month high, hinting at a recovery in Q4 FY25 corporate earnings, he added.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 5,901.63 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) were buyers as they bought equities worth Rs 4,322.58 crore.

GCMMF revenue rises 11 pc in FY25 to Rs 65,911 cr on higher demand for Amul products: MD Mehta



NEW DELHI, APR 3

Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF), which sells dairy products under the 'Amul' brand, recorded an 11 per cent rise in its revenue to Rs 65,911 crore for the last fiscal, mainly driven by an increase in volumes across all categories, its MD Jayen Mehta said.

GCMMF's turnover increased 8 per cent in 2023-24 to Rs 59,259 crore.

"Our revenue during the 2024-25 financial year grew by 11 per cent to Rs 65,911 crore. We have clocked double digits across all product categories," Mehta told PTI.

There has been decent growth in the last two quarters of the 2024-25

financial year, he added.

"The rise in turnover was largely driven by volume growth. We did not increase prices much," Mehta said.

Only in June last year, he said, the milk prices were raised because of a rise in input costs. In January this year, GCMMF reduced the prices of one-litre packs by Rs 1 per litre across India to encourage consumers to buy larger packs.

The GCMMF Managing Director expects to maintain the growth momentum in the current financial year on strong consumer demand.

Mehta said the company would continue to expand capacity to meet rising demand.

GCMMF is the world's largest farmer-owned dairy cooperative, having 36 lakh farmers across 18,600 villages of Gujarat and its 18 member unions procure 300 lakh litres of milk per day.

It also ranks 8th among the top 20 dairy companies in the world in terms of milk processing, as per the International Farm Comparison Network (IFCN).

Besides the domestic market, GCMMF is exporting dairy products to about 50 countries.

Last year, GCMMF entered the US market with the launch of four variants of fresh milk to cater to the Indian diaspora and Asian population.

Mundra Port handled record 200 mn metric tonnes of cargo volume in 2024-25



NEW DELHI, APR 3

Mundra Port, the flagship shipyard of Billionaire Gautam Adani-led Adani Ports, has become the first India dockyard to handle over 200 million metric tonnes of cargo volume in 2024-25.

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ), in a statement, said during March 2025, it handled its highest-ever cargo volume at 41.5 MMT (+9 per cent year-on-year), led by containers (+19 per cent) and liquids and gas (+5 per cent).

"APSEZ handles all-time high cargo volume in Mar 2025; Mundra becomes the first Indian port ever to

cross 200 MMT annual cargo volume," the company said.

The company said its Vizhinjam port crossed the 1,00,000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent unit) milestone during the month.

During FY25, APSEZ handled 450.2 MMT cargo volume (+7 per cent), led by containers (+20 per cent) and liquids and gas (+9 per cent).

In FY25, logistics rail volume stood at 0.64 Mn TEUs (+8 per cent), and GPWIS volume was at 21.97 MMT (+9 per cent).

APSEZ has a network of 15 ports/terminals across India's coastline with a capacity to handle some 627 mt of cargo a year.

Rupee falls 2 paise to close at 85.52 against US dollar

MUMBAI, APR 3

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day 2 paise lower at 85.52 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, as the support from positive domestic markets was negated by uncertainty over trade tariffs.

Forex traders said the Indian rupee ended the first trading session of the fiscal year 2025-26 on a flat note over Trump's reciprocal tariffs concerns and foreign fund outflows. A surge in crude oil prices also put pressure on the rupee.

However, positive domestic markets and a weak tone in the US dollar cushioned the downside, forex dealers said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.65 then touched an intra-day high of 85.50 and a low of 85.73 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 85.52 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 2 paise from its previous closing level.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias on trade tariff uncertainty and worries over rising crude oil



prices. However, foreign inflows and positive domestic markets may support rupee at lower levels," said Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly criticised the high tariffs charged by India and other countries on American goods.

He plans to roll out a set of reciprocal tariffs on April 2, which he says will be "Liberation Day" for the US.

On Friday, the rupee appreciated 24 paise to close

at 85.50 against the US dollar.

This is the first trading session of the 2025-26 financial year. On April 1, the currency and bond markets were closed on Tuesday for the annual account closing of banks.

On March 31, stock, money, commodity and derivative markets remained closed on account of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In the financial year 2024-25, the rupee depreciated more than 2 per cent. On

April 2, 2024, it was quoted at 83.42 against the US dollar.

In March this year, the local unit appreciated 2.17 per cent, the maximum since November 2018 when the local unit had registered a gain of over 5 per cent.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.12 per cent lower at 104.13.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.12 per cent to USD 74.40 per barrel in futures trade.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 592.93 points, or 0.78 per cent, to close at 76,617.44, while the Nifty advanced 166.65 points, or 0.72 per cent, to settle at 23,332.35 points.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) turned sellers and offloaded equities worth Rs 5,901.63 crore on a net basis on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Meanwhile, India's manufacturing sector growth rose to an eight-month high in March, driven by quicker increases in factory orders and production amid buoyant demand conditions, a month-

US tariffs may impact agri, machinery, pharma, electrical, chemical sectors: Experts

NEW DELHI, APR 3

Goods from sectors, including agriculture, precious stones, chemicals, pharma, medical devices, electricals, and machinery may get impacted if the US will go ahead with imposing reciprocal tariffs on Indian products, according to experts.

They said that these sectors could face additional customs duties from the Trump administration because of the high tariff differential or gap, which is the difference between the import duties imposed by the US and India on a product.

At the broad sector level, the potential tariff gaps between India and the US vary across the sectors.

The gap is 8.6 per cent for chemicals and pharmaceuticals; 5.6 per cent for plastics; 1.4 per cent for textiles and



clothing; 13.3 per cent for diamonds, gold, and jewellery; 2.5 per cent for iron, steel, and base metals; 5.3 per cent for machinery and computers; 7.2 per cent for electronics; and 23.1 per cent for automobiles and auto components.

"The higher the tariff gap,

the worse affected a sector could be," an exporter said.

US President Donald Trump has said that the tariff announcements, scheduled for early morning Wednesday (India time), will amount to a 'Liberation Day' for the US.

According to an analysis of

the think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), the hardest-hit sector in agriculture would be fish, meat, and processed seafood, with USD 2.58 billion in exports in 2024, facing a 27.83 per cent tariff differential.

Shrimp, a major export to America, will become significantly less competitive due to the imposition of the US tariffs. "Already our exports have antidumping and countervailing duties in the US. The additional hike in tariffs will make us uncompetitive. Out of India's total shrimp exports, we ship 40 per cent to America," Kolkata-based seafood exporter and MD of Megaa Moda Yogesh Gupta said.

He said that Indian exporters may get some relief if the US will impose similar tariffs on competitor countries - Ecuador and Indonesia.

Govt appoints NCAER Director General Poonam Gupta as RBI Deputy Governor



NEW DELHI, APR 3

The Government has approved the appointment of NCAER Director General Poonam Gupta as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a period of three years, according to sources.

The post of the Deputy Governor of RBI fell vacant after M D Patra demitted office in January.

The sources said the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) approved Gupta's appointment for the post of Deputy Governor in the RBI for three years from the

date of joining, sources said.

