

# TOP NEWS OF J&K



JAMMU, THURSDAY, APRIL 03, 2025

Daily Evening Newspaper



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**Shalini Pandey says 'my heart broke' when Jayeshbhai Jordaar failed**



**CM Adityanath accuses Waqf Board of land encroachment, calls it 'land mafia'**

**"Europe is prepared to respond," EU ramps up counters against US tariffs**

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## BRIEFLY

### MeT forecasts rains, snow in J&K next week

SRINAGAR, Apr 3 (Agencies): Weatherman here on Thursday forecast a wet spell next week in Jammu and Kashmir.

A meteorological department official here said that while generally cloudy weather with possibility of light rain/snow (higher reaches) was expected over North Kashmir and Sonamarg-Zojila axis today, the weather is likely to remain "generally dry" from April 4-7. The MeT department also predicted possibility of thunder with gusty winds (30-40 KMPH) at few places towards late afternoon today.

Regarding April 8, he said, the weather is expected to be generally cloudy towards afternoon with possibility of light snow over higher reaches of North Kashmir and Sonamarg.

From April 9-10, he said, generally cloudy weather with light rain and snow (higher reaches) was expected at many places of Kashmir Division and at scattered places of Jammu region. He said on April 11, generally cloudy weather with light rain and snow (higher reaches) was expected at isolated places towards morning and improvement thereafter.

The MeT department urged travelers, tourists, transporters to follow traffic advisory by the authorities.

Also, the weather department advised farmers to continue farm operations for now.

### Youth arrested in Bandipora for glorifying Yasin Malik on social media: Police

BANDIPORA, Apr 3 (Agencies): Police in north Kashmir's Bandipora have arrested a youth for glorifying the head of proscribed organisation JKLF, Mohamad Yasin Malik, and other separatist leaders on social media.

During routine cyber surveillance and patrolling, police said one youth operating adverse social media handles was identified for posting content that promoted militancy and extremist ideologies. He has been identified as Sajad Naseer Bhat of Naikkhai Sumbal.

"The youth had deliberately uploaded

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## SC judges to declare assets on assuming office

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (Agencies): In a bid to ensure transparency, Supreme Court judges have agreed to make declaration of their assets public on assuming office.

In a full court meeting, the top court judges decided to disclose their assets, and the data will be uploaded on the SC website.

Placing the declaration of assets on the Supreme Court website



will be on a voluntary basis, the apex court website said.

Thirty judges, including Chief Justice of India

Sanjiv Khanna, have submitted their declarations of assets.

"The full court of the

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## Waqf Amendment bill violation of Article 25 of Indian constitution: J&K Assembly Speaker

JAMMU, Apr 3 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather conducts the proceedings during the budget session of UT's Legislative Assembly, in Jammu on Thursday.

The Speaker of Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly Abdul Rahim Rather on Thursday said the Waqf bill passed by the Lok Sabha violates the right to religion enshrined in the Constitution of India.



Talking to reporters, Rather said that it infringes upon Article 25 of the Constitution of India. "As far as this bill is concerned, it violates the Article 25 of the Con-

stitution of India which guarantees right to freedom of religion to people in the country. It is not good that you are interfering in personal laws of people," he said.

Article 25 of the Constitution of India guarantees the freedom of religion to every individual. It ensures that all persons have the right to freedom of conscience and can freely profess, practice, and propagate their religion.

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## Bill will bring transparency and accountability in Waqf: BJP's Tarun Chugh



JAMMU, Apr 3 (Agencies): Bharatiya Janata Party's Tarun Chugh on Thursday said that the Waqf (Amend-

ment) Bill, 2025, will bring transparency and accountability in the board and that opposition leaders are "misleading" the community.

He said leaders like Rahul Gandhi and Asaduddin Owaisi are "creating artificial fear" among the Muslim community.

"Leaders like Rahul Gandhi and Owaisi are only doing the work of

misleading the Muslim community and creating artificial fear among them. This bill will bring transparency and accountability in Waqf," Chugh said.

Additionally, JD(U) MP Sanjay Jha said that yesterday's debate has clarified the confusion.

"After yesterday's debate, the confusion that was there was cleared. After Union HM

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## Greater Kailash gold shop heist solved, culprits in custody: SSP Jammu

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: The Jammu Police, South Zone, has successfully cracked the sensational Greater Kailash gold shop robbery, bringing the culprits to justice.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, SSP Jammu, Joginder Singh along with senior officers, provided details of the case resolution and the swift police action that led to the arrest of the accused.



"On February 1, 2025, at noon, two armed robbers stormed into Anand Jewelers, Greater Kailash, Fowara Chowk, Jammu, wielding a

sharp-edged weapon (Toka). They threatened the lone woman shop owner, pressing the weapon against

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## Two imposters posing as police officers arrested in Pulwama

SRINAGAR, Apr 3 (Agencies): Two persons impersonating police officers have been arrested in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district, officials said. Jammu travel guide

Police said in a statement, "Two suspects were apprehended on the complaint of one Mohd Altaf Ganai, son of Mohd Ramzan Ganai, resident of Nageenpora Tral, who are fraudulently posing as Law enforcement officers to extort money from the general public."

The suspects were identified as Bashir Ahmad Sheikh, son of Mohd Jamal Sheikh, resident of Saimooh and Mohd Shafi Dar, son of Gh Nabi Dar, resident of Dadsara.

The two were targeting unsuspecting citizens, falsely claiming to have police authority and demanding money

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## 48 JKAS officers transferred on LG's direction in J&K

JAMMU, Apr 3 (Agencies): In a major administrative rejig, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has ordered the transfer and posting of 48 J-K Administrative Service (JKAS) officers -- a move that is likely to create a rumbling in the National Conference-led government in the Union Territory.

In a move seen by many as an attempt to take full control of the

bureaucracy, the LG ordered the transfer of 48 middle-rung JKAS officers, including 14 additional deputy commissioners and 26 subdivisional magistrates.

The LG ordered the transfer and posting of additional deputy commissioners in Pulwama, Kupwara, Basohli, Doda, Anantnag, Sunderbani, Rajouri, Nowshera, Baramulla, Srinagar, Ganderbal,

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## J&K LG chairs meeting of SASB in Srinagar



SRINAGAR, Apr 3 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha on Wednesday chaired a meeting with the senior officials of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board

(SASB) and executing agencies and reviewed the progress for development of Disaster Management and Yatri Niwas Complexes.

The Lieutenant Governor took appraisal of the works under execution at Baltal, Nunwan, Sidhra and Bijbehara, read an official handout.

He directed the officials and executing agencies to expedite the ongoing works being carried

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## Omar Abdullah to chair emergency meeting of NC legislative party, allies over LG's transfers orders

SRINAGAR, Apr 3 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah will chair NC legislative party and allies meeting in Srinagar on April 4, Friday.

The meeting is being held in the wake of transfers of 48 KAS officers by the LG administration, highly placed sources told Greater Kashmir.

On Monday, LG administration ordered the transfers and posting of 48 JKAS officers.

## Burglars loot six shops in Surankote Bazar in Poonch

POONCH, Apr 3 (Agencies): Burglars went on a looting spree in Surankote Bazar in Poonch district and decamped with valuables from six shops late last night, reports and officials said on Thursday.

The unidentified

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# GupShup

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# Jammu to celebrate 134th Birth Anniversary of Dr. B R Ambedkar with grand rally & cultural fest

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: The Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti Celebration Committee proudly announces a grand celebration of the 134th Birth Anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, featuring a series of meaningful events aimed at honoring his life, ideals, and contributions to social justice in India.

The celebrations will kick off with the Ambedkar-Phule Rally on April 10, 2025, at 11:00 AM from Bhagwati Nagar. The rally will proceed through key locations in Jammu city, including Canal Road, Jewel, Gumat, Prem Nagar, Gullar Nagar, and University Road, and will conclude at Babasaheb Ambedkar Chowk.

The rally will feature a large bike and car procession, drawing partici-



pants from diverse communities across Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory (JKUT). Special provisions have been made to accommodate women and elderly participants, ensuring their comfortable participation. All attendees are encouraged to wear blue turbans and scarves as a symbol of unity and respect.

To ensure the event's smooth and peace-

ful conduct, necessary permissions from local authorities have been secured. The rally will conclude with a community lunch at Babasaheb Ambedkar Chowk, where all participants will be served food.

On April 13, 2025, a painting and quiz competition will be organized at Babasaheb Ambedkar Chowk. These activities aim to educate and engage young minds

with the values and ideals of Dr. Ambedkar, inspiring them to carry forward his mission of equality and justice.

The grand celebration will culminate on April 14, 2025, with the Ambedkar Jayanti Mela, a vibrant cultural festival that draws thousands of visitors each year. Renowned artists from JKUT and beyond will take the stage to showcase performances

inspired by Dr. Ambedkar's life and vision. The event is expected to witness a large turnout, as people from different backgrounds gather to pay homage to the architect of the Indian Constitution.

To ensure a comfortable experience for all attendees, the Celebration Committee will provide breakfast, lunch, and drinking water throughout the event. The celebrations will conclude with a cake-cutting ceremony at 4:00 PM, where children will take part in the festivities.

The Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti Celebration Committee warmly invites the people of Jammu and Kashmir to join in this historic celebration and pay tribute to the enduring legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

# De-Silting Waste in Digiana Sparks Health and Environmental Concerns Social Activist Parvinder Singh leads effort for immediate cleanup

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: A serious environmental and public health crisis has emerged in Digiana, where large piles of de-silting waste remain unattended along canal banks. The accumulated waste—comprising mud, plastic, and non-biodegradable materials—poses a severe risk to public health and environmental safety.

Taking swift action, social activist Parvinder Singh Happy led a delegation to meet with officials from the Irrigation Department, demanding immediate cleanup and strict enforcement of waste disposal regulations.

The delegation submitted a memorandum to the Executive Engineer (XEN) of Irrigation Division 2, emphasizing the urgent need to remove the waste and enforce contractual obligations on de-silting contractors.

In response to the concerns raised, the XEN assured the delegation that the waste would be lifted by tomorrow, with Assistant Engineer (AE) Vishal Sharma personally supervising the cleanup process. This assurance brought some relief to local residents, who had been raising complaints about the unattended waste and its hazards.

The annual de-silting process, meant to ensure the smooth flow of water in canals, is being undermined by poor waste management. The failure to promptly dispose of the extracted waste has led to several problems.

First, the public health hazards are concerning. Dust and decaying organic matter contribute to respiratory issues,



especially among children and the elderly. The stagnant waste also becomes a breeding ground for insects and rodents, increasing the risk of diseases.

Finally, there is a contract violation aspect. Contractors responsible for de-silting are contractually bound to remove the waste, but repeated non-compliance has worsened the problem. The lack of enforcement has allowed waste to accumulate, causing inconvenience to residents and posing long-term environmental risks.

The deputation put forward key demands to prevent such issues in the future. They demanded the immediate removal of waste from key locations, including Digiana Pully, Akalikour Singh Nagar, Green Avenue, Digiana Ashram, and Digiana Camp. They insisted that the department must act swiftly to clear the waste before it causes further damage.

Additionally, the delegation called for strict accountability for contractors who fail to clear waste as per their contracts. They urged authorities to take strict action against violators, ensuring that such lapses do not occur again. Regular monitoring of de-silting operations was also proposed to prevent negligence.

Beyond immediate solutions, the delega-

tion stressed the need for long-term environmental protection measures. They suggested installing waste bins at designated spots along the canal, conducting awareness campaigns on responsible waste disposal, and ensuring better coordination with municipal authorities for regular garbage collection.

Following the submission of the memorandum, the Irrigation Division 2 officials assured swift action, with AE Vishal Sharma overseeing the clean-up operation. The department's response has provided some reassurance to the residents, but many remain cautious, hoping that this is not just a temporary fix.

The delegation, which included Narinder Singh Neetu, Satnam Singh Vicky, Harpreet Singh, Gurjeet Singh Geenu, Harjeet Singh, and Tajinder Singh, reaffirmed their commitment to collaborating with authorities to maintain a clean and healthy environment. They emphasized that public participation is key in ensuring sustainable cleanliness.

The success of this cleanup drive depends not just on immediate action but also on long-term efforts to prevent pollution. With community engagement and stricter regulations, there is hope for a cleaner and healthier Digiana in the future.

# Serving Nation is BJP's sole mission: Kavinder



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta reaffirmed that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) remains steadfast in its mission to serve the nation with unwavering dedication. He emphasized that BJP, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has redefined gover-

nance by prioritizing public welfare, national security, and inclusive development.

He was speaking after chairing a meeting with party colleagues at the Party Headquarters in Jammu. The meeting saw the active participation of several esteemed party leaders including Sanjita Dogra, President of Mahila Morcha; Prerna Nanda; Raghunandan Bablu, DDC

Member; Kulbhushan Mohtra; Anita Gandotra; Reema Padha; Suman Raina; Ayodhya Gupta; Eshant Mahajan; Aarti Koul; and Gulshan Bhagat.

Speaking at a gathering, Kavinder Gupta stated that BJP's commitment to "Nation First" is reflected in its pro-people policies, welfare schemes, and transformative initiatives that have empowered mil-

lions across the country. He highlighted key initiatives such as Ayushman Bharat, PM Awas Yojana, Digital India, and infrastructure development, which have significantly improved the lives of citizens.

He further asserted that BJP will continue to work with the vision of a strong, self-reliant, and prosperous India, ensuring that every section of society benefits from the government's progressive policies.

"The BJP is not just a political party; it is a movement dedicated to national service," he remarked.

Kavinder also discussed the forthcoming programmes aimed at further disseminating the party's policies and activities.

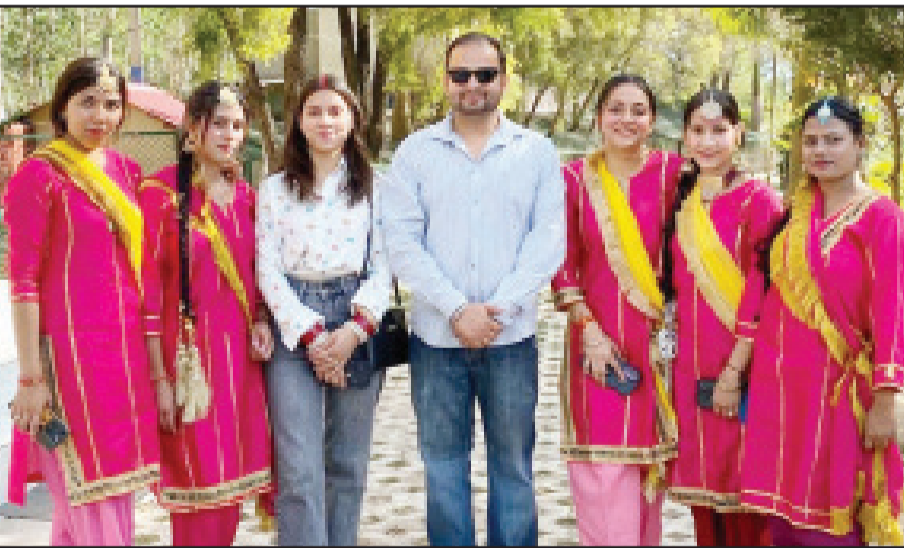
He urged his colleagues to intensify their efforts in mobilizing support and ensuring that every policy initiative reaches the common man. "We must work

with renewed dedication to bridge the gap between the party's strategic vision and its implementation at the community level. Our initiatives are designed to bring tangible benefits to the people," he added.

The senior BJP leader further highlighted the Party's holistic approach to governance and its commitment to transparency, accountability, and inclusive development. With a clear roadmap for future programmes, the BJP is poised to continue its mission of serving the nation, empowering communities, and fostering a spirit of unity and progress among all citizens.

The former Deputy Chief Minister also urged the people to support BJP's mission and join hands in building a New India, where development, integrity, and service remain the core principles of governance.

# Nat Manch celebrates Foundation Day, reflecting on its journey of empowering art, culture, sports, social progress



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Nat Manch, a multifaceted organization dedicated to promoting art, culture, sports, and social causes, recently marked its 13th Foundation Day with a spectacular event that brought together artists, athletes, community leaders, and supporters from all walks of life. Founded in 2012 by Tarun Sharma, Nat Manch has become a symbol of community empowerment, cultural preservation, and social development.

The Foundation Day celebration was a true testament to the organization's vision of fostering a harmonious society through the creative and physical expressions of art and sport. The event showcased the organization's diverse programs, which have made a significant impact over the years, benefiting individuals from various backgrounds and age groups. The event included a vibrant blend of cultural performances, including traditional dance, music, and theatre, all of which highlighted the rich cultural

tapestry that Nat Manch works to preserve and promote. Sports enthusiasts also had their moment to shine, with thrilling exhibitions and friendly competitions that underscored the importance of physical fitness, teamwork, and community spirit.

In addition to the performances, the Foundation Day celebration highlighted the organization's numerous social initiatives. Nat Manch's efforts in supporting education, healthcare, and community welfare were recognized, with several

programs designed to uplift marginalized communities and empower individuals through social engagement and support.

Speaking at the event, Tarun Sharma, Founder and President of Nat Manch, expressed his gratitude and vision for the future: "When I founded Nat Manch in 2012, I envisioned an organization that would not only promote art and culture but also create a platform where sports and social causes could thrive together. Today, as we celebrate this milestone, we are proud of the progress we have made. Our journey is a collective effort, and we are deeply grateful to the entire Nat Manch family for their unwavering support. Together, we are creating a stronger, more vibrant community."

As Nat Manch moves into its next phase, the organization is committed to expanding its reach and impact in all areas of focus. Plans include hosting international cultural exchanges, strengthen-

ing community-based sports programs, and launching new social welfare initiatives that further promote inclusivity, sustainability, and empowerment.

Nat Manch also aims to increase its presence through workshops, performances, and collaborations, continuing its mission to bring art, culture, and social causes to the forefront of community development.

Founded in 2012 by Tarun Sharma, Nat Manch is an art, cultural, sports, and social organization dedicated to enriching the community by promoting creativity, physical health, and social well-being.

The organization offers platforms for artistic expression, sports competitions, and social programs, creating opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage and thrive. Through its programs and initiatives, Nat Manch strives to foster an inclusive, progressive, and supportive environment for all.

# Career Counselling Cell of GDC Paloura organizes training program on 'Community Journalism'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Govt Degree College (GDC) Paloura, Jammu city believe in overall development of the students. The college always provides the students a platform to enhance their skills in various fields.

To fulfill the objective, Career Counselling Cell of GDC Paloura organised a Short Term 60 Hrs. Training Program on 'Community Journalism' during academic session 2024-25.

The programme was organised by School of Business studies, Central University of Jammu in collaboration with Directorate J and K skill development mission under the project "Up Skilling training programme for Women".

Students of all semesters participated in the training programme and learnt the skills of Photography and videography. 40 girl students competed the course with dedication. To acknowledge their hard work, enthusiasm and determination a certificate distribution ceremony was held on Thursday where certificates were distributed by worthy Principal of



the college, Dr. Kulvinder Kour.

Dr. Kulvinder conveyed their wishes to all the participants and motivated others for the same.

The programme was coordinated by Prof. Pooja Sharma and Komal Shagroo was

the training partner of the community journalism course. The certificate distribution program was hosted by Pooja Kalsi and Suneha Arti of the college. The program was attended by Prof. Geetanjali, Dr. Sapna Sharma and other faculty members.

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acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) with closing date 25.04.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to the closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through payment modes available on the IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card, etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheques, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System
Open	Works	Single Packet System
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time
02.04.2025	11.04.2025	25.04.2025

S.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender	Advised Value (Rs.)	Validity of offer	Period of completion
1.	332-2024-25-ADEN-JAT	Protection work to the foundation & Guide bund Bridge No 172 at pier No 7, 8, and 9 UP Line and pier 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 DNI line in PTK-JAT Section under ADEN-JAT	21674149.74	60 Days	06 Months
2.	333-2024-25-JAT-DRM-FZR	Renovation of ORH Manali and Develop open Gym in the campus of ORH Manali in the section of SSE/W/PLMIX.	3046834.44	60 Days	06 Months

NOTE: Contractors are advised to check the IREPS website for any corrigendum issued against this tender before submitting the bids. No-770-W/169/WA-1/FZR-332-2024-25-ADEN-JAT and 333-2024-25-JAT-DRM-FZR

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## EDITORIAL

EXPLORING  
JAMMU TOURISM

Jammu, often referred to as the City of Temples, is a treasure trove of cultural heritage, spiritual significance, and breathtaking landscapes. Nestled in the foothills of the Shivalik range, Jammu serves as the gateway to Jammu & Kashmir, offering a blend of ancient traditions, religious sanctuaries, adventure tourism, and modern infrastructure. With its historical forts, serene lakes, lush valleys, and vibrant festivals, Jammu is an emerging hotspot for travelers seeking divine blessings, natural beauty, and thrilling experiences.

Jammu is deeply rooted in Hindu mythology and religious traditions, making it one of India's most revered pilgrimage destinations. Some of the most significant religious sites in Jammu include:

One of the most visited pilgrimage sites in India, the Vaishno Devi Temple is located in the Trikuta Hills, around 61 km from Jammu city. Pilgrims undertake a 13 km trek from Katra, chanting "Jai Mata Di" as they ascend to seek blessings from Mata Rani. For those who prefer convenience, battery-operated cars, helicopter services, and pony rides are available. The temple attracts millions of devotees each year, contributing significantly to Jammu's tourism economy.

Situated in the heart of Jammu city, the Raghunath Temple is a magnificent shrine dedicated to Lord Rama. Built in the 19th century by Maharaja Gulab Singh, this temple complex houses seven shrines, intricate gold-plated interiors, and rich scriptures, making it a must-visit for devotees and history enthusiasts alike.

Perched on the banks of the Tawi River, the Bawe Wali Mata Temple is dedicated to Goddess Mahakali, an incarnation of Durga. Locals believe that the temple holds immense spiritual power, and many devotees visit to seek the goddess's protection and blessings.

These two temples are dedicated to Lord Shiva, drawing thousands of devotees, especially during Mahashivratri. The Ranbireswar Temple, built by Maharaja Ranbir Singh, is famous for its 12 crystal lingams, while the Peer Kho Cave Temple is known for its mythological significance and naturally formed shivling inside a cave.

Jammu is home to a rich history that dates back centuries. The region was ruled by the Dogra Dynasty, leaving behind remarkable forts, palaces, and monuments that reflect the grandeur of its past.

This majestic palace, once the royal residence of Dogra rulers, boasts a fusion of Rajasthani, Mughal, and European architectural styles. The Sheesh Mahal (Mirror Palace) inside the complex is particularly fascinating for its intricate glasswork. The palace is currently undergoing restoration and is set to be a major cultural hub in Jammu.

Believed to be over 3,000 years old, the Bahu Fort stands tall as a symbol of Jammu's resilience and strength. Overlooking the Tawi River, this fort houses the famous Bawe Wali Mata Temple and offers stunning panoramic views of Jammu city.

Located 32 km from Jammu, the Akhnor Fort sits along the Chenab River and is believed to be associated with the epic Mahabharata. The fort is an important site for history lovers and offers scenic sunset views over the river.

For nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers, Jammu offers picturesque landscapes, dense forests, gushing rivers, and thrilling activities.

A popular hill station just 110 km from Jammu, Patnitop is known for its lush meadows, cool climate, and adventure sports like paragliding, trekking, and skiing in winter. Visitors can also explore Sanasar, a hidden gem for camping and rock climbing.

These twin lakes, surrounded by dense forests and temples, are ideal picnic spots near Jammu. Boating in the serene Mansar Lake while spotting migratory birds is a peaceful experience.

Located 140 km from Jammu, the Shiv Khori Cave is a sacred site dedicated to Lord Shiva, featuring a naturally formed 4-foot Shiva Lingam. Pilgrims undertake a scenic trek to reach the cave, adding an element of adventure to their spiritual journey.

Just 28 km from Jammu, this wildlife sanctuary is home to leopards, wild boars, pheasants, and langurs. A visit here offers wildlife photography, nature walks, and birdwatching opportunities.

Jammu is more than just a gateway to Kashmir; it is a destination in its own right, offering a perfect blend of spirituality, history, adventure, and natural beauty. From the divine aura of Vaishno Devi to the serene charm of Patnitop, the architectural splendor of Mubarak Mandi to the wilderness of Nandini Sanctuary, Jammu has something for everyone. With infrastructure development, heritage conservation, and sustainable tourism initiatives, Jammu is poised to become a premier travel destination, welcoming visitors from across the world to experience its timeless charm and modern vibrance.

The Harsh Reality and truth of Displaced Kashmiri Pandits  
Is Buried Under Misconceptions

By: Kundan Kashmiri  
(Sevak, President KPC)

Misconceptions about Kashmiri Pandits have been deliberately created, portraying them as well-settled and financially secure. It is falsely claimed that all migrant Kashmiri Pandits receive a relief amount of ₹13,000 per family and that they all have been provided with government jobs. However, the stark reality is that they continue to suffer due to financial distress, social neglect, and a lack of opportunities.

The displaced Kashmiri Pandit community has been in exile for over 35 years, having lost everything they owned in the Valley. Their properties were either looted, encroached upon, occupied under draconian land laws, or sold under distress. Despite being highly qualified and experienced, a significant portion of the community remains unemployed and struggles for survival. Many do not own homes and are forced to live in rented accommodations or deteriorating camps, facing extreme poverty and neglect. Those who have managed to build homes or purchase the flats often carry substantial loan liabilities, adding to their financial burden.

Healthcare has become a major challenge, with most unable to afford proper medical treatment. They are burdened with high medical expenses while struggling to access even basic healthcare services. Those who have Anshuman cards are either not functioning or accepted at the time of need by the hospitals in various places of the country they live as exiled persons.

The meager relief amount provided to some displaced families is not only insufficient but is often stopped for months, delayed, or obstructed by bureaucratic hurdles, creating additional hardships. They are frequently harassed with endless paperwork and filling of forms, making it difficult to receive even the minimal aid they are entitled to. Many families have reached the verge of starvation, with children facing difficulties in accessing education due to the inability to afford books, fees, and travel expenses. The lack of funds also means that purchasing necessary medicines becomes an insurmountable challenge.

**Contrary to the false propaganda, only about 25% of the displaced KP community receives relief aid, which is structured as follows:**

**Single-member family:**  
₹3,250 per month  
**Two-member family:**  
₹6,500 per month  
**Three-member family:**  
₹9,750 per month  
**Four or more members:**  
₹13,000 per month  
(maximum limit)

This completely disproves the myth that every displaced Kashmiri Pandit family receives ₹13,000 monthly. Even this small relief amount is either unpaid or frequently delayed, forcing affected families into deeper financial distress. Considering the rising costs of living, paying house rent, household and domestic expenses etc, this amount is grossly insufficient to sustain a family.