Currently, Gupta is the Director General of National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), India's largest economic policy think tank.

She is also a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister and Convener of the Advisory Council to the 16th Finance Commission. She joined NCAER in 2021 after working in senior positions for nearly two decades at the IMF and World Bank in Washington DC.

Gupta taught at the Delhi School of Economics, University of Maryland (USA) and as a visiting faculty at ISI, Delhi. She has also been the RBI Chair Professor at NIPFP and a Professor at ICRIER.

Gupta holds a Master's degree and PhD in Economics from University of Maryland, USA, and a Master's degree in Economics from Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi.

She won the 1998 EXIM Bank award for her PhD on international economics.

Swaraj Tractors, Mahindra Susten partner to develop Punjab's largest Solar captive project

MUMBAI, APR 3

Swaraj Tractors, a division of the Mahindra Group, has announced its collaboration with Mahindra Susten, the Group's clean-tech arm, to establish Punjab's largest solar group captive project-a 26 MW solar energy installation in Bathinda district.

This ambitious venture is a significant step forward towards scaling up Swaraj Tractors renewable energy share to up to 50 per cent, the company said in a statement. The solar energy project developed by Mahindra Susten, will supply clean energy to four Swaraj Tractor manufacturing facilities located in Mohali and Dera Bassi. The project is expected to generate approximately 60 million kWh of renewable energy annually, contributing to the abatement of around 54,600 tonnes of CO2 emissions. The initiative reinforces Mahindra Group

dedication to sustainability and climate action, while setting a new benchmark for green energy adoption in tractor manufacturing. Commenting on the significance of this project, Hemant Sikka, President, Farm Equipment Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd stated, "With this groundbreaking solar project, we are taking a pioneering step in introducing green energy at such a large scale in tractor manufacturing for the first time in India. The initiative aligns perfectly with our vision of Transforming Farming and Enriching Lives, while advancing toward a sustainable future."

Echoing this sentiment, Gaganjot Singh, CEO, Swaraj Division, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., remarked, "This solar project is a testament to our unwavering commitment to creating a cleaner,

greener future. By leveraging Mahindra Susten's expertise, we are confident of achieving our renewable energy goals and making a significant contribution to Punjab's evolving energy landscape."

The project also marks Mahindra Susten's entry into another state viz. Punjab, further strengthening its business footprint as a leading renewable Independent Power Producer (IPP). Deepak Thakur, Managing Director and CEO, Mahindra Susten Private Limited, emphasized the importance of this collaboration: "At Mahindra Susten, our vision is to deliver clean and efficient energy solutions to the Commercial and Industrial (C&I) sector and we are doing so by developing bespoke power plants tailored to optimally serve each C&I client requirements."

Coromandel International Empowers Tribal Students with Comprehensive Infrastructure Support in Nilgiris

JAMMU, APR 3

Coromandel International Limited, one of India's leading agri-solutions providers, in collaboration with Round Table India, has successfully initiated infrastructure development at Eklavya Tribal School in Ooty, Nilgiris District, Tamil Nadu, furthering its commitment to improving access to quality education for underprivileged communities. This initiative aims to provide better learning conditions, essential amenities, and a safer environment for 200 tribal students, addressing both immediate and long-term needs.

The school has been operating with limited infrastructure, lacking proper classrooms, dormitories, and recreational

spaces. To bridge this gap, Coromandel International has provided essential resources such as mattresses, blankets, uniforms, and washing machines to improve students' daily living conditions. Additionally, the company has contributed solar streetlights and water purifiers, ensuring a safer and more sustainable environment for the students.

The inauguration was held at M. Palada Village, Nilgiris and graced by the District Collector of Ooty, Lakshmi Bhavaya Tanneeru, I.A.S.; Head-CSR Coromandel International, Jayagopal Chathur; Ooty Round Table Honorary Member, Mr. Ashwin Shivraj; and other members from the government Tribal welfare association, students,

teachers, members, and dignitaries from Round Table India.

Recognizing the importance of holistic development for students, Mr. Arun Leslie George-President & CHRO, Coromandel International Limited, emphasized the company's long-term commitment to strengthening educational opportunities in underserved areas. He stated, "Creating a nurturing environment for young learners is key to shaping their future. Through this initiative, we are glad to contribute towards ensuring that students have access to proper infrastructure, allowing them to focus on their education without infrastructural challenges. We hope this project will serve as a foundation for their personal and academic."

India's defence exports surge to record Rs 23,622 crore in 2024-25: Rajnath



NEW DELHI, APR 03

India's defence exports have surged to a record high of Rs 23,622 crore (approx. USD 2.76 billion) in 2024-25, registering a 12.04 per cent growth over the previous fiscal, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the achievement as a "proud milestone" in India's progress in the defence manufacturing sector.

"This is indeed a proud milestone in our journey towards self-reliance and global leadership in defence manufacturing!" Modi said on X.

Singh also said the country is poised to achieve the target of Rs 50,000 crore in defence exports by 2029.

India's defence exports in 2023-24 were Rs 21,083 crore.

"India's defence exports have

surged to a record high of Rs 23,622 crore in the FY 2024-25," the defence minister said on X. "An impressive growth of Rs 2,539 crore or 12.04% has been registered in the just-concluded FY over the defence exports figures of FY 2023-24, which were Rs 21,083 crore," he added. Singh also congratulated all the stakeholders on this "significant achievement".

"Under PM Shri @narendramodi's leadership India is marching towards achieving the target of increasing defence exports to Rs 50,000 crore by 2029," Singh said.

The Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) have shown a significant increase of 42.85 per cent in their exports in 2024-25, according to an official readout.

It said the surge in the

DPSU's exports reflected the growing acceptability of Indian products in the global market and the ability of the country's defence industry to be a part of the global supply chain.

The private sector and DPSUs have contributed Rs 15,233 crore and Rs 8,389 crore respectively in defence exports of 2024-25, the defence ministry said in the readout.

The corresponding figures for 2023-24 were Rs 15,209 crore and Rs 5,874 crore respectively, it added.

"India has evolved from a largely import-dependent military force to one increasingly focused on self-reliance and indigenous production," the ministry said.

"In a major boost to defence exports, a wide range of items from ammunition, arms, sub-systems/systems and parts & components have been exported to around 80 countries in the just-concluded financial year," it said.

The ministry said the Department of Defence Production has a dedicated portal for application and processing of export authorisation requests, and 1,762 export authorisations were issued in 2024-25 compared to 1,507 in the preceding year.

The total number of exporters also grew by 17.4 per cent in the same period, it said.

'Laboured, tortuous': Chidambaram on Sitharaman's explanation to query on capital expenditure

NEW DELHI, APR 03

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram has said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman gave a "tortuous" explanation to his question on capital expenditure, asserting that the numbers "conclusively" proved that there was a "cut" in capex during 2024-25.

Chidambaram said this in a statement late on Tuesday evening while responding to the answers given by Sitharaman in the Rajya Sabha.

The former finance minister said Sitharaman has given a "laboured and tortuous" explanation to a simple question on what was the budget estimate for capital expenditure in the 2024-25 budget and what is the estimate at the end of year.

"There is a reduction (cut), and I asked in the Rajya Sabha what are the reasons for the cut? FM could have listed the reasons and it is for the people to decide whether the reasons are acceptable or not.

"Instead, she has questioned the very comparison of BE and RE. I am astonished that the Hon'ble FM should say that comparison of BE and RE is 'flawed'. If BE and RE are not comparable, why list the two numbers side-by-side on the same page in the Budget documents," Chidambaram asked.

He also asked why does the finance minister list the Budget Estimate (BE) of fiscal deficit side-by-side with the Revised Estimate (RE) of the fiscal



deficit.

"In order to show the world that the government has 'improved' upon the original estimate of the fiscal deficit," he said.

"The same logic applies to all estimates. As far as capital expenditure in 2024-25 is concerned, the numbers conclusively prove that there was a reduction (cut) in 2024-25," Chidambaram said in the statement.

Earlier, Sitharaman said the capital expenditure has not been reduced but has gone up to Rs 11.21 lakh crore for the 2025-26 fiscal, and claims of cuts are misleading and based on flawed comparisons.

Replying during the Question Hour in the Rajya Sabha, Sitharaman said the capital expenditure was Rs 11.11 lakh

crore in 2024-25.

"Actually, (in) the budget this year..., it has gone up to Rs 11.21 lakh crore. So, the capital expenditure has not been cut at all," she said.

"So, cutting down the capital expenditure is not the case with us," she added.

Sitharaman was responding to a question by Chidambaram.

Later, responding to a social media post of Chidambaram, Sitharaman said his "claims of a cut in capital expenditure are misleading and based on flawed comparisons".

Chidambaram's selective arithmetic and flawed comparisons between BE and RE of the same year may serve political rhetoric but do little for informed public discourse, she said in a post on X.

He further argued that the



A woman holds a placard in support of Waqf Amendment Bill during a BJP rally ahead of a debate on the bill in Lok Sabha, in New Delhi.

Waqf bill attack on Constitution's basic structure, INDIA bloc opposes it: Gogoi



NEW DELHI, APR 03

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Wednesday said the INDIA bloc will oppose the proposed changes to the Waqf law and called the bill an attack on the basic structure of the Constitution with an aim to dilute its provisions, defame minorities, disenfranchise them and divide the Indian society.

Hitting back, former Union minister and BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said when large number of Waqf properties are lying vacant and being looted, the government has all powers to bring a law to regulate it.

He told Gogoi that while he cited Constitution, he did not present a complete picture on its various provisions authorising government to bring laws on various issues, including Waqf properties.

Initiating the debate on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, Gogoi accused the government of misleading Parliament, referencing past discussions on the matter.

"This bill is an attack on the basic structure of our Constitution, an attack on our federal structure, and has four primary objectives: to dilute the Constitution, to defame minority communities, to divide Indian society, and to disenfranchise minorities," he alleged.

"The claim that the 2013 UPA government did not act on this issue is false. Repeated allegations have been made," Gogoi said, questioning the necessity of the amendments.

He further argued that the

bill had not been adequately discussed with minority representatives.

"In 2023, four meetings of the Minority Commission were held, and yet, there was no mention of the need for a Waqf amendment bill. I ask the government – was this bill drafted by the Minority Affairs Ministry or some other department?" The opposition MP also raised concerns over Clause 3, which defines individuals practising Islam.

"Minorities are now being forced to prove their religious identity with certificates. Tomorrow, will people from other faiths also have to do this? This is against Article 26 of the Constitution," he said.

"Which community do you want to mislead? The same community that fought for India's independence? The community that sacrificed alongside Mangal Pandey in 1857? You want to tarnish the reputation of a community in which 2 lakh ulema were martyred? You seek to defame the community that supported us during the Quit India Movement? You want to stain the name of the community that supported the Dandi March on April 6, 1930?" Gogoi said. "You wish to malign the community that opposed the British policy of divide and rule in 1926? You aim to taint the community whose leader, Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, demanded complete independence?" he added.

Gogoi also accused the government of spreading misinfor-

mation about the bill's impact on women's rights.

"There is an attempt to create the illusion that the existing law discriminates against women. In reality, the law already has provisions for the protection and empowerment of women, including widows," he said.

He also claimed that the Joint Parliament Committee did not take any suggestions of the Opposition into consideration.

Gogoi noted the reduction in revenue allocation from 7 per cent to 5 per cent, arguing that instead of reducing it, the government should consider increasing it to 11 per cent to strengthen the Waqf Board. He also claimed that provisions on imprisonment had been diluted.

"There is a clear attempt to take control of Waqf properties. Today, their eyes are on one minority group; tomorrow, they will target another. We support necessary reforms, but this bill will only lead to increased litigation and more problems," he said.

Countering the Opposition attack, Prasad said the church community is also in favour of Waqf amendment bill as churches too are facing the problem of encroachment by Waqf bodies.

He said the government cannot watch silently as corruption on Waqf properties continue unabated.

"Waqf is not a religious body; it is a statutory body. There are over 8 lakh Waqf properties, including schools, hospitals, and orphanages. Shouldn't there be a mechanism to ensure proper governance? The opposition is politically bound to oppose reforms, but they must look within themselves," he added.

Prasad said that the amendments were necessary to ensure transparency and fairness in Waqf administration.

"The Waqf Bill is about regulating properties, not about targeting any community. If the bill provides more representation to backward Muslims in Waqf affairs, why is the opposition objecting? If Waqf properties are being misused or illegally occupied, the Constitution allows for corrective legislation," he said.

Prasad said the Congress has

Man posing as Army officer arrested for cheating family of over Rs 8 lakh in Delhi



NEW DELHI, APR 03

A 28-year-old man impersonating a lieutenant colonel in the Army has been arrested for allegedly cheating a family of over Rs 8 lakh by promising government jobs, an official here said on Wednesday.

The accused, identified as Sumit Singh, a resident of Delhi's Uttam Nagar, created fake Army documents, wore a Lieutenant Colonel's uniform, and used badges and rubber stamps to mislead victims, he said.

Singh was also involved in multiple cases of similar fraud in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, including a rape and cheating case in Lucknow and another

fraud case in Hardoi, police said.

The accused, originally from Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur, also reportedly procured a canteen card and issued fraudulent recruitment letters under the Ministry of Defence, police added.

"A case was registered in Gulabi Bagh Police Station based on the complaint of a 30-year-old woman advocate who alleged that Singh introduced himself as a senior Army officer in July 2024 and promised her a legal position in the Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT)," a senior police official said.

He later extended similar job offers to her brother and father,

extracting large sums under the pretence of recruitment formalities, the woman said in her complaint.

The accused allegedly demanded money for application fees, mess charges, uniform kits, and other expenses, accumulating over Rs 8 lakh in cash from the victim and her family, officials said.

He also took a mobile phone worth Rs 1.6 lakh from the complainant under false pretences, the officer added.

Police said Singh fabricated recruitment letters, used a false identity, and even pressured the complainant to marry him.

"The fraud came to light when the victims cross-verified his claims and found discrepancies in the documents he provided," the officer said.

The police traced Singh to a rented accommodation in Bindapur and arrested him. Upon interrogation, he confessed his crimes, the officer said.