Justice has been denied for decades, with no accountability for the genocide, ethnic cleansing, and targeted killings of Kashmiri Pandits. FIRs were

either never registered for the massacres, killings, and atrocities committed during the turmoil in the Valley, or, in rare cases where they were filed, no action has been taken for the past 35 years. The Supreme Court rejected our appeals for justice, citing the passage of time, while much older cases of other communities have been actively pursued and addressed. The police, executive and administrative authorities have remained inactive and ignored the killings, loot, arson, and illegal occupation of properties. Instead of addressing these grievances, political parties have only exploited them for their political and electoral gains, further adding to their pain.

The silence of the nation, human rights organizations, and international bodies on the plight of displaced Kashmiri Pandits is deafening. Despite facing one of the worst cases of ethnic cleansing in modern India, they remain unheard, scattered across various states, living in exile without any concrete steps being taken for their rehabilitation.

It is unfortunate that the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community has not been rehabilitated in their rightful land of ancestors, the Kashyap Bhoomi, in the Kashmir Valley, which should have been the government's first and foremost priority. No financial grants have been provided to help the community rebuild their lives, nor has compensation been granted for their immense losses, despite repeated requests and appeals. No comprehensive plan for their economic and social upliftment has been implemented. Their political representation has been ignored in both the

Assembly and Parliament. No special employment package has been introduced in central government departments to address the crisis of unemployment among displaced Kashmiri Pandits. Additionally, no heed has been given to passing the long-pending Temple and Shrine Bill to protect the religious and cultural heritage of Kashmiri Pandits.

The suffering of displaced Kashmiri Pandits is real and ongoing. They have been ignored, isolated, and left to struggle without support. It is time for the government and society to acknowledge their pain and take immediate steps to ensure their dignified return, rehabilitation, and justice.

The exile of Kashmiri Pandits is not just a tragedy; it is a national shame. The false narratives about their financial well-being are a deliberate attempt to erase their suffering from public memory. The Kashmiri Pandit community remains ignored, unheard, and isolated despite their immense sacrifices and unwavering nationalist spirit.

It is time for the government, political parties, and civil society to rise above tokenism and take real, impactful actions. The Kashmiri Pandits have suffered in silence for 35 years—justice must not be delayed any longer.

**(Kundan Kashmiri)  
Community Sevak &  
President Kashmiri  
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## NEP 2020's Three Language Formula catalyst for Linguistic Diversity

By: Omkar Dattatray

National Education Policy 1986 has envisaged three languages formula and stipulated and provided for the three language formula but made Hindi language as a compulsory subject. But NEP 2020 more or less is similar to NEP 1986, but with one glaring modification that Hindi was no longer stipulated as a compulsory language to be taught in all states and UT's. Thus three language formula as provided by the NEP2020 is a major departure from the earlier education policy mainly because new education policy 2020 did not make Hindi language compulsory and thus the NEP 2020 is really a catalyst for ensuring linguistic diversity and thus all languages are fine and need to be taught for ensuring linguistic diversity. Hindi is our official language and majority of the people in India speak and know Hindi and it being the language associated with the history of country's freedom struggle should be given the status of national language which this language deserves. But then Hindi should not be thrust and imposed on non Hindi speaking people and states. All languages are rich and divine and should be respected and there should be no conflict and row on the issue of languages. It is good to teach local/regional languages along with official language Hindi. The NEP 2020's three language formula encourages students to learn three languages, with at least two being native Indian languages, including one regional language, and the third being English or another modern Indian language, promoting multilingualism and national unity with flexibility in language selection. NEP 2020 retains the three language formula, originally introduced in the 1986 NEP, but with greater flexibility, allowing states, regions, and students to choose the languages they learn, as long as at least two are native to India. NEP2020 has the following characteristics—A Flexibility—States and students have the freedom to choose the three languages they learn, promoting multilingualism and respecting cultural and regional diversity. B—No Imposition—No specific language is mandated for any state, ensuring that states can tailor their language education to their specific needs and contexts. C—Emphasis on Mother Tongue—The policy encourages the use of the mother tongue/local language as the medium of instruction, at least until Grade 5, and preferably until Grade 8. D—Pro-

moting Multilingualism—The three language formula aims to promote multilingualism, linguistic diversity, enabling students to communicate effectively across the country and in globalized world. E—National Unity—By promoting the learning of multiple languages, the policy aims to foster national unity and understanding. It is pertinent to mention that the three language formula was first proposed by the Kothari Commission [1964-65] and was later adopted in the National Education Policy 1986. The NEP 1986 mandated Hindi, English, and a regional language, but NEP 2020 offers greater flexibility in language selection. The following benefits accrue from the New Education policy 2020—1-Cognitive Development—Multilingualism can enhance cognitive flexibility, problem solving skills, and memory. 2—Cultural Awareness—Learning multiple languages can foster cultural awareness and understanding. 3—Global Competitiveness—Students who are multilingual are better prepared for a globalized world. The three languages formula is one of the vital approaches under NEP2020 that necessitates all Indian students to learn at least three languages. It states that they will learn two native Indian languages, including one regional language. They will also learn English as the third and essential language. The 1961 meeting of the several chief ministers of the Indian states resulted in a consensus that led to the implementation of the three-language formula. The Three-Language Formula was intended to be a handy starting point for the examination of the country's developing Knowledge base and emotional integration, rather than a goal or restriction—language formulas are appropriate across India has been reopened by this action. The CM of Tamil Nadu rejected it, and it merely reaffirmed the state's staunch stance on a sensitive and political matter. The Three Language Formula states that every student in India should learn three languages, two of which should be native Indian languages, including one regional language and the third should be English. The formula is applicable to both government as well as private schools, and the medium of instruction can be any of the three languages. The national education policy of 1968 introduced the three-language formula, meaning that apart from Hindi and English, there should be a third language which is a part of modern India and must be used for education in Hindi speaking states. The Three Language Formula is as under—1 One Indian native language [Hindi] 2—One Regional Lan-

guage 3—English Language. The primary aim of the Three language Formula is to promote multilingualism in India and enable students to communicate effectively across the country. It also aims to strengthen national integration by exposing students to different cultures and languages and fostering respect for linguistic diversity. That a child's cognitive growth includes acquiring languages, which are significant. Promoting multilingualism and international concord is the main goal. It further helps with— a—Bridging the linguistic gap and enabling effective communication across the country. b—Providing career opportunities and a competitive edge in the job market through proficiency in English. c—Fostering respect for linguistic and cultural diversity. d—Promoting the use and learning of regional languages can help preserve them for future generations. e—Enhancing cognitive development through learning multiple languages. A comprehensive foundation for implementing the Three Language Formula in Indian schools is provided under NEP 2020. The following are the policy's key points—A-Early Childhood Education—The policy places a strong emphasis on the value of early childhood education in helping children learn languages. It suggests that kids between the age of 3 to 8 study in their native language or in regional tongue. B-Flexibility—The policy provides a wide range of language option. The third language can be English or any other language of the students choice, while first two languages must be native Indian languages from the state or region. In non-Hindi speaking states where there have been worries about imposition of Hindi, this clause is anticipated to lessen opposition to formula. C-Teachers Training—The policy acknowledges the necessity of trained educators in order to successfully apply the Three Language Formula. It suggests that teachers be given multilingual training and that attempts be made to find teachers fluent in the local languages. Examination System—According to the policy, students should be evaluated on their command of all three languages, including English. Online Resources—To enable students to learn in their native tongues, the policy encourages the creation of online resources and instructional materials in native languages. NEP 2020 Views on The Three Language Formula—The home language, mother tongue, local language or regional language will whenever possible be the medium of instruction up until at least Grade 5, but preferably up to

Grade 8 and beyond. The three language formula will still be used but it will be done so while promoting both national unity and multilingualism. This system will have more freedom, according to NEP and no state will be forced to use a certain language, so long as at least two of the three languages are indigenous. Hindi will not be imposed in non-Hindi speaking states. Unfortunately the three language formula proposed in the NEP 2020 is at the centre of the political row and storm between the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government and the central government. Tamil Nadu and Kerala government and political parties should desist from opposing the NEP 2020 as there is no base for opposition as it does not make Hindi language compulsory and there is much flexibility in it as it allows much choice to the students to choose languages for medium of instruction. The NEP 2020 proposes an early implementation of the three language formula to promote multilingualism from the school level. The document states that the three language formula will continue to be implemented "while keeping in mind the constitutional provisions, aspirations of the people, regions, and the union, and the need to promote multilingualism as well as to promote national unity. Tamil Nadu's refusal to implement key aspects of NEP2020, particularly the three language formula, has resulted in the centre withholding Rs 573 crore in central education assistance under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan SSA. According to policy rules, states must comply with NEP guidelines to receive SSA funding, of which 60% is provided by the centre to states like Tamil Nadu. It is hoped that sanity will prevail on the Tamil Nadu /DMK government there and they shun blind opposition to NEP 2020. In brief we can say that NEP 2020 is the catalyst for linguistic diversity and opposition to it has no base.

**(The author is a  
columnist, social and  
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## Dr. Abhishek organises mask making workshop at Haryana



### Top News Report

JAMMU /HARYANA, Apr 3: J&K's well-known designer, theatre director, and Sangeet Natak Akademi Delhi's Ustad Bismillah Khan Awardee, Dr. Abhishek Bharti, conducted a three-day professional mask-making workshop at the Department of Teacher Education, Central University of Haryana, from April 1 to 3, 2025.

The workshop was organized in connection with Hindi Diwas. On this occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Tankeshwar Kumar, Head of the Department of Teacher Education Prof. Pramod Kumar, Prof. Nand Kishore, Prof. Dinesh Chahal, Dr. Mukesh

Upadhyay, Dilip Patel, Dr. Sharan Prasad, Dr. Rubul Kalita, Dr. Neha, and other distinguished guests were present.

In this workshop, 60 students from different states of India participated and created various kinds of masks, including those of animals such as horses, donkeys, dogs, cats, rats, elephants, eagles, owls, monkeys, and oxen.

Additionally, they crafted masks representing witches, Hindu deities such as Radha, Krishna, Vishnu, Shiva, Hanuman, Ganpati, Suryadev, and Indradev, as well as masks related to various theatrical plays. Briefing the media, Dr. Abhishek Bharti said, "As a theatre director

from J&K, I feel honored to conduct this workshop at such a prestigious institution in Haryana. The history of these masks in theatre dates back around five thousand years, and their use on stage makes performances more impactful."

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Tankeshwar Kumar stated that this workshop provided an excellent opportunity for students to develop their skills and explore new ways of education through theatre.

Workshop coordinator Dr. Mukesh Upadhyay presented the training outline and emphasized that today's young generation, aspiring to pursue professional theatre, must acquire knowledge of all aspects of theatre design, mask-making being a crucial part of scenic design.

He further added that it was a matter of great pride for the department and the university that Dr. Abhishek Bharti conducted such a creative and inspiring mask-making workshop with the students.

## MLA Devsar visits Waltengoo Kund, inspects ongoing construction of Ziyarat Sharif

### Top News Report

KULGAM, Apr 3: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Devsar Peerzada Feroze Ahmad Shah on Thursday visits Waltengoo area of Kund in Kulgam, inspects ongoing construction of Ziyarat Sharif of Syed Noor Shah Wali Baghdadi.

During his visit, he was accompanied by concerned officers and others line departments.

On the occasion, the MLA took a round of under construction of Ziyarat Sharif and directed the executing agency to complete the vital project under the set timeline. Later, Shah visits many areas in Kund to offer his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.



## JKTF demands immediate release of Headmasters promotion list

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: The Jammu Kashmir Teachers Forum (JKTF), affiliated with the All India Secondary Teachers Federation (AISTF) and Education International (EI), has expressed deep concern over the prolonged delay in issuing the Headmasters' promotion list.

According to UT Spokesperson Joginder Singh, JKTF State President Mohd Ashraf Sheikh stated that the failure to fill hundreds of vacant Headmaster posts is severely affecting the smooth functioning of high schools. The consideration list for Master-to-Headmaster promotions was released long ago, yet no concrete action has been taken.

Sheikh further highlighted that in the past 4-5 months, numerous eligible Masters from the consideration list have retired without receiving their due promotions, causing disappointment and frustration among the teaching community.

He urged the School Education Department to take immediate steps to resolve the issue, emphasizing that timely promotions are crucial for maintaining teachers' motivation and ensuring quality education.

The Forum has appealed to Education Minister Sakeena Masood Itoo and Administrative Secretary Shantmanu to personally intervene and expedite the release of the long-pending Headmasters' promotion list.

## Carrom competition organised under Fit India initiative at GDC RS Pura

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Carrom competition organised by Department of Physical Education and Sports of Govt. Degree College (GDC) RS Pura under Fit India Initiative.

Series of Activities shall be conducted every month. The movement aligns with the broader goal of making India a Fit nation by fostering long-term behavioural changes in individual.

One day carrom Competition started with enthusiasm, both men and women students of the college participated in the competition under the supervision of Dr. Roopali Slathia Physical Director, GDC R.S. Pura.

Principal Prof. (Dr.) Preetpal Kour was the Chief Guest on the occasion, while speaking with students, she highlighted the key objectives of Fit India Movement to Promote Physical Fitness, Health Awareness, Encourage workplace



Fitness and Healthy Diet and Habits.

She motivated the players to participate with enthusiasm, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the true spirit of sportsmanship throughout the event. She also awarded the Medals to the winners.

Results: In Women Category Sneha Kumari, Shivani Viridhi were

Winner and in Men's Category Sarabjeet Hira and Namanpreet Singh were winners.

Convenor Sports Committee Prof. Anupama Pandotra, Prof. Kiran Pathania, Prof. Sanjay Upadhyay, Prof. Neelam Kumari, Prof. Rakesh Choudhary, Prof. Rakesh Kalotra, Dr. Roopali Slathia and Kamaldeep Singh were present during the event.