Recovered items include two fake Indian Army rubber stamps, a military uniform with four Lieutenant Colonel badges, a canteen card, three fake recruitment letters and a motorcycle bought with the defrauded money, the officer said.

Further investigation into the matter is underway, the officer added.

India's Media Ecosystem Doesn't Need Validation From Foreign Bodies: Govt

NEW DELHI, APR 03

India has a vibrant press and media ecosystem which does not need validation from foreign organisations, the government told the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan said this in a written response to a question from Congress MP K Sudhakaran, who asked about "India's decline in the Global Press Freedom Index ranking in 2024".

"India has a vibrant press and media ecosystem, which does not need validation from foreign organisations," he said.

In its report published last year, global media watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked India 159th out of 180 countries based on journalists' ability to work and report freely and independently.

India was ranked below Turkey, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, which stood at 158th, 152nd, and 150th positions, respectively.



RSF has consultative status with the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the International Organisation of the Francophonie.

Asked about steps taken by the government to safeguard press freedom and journalists' rights, the minister said freedom of speech and expression is protected under Article 19 of the Constitution.

He added that India has a

robust judicial system that ensures the enforcement of constitutional provisions.

The minister also said the Press Council of India (PCI), an autonomous statutory body set up under the Press Council Act, 1978, and headed by a retired Supreme Court judge, adjudicates complaints from journalists about curbs on press freedom, physical assaults and attacks on journalists.

Shamita Shetty on 25 years of Mohabbatein: "It was a dream debut for me and that's a film that i can still watch"



Shamita Shetty, the talented Bollywood actor and younger sister of superstar Shilpa Shetty, is celebrating a significant milestone in her career as her debut film Mohabbatein completes 25 years this October. The film, a beloved musical romantic drama directed by Aditya Chopra and produced under the prestigious Yash Raj Films banner, was released

on October 27, 2000. With an ensemble cast featuring Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, and Aishwarya Rai, Mohabbatein became an iconic film that continues to hold a special place in the hearts of audiences. For Shamita, who played the role of the spirited college student Ishika, the film's silver jubilee anniversary is a moment of joy and gratitude.

Reflecting on her debut, she expressed her happiness at having started her Bollywood journey with a film that remains evergreen. "It's a great feeling to see Mohabbatein turn 25. I was very lucky to have debuted in a film like that. It was a dream debut for me, and that's a film I can still watch. It's timeless," she shared in an interview with PTI during

the Lakme Fashion Week (LFW) X FDCI event.

Shamita's journey in Bollywood has seen her take on diverse roles in films such as Zeher, Bewafaa, and Cash, along with notable appearances in television reality shows, including Bigg Boss 15. Despite her sporadic presence in the industry, she remains hopeful and eager to explore new opportunities. "I'm waiting for something nice to come my way. Let's see if there's a filmmaker out there who believes I can do good work on screen. I'm ever willing to work," she said, expressing her desire to make a strong comeback.

Apart from her film career, Shamita has also been a style icon, often making headlines with her fashion choices. At the Lakme Fashion Week, she extended her congratulations to the platform for completing 25 successful editions. Recognizing its role in shaping India's fashion industry, she stated, "Lakme Fashion Week was one of the first platforms to help fashion designers showcase their work and creativity. They have continued to do so for so many years. They were one of the firsts, and then came the rest of them."

When asked about her personal style statement, Shamita emphasized the importance of comfort. "It's fairly simple... For me, comfort always takes precedence," she remarked.

As she celebrates Mohabbatein's milestone and looks ahead to new projects, fans continue to appreciate Shamita's grace and talent, hoping to see her shine once again on the silver screen.

Genelia Deshmukh reveals the reaction to her comeback after 10 years: "I was told it won't work"



Genelia Deshmukh might be most popular for her role in Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Na with Imran Khan. However, her Marathi debut Ved with Riteish Deshmukh was the second highest-grossing film in Marathi cinema after Sairat.

The actress attended a panel discussion on women empowerment at Elle Impact recently, and she got candid about how she was asked to not make a comeback after 10 years.

Genelia Deshmukh Reveals The Reaction To Her Comeback After 10 Years: "I Was Told It Won't Work" On the work front, she will be seen in Aamir Khan's Sitaare Zameen Par, which is a sequel to Taare Zameen Par

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Genelia said, "It's a part of our life. I feel we hype our success too much and stress a bit too much

about failure, whereas the impact and intent of your daily life are what truly matter. Being an actor who has worked in six languages, and someone who took a break because I was having babies, I remember people telling me, 'Oh, you want to come back to films after 10 years? It won't work', but my comeback film became a cult hit. We shouldn't listen to people." She added, "During those ten years, I was focusing on myself and my kids, and I remember Riteish telling me that we have to make our kids capable. As someone who was used to easy protein and a non-vegetarian diet, I struggled with it. That's where Imagine was born. It is for every flexitarian, someone who consumes meat five days a week but opts for sustainable options twice a week. Even when it comes to vegetarian foods, we have very few options for protein intake. This led Riteish and me to create a sustainable option."

For the unversed, Imagine Meats is a plant-based meat initiative made by Genelia and Riteish Deshmukh. The actress also mentioned how she does not give too much attention to success or failure.

On the work front, she will be seen in Aamir Khan's Sitaare Zameen Par, which is a sequel to Taare Zameen Par.

Sanjay Dutt confirms working with Salman Khan after 25 Years: "Excited to work with my younger brother"

Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt, who was last seen in the streaming movie Ghudchadi, has confirmed working with his brother from another mother, Bollywood superstar Salman Khan.

Sanjay attended the trailer launch of his upcoming movie The Bhootnii in the city on Saturday where he spoke about working with his "Chhota bhai" Salman Khan. The actor also mentioned that the film will be an action entertainer.

The actor told the media stationed at the venue, "Saajan dekh li aapne, Chal Mere Bhai dekh li, abhi dono mein Tashan dekh lijiye (You have seen Saajan, you have seen Chal Mere Bhai, now you can see Tashan). I'm very excited for the movie. I'm also happy, ye soch ke ki main apne chote bhai ke sath kaam karunga 25 years ke baad (I'm very happy collaborating with my younger brother Salman after 25 years)".

Salman and Sanjay are the thickest of friends in Bollywood. The two have even hosted the 5th season of the reality television show Bigg Boss.

Earlier, Sanjay visited Finland and enjoyed the sighting of Aurora Borealis. The actor took to his Instagram and shared an array of pictures and videos from Finland. In the video, he can be seen chanting Har Har Mahadev and Jai Bholenath along with a few fellow Indians in Finland.

He wrote in the caption, "Bholenath's presence knows no boundaries. Meeting fellow Indians in Finland, the magic of the Northern Lights, and the love of family by my side, it couldn't get any better. Jai Bholenath".

The Aurora Borealis is a natural light display that occurs when charged particles from the sun collide with Earth's atmosphere.

A Sneak Peek into Priyanka Chopra's Jaipur vacay

Please do not disturb Priyanka Chopra. The actress is currently in Jaipur to attend a Bvlgari event. Recently, the Quantico star shared glimpses from her City Palace stay on Instagram.

Priyanka shared a view of the city from her hotel and wrote, "Gorgeous."

The actress also posted a video of a painting in her room and said, "View from my bed, gorgeous."

The next morning, Priyanka spotted a peacock in the hotel garden. Take a look:

Priyanka Chopra made sure to eat authentic Rajasthani food. Her platter featured dal, baati and churma.

On the work front, Priyanka Chopra is currently busy with SS Rajamouli's SSMB29. The film features Mahesh Babu as the male lead. While an official announcement with full details about the project is still awaited, Pinkvilla confirmed that the actress would play the female lead in the film.

A source told the publication, "The film is in the final stages of writing, and is all set to go on floors in April 2025. SS Rajamouli was looking for a female lead with a global presence; and who better than Priyanka to play the lead role. The filmmaker had multiple meetings with PC over the last 6 months, and the energies have aligned for both the stakeholders."

Priyanka Chopra is all set to light up the screen alongside Idris Elba and John Cena in Ilya Naishuller's action-comedy Heads of State. But that is not all — she is also gearing up for the action-packed The Bluff with Karl Urban and has Citadel Season 2 in her lineup.

Tamannaah Bhatia on Baahubali: The Beginning: "Baahubali was a magical movie that happened to us"



Actor Tamannaah Bhatia says no one could have predicted that Baahubali: The Beginning, which turns 10 this year, would go on to become an "unforgettable" chapter in the history of Indian cinema.

Directed by SS Rajamouli, the first part in the pan-India superhit Baahubali franchise released in theatres on July 10, 2015 with Prabhas in the lead. It was the first Telugu film to get a worldwide release in Hindi.

Bhatia, who played the role of the

skilled warrior Avantika in the two-part fictional period saga, said the film was more than a career turn-around for her.

Baahubali was a magical movie that happened to us. I don't think any of us could have imagined or predicted what that film would do. But what it did for us, not just me as an actor, but also the country and the film industry, that's something unforgettable and historic," the actor told PTI on the sidelines of the Lakme Fashion Week X FDCI here.

This year is also special for Bhatia as she completes 20 years in the film industry. She made her acting debut with the 2005 Hindi film Chand Sa Roshan Chehra.

The 35-year-old actor, also known for her work across Telugu, Tamil and Hindi film industries such as Happy Days, Kalloori, Devi, Aranmanai 4, and the upcoming Odel 2, said she's just getting started.

"It actually takes 20 years for creative people to figure themselves out. In my case, it's true because I started very young. I truly feel I've just started out and I'm going to make each day count and hopefully give audiences something special to watch every time," she added.

On Friday evening, Bhatia walked the ramp for popular designer duo Falguni Shane Peacock alongside filmmaker Karan Johar.

The actor, who rocked the stage in an intricate metal corset clubbed with a black jacket and black flaring pants, praised the couturiers for skillfully blending glamour with silhouette.

"Casual glamour is something that I have found out to be my innate expression in styling myself or anything I do. I feel very comfortable and natural in casual glamour.

Palak Tiwari reacts to looking similar to Ananya Panday: "Hamesha aise kyun bolte ho aap log?"



Palak Tiwari gained rapid fame after her video dancing to Bijlee Bijlee went viral on social media. She is Shweta Tiwari's daughter and made her big Bollywood debut with Salman Khan's Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan.

The paparazzi seems to follow her everywhere she goes. Be it being spotted with friends in the city or at the airport, she is often seen interacting with them as well.

However, recently the paps addressed her by saying, "Palak Tiwari bole ya Ananya Panday bole? (Should we call you Palak Tiwari or Ananya Panday?)"

Though Palak tried to ignore it, on repeatedly being asked the same, she got a little perturbed as she said, "Hamesha aise kyu bolte ho aap log?" (Why do you always speak like

this?)."

Palak still maintained her exposure as she walked away.

The video went viral on social media in no time and garnered a lot of attention.

On the work front, Palak will next be seen in Vivek Oberoi's film, Rosie The Saffron Chapter. Her look poster for Bhootnii was also released recently, she will star alongside Sanjay Dutt, Mouni Roy, Sunny Singh, Aasif Khan, and Beyounick. The film will be directed by Siddhant Sachdev and is scheduled for a theatrical release on April 18, 2025.

Palak Tiwari has also been rumoured to be dating Ibrahim Ali Khan for the longest time. However, none of them have confirmed it yet, even though they have been spotted together at several events.

Radhika Apte shares a glimpse of her daughter as she arrives in "Motherland" Mumbai

Radhika Apte and Benedict Taylor welcomed their first child, a baby girl, in December last year. Now, the new mom has dropped a new picture of her little munchkin on Instagram.

Earlier today, Radhika Apte arrived in her "motherland," Mumbai, with her daughter and husband. In the snap, the newborn is snuggled cosily in a baby carrier.

The infant's face is partially visible. A GIF hat and sunglasses conceal most of her features, but the subtle glimpse is enough to leave us gushing. Radhika Apte smiles gleefully in the photo.

Her caption read, "Touchdown in the motherland! Mum chose the best month for a Mumbai intro."

She hashtagged the post with the words mango season, underlining her excitement for the city's famous summer delight.

Radhika Apte tagged her partner, Benedict Taylor, to the post, indicating that the sweet image was clicked by him.

Actress Tisca Chopra reacted to the post, "Oh my lord (red heart emoji)," she commented.

Previously, on Women's Day, Radhika Apte had uploaded a fam-jam photograph on Instagram. The cute shot captured by Benedict Taylor shows the first-time dad holding his daughter. Here, too, the little one's face was not visible.

Radhika Apte rested her head on Benedict Taylor's shoulders. She looked at her little bundle of joy affectionately.

The lush greenery and picturesque sunset in the background added a magical touch to the priceless moment. Radhika Apte captioned it, "Happy Women's Day to us all."

From breast cancer to brain, DNA damage – here’s how ethylene oxide can affect your health



Ethylene oxide is a cancer-causing agent that can raise the risk of breast cancer, as well as cause damage to the DNA, the brain, and the nervous system in humans. The carcinogen has been found in four products from two big spice brands in India — three from MDH and one from Everest — at levels exceeding the permissible limit.

What is ethylene oxide?

The Spices Board, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, defines ethylene oxide as a “flammable, colourless gas at temperatures above 10.7 Celsius”.

It serves as a “disinfectant, fumigant, sterilising agent and insecticide”.

It is majorly used to sterilise medical equipment and to reduce microbial contamination in spices.

Besides being produced

from natural sources, it can also be generated from water-logged soil, manure, and sewage sludge.

What are the health effects?

The World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classifies ethylene oxide as a ‘Group 1 carcinogen’, meaning it has “enough evidence to conclude that it can cause cancer in humans”.

Short-term exposure to the carcinogen can affect the human central nervous system, and cause depression and irritation of the eyes and mucous membranes but prolonged exposure can irritate the eyes, skin, nose, throat, and lungs, and damage the brain and nervous system, as per the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The EPA said “ethylene oxide is carcinogenic to humans by the inhalation route of exposure”, and has also been linked to reproductive problems.

“Evidence in humans indicates that exposure to ethylene oxide increases the risk of lymphoid cancer and, for females, breast cancer,” it noted.