## "Dy CM hurled filthy abuses upon me, insulted, rebuked Constitution"

### Arrest Surinder Choudhary, divest him of Ministership: Harsh Dev to LG

#### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Former Minister and JKNPP (India) president Harsh Dev Singh on Thursday urged upon the Lt Governor to strip Surinder Choudhary of all his Ministerial portfolios and order his immediate arrest for his criminal conduct, abuse of position and authority and for insulting and rebuking the Constitution of India.

In a letter to LG J&K, Singh said that the incumbent Dy CM apparently having lost his mind and with his erratic behaviour he has become unfit for the high position which he occupies and has become a threat

to the public as well as those who approach him with peoples' problems.

Singh said that he had gone to Choudhary's office with a memorandum and requested him to address the problem of dilapidated roads which had become unfit for traffic.

Surinder Choudhary got infuriated, threw my memorandum on the floor and in a threatening tone said "Why did you hold a Dharna against me and my Deptt"? When I told him that Dharnas and protests are held even outside PM and Parliament and the said right had been conferred upon citizens of this free country by the Constitu-

tion of India.

He got further agitated and said, "To hell with your Constitution (Aisi Tesi Constitution Ki). I am DyCM. No one can hold Dharna outside me".

"Had you been educated enough and read the Constitution, you would not have made such obnoxious comments", I replied back.

"But Surinder Choudhary once again went hammer and tongs against Constitution and me and started hurling filthy abuses upon my mother and sisters. Having lost all sense of decency, civility and courtesy, he got up from his chair and pounced upon me.

When I cautioned him not to touch me, he called his staff and security and physically assaulted me with at least 20 staff and security personnel thrashing me and dragging me in his office chamber.

They tore off my clothes with Surinder Choudhary holding out threats of destroying me", said Singh.

Appealing to the Lt Governor to take cognizance of the wanton criminality of Surinder Choudhary and his extremely perverted, debased and depraved conduct, Singh demanded Surinder's ouster from Minsitry and his immediate arrest in the interest of justice and rule of law.

## Keshav meets SSP Jammu, discusses crime & drug eradication efforts

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Prominent social activist and Chairman of the Samvedna Society, Keshav Chopra, met with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Jammu, Joginder Singh (JKPS) to discuss pressing social and law enforcement issues in the region.

During the meeting, Keshav Chopra praised SSP Jammu for his people-friendly approach to policing and lauded the Jammu Police for their relentless efforts in tackling crime. He particularly commended the police force for apprehending drug peddlers

and notorious criminals, ensuring a safer environment for the people of Jammu. Additionally, he appreciated the police's swift action in solving the Greater Kailash robbery case, highlighting the dedication and efficiency of the district police team.

Expressing his commitment to a safer society, Chopra reaffirmed that the Samvedna Society is always prepared to collaborate with the Jammu & Kashmir Police in their mission to eliminate crime and drug abuse from society.

SSP Jammu Joginder Singh reassured that the Jammu Police is avail-

able 24/7 to serve the people. He emphasized that eradicating the drug menace and solving theft cases remain top priorities for law enforcement. The SSP also highlighted the various awareness campaigns and community engagement initiatives undertaken by the Jammu Police to educate the youth about the dangers of drug addiction.

Recognizing the contribution of NGOs like the Samvedna Society, SSP Joginder Singh acknowledged their crucial role in spreading awareness and assisting law enforcement in maintaining peace and order.



The meeting concluded with both sides reaffirming their commitment to

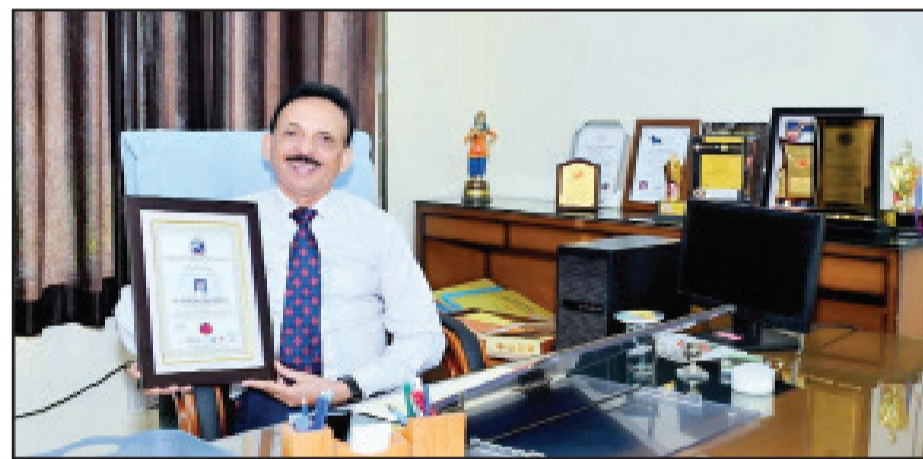
working together for a crime-free and drug-free Jammu.

## GGs College Principal, Dr. Uppal honored with "Mahatma Gandhi Global Peace Award 2025"

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Dr. Rajinder Kumar Uppal, a distinguished Emeritus Professor and renowned academician, has been honored with the Mahatma Gandhi Global Peace Award 2025 by Dr. Hrushikesh Acharya, Executive Director of MGGP India Foundation, recognized by the Government of India.

This prestigious accolade acknowledges Dr. Uppal's tremendous contributions to social change and his exemplary work in educa-



tion and research. His scholarly writings focus on uplifting rural communities and providing strategic insights into

employment generation through rural credit.

Dr. Uppal currently serves as Professor-cum-Principal at Guru

Australia, London, and Pakistan.

His groundbreaking research projects, funded by institutions like UGC, ICSSR, and HRD, have provided critical insights into the transformation of the Indian banking sector through technological advancements.

In addition to his scholarly pursuits, Dr. Uppal is a highly regarded mentor, having supervised 62 M.Phil. and 8 Ph.D. scholars. His academic leadership extends beyond research, as he actively participates as a reviewer, discussant, and session chair for esteemed professional organizations.

His expertise in Banking and Finance is frequently sought by policymakers, and his research on bank mergers has influenced policy implementation in India.

Dr. Uppal's dedication to academia and social upliftment has earned him numerous accolades, including honorary D.Litt. degrees from reputed international universities and prestigious awards such as the Jewel of India Award, Best Educationist Award, Pride of India Award, and the Punjab Rattan Award (2022).

His visionary leadership and relentless pursuit of knowledge continue to inspire future generations, shaping the academic landscape of finance and banking on a global scale.

Gobind College of Management and Technology, Gidderbaha, Punjab, India. With an illustrious career spanning decades, he has made profound contributions to the fields of Banking and Finance.

His research has led to numerous national and international patents, solidifying his reputation as an innovative thinker and thought leader in financial studies. His scholarly works have not only influenced academic discourse but have also had a tangible impact on financial policies and banking practices in India.

A prolific writer, Dr. Uppal has authored and edited 72 books, several of which have gained global recognition. His extensive research output includes 275 research papers, with 72 presented at national and international conferences.

Eight of his research presentations have been recognized on prestigious global platforms in Hawaii, Indonesia, Finland, Costa Rica,

## Scenesational: As Laapataa Ladies lands in controversy for plagiarism, here's a look at films that faced the heat in the recent past

India's official Oscar entry Laapataa Ladies has landed in controversy, as a clip from an Arabic film Burqa City has gone viral. The uncanny similarity between the police station scene in both the movies is in question. So, is it inspiration or plagiarism?

In a hyper-connected world, that it took a year for this to surface comes as a surprise. Though it's not the first time that Laapataa Ladies has courted controversy. Actor-director Ananth Mahadevan had called out the makers for a similar storyline to his TV film Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol. The film was both written and directed by Ananth Mahadevan in 1999. He recently addressed the concerns, posting on social media, "Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol just made a clean sweep of something called IIFA awards... including best original story! Of course with another title...but then a rose is a rose by any name."

The story of Laapataa Ladies, which begins on the same note as Ghunghat Ke Pat Khol, takes a different turn. As for Burqa City, the premise is the same but the Fabrice Braçq's directorial is a short film of only about 19 min-



utes. All these three, however, offer a challenge to patriarchy. While the makers of Laapataa Ladies are yet to address the issue, we take a look at some controversies that rocked Bollywood in the first quarter of this year.

Touted as the most expensive Malayalam film ever, L2: Empuraan came under fire for the name of antagonist, violence against women, riot scenes and a track involving Mulla-periyar Dam. Some Christian associations also registered a protest for scenes involving the Church. However, the makers

announced over 17 voluntary changes. The film was released last week after a re-censored version that addressed the sensitive content.

Vicky Kaushal-starrer Chhaava might have been labelled a success, but it faced much opposition before its February release. Battling accusation of distorting historical facts, for which director Laxman Utekar apologised, questions were also raised over a Lezim dance, which was eventually deleted before release. The controversy around it refuses to die though, as post the release the

film battles accusation of igniting religious hostility.

Kangana Ranaut-directorial Emergency, which aimed at a 2023 release, saw the light of the day in January 2025. The film was released theatrically after being cleared by the Censor Board after about 13 cuts and alterations. The changes included cuts on a few violent scenes and a dialogue in reference to Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

Another film waging a CBFC war is Honey Trehan's Punjab 95. First, the film's title was in question and CBFC advised 120 plus cuts, which wasn't acceptable to the makers. The film, based on insurgency period in Punjab, is a biopic on human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra, a role essayed by singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh. The film's fate hangs in balance though, but the director vows to take it to the audience.

As we await a response from the makers of Laapataa Ladies on the fresh controversy, we remember French and Swiss film director Jean-Luc Godard's words, "It's not where you take things from—it's where you take them to..."

## Val Kilmer, the Top Gun and Batman Forever star, passes away at 65



Val Kilmer, the brooding, versatile actor who played fan-favourite Iceman in Top Gun, donned a voluminous cape as Batman in Batman Forever and portrayed Jim Morrison in The Doors, has died. He was 65. Val died from pneumonia. He had recovered after a 2014 throat cancer diagnosis that required two tracheotomies. His break came in 1984's spy spoof Top Secret, followed by the comedy

Real Genius in 1985. Kilmer would later show his comedy chops again in films like MacGruber and Kiss Kiss Bang Bang.

His movie career hit its zenith in the early 1990s as he made a name for himself as a dashing leading man, starring alongside Kurt Russell and Bill Paxton in 1993's Tombstone, as Elvis' ghost in True Romance and as a bank-robbing demolition expert in Michael Mann's 1995

film Heat with Al Pacino and Robert De Niro. One of his more iconic roles — hotshot pilot Tom 'Iceman' Kazansky opposite Tom Cruise — almost didn't happen. Kilmer was courted by director Tony Scott for Top Gun, but initially balked. "I didn't want the part. I didn't care about the film. The story didn't interest me," he wrote in his memoir. He agreed after being promised that his role would improve from the initial script. He would reprise the role in the film's 2022 sequel, Top Gun: Maverick.

One career low was playing Batman in Joel Schumacher's goofy, garish Batman Forever with Nicole Kidman and opposite Chris O'Donnell's Robin — before George Clooney took up the mantle for 1997's Batman & Robin and after Michael Keaton played the Dark Knight in 1989's Batman and 1992's Batman Returns.

## SRK spotted at Mumbai airport

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan returned to Mumbai in the wee hours on Wednesday. He was spotted at Mumbai International Airport as he returned from a long trip.

Often seen in a mask and hoodie, Khan's latest airport look has surprised his fans. In the visuals, the Jawan actor looked handsome in a black shirt and loose blue jeans. Shah Rukh complimented his outfit with black sunglasses.

The actor greeted his fans before he hopped into his car. He was accompanied by his manager, Pooja Dadlani.

Shah Rukh recently hosted an IPL 2025 opening ceremony, which signified a beautiful crossover between cricket and Bollywood. The highlight of the event was undoubtedly the moment when SRK called former RCB captain Virat Kohli 'GOAT'



and shook a leg with him on his blockbuster song Jhoomo Jo Pathaan. The entire Eden Gardens erupted into loud

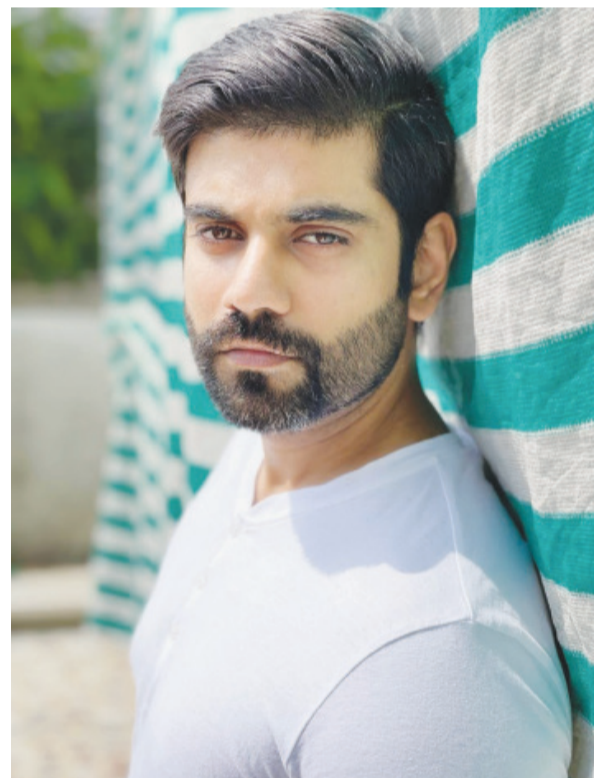
'Kohli Kohli' chants. Like the audience, SRK could not resist himself and chanted 'Kohli Kohli'.