Further, according to the US National Cancer Institute, ethylene oxide is frequently reported to be associated with lymphoma and leukaemia.

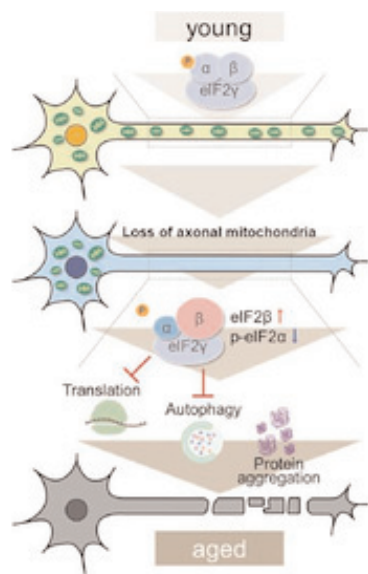
Stomach and breast cancers may also be associated with ethylene oxide exposure, the institute said.

It stated that people can be exposed to ethylene oxide via inhalation and ingestion, which may occur through occupational, consumer, or environmental exposure.

According to the latest estimates of cancer’s global burden by the WHO, India has more than 14.1 lakh new cancer cases and over 9.1 lakh deaths in 2022.

The number is projected to go up to 15.7 lakh in 2025, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Cancer Registry Programme (ICMR-NCRP).

Scientists decode abnormal build-up of proteins in neurons that cause Alzheimer’s



A team of Japanese researchers has identified how proteins collect abnormally in neurons which is a feature of neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer’s.

Diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) are known to be accompanied by an abnormal build-up of proteins in neurons.

However, the trigger behind this accumulation remains unknown,

according to the study that appeared in the journal eLife.

The team, led by Associate Professor Kanoe Ando of Tokyo Metropolitan University, focused on the presence of mitochondria in axons, the long tendril-like appendages that stretch out of neurons and form the necessary connections that allow signals to be transmitted inside our brains.

It is known that the levels of mitochondria in axons can drop with age, and during the progress of neurodegenerative diseases.

The team used fruit flies to show that depletion of mitochondria in axons can directly lead to protein accumulation.

At the same time, significantly high amounts of a specific protein were found. Restoring the levels to normal led to a recovery in protein recycling.

Such findings promise new treatments for neurodegenerative diseases, said researchers

“As populations age and the prevalence of neurodegenerative conditions continues to increase, the team’s findings present a vital step in developing therapies to combat these serious illnesses,” the study noted.

This could be a reason for your late-night chocolate cravings



If you have spent nights eating chocolates or ice cream, then ‘loneliness’ can be the reason behind the binging on sugary items, say researchers.

According to the study published in the journal JAMA Network Open, loneliness can cause an extreme desire for sugary foods.

To conduct the study, the researchers linked brain

chemistry from socially isolated individuals to poor mental health, weight gain, cognitive loss, and chronic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and obesity.

Senior study author Arpana Gupta, an Associate Professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, said that she wanted to observe the brain pathways associated with obesity, depression,

and anxiety, as well as binge eating, which is a coping mechanism against loneliness.

The study included 93 premenopausal participants, and the results indicated that people who experienced loneliness or isolation had a higher body fat percentage.

Moreover, they displayed poor eating behaviours such as food addiction and uncontrolled eating.

Scientists used MRI scans to monitor the participants’ brain activity while they were looking at abstract images of sweet and savoury foods. The results revealed that individuals who experienced isolation had more activity in certain regions of the brain that are responsible for reacting to sugar cravings.

These same participants showed a lower reaction in areas that deal with self-control.

According to Gupta, social isolation can cause food cravings similar to “the cravings for social connections”.

meal if their child dislikes the food served, often opting for a less healthy alternative.

“Rather than allowing the child to choose an alternate menu, parents should provide a balanced meal with at least one option that their child is typically willing to eat,” Woolford said.

She further suggested that if a child chooses not to eat, parents need not worry, as this will not harm healthy children and “they will be more likely to eat the options presented at the next meal.”

New shoe insole technology to reduce diabetic foot ulcer risk



Diabetic foot ulcers — a dangerous open sore that can lead to hospitalisation and leg, foot, or toe amputations — can now be reduced using a new shoe insole technology, said researchers.

Nearly one in three people with diabetes develop foot ulcers during their lifetime. Foot ulcers happen because diabetes over time causes low blood supply to the nerves and feet, leading to poor circulation and foot sores.

While several shoe insoles have been created over the years to try to alleviate the problem of foot ulcers, the new technology focuses on creating a pressure-alternating shoe insole.

The new technology “works by cyclically relieving pressure from different areas of the foot, thereby providing periods of rest to the soft tissues and improving blood flow. This approach aims to maintain the health of the skin and tissues, thereby reducing the risk of diabetic foot ulcers,” said Muthu B J Wijesundara, principal research scientist at The University of Texas at Arlington Research Institute, US.

Muthu noted that the innovative insole technology addresses the skin and soft tissue breakdown in diabetic patients that occurs due to repetitive stress on the foot during walking.

Because the problem of foot ulcers is so large, “it’s exciting that we may be able to make a real difference in the lives of so many people,” he noted in an article in the peer-reviewed International Journal of Lower Extremity Wounds.

Experts urge parents to wean children off social media

After the tragic death of 19-year-old Shivansh who fell into a water tank and died while making a reel for social media, psychology experts have asked parents to work in coordination with the schools to provide love, recognition and validation that young people seek on social media, even while putting their lives in danger.

Clinical psychologist and former head of the psychology department at Lucknow University, Prof Pallavi Bhatnagar said young people want to be noticed, even if it means losing relationships.

She explained that in a fast-changing world, relationships often suffer. Youngsters seek recognition, security and belonging, so they turn to the Internet for support. “They think doing unique things will get them attention and make them feel good, like a drug. This makes them constantly crave more attention and try to outdo others,” she said.

Prof Adarsh Tripathi from the psychiatry department of the King George’s Medical University (KGMU) here said that five to six young patients struggling with social media addiction and having suicidal feelings, visit him daily. They make risky or explicit content. When people see it, they want more to be seen, which keeps them hooked.

Social media gives a dopamine rush in the brain, like an addiction, said the experts.

To counter this trend, Prof



Bhatnagar suggested parents should pay attention and tell them not to take the Internet too seriously. Group discussions should be arranged at school, keeping in mind the risky stuff they might do.

Prof Tripathi suggested holding off on giving adolescents smartphones with social media. “Playing outdoor sports can also help in controlling the urge to make reels or view it,” he added.

In an interesting observation, it has been seen that all UP Board top scorers have one thing in common, they are ‘inactive’ on social media.

The toppers said that board preparation is incomplete without daily revisions and one should be trusting classroom teaching rather than running after knowledge from the Internet and coaching classes.

Though born in the times of social media reel popularity, these toppers maintained a safe distance from social media.

Almost all the toppers said that they preferred reading books instead of being active on social media.

World needs better robotics surgeons to improve patient outcomes: Experts



As robot-assisted surgeries gain momentum globally, including in India, it is time to train surgeons employing the latest technological advances to improve patient outcomes, experts said on Sunday.