## Warrior spirit: Ankit Anil Sharma goes the distance for each role he essays

Essaying the role of a warrior on screen is fraught with challenges, but actor Ankit Anil Sharma enjoyed each moment of the shoot for the recently released period film Chhaava, headlined by the much-talented Vicky Kaushal. Just like he is doing on the sets of Geetu Mohandas' film Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown Ups, featuring KGF actor Yash in the lead role.

About his experience of working with the Kannada superstar Yash, Ankit shared, "Yash is very detail-oriented; he understands each scene deeply and also offers suggestions for improvement. Behind a happy-go-lucky guy is a very serious actor. It was great fun being with him on sets."

Known for his roles in Gulaab Gang, Turtle, Waah Zindagi, Mimansa and the successful



series Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah, Ankit was overjoyed when he was offered the role of Santaji Ghorpade in Chhaava. "The film was based

on the life of my idol, Sambhaji Maharaj, so I was really happy. I also wanted to work with Laxman sir and Maddock Productions, so you could say that this

one film brought everything together for me," he begins.

When one is playing a role of such enormity, where the past is being recreated and that too on a lavish scale, there are bound to be challenges, but Ankit took them up with much enthusiasm. "The biggest challenge was achieving a warrior-like physique while maintaining flexibility to swing swords and move quickly. A warrior needs to be light on his feet, but strong with the hands. I adopted traditional methods, imagining how Santaji Ghorpade might have trained. I joined an akhada and focused on the basics, like dand-bethak and uthak-bethak, repeating them countless times. The idea was to do fewer variations of exercises, but with a high number of sets to build endurance and strength." Ankit learned the

nuances of horse-riding and sword fighting for the role too, especially traditional Maharashtrian shastra vidya. "By the time we were performing action sequences on set, the footwork had become second nature to us," he beams.

Talking about Vicky Kaushal, Ankit says he was incredibly supportive and cooperative. "He was always there to help us and I still remember how he would personally give us cues during scenes. I've never met someone as genuine and simple as Vicky. He's someone who ensures everyone moves forward together. Rashmika was equally impressive. I was amazed to see how she had memorised all her Hindi lines perfectly and delivered them so fluently. I genuinely enjoyed working with both of them," he signs off.

## Shalini Pandey says 'my heart broke' when Jayeshbhai Jordaar failed

Actor Shalini Pandey received good reviews for her performance in Dabba Cartel recently. Last year, she also had a success with Maharaj. However, her entry into Hindi industry wasn't as smooth as her debut vehicle, the 2022 release Jayeshbhai Jordaar with actor Ranveer Singh, didn't do well at the box office.

Reflecting on her debut film's reception, Shalini Pandey says, "When you do a film like Jayeshbhai Jordaar, it's absolutely amazing on papers—It's Ranveer Singh, Yash Raj Films, an amazing story and such a strong character to play. But yes, my heart broke when it didn't work. When everything looks so great and you feel like people are going to love you but it does not play out that way, you feel shattered. But you gather your heart and

move on. I'm lucky that I've been thriving with the work that I want to do."

Shalini's film journey began with a hit, Telugu film Arjun Reddy (2019). Did her perception change after Jayeshbhai Jordaar's failure? "It's not that I had built one perspective, and it broke; I'm someone who is also very adaptable. I flow with the world and I change, evolve, grow and fall. I take it as it comes," she responds.

With Maharaj too, the kind of recognition that her co-stars Sharvari and Junaid Khan got, did she feel she didn't get as much after that film? "It's not in my hand. I do not remember what I felt because I do move on very quickly with my feelings. I am someone who gets done with my work, takes the love or the feedback and just move on with the next. I'm striving to



do better and have fun at my work. So, I don't remember thinking like that because it is literally not in my control," she answers.

The actor adds that no matter the outcome of her projects, she is proud of where they have led her to: "I am very proud of myself. I'm my biggest cheer-

leader but also my biggest critic. Earlier, I did not use to be gentle and kind to myself, but I started being kind to me after Jayeshbhai Jordaar. When it didn't work, I became very harsh with myself. But it taught me how important it is to be kind to myself and take pride in my journey."

## Kareena Kapoor says no to botox: 'Doing little work on my own'

Going under the knife to look younger might have become a norm for many in showbiz, but Kareena Kapoor doesn't prefer that. Instead, the actor has her own ways and tricks to steer away from botox.

Kareena recently attended the launch event for nutritionist Rutuja Diwekar's recent book, The Commonsense Diet, in Mumbai. At the event, the actor spoke about embracing her age, and her own set of strategies to keep her skin looking healthy and radiant without relying on such procedures.

Expressing her desire to be fit and healthy in the later years of her life, Kareena shares, "For that, I need to eat right with her (Rutuja) guidance. That's what for me, ageing and life is. I love it, I'm embracing it, but I'm taking all these particular things, like eating ghee, eating



khichdi, doing a little bit of weight training for muscle strength, walking a little, my Surya Namaskars, doing my little work on my own rather than skin treatments and botox."

Kareena also opened up about her relationship with food. The mother of two shared,

"In my early years when I was chubby, my relationship with food was amazing. It's not like I ever tried to starve myself. I'm very comfortable in my own skin. In my teenage years also, I think I was always really happy to pick up a packet of chips. But I was a confident girl..."

In the last 10-15 years, I have just gone back to the same food. I'm always very happy with it. Because whether it's good for me or bad for me, I just love the fact that it comforts me, it makes me feel happy. I feel amazing. And that's the most important thing for me."

The actor, who shares Taimur and Jeh with Saif Ali Khan, also shared that she believes "every woman should live her life because self-belief is everything".

On the work front, Kareena had three projects in 2024- Crew, The Buckingham Murders and Singham Again. The last of the three was directed by Rohit Shetty and featured Ajay Devgn, Akshay Kumar, Ranveer Singh, and Deepika Padukone in lead roles. She is working with Raazi director Meghna Gulzar for her next film.

## PM Modi leaves for Thailand; to attend BIMSTEC summit, hold talks with Thai counterpart

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday left for Thailand to attend the sixth BIMSTEC summit, after which he will travel to Sri Lanka for his first visit to the island country since the election of its new president.

In a departure statement, Modi described BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) as a significant forum for promoting regional development, connectivity, and economic progress in the Bay of Bengal region over the past decade.

He highlighted that India's North Eastern region lies at the heart of BIMSTEC due to its geographical location.



"I look forward to meeting the leaders of the BIMSTEC countries and engaging productively to further strengthen our collaboration with the interests of our people in mind," he added. During the visit, Modi said he

would have the opportunity to engage with Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra and the Thai leadership, with a shared desire to elevate their long-standing historical ties, which are based on the strong

foundations of shared culture, philosophy, and spiritual thought.

From Thailand, he will depart for a two-day visit to Sri Lanka on April 4.

"This follows the highly successful visit of President Ranil Wickremesinghe to India last December. We will have the opportunity to review progress made on the joint vision of 'Fostering Partnerships for a Shared Future' and provide further guidance to realise our shared objectives," Modi said.

He expressed confidence that these visits would build on the foundations of the past and contribute to strengthening the close relationships for the benefit of the people of these countries and the wider region.

## CM Adityanath accuses Waqf Board of land encroachment, calls it 'land mafia'



PRAYAGRAJ, Apr 3 (Agencies): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the Waqf Board, accusing it of land encroachments and asserting that its "arbitrary claims" over public and historical sites would no longer be tolerated.

Speaking at a gathering in Prayagraj, Adityanath said, "The Waqf Board had been making baseless claims over lands across cities. Even during the preparations for the Kumbh

Mela, they declared that the event's land belonged to them. We had to ask - has the Waqf Board turned into a land mafia?" He emphasised that under his government, such encroachments had been removed, and mafias had been driven out of Uttar Pradesh.

"Encroachments were made in the name of Waqf at various places, including the sacred land associated with Nishad Raj. But this will not be allowed to continue. A grand and divine Kumbh Mela was

organised despite their objections," he said.

The chief minister also lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for taking legislative action against the alleged irregularities of the Waqf Board.

"We are grateful to the prime minister and the home minister for ensuring that the Waqf Board's arbitrary practices are curbed. A crucial act addressing this issue has already been passed in the Lok Sabha and will now be cleared in the Rajya Sabha," he stated.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday and introduced in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

Adityanath stressed that the state would no longer tolerate illegal claims and national interest must come first. "Those who are loyal to the nation will always find their path ahead," he said.

## Waqf Amendment Bill assault on Constitution, polarises Society: Sonia Gandhi

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (Agencies): Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Thursday termed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill as a "brazen assault" on the Constitution, saying it was part of the BJP's strategy to keep society in a state of "permanent polarisation".

Hours after the Lok Sabha passed the Waqf amendment bill, Gandhi said the bill was "bulldozed" through in the lower house.

Addressing party MPs at a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Party in Samvidhan Sadan here, she also said that the One Nation, One Election Bill is another subversion of the Constitution and the party would strongly oppose it.

"Yesterday, the Wakf Amendment Bill, 2024 was passed in the Lok Sabha and today it is scheduled to come up in the Rajya Sabha. The bill was in effect bulldozed through. Our party's position is clear. The Bill is a brazen assault on the Constitution itself. It is very much part of the BJP's deliberate strategy to keep our society in a state of permanent polarization," Gandhi said.

The Lok Sabha passed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill well past midnight after a 12-hour debate. The Bill was passed after all amendments moved by the opposition members were rejected by voice votes. It was

passed after division of votes — 288 in favour and 232 against. The Bill will now come up in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

The former Congress president also said their plea for the immediate implementation of the women's reservation bill passed by both Houses two years back continues to be wilfully ignored along with the other demand for one-third reservation for women belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and OBC communities.

"Whether it is education, civil rights and liberties, our federal structure or conduct of elections, the Modi government is dragging the country into an abyss where our Constitution will remain on paper and we know their intention is to demolish even that," she charged.

"It is vital for all of us to continue to fight for what is right and just, to expose Modi government's failing and intention to turn India into a surveillance state," Gandhi told MPs at the meeting.

All party MPs, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, were present at the meeting.

Gandhi also said they have repeatedly been raising the issue of free and fair elections and the need for Parliament to debate the functioning of the Election Commission and its "opaque"

rules and procedures, some of which are presently under challenge in the Supreme Court.

Targeting the prime minister, she accused him of rebranding, repackaging and marketing numerous initiatives taken during 2004-2014 as his own personal accomplishments.

That too needs to be exposed through our own public outreach activities, she asserted.

Speaking on the functioning of both houses of Parliament, she charged that the Leaders of Opposition are not allowed to speak and the treasury benches are often found to be creating disturbance in a bid to not allow the Congress to raise their issues.

"It is a matter of grave concern to our democracy that the LoP in the Lok Sabha is not permitted to speak. Similarly, time and again, the LoP in the Rajya Sabha, Khargeji is also not allowed to say what he wants to say and indeed must say.

"Like you, I have been witness to how the House gets adjourned not because of us but because of the protests by the treasury benches themselves. This is quite extraordinary and shocking designed to prevent the Opposition from raising their concerns that would put the government on the spot," she noted.

Noting that the BJP members aggressively target Congress-ruled



state governments, with "total falsehoods", she urged party MPs to be equally aggressive and raise the failures and mis-governance in BJP-ruled states. This will mean much more pointed homework and research on our part, she noted.

The CPP chairperson said Congress MPs have effectively highlighted the real state of the economy and have exposed the vast gap between what the government claims and what the overwhelming reality is in relation to price rise, unemployment and growing inequalities.

She also lauded the role played by Congress leaders who are chairpersons of Parliamentary committees for providing forceful leadership.

"You have used these reports to build a larger consensus to hold the government to account. This is especially so in agriculture, rural development and education," she said.

Gandhi, however, said their demands for a debate on a number of

issues of public importance have been denied by the ruling party.

"Gone are the days when the ruling party was accommodative of the Opposition, when debates and discussion used to take place in both Houses, and as MPs we looked forward to them," she noted.

She said they wanted a detailed discussion in the Lok Sabha on the working of the ministries of defence and of external affairs as both these subjects are of critical importance given the increasingly turbulent political atmosphere in our neighbourhood, but this was disallowed.

The former Congress president said the party has been seeking a discussion in both Houses on grave challenges posed by China on our borders and the "shocking clean chit" given to it by the prime minister on June 19, 2020.

The Congress leader urged MPs reinforce outside Parliament the issues of dilution of RTI, MGNREGA, Forest Rights Act and the Land Acquisition Act.

## 'Pilot stable with fractured leg': Fighter jet crash in Gujarat's Jamnagar

AHMEDABAD, Apr 3 (Agencies): The Indian Air Force has ordered an inquiry into a Jaguar fighter jet crash at a village near Jamnagar IAF station in Gujarat in which one of the pilots was killed and another suffered injuries.

In a statement on Thursday morning, the IAF said the pilots, who were on a night mission, experienced a "technical malfunction" in the aircraft before the crash on Wednesday night.

"An IAF Jaguar two seater aircraft airborne from Jamnagar airfield crashed during a night mission. The pilots faced a technical malfunction and initiated ejection, avoiding harm to the airfield and local population," the statement said.

"Unfortunately, one pilot succumbed to his injuries, while the other is receiving medical treatment at a hospital in Jamnagar.

The IAF deeply regrets the loss of life and stands firmly with the bereaved family. A Court



of Inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the cause of the accident," it added.

The fighter jet crashed at around 9.30 pm on Wednesday at an open field in Suvarada village, 12 km from Jamnagar city, and caught fire, police earlier said.

While the police found one pilot in an injured state at the spot, a search operation was launched to find the second one, who

went missing after the crash, Jamnagar district Superintendent of Police Premsookh Delu said on Wednesday.

The injured pilot was then taken to the government-run GG Hospital in the city, he said.

District Collector Ketan Thakkar, who also rushed to the spot after the incident, said the blaze engulfed the open field after the crash and was later doused by firefighters.

## Shortage of 22 lakh skilled drivers in India: Nitin Gadkari in Lok Sabha

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (Agencies): The country is facing a shortage of 22 lakh skilled drivers, Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday, underlining that lack of proper training facilities for them was leading to many accidents.

During the Question Hour in Lok Sabha, Gadkari said the Centre has launched a Rs 4,500 crore scheme for setting up training institutes for drivers.

According to a World Bank report, India has a shortage of 22 lakh drivers, he said.

The minister said the country also lacked proper driving training facilities, leading to many accidents and deaths.



The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has started a Rs 4,500 crore scheme to set up driving training institutes across the country in a phased manner to set up 1,600 such institutes in all states and Union Territories, he said.

Gadkari said these will generate over 60 lakh employment.

He said all the states and UTs were request-

ed to send suitable proposals for setting up of Institute of Driving Training & Research (IDTRs), Regional Driving Training Centres (RDTCs) and Driving Training Centres (DTCs), including the cluster approach.

The minister said about 1.8 lakh people die every year due to road accidents and many of them due to untrained drivers.

## Rahul Gandhi claims China took Indian land, warns US tariffs could hurt economy

AHMEDABAD, Apr 3 (Agencies): Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Thursday claimed that China had taken over 4,000 square kilometre of Indian territory and that reciprocal tariffs or import duties imposed by the US would "completely devastate" the Indian economy, as he demanded answers from the government over these issues.

Speaking during the Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, Gandhi slammed the government over the celebration of the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties by India and China.

"China is sitting on 4,000 square kilometre of our territory. I was shocked some time back to see that our foreign secretary (Vikram Misri) was cutting a cake with the Chinese ambassador. The question is -- what exactly is happening to this territory of 4,000 sq km that China has taken?" the former Congress president said.

Referring to the Galwan incident, Gandhi said 20 jawans were martyred in 2020.

"There is a celebration taking place over their martyrdom by cutting a cake. We are not against normalcy but there should be



status quo before that. We should get our land back. It has also come to my notice that the President and the Prime Minister have written to the Chinese," he said.

"We are not finding this out from our own people, it is the Chinese ambassador who is telling the people of India that the PM and the President have written to them," Gandhi said.

He said foreign policy is about managing the external countries and pointed out that on one hand, "you have given China 4,000 sq km of our land", and on the other hand our ally US has suddenly decided to impose

tariffs on us.

He said the tariffs imposed by the US are going to "completely devastate" the Indian economy, particularly sectors like the auto industry, pharmaceuticals and agriculture.

"Somebody once asked Indira Gandhi ji-- 'In the matter of foreign policy you lean left or you lean right', and Indira Gandhi ji answered 'I don't lean left or right, I stand straight. I am Indian and I stand straight'."

"The BJP and the RSS have a different philosophy, when they are asked whether they lean left or the right, they say 'no, no, no, we bow our head in front of every foreigner that comes in front of us. This is something that is in their culture, in their history, we know that," Gandhi said.

He said the government of India must give answers as to "what is it doing about our land and about these tariffs that our ally has imposed on us".

The US has announced 27 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India, saying New Delhi imposes high import duties on American goods.

## Israeli strikes on Gaza overnight leaves more than 50 Palestinians dead

DEIRAL BALAH, Apr 3 (Agencies): Overnight strikes by Israel killed at least 55 people across the Gaza Strip, hospital officials said Thursday, a day after senior government officials said Israel would seize large areas of Gaza and establish a new security corridor across the Palestinian territory.

Israel has vowed to escalate the nearly 18-month war with Hamas until the militant group returns dozens of remaining hostages, disarms and leaves the territory. Israel has imposed a month-long halt on all imports of food, fuel and humanitarian aid that has left civilians facing acute shortages as supplies dwindle.

Officials in Khan Younis, in the southern part of the strip, said the bodies of 14 people had been taken to Nasser Hospital — nine of them from the same family. The dead included five children and four women.

The bodies of another 19 people, including five children aged between one and seven years and a pregnant woman, were taken to the European hospital near Khan Younis, hospital officials said. In Gaza City, 21 bodies were taken to Ahli hospital, including those of seven children.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Israel was establishing a new security corridor across the Gaza Strip to



pressure Hamas, suggesting it would cut off the southern city of Rafah, which Israel has ordered evacuated, from the rest of the Palestinian territory.

Netanyahu referred to the new axis as the Morag corridor, using the name of a Jewish settlement that once stood between Rafah and Khan Younis, suggesting it would run between the two southern cities.

He said it would be "a second Philadelphia corridor" referring to the Gaza side of the border with Egypt further south, which has been under Israeli control since last May.

Israel has reasserted control over the Netzarim corridor, also named for a former settlement, that cuts off the northern third of Gaza, including Gaza City, from the rest of the narrow coastal strip. Both of the existing corridors run from the Israeli border to the Mediterranean Sea.

"We are cutting up the strip, and we are increasing the

pressure step by step, so that they will give us our hostages," Netanyahu said.

The Western-backed Palestinian Authority, led by rivals of Hamas, expressed its "complete rejection" of the planned corridor. Its statement also called for Hamas to give up power in Gaza, where the militant group has faced rare protests recently.

Netanyahu's announcement came after the defense minister, Israel Katz, said Israel would seize large areas of Gaza and add them to its so-called security zones, apparently referring to an existing buffer zone along Gaza's entire perimeter. He called on Gaza residents to "expel Hamas and return all the hostages," saying "this is the only way to end the war."

Hamas has said it will only release the remaining 59 hostages—24 of whom are believed to be alive—in exchange for the release of more Palestinian prisoners, a lasting ceasefire and

an Israeli pullout. The group has rejected demands that it lay down its arms or leave the territory.

On Sunday, Netanyahu said Israel plans to maintain overall security control of Gaza after the war and implement US President Donald Trump's proposal to resettle much of its population elsewhere through what the Israeli leader referred to as "voluntary emigration."

Palestinians have rejected the plan, viewing it as expulsion from their homeland after Israel's offensive left much of it uninhabitable, and human rights experts say implementing the plan would likely violate international law.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking 251 hostages, most of whom have since been released in ceasefire agreements and other deals. Israel rescued eight living hostages and has recovered dozens of bodies.

Israel's offensive has killed more than 50,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Israel says it has killed around 20,000 militants, without providing evidence.

The war has left vast areas of Gaza in ruins and at its height displaced around 90% of the population.

## Myanmar earthquake death toll rises to 3,085 as more bodies found



BANGKOK, Apr 3 (Agencies): The death toll from the massive earthquake that hit Myanmar nearly a week ago rose Thursday to 3,085 as more bodies were found by search and rescue teams, the military-led government said.

In a short statement, the military said another 4,715 people have been injured and 341 are missing.

The epicenter of Friday's 7.7 magnitude earthquake was near Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city. It brought down thousands of buildings,

buckled roads and destroyed bridges in multiple regions.

Local media reports of casualties have been much higher than the official figures and with telecommunications widely out and many places difficult to reach, it's thought the numbers could rise sharply as more details come in.

Myanmar's military seized power in 2021 from the democratically elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, sparking what has turned into a civil war.

The quake worsened an already dire humanitarian crisis, with more

than 3 million people had been displaced from their homes and nearly 20 million were in need even before it hit, according to the United Nations.

Amid growing fears that ongoing fighting could hamper humanitarian aid efforts, the military declared a temporary ceasefire Wednesday, through April 22. The announcement followed unilateral temporary ceasefires announced by armed resistance groups opposed to military rule. In the military's announcement, it said it would still take "necessary" measures against those groups if they use the ceasefire to regroup, train or launch attacks.

In Bangkok, where the quake brought down a skyscraper under construction, the search for survivors and bodies continued as Governor Chadchart Sittipunt said a possible sound of life was detected amid the rubble. Twenty-two people were killed, and 35 injured, in the city, mostly by the collapse of the unfinished building.

## 4 dead including 2 children as boat carrying migrants capsizes near Greek island

ATHENS, Apr 3 (Agencies): The capsizing of a boat carrying migrants from the Turkish coast to a nearby Greek island has left at least four people dead, including two children, Greece's coast guard said Thursday, while 23 people have been rescued.

A search and rescue operation off the northern coast of the island of Lesbos recovered the bodies of two women and two children — a boy and a girl — the coast guard said.

Reporting on what appeared to be the same sinking, Turkey's state-run media said five people died and 25 were rescued by the Turkish coast guard after a rubber dinghy sank in the Aegean Sea between the Turkish mainland and Lesbos. Those saved were taken to a hospital and the search continued, Anadolu news agency said.

Weather in the area



was reported to be good, and it was unclear what had caused the boat to overturn early Thursday morning. There was no immediate information on the total number of people who had been on the boat, their nationalities, or the type of vessel they had been using.

A sea and land search and rescue operation was continuing, with three coast guard vessels, an air force helicopter and a nearby boat searching for potential further victims.

Greece is one of the main entry points into the European Union

for people fleeing conflict and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, with many making the short but often treacherous journey from the Turkish coast to nearby Greek islands in inflatable dinghies. Many are unseaworthy or set out in bad weather, and fatal accidents have been common.

The Greek government has cracked down with increased patrols at sea, and many smuggling rings have shifted their operations south, using larger boats to transport people from the northern coast of Africa to southern Greece.

## China vows resolute countermeasures against US reciprocal tariffs

BEIJING, Apr 3 (Agencies): China on Thursday said it would resolutely adopt countermeasures after President Donald Trump imposed 34 per cent tariffs on its over USD 438 billion imports to America, the country's third largest export market, and urged Washington to immediately cancel these duties.

Trump announced tariffs on Chinese imports on Wednesday as part of sweeping measures aimed at reshaping American trade policy.

China firmly opposes the US "reciprocal tariffs" and will resolutely adopt countermeasures to safeguard its rights and interests, said a spokesperson for the Ministry of Commerce after Trump's announcement. "History shows that increasing tariffs cannot solve the United States' own problems. It harms US interests and endangers global economic development as well as industrial and supply chain stability," according to the spokes-

person.

"There is no winner in a trade war, and protectionism leads nowhere," official media quoted the spokesperson as saying.

The US determined the so-called "reciprocal tariffs" based on subjective and unilateral evaluation, which does not comply with international trade rules, severely damages the legitimate rights and interests of relevant parties, and is a typical practice of unilateral bullying, the spokesperson said.

China urges the US to immediately cancel its unilateral tariff measures and properly resolve differences with its trading partners through equal dialogue, the spokesperson said.

The tariffs brought the total levies on China to 54 per cent, close to the 60 per cent Trump threatened during his poll campaign.

Trump earlier imposed two rounds of 10 per cent tariffs on Chinese goods, first in February and then in March this

year. Trump had said he would consider lowering tariffs on China if Beijing supported a deal for ByteDance to divest its short-video app TikTok to a US buyer.

China earlier retaliated against Trump's tariffs with an additional 15 per cent tariffs on American goods and initiated legal action against Washington in the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Additionally, China added 10 US firms to the country's unreliable entity list and took corresponding measures against them. They include a number of companies linked to defence and security besides AI, aviation, IT and dual-use items that carry both civilian and military applications.

Though Chinese officials argue that the new tariffs would hurt the US consumers more, the new tariffs were expected to lower substantial exports to the US hitting its industries back home heavily which is already reeling under the impact of the slowdown of the

Chinese economy.

The US constitutes China's third biggest export destination after ASEAN and the European Union.

The US total goods trade with China was an estimated USD 582.4 billion in 2024, according to the figures from the Office of the US Trade Representative.

US goods exports to China in 2024 were USD 143.5 billion while the US imports from China in 2024 totalled USD 438.9 billion.

US goods trade deficit with China was USD 295.4 billion in 2024.

With heavy tariffs, Trump is putting pressure on China to buy more US industrial and agricultural goods and products.

Speaking from the White House's Rose Garden Trump said, "We're going to be charging a discounted reciprocal tariff of 34 per cent." China, he said, charged tariffs of 67 per cent to the US, noting that the figure included the effects of currency

manipulation and trade barriers. The new 34 per cent tariffs on Chinese imports reflect a 10 per cent universal baseline plus 24 per cent specific to the country. The 10 per cent will come into effect on April 5 while the higher reciprocal tariffs will take effect on April 9.

Trump had vowed for months to impose reciprocal tariffs to match other countries' higher tariff rates for specific goods and offset non-tariff barriers that put US exports at a disadvantage, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

The new levies, Trump said, would correct years of unfair trade during which other countries had been ripping off the US.

At the White House, Trump described his actions on China as tough love. "I have great respect for President Xi (Jinping) of China, great respect for China, but they were taking tremendous advantage," he said.

## "Europe is prepared to respond," EU ramps up counters against US tariffs

The EU is 'preparing for further countermeasures' to protect its interest, Von der Leyen said after US President Donald Trump announced a 20 per cent levies on European goods, urging the US to 'move from confrontation to negotiation', as per Euro News.

BRUSSELS, Apr 3 (Agencies): President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen on Thursday announced that the EU was preparing to ramp up its countermeasures to protect itself from US' reciprocal tariffs, Euro News reported.

The EU is "preparing for further countermeasures" to protect its interest, Von der Leyen said after US President Donald Trump announced a 20 per cent levies on European goods, urging the US to "move from confrontation to negotiation", as per Euro News.

In a post on X, Von der

Leyen said, "The universal tariffs announced by the US are a major blow to businesses and consumers worldwide. Europe is prepared to respond. We'll always protect our interests and values. We're also ready to engage."