According to Dr Mahendra Bhandari, CEO of US-based Vattikuti Foundation, we should focus on how new robotic technology is being used, capturing data predictive models before, during, and after an operation to improve patient outcomes as well as surgeon didactic and training skills.

“We encourage teams of accomplished surgeons to prepare high-quality, digital submissions showcasing their most extraordinary surgical work employing the latest technological advances,” Bhandari said.

Vattikuti Foundation has also announced the 2024 edition of its

‘KS International Innovation Awards in Robotic Surgery’.

The scope of the multi-disciplinary technology competition has been expanded to cover two distinct tracks — robotic procedure innovation and technological innovation.

According to the foundation, the robotic procedure innovation entries can be from cardiac, general surgery, gynaecology, head and neck, microsurgery, organ transplant, orthopaedics, plastic surgery, paediatrics, urology and other areas.

The entries for Technological Innovation will cover areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Imaging Modalities, Robotic Systems, Tele Surgery, Training Modalities, Virtual Reality, and others.

The competition, initiated in 2015, is open to robotic surgeons, medical school faculty, and students, presenting an opportunity for a close examination of technologies and procedures being used globally.

The 2023 KS Innovation Awards saw entries from 429 surgeons from 14 countries, submitting in 10 different specialties.

Meanwhile, the Brady Urological Institute at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore has announced its first Brady-Vattikuti Robotic Academy masterclass in Urology under guidance of the accomplished robotic surgeons.

The week-long masterclass beginning May 13 will cover several hours of live case observation, simulation sessions and proctor-led procedural training with experts, said the foundation.

Using dietary treatment, over 70 pc of patients reduced IBS symptoms: Study

In a new study a group of researchers found that dietary treatment is more effective than medications in treating irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and by doing so, more than seven out of 10 (70 per cent) patients had significantly reduced symptoms.

In the study, published in the journal The Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology, the researchers compared three treatments — two dietary and one based on the use of medications.

IBS is a common diagnosis that causes abdominal pain, gas & abdominal bloating, diarrhoea, and constipation, in various combinations and with varying degrees of severity.

According to Sanna Nybacka, researcher and dietician at the University of



Gothenburg, Sweden, with this study, “we can show that diet plays a central role in the treatment of IBS”, however, she noted that there are several alternative treatments that are useful.

The first group was advised to follow a traditional

IBS dietary advice, which focused on eating behaviour combined with low intake of fermentable carbohydrates called FODMAPs.

For example, FODMAPs include products with legumes, onions, lactose and grains, which ferment in the

colon and can cause pain in IBS.

The second group was given a dietary treatment low in carbohydrates and high in protein and fat. The third group received medication based on their most troublesome IBS symptoms.

About 76 per cent of those who received traditional IBS dietary advice and low FODMAPs content had significantly reduced symptoms.

The proportion was 71 per cent in the group receiving a low-carbohydrate and high-protein and fat diet, and 58 per cent in the medication group.

As per the study, all groups reported significantly better quality of life, less physical complaints, and fewer signs of anxiety and depression.

District Level Workshop on AWAAS PLUS 2.0 held at Panchayat Bhawan

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

A one day District Level Workshop cum Awareness Programme on AWAAS PLUS 2.0 -PMAY (G) was to-day organized here at Panchayat Bhawan.

In his inaugural address, Director Rural Development Department Mohammad Mumtaz Ali exhorted the departmental functionaries to complete the registration process by April 30, 2025- the timeline set by the government. He lauded the efforts put in by the Officers and Officials of Rural Development Department of District

Jammu for registering 13,426 beneficiaries as on date.

Earlier, Assistant Commissioner Development Dr. Vikas Sharma provided an overview of PMAY-G and the achievements with respect to District Jammu. “Since the Government has extended the deadline by one month from 31st of March 2025 to 30th of April 2025 the Block Development Officers and registered surveyors have been instructed to ensure that no eligible beneficiary was left unregistered” he added.

The Block Development Officers of R.S. Pura, Maira Mandrian and Sat-

wari presented the PPTs on success stories, best practices and cumulative targets achieved in District Jammu under PMAY –G from the year 2016 till date.

Director Rural Development, Jammu, Dr. Vikas Sharma, Assistant Commissioner Development, Jammu, Block Development Officers and Panchayat Inspectors of District Jammu and Register surveyors under AWAAS Plus, Operators dealing with PMAY-G along with other Field functionaries have attended this One Day District Level Workshop at Panchayat Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu.

Tawi, Ravi Canals being recharged on April 7-2025

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

The Irrigation Department has geared up to release waters in Tawi and Ravi Canals on the coming Monday, a departmental notification stated today.

“It is notified for the information of the public in general and farmers in

particular that the water in Tawi and Ravi Canals of this department shall be released from 07.04.2025. The Executive Engineers of RCC U/Division, Kathua/RCC Lower Division Hiranagar besides TCC Division Jammu are directed to plan their activities to ensure completion of all the ongoing works well before the recharging of the

canals”, it stated.

The Executive Engineer concerned have been asked to constitute teams in their respective jurisdiction which shall monitor flow in canals/distributaries system during release of water as it reaches their jurisdiction to ensure its safe passage right up to tail and to avoid any untoward incident.

Status of Registrations on JK Samadhan Portal 2.0 reviewed in Kishtwar

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Pawan Kotwal today chaired a meeting to review the progress of registrations on the JK Samadhan Portal 2.0.

The meeting focused on evaluating the current status of registrations, identifying gaps, and implementing measures to enhance the process.

The ADC emphasized the critical role of the portal in streamlining grievances redressal mechanism, promoting transparency, accountability, and efficiency in addressing public complaints. He directed the line departments to maximize outreach and ensure active public participation in the registration process.

He specifically instructed Supervisors and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to register left out citizens within the next five days to achieve the targets set



by the government.

Furthermore, the ADC directed the Election Registration Officers (AEROs) to closely monitor the registration progress and submit daily reports to ensure timely completion of the process.

Stressing the importance of public awareness, the ADC urged all stake-

holders to actively sensitize citizens about the JK Samadhan Portal, highlighting the benefits of timely grievance registration and resolution through the platform.

The meeting was attended by ACR Idrees Lone, Tehsildars/AEROs, Deputy CEO, Supervisors, BLOs, and other concerned officials.

Reasi Admin hosts orientation workshop for Resource Persons

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

A one-day orientation programme to train resource persons for conducting Information, Education and Communication Campaign against drug abuse was organized today by the District Administration Reasi here under the aegis of Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar chaired the workshop organised to impart training to Resource persons for Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan.

The IEC campaign forms part of the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction initiated under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan. District Social

Welfare Officer Sachin Sharma; District Information Officer Ujwal Sambyal and officials from other stakeholder departments attended the orientation program.

At the outset, the District Social Welfare Officer delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation, highlighting the importance of equipping resource persons with proper training and knowledge for effective implementation. A detailed deliberation was held on strengthening efforts to curb drug abuse and work collectively towards making Reasi a drug free district.