"We are already finalising a first package of countermeasures in response to tariffs on steel. And we are now preparing for further countermeasures, to protect our interests and our businesses if negotiations fail," she said on Thursday from Samarkand, Uzbekistan, where she will attend the first-ever EU-Central

Asia summit.

"We will also be watching closely what indirect effects these tariffs could have, because we cannot absorb global overcapacity nor will we accept dumping on our market," she added, as per Euro News.

The US President on Wednesday imposed a minimum 10 per cent tariff on all countries, with the EU put on a list of 60 "worst offenders" and slapped with a higher tailored rate of 20 per cent. The levies are scheduled to come into force next Wednesday.

Tariffs on automobiles made outside the US of 25 per cent were also



announced with immediate effect.

Sweden and Ireland have already said in statements that they "regret" the additional tariffs. "We don't want growing trade barriers. We don't want a trade war. That would make our populations poorer and the world more dan-

gerous in the long run," Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said, as per Euro News.

"But - Sweden and the Swedish Government are well prepared for what's happening now. We stand on solid economic ground, with world-class public finances," he added.

Ireland's Tanaiste, Simon Harris, said in a statement that the bloc "must remain calm and measured in our response", adding that "the EU and Ireland stand ready to find a negotiated solution with the US". "Together with my government colleagues, my officials and the EU we will be reviewing the situation and the best way to respond in the coming hours and days. The EU will have to respond in a proportionate manner which protects our citizens, our workers and our businesses," he added.

The bloc, von der

Leyen said earlier this week in an address to the European Parliament, holds a lot of cards: from trade to technology to the size of our market" and would "approach these negotiations from a position of strength". The EU recorded a surplus of goods with the US Euro 156.6 billion in 2023 but a deficit of services worth Euro 108.6 billion.

Brussels already has two lists of US products that could be hit with tariffs, EU officials previously said, including one that contains goods that have been subject to suspended tariffs since 2018. Further measures

may be necessary, the officials said, that could potentially target services.

In her short address on Thursday, von der Leyen said she agrees with Trump "that others are taking advantage of the current rules" and that she is "ready to support any efforts to make the global trading system fit for the realities of the global economy."

"But I also want to be clear: Reaching for tariffs as your first and last tool will not fix it," she said, adding: "Let's move from confrontation to negotiation," as per Euro News.



## Two major bovine smuggling bids foiled, 44 bovines rescued, 2 vehicles seized

### Top News Report

SAMBA, Apr 3: Tightening noose against the bovine smugglers and their propagators, Samba Police on Thursday foiled two major bovine smuggling attempts in the jurisdiction of Police Station Ghagwal and rescued forty four bovines from the clutches of bovine smugglers.

The vehicles used for illegal transportation of bovines were also seized.

As per police report, an information was received at Police Station Ghagwal from reliable sources regarding smuggling of bovines in a truck container bearing registration No NL01N-0553.

Acting on information, police spokesperson said, a police team headed by SHO Police Station Ghagwal intercepted the aforesaid truck at naka NHW Tappal for its checking.

During checking, 26 bovines found inside the vehicle which were tied in a cruel manner and were being transported illegally without any valid permission, spokesperson said adding that all the bovines have been rescued and the aforesaid truck has also been seized.

A case FIR No. 48/2025 under Section 223 BNS, 11 PCA Act was registered at Police Station Ghagwal and investigation started.

Similarly in another bovine smuggling

attempt foiled by Police, a truck container without registration No. was intercepted at naka NHW Tappal and during its checking, eighteen bovines were found inside the vehicle which were tied in a cruel manner and were being transported illegally without any valid permission. All the bovines have been rescued and the truck has also been seized.

A case FIR No. 47/2025 under Section 223 BNS, 11 PCA Act was registered at Police Station Ghagwal and investigation started.

The whole operation was carried out under the supervision of DySP Hqrs Samba and under the overall supervision of SSP Samba.

## Need for four key reforms to prioritize health in schools: Dr Rahul Mehra

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: With rising cases of mental health disorders, obesity, substance abuse and excessive screen time among young people, India faces a growing public health crisis that begins early in life.

Schools, where children spend a significant part of their formative years, play a crucial role in shaping lifelong health behaviours. However, the current education system largely limits health education to sports and yoga, leaving critical aspects like mental resilience and social well-being unaddressed.

Highlighting these concerns, Dr Rahul Mehra, India's National Representative for the UNESCO Chair on Global Health & Education and Executive Chairman of Tarang Health Alliance, has called for urgent reforms to ensure a more comprehensive approach to school health educa-

tion. Following a review of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), he has put forward four key recommendations to make health a priority in schools, emphasizing that without these changes, young learners will remain ill-equipped to navigate the complex challenges of modern life.

Dr Mehra's first recommendation is to expand the curriculum beyond physical fitness and integrate structured discussions on mental health, social health and life-skills.

"Topics such as self-esteem, stress management, goal-setting, decision-making, and relationship-building must be embedded into everyday learning," he said.

Secondly, he stresses the need to address contemporary health challenges such as air pollution, drug abuse, and digital addiction, ensuring that health education remains relevant to the realities

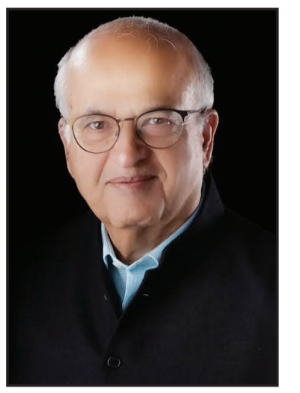
As a next step, and as his third vital recommendation, Dr Mehra calls for specialized training for health educators as well. "Teachers must be equipped with structured materials and clear learning objectives to effectively impart knowledge on holistic well-being," he said. Lastly, he advocates for a collaborative approach to health education, urging schools to actively involve parents and public health experts to create a supportive ecosystem that extends beyond the classroom.

Dr Mehra draws attention to successful global models, such as Finland and Canada, where comprehensive health education is a core part of the school system. Finland's education framework seamlessly integrates physical, mental, and emotional well-being, reducing student stress and fostering creativity. Canada's Comprehensive School

Health (CSH) model, through initiatives like the "Healthy Schools Certification" program, ensures that student well-being is prioritized at multiple levels, involving parents, educators, and policymakers.

With NCERT curriculum revisions occurring only once every 15-20 years, Dr Mehra stresses that India has a rare chance to implement these much-needed reforms now. By embedding a truly holistic approach to health education, schools can play a transformative role in shaping a healthier and more resilient generation. As policymakers and educators plan the future of India's education system, he emphasizes that health must no longer be an afterthought, it must be at the very heart of learning.

Tarang Health Alliance, led by Dr Mehra, is a non-profit organization working to promote health education and preventive healthcare across India. Since



2016, it has been raising awareness and developing programs to improve children's physical, mental and social well-being. The organization advocates for compulsory health education to help shape policies that equip children with the knowledge and skills for a healthier future. It has successfully implemented school health programs in cities like Delhi NCR, Chandigarh, and Jaipur. In 2024, the initiative expanded to 30 schools, focusing on both student education and parental involvement for a more comprehensive approach to well-being.

## J&K SCARD Bank bids farewell to Branch Head Shafqat Hussain Khan on superannuation



### Top News Report

HANDWARA, Apr 3: The Jammu and Kashmir State Cooperative Agriculture & Rural Development (SCARD) Bank, Branch Office Handwara, organized a heartfelt farewell ceremony for its Branch Head, Shafqat Hussain Khan, as he retired from bank service upon superannuation.

The event was attended by bank officials and esteemed members of civil society, who gathered to express their appreciation for Khan's dedication and valuable contributions to the institution.

On this occasion, Tauseef War acknowledged Shafqat Hussain Khan's commitment and leadership, praising his excep-

tional service during his tenure at the bank. He highlighted how Khan's efforts had positively impacted the institution and its operations.

The farewell ceremony was marked by an atmosphere of gratitude and respect, as colleagues and associates reminisced about his professional journey and wished him success in his future endeavors.

## NCORD committee of GCOE Jammu conducts awareness rally on "Stay away from drugs"

### Top News Report

JAMMU Apr 3: A Rally-cum awareness campaign was organized by NCORD committee of GCOE, Jammu, in collaboration with Social Reform Charitable Trust on the theme "Stay away from drugs" under the patronage of Principal GCOE, Dr.(Prof.) Jyoti Parihar. The event was also graced by the presence of our esteemed speaker S.K Jain State Yoga Commissioner and his team.

The event was initiated with warm and engaging welcome speech by Convener NCORD com-



mittee, Prof. Sunanda Rani.

Following her welcome address, the stage was taken over by S.K. Jain, State Yoga Commissioner, who 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 took collective efforts to shed light on this sensitive issue.

To enhance the impact of the event, a pledge taking ceremony on "Say No To Drugs" was also conducted.

To add depth to the event, a rally was organized and flagged off by Prof. Sunanda Rani accompanied by Dr. Shalini Sharma, Prof. Roopa Kumari, Dr. Ambica Kumari along with the students to raise awareness about the drug abuse.

A formal vote of thanks was extended by Dr. Ambica Kumari.

The event concluded with a distribution of refreshment to the students, generously sponsored by Dabar India Limited.

The event was a great success with active participation from both students and faculty members 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.

## FromPage No:1

### SC judges to declare assets on assuming office

Supreme Court had resolved that judges should make a declaration of their assets on assuming office, and whenever any acquisition of a substantial nature is made, to the Chief Justice.

"This also includes declaration(s) by the Chief Justice of India. Placing the declaration of assets on the Supreme Court website will be on a voluntary basis," the SC website said.

### 48 JKAS officers transferred on LG's direction in J&K

Kathua, Bhandarwah and Handwara.

The order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) on Tuesday came at a time when the elected government was waiting for a nod from the Union home ministry for the business rules it framed about a month ago and sent to the lieutenant governor (LG) for approval to facilitate smooth governance without confusion.

In the run up to the much-awaited Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir last year, the Ministry of Home Affairs last July amended the "transaction of business rules", enhancing the powers of the LG in matters related to police, public order, all-India services such as the IAS and IPS, and the granting of prosecution sanctions.

"Until we receive statehood, it is necessary to establish business rules for clarity. It took some time, but yesterday (March 5) at 8 pm, we convened a Cabinet meeting and finalised the business rules. They were approved by the Cabinet," Chief Minister Omar Abdul-

lah had said while replying on the motion of thanks to the LG's address in the Assembly on March 6.

He also said the rules have been submitted to the LG for approval, and "we hope they will be approved".

Abdullah had earlier openly criticised the dual governance model in the Union Territory -- where he shares power with the LG -- as a "recipe for disaster".

### J&K LG chairs meeting of SASB in Srinagar

out at different locations to further improve the facilities for the devotees.

He also directed for completing the vital infrastructure projects at Batal and Nunwan base camps before the commencement of Yatra. The meeting was attended by the Chief Executive Officer, SASB, senior officials of SASB and executive agencies.

### Burglars loot six shops in Surankote Bazar in Poonch

burglars entered the shops by damaging the shutters and decamped with the valuables, they said.

The shops in which the burglary was carried out included a mobile phone store, a provisional store besides the one housing office of Jio Company, they said.

A police official said that a case has been registered, and investigations have been launched.

Teams of FSL were immediately rushed to the spot for the purpose of collecting evidence, the official said. "Police is also working on other angles and those behind the burglary will be soon nabbed," the official added.

### Waqf Amendment bill violation of Article 25 of Indian constitution: J&K Assembly Speaker

The controversial Waqf bill was passed in the Lok Sabha late last night after 12 hours of discussion. While BJP and allies supported the bill, INDIA bloc parties voted against it.

Almost all regional political parties including NC, PC, and PDP voiced their opposition to the bill.

### Bill will bring transparency and accountability in Waqf: BJP's Tarun Chugh

Amit Shah's speech, all the confusion vanished, and those who were trying to create confusion amongst Muslims, people now understand them. Pasmada Muslims, who are the largest population in Bihar (among the Muslim community), as we have a caste survey in the state, they weren't given a representation in the Waqf board," Jha said.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, will be tabled in the Rajya Sabha a day after it was cleared with a majority in the Lok Sabha. The Lower House witnessed a 12-hour debate, after which the Bill was passed with 288 in its favour and 232 against it.

The House sat beyond midnight to pass the legislation. Speaker Om Birla later announced the division's result. "Subject to correction, Ayes 288, Noes 232. The majority is in favour of the proposal," he said.

The government brought the revised bill after incorporating the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which examined the legislation which was introduced in August last year.

The bill seeks to amend the Act of 1995 and improve the administration and management of waqf properties in India. It aims to overcome the shortcomings of the previous act and enhance the efficiency of Waqf boards, improving the registration process and increasing the role of technology in managing Waqf records.

### Two imposters posing as police officers arrested in Pulwama

under various pretences.

"Their activities came to light after multiple complaints were received from victims who had been coerced into paying sums of money out of fear of legal consequences. On this complaint Police station Tral registered a case FIR No. 31 of 2025 under relevant sections of laws and arrested the involved accused persons. Both suspects are currently in custody and face multiple charges," the statement read.

"Police have urged citizens to remain vigilant and report to them if anyone is demanding money in their name," the statement added.

### Greater Kailash gold shop heist solved, culprits in custody: SSP Jammu

her throat to instill fear before looting gold ornaments, cash, and a mobile phone (Vivo V20, SIM No.

9906015489). The accused fled the scene, leaving the shop owner and the entire Sawarnkar community in shock," SSP Jammu said.

"Following the incident, a case was registered under FIR No. 19/25 at PS Gangyal under Sections 309(3), 311, and 3(5) of BNS, and an investigation was launched immediately," SSP Jammu said adding that recognizing the seriousness and public concern over the case, he constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) under the supervision of SP City South, led by SDPO City South.

"The team adopted an intelligence-based and technology-driven approach to track down the culprits," SSP Jammu said.

The investigation led to the arrest of the mastermind, Advocate Rahul Sharma, son of Shashi Sharma, resident of Lower Kanal, near Grammeen Bank, Bishnah. He, along with two other accomplices, meticulously planned and executed the robbery. Their inspiration came from a similar robbery in Delhi's Samaypur Badli area in 2023, SSP Jammu disclosed.

During questioning, SSP Jammu said, the accused confessed to orchestrating the crime to make quick money, believing they could escape undetected. However, Jammu Police's relentless pursuit and efficient crime-solving strategies ensured their arrest.

He said Jammu Police successfully recovered a substantial quantity of stolen gold jewelry, including Jhumka (15 pieces), Gold Chains (9 pieces), Chain Set (1 piece), Bangles (30 pieces), Rani Haar (2 pieces), Ladies Small Set (7 pieces), Rings (11 pieces), Lockets (7 pieces), Kante (49 pieces), Tops (16 pieces), Stone Earrings (6 pieces), and Sterling Silver Watch (1 piece).

At the press conference, SSP Jammu commended the SIT for their swift action and professional approach in solving the case. He

urged the public to stay vigilant and take precautionary measures, including installing CCTV cameras at shops and residences, keeping only minimal valuable jewelry on display, reporting any suspicious activity to the police by dialing 100.

Jammu Police reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining law and order and warned that crime will not be tolerated. The swift and precise action in this case sends a strong message to criminals that justice will be served, regardless of how well-planned their crimes may be.

### Youth arrested in Bandipora for glorifying Yasin Malik on social media: Police

photos of head of JKLF Mohamad Yaseen Malik and others on his social media handle to disturb law and order," police said in a statement.

According to the police, the youth was arrested, and FIR No.65/2025 U/S 152 BNS, 66 IT Act was registered in police station Sumbal, and further investigation is underway "Bandipora police is actively monitoring social media platforms to identify individuals engaged in spreading extremist content, inciting violence, or attempting to disrupt public order. Any attempt to glorify terrorism, promote secessionist ideologies, or spread misinformation against national integrity will be dealt with strictly under the law," police said. "Bandipora police urges social media users to act responsibly and refrain from activities that violate legal and ethical norms. Stringent legal action, including prosecution under relevant laws, will be taken against those found misusing digital platforms for unlawful purposes," it added.

## JKESL doing great services to ex-servicemen, their families: Balbir



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Balbir Ram Rattan, a proud son of a retired Indian soldier and prominent social activist, called on Lieutenant General Rakesh Sharma (Retd.), President, J&K Ex Services League (JKESL), at his office in Jammu, to acknowledge and commend their commitment towards the welfare, resettlement, and rehabilitation of ex-servicemen and their dependents.

Lieutenant General Rakesh Sharma (Retd.), shared the League's initiatives aimed at honouring the legacy of the Dogra warriors. He shared that the League regularly organizes commemorative programmes to mark the birth anniversaries and martyrdom days of iconic figures such as General Zorawar Singh and Brigadier Rajinder Singh. These events serve not only as tributes but also as reminders of the valiant history

that continues to inspire generations.

"We take immense pride in paying homage to our great Dogra warriors like General Zorawar Singh and Brigadier Rajinder Singh. Their bravery and dedication have set standards of courage and leadership. Our efforts at the League are aimed at ensuring their sacrifices are never forgotten," said Lt. General Sharma.

Balbir Ram Rattan, while appreciating the services of JKESL, said that the League is doing great services to many ex-servicemen and their families.

Their dedication towards rehabilitation, resettlement, and welfare of ex-servicemen, war widows and veer naris, reflects the true spirit of service and sacrifice that defines Indian armed forces.

He said that the J&K Ex Services League has been instrumental in providing support and assistance to countless

ex-servicemen and their families over the years. Their continuous efforts to address issues related to rehabilitation, pensions, and welfare have earned them widespread appreciation and respect.

He said that the JKESL deserves all the appreciation for its tireless efforts in ensuring the well-being of those who have sacrificed for the nation. He emphasized that the legacy of the Dogra warriors must be preserved and celebrated, highlighting the pivotal role played by the JKESL in this noble cause.

He expressed confidence that the League will continue its service towards the servicemen and their families.

Lieutenant General Rakesh Sharma (Retd.), along with League's General secretary Colonel Rajinder Singh and Secretary Colonel Oshnak Choudhary also presented vaster to Balbir as a token of respect.

## GDC Sidhra organizes IEC Campaign against menace of Drug Abuse



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: As a part of ongoing IEC Campaign against menace of "Drug Abuse" launched by District Administration Jammu under the leadership of Sachin Kumar Vaishya, DC Jammu, Anti Drug and Rehabilitation Cell of GDC Sidhra organized an awareness programme on Drug Abuse under J&K Nasha Mukta Abhiyan with an aim to disseminate information regarding Drug Abuse and its Prevention.

The event started with the formal welcome address by Prof. Deepa Kak, Convener of Anti-Drug and Rehabilitation Cell followed by brief introduction related to the menace of drug abuse. Various resource persons from different departments were part of the event to generate awareness among the students and community regarding this alarming problem. As a token of gratitude all the dignitaries were presented with saplings by the Principal of the col-lege.

To begin with Dr. Vandana, MO, NTPHC

Bain Bajalta delivered a comprehensive lecture on the various components of drug abuse like prescription medicine (morphine, benzodiazepines) or illegal substance like cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and synthetic drugs.

She narrated the whole mechanism of the drugs which affects the brain's reward system, altering mood, perception and behavior and emphasised that with the repeated use of these drugs, the brain's chemistry changes, making the user dependent on the substance for pleasure and comfort.

Moving ahead second resource person, Neeraj Parihar from Police Department, deliberated specifically on the criminal activities induced by drug abuse. He narrated some of the live incidents of the drug abusers who eventually associated themselves with the criminal activities.

This further led to social isolation, broken families, economic burden and violence.

## Randhawa launches development works worth Rs 60 Lakh in Bahu Constituency

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: MLA Bahu, Ch. Vikram Randhawa, today inaugurated two significant development projects in Bahu Constituency, with a total investment of Rs 59 lakh, aimed at improving local infrastructure and enhancing public convenience.

Ch. Vikram Randhawa started the upgradation of a lane near Golden Roots School, Gandhi Nagar (Ward No. 20). The project includes high-quality tile work and drain covering to enhance sanitation and accessibility for residents.

Officials present at the event included AEE Nisha Bharti and JE Vishal Kotwal, along with senior party leaders Naresh Singh (District President), Rahul Kumar (Mandal President), Satvir Singh, Daljeet Singh, Varun Sharma, Pankaj Bral, and other dignitaries.

To address water supply challenges, Ch. Vikram Randhawa also initiated the PHE pipeline installation at Sanjay Nagar, Sector-4 (Ward No. 46). This project is expected to significantly improve



water distribution in the area, ensuring a steady supply for residents. The event was attended by AEE Arun Kumar and JE Amit Sharma, as well as local leaders Ritika Mam (Mandal President), Narinder Koki, Sata-pul Choudhary, Sanjay Bhu, Vinod Kumar, and other respected community members.

Addressing the gatherings at both locations, Ch. Vikram Randhawa highlighted the importance of continuous infrastructural development for the well-being of the people. He reiterated

his commitment to resolving public grievances and assured residents that several more projects focusing on roads, drainage, and water supply are in the pipeline.

He further urged the residents to cooperate with the administration during the execution of these projects, ensuring their smooth and timely completion. "Development is a shared responsibility, and with collective efforts, we can transform Bahu Constituency into a model region," he stated.

## NSF celebrates 122th birth anniversary of Maniben Patel

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: National Secular Forum (NSF), University Unit organized a program in University Campus, and on the Birth anniversary of Maniben Patel who laid her life for the country.

A programme in this connection was organized wherein Dr Vikas Sharma Coordinator Jammu District and Zonal Secretary JKNC was the Chief Guest while, Dr Sukhdev Singh State President NSF presided over the function. Vikshay Vashist, State Secretary NSF was the guest of honour.

Speaking on the occasion Dr

Vikas Sharma threw light on the life history of Maniben Patel and appreciated the efforts of NSF and appealed to the youth to come forward to eliminate all evils from the society.

He said that Maniben Patel was an Indian independence movement activist and a Member of the Indian parliament. She was the daughter of freedom fighter and post-Independence Indian leader Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Educated in Bombay, Patel adopted the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi in 1918, and started working regularly at his ashram in Ahmedabad.

Dr Sharma also said that in

1923-24 the British government levied heavy taxes on the common people and for recovery of the same they started confiscating their cattle, land and property.

To protest against this oppression, Maniben motivated women to join a campaign led by Gandhi and Sardar Patel and support the No-Tax Movement.

On this occasion, Dr Sukhdev Singh State President NSF said that Maniben Patel participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement as well as the Salt Satyagraha and was imprisoned for long periods of time. However, because Maniben Patel was

committed to the liberation of India, and thus the Quit India movement, she was again imprisoned from 1942 to 1945 in Yerwada Central Jail. She went on to author an account of the freedom struggle as a book on her father's life in the years following Indian Independence.

Vikshay Vashist, State Secretary NSF also addressed this occasion.

Gourav Partap Singh President University Unit delivered the welcome address; Abhishek Uppal Chairman Jammu District unit was delivering the vote of thanks.

## Godrej Enterprises Group strengthens office furniture portfolio with focus on innovation, ergonomics

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Interio, a leading home and office furniture brand of Godrej Enterprises Group, announced that they are targeting 30% growth in its B2B business by FY27, as the company expands its presence in the institutional furniture solutions. With the office furniture market projected to grow from USD 5.8 Billion in 2024 to USD 13.0 Billion by 2033 at a CAGR of 8.83%[1], Interio has allocated INR 55 crore to transform its product portfolio and capitalize on the emerging opportunities in workspace solutions.

Commenting on the evolving office market, Sameer Joshi, Senior Vice President and Head of B2B Business, Interio, said, "India's office sector is undergoing a significant transformation, with global enterprises and MNCs seeking high-performance, future-ready workspaces. At Interio, we are committed to designing office environments that enhance employee productivity, promote well-being, and support sustainable business practice. Our B2B business is targeting a growth of 15% in FY26. Our expertise in creating agile, technology-driven, and premium office solutions positions us as a key enabler in the evolving corporate landscape."



India's commercial office space demand is projected to reach 65-70 million sq. ft in 2025, fueled by expansion and leasing of office space in IT, BFSI, and GCCs, presenting significant opportunities for innovative workspace design.[2] To cater to this demand, Interio is creating flexible, ergonomic, sustainable and technologically advanced office environments that fulfill to the needs of multinational corporations, global capability centers and progressive enterprises.

Interio's product portfolio has seen strong traction, particularly in the ergonomic category such

as Motion & Thrill Chairs and Flexmeet workstations. The company recently expanded its wellness portfolio with the launch of Posture Perfect Chair and Motion Mesh along with height-adjustable desks. To address the growing demand for technology integration in workspaces, Interio has also introduced innovative solutions like Network lockers and AV solutions. The company has demonstrated significant innovation in its product development, with approximately 70 products holding registrations and 9 products with patents. The patented Motion chair enables

users to adopt dynamic, three-dimensional body movements, while the Posture Perfect chair tracks the movement of the human spine and provides complete back support in every position of recline – innovations specifically designed to address the evolving needs of the modern workplace.

Interio has strengthened its position as a leader in creating innovative, functional and aesthetically pleasing spaces for global brands entering the Indian market, having executed over 1500 projects spanning more than 100 million sq.ft. across diverse sectors including Corporate Offices, Government facilities, Banking, Infrastructure (Metros, Airports), Museums, Auditoriums, Healthcare, Hospitality, Warehouses, and Retail spaces.

Offering comprehensive solutions such as General Contracting, Turnkey projects, and Design and Build services, Interio stands ready to deliver world-class interior solutions that meet the unique needs of each client as companies continue to invest in state-of-the-art facilities in India. The company's offerings also include general contracting, design, and execution of everything from interior design to MEP to security and surveillance to AV systems.

## GGM Science College organises table tennis matches under Fit India 2025



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: GGM Science College organised Table Tennis (Men & Women) matches under the Fit India, 2025 at College Auditorium Hall today on 03-04-2025.

Dr. Romesh Kumar Gupta, Principal GGM Science College was the Chief Guest during the occasion. He emphasized on the importance of sports in day to day life. He said that Sports play a vital role for a well-rounded life, promoting physical and mental health, fostering teamwork, and building character. It encourages fitness, reduce stress and teach valuable life skills, like discipline and

leadership both on and off the field.

The tournament was organised under the overall supervision of Dr. Devinder Kumar Sharma, Incharge Physical Director GGM Science College Jammu.

He said sports activities leads to a healthy and mindful living which provide feeling of wholeness and increases one's efficiency to perform daily tasks, thus leading to more productivity.

He also said that a healthy mind lives in a healthy body and our College will organise such activities under Fit India in near future also.

In Women's section the match was played between Merryleen

Kour and Neelakshi Rana in which the match was won by Merryleen Kour by 4-1 Set.

In Men's Single, the 1st match was played between Navjot Singh and Karma in which Navjot won by 3-2.

In Men Double section the match was played between Navjot Singh & Ayushman Singh and Gagan Deep Singh & Aniket Rathore in which the match was won by Gagan Deep Singh & Aniket Rathore by 3-2.

Dr. Sunit Dutt, Dr. Anil Kumar, Dr. Bhekam Pal Singh, Dr. Sumit, Dr. Mohd. Maqem and Sports