Addressing the participants, the ADC emphasized the necessity of a coordinated, multi-departmental effort to im-

plement the IEC campaign at the grassroots level. He urged resource persons to ensure the successful execution of the campaign across the district. Resource persons were sensitized on the importance of executing the campaign in mission mode by conducting awareness drives, drug-free pledge ceremonies and organizing events at the Block and Panchayat levels to promote drug abuse prevention across all Panchayats in the district.

The Resource persons were also briefed about the Mobile application, videos and banners made for this Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan. At the end a Nasha Mukht pledge was also taken by all participants.

DIPR artists promote anti-drug campaign among GDC Sidhra Students

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

A Nukkad Natak cum Cultural Awareness Programme on “Nasha Mukht Bharat” (Say No to Drugs) campaign was organised by the Cultural Unit, Department of Information & Public Relations here at Government Degree College Sidhra. The initiative aimed to spread

awareness about the detrimental effects of drug abuse and encourage a drug-free society.

Artists of the Cultural Unit presented theme-based songs and Nukkad Natak depicting real-life consequences of substance abuse and the importance of rehabilitation and awareness. The performers skillfully highlighted how

drug addiction impacts individuals, families and society at large.

Speaking on the occasion, the College Principal Dr G.S. Rakwal shared his views and also made the students and the audience aware of the topic. He appreciated the Department of Information and Public Relations for organising such a meaningful event

to raise awareness among the future of the nation.

Among others, officials of different departments, staff members and students witnessed the programme.

The programme was conducted under the directions of Joint Director Information Jammu Atul Gupta and supervision of Cultural Office Mukesh Kumar Sharma.

sanitation, the Department clarified “The Escape Channel besides playing a vital role in protection of MRC structure during flood season also feeds Bhadrora Supply channel, Bhadrora khul and Seora khul to provide irrigation to 600 Ha of CCA falling in 2 villages viz. Bhadrora and Seora which is minor as compared with the total CCA of 38000 Ha of the entire Ranbir canal.

As per the past practice, the desilting work of the Escape channel and these khuls is done in the month of April every year as the farmers along these khuls do not allow passing the vehicles through their fields in view of the standing wheat crops and water is supplied to them ending April as per their demand. Moreover, the initial 300m stretch of the escape channel.

GCOE Jammu organises awareness rally themed “Stay away from drugs”

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

NCORD Committee of Government College of Education, in collaboration with Social Reform Charitable Trust on Thursday organised a Rally-cum awareness campaign themed “Stay away from drugs.” The College Principal Dr.(Prof.) Jyoti Parihar led the event in the presence of esteemed speaker S.K Jain, State Yoga Commissioner and his team.

The event was initiated with a warm and engaging welcome speech by Convener NCORD Committee, Prof. Sunanda Rani.

In his address, the State Yoga Commissioner captivated the audience with a heartfelt poem highlighting the dangers of drug addiction and emphasizing the importance of saying no to drugs. His other team members also shed light on this sensitive issue.

To enhance the impact of the



event, the participants solemnly pledged to “Say No To Drugs”. To add depth to the event, a rally was organised and flagged off by Prof. Sunanda Rani in presence of Dr. Shalini Sharma, Prof. Roopa Kumari, Dr.Ambica Kumari along with the students to raise awareness about drug abuse. A formal vote of thanks was extended by Dr. Ambica Kumari. The event concluded with the

distribution of refreshment to the students, generously sponsored by Dabur India Limited. The event was a great success witnessing active participation from both students and faculty members, including Prof. Satish Kumar Sharma, Dr. Rajinder Kour, Dr. Sushma Bala and Prof. Sarita Dogra. Overall the event concluded on a positive note, leaving a lasting impact on all the participants.

DC inaugurates Senior Citizens Club/Old Age Care Home at Kishtwar

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

In a significant move to bolster welfare services for the elderly, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rajesh Kumar Shavan today inaugurated the Senior Citizens Club/Old Age Care Home here in the heart of Kishtwar town.

The inauguration ceremony witnessed a large gathering of Prominent and Senior citizens of the District, who expressed their heartfelt appreciation for this thoughtful initiative. The event was marked by warmth, gratitude, and a strong sense of community.

The DC highlighted the importance of such facilities in ensuring the wellbeing and dignity of the elderly. He acknowledged the invaluable contributions of senior citizens to society and emphasized the administration’s commitment to their welfare.

The gathering lauded this initiative, describing it as a “gift to the senior citizens” by the DC, designed to provide them with a comfortable and supportive environment.

The newly inaugurated facility is equipped with modern amenities, including sports facilities, medical care

services, and homestay accommodations, all aimed at promoting a healthy, active, and fulfilling lifestyle for senior citizens.

The DC urged the community to actively participate in making this initiative a success, fostering a spirit of inclusivity and support for the elderly.

The event was attended by DSWO Zubair Ahmed; CMO Dr Rajinder Kumar; MS DH Kishtwar Dr. Yudhvir Singh Kotwal; TSWO Rajesh Kumar, Senior Citizens, Prominent Citizens, besides staff from Social Welfare Department and other concerned.

DC reviews implementation of PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in Poonch District

JAMMU RISING

JAMMU, APR 03

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to evaluate the implementation of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in the district. The meeting aimed to streamline the installation of solar rooftop systems and enhance public awareness regarding the scheme's benefits.

At the outset, the Executive Engi-

neer JPDCL delivered an in-depth PowerPoint presentation detailing the objectives and advantages of the scheme. It was reported that out of 570 applications received, 61 solar units have already been installed, with 48 cases approved for loan schemes by banks.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer to ensure the installation of 100th solar units by

April 12, 2025. He urged vendors to commence the installation of Solar Rooftop Systems (SRTs) for sanctioned applicants methodically.

The DC emphasized the need for public awareness and participation. He instructed the Executive Engineer to actively involve stakeholders and enlighten them about the numerous benefits and incentives associated with the solar energy scheme.



STOP ...!
MOSQUITO BREEDING
PREVENT MALARIA, DENGUE & CHIKUNGUNYA

- Do not allow water to stagnate in and around your surroundings.
- Keep water tanks and other water containers tightly covered with lids.
- Get your Blood tested from Govt. Hospital/ Health Worker in case of Fever with chills, rigors and headache.
- Empty water coolers once in a week.

- Discard/destroy Junk items like old tyres etc.
- Empty air coolers, drums, flower pots and birds bath weekly.
- Use Mosquito repellent creams and Bed nets while sleeping.
- Use netted screens on doors and windows.
- Wear full body clothes to prevent mosquito bites.
- Improve basic sanitation.

Symptoms

- **Dengue** : High fever, frontal headache, pain behind the eyes worsening with eye movement, muscle & joint paints, rash on the body, pain abdomen, nausea, vomiting, bleeding and low BP in severe cases.
- **Chikungunya** : Fever, joint paints, muscle pain, fatigue, headache, rash.
- **Malaria** : High grade fever with chills, sweating, headache, vomiting convulsions, weakness.

Visit nearby Health Institution if any of above diseases is suspected. Investigations & Treatment are free of cost in Govt. Institutions



DIP/J-62/25 Dt:03-05-2025



ISSUED IN PUBLIC INTEREST BY :
STATE PROGRAMME OFFICER/STATE MALARIOLOGIST, J&K
DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH SERVICES JAMMU

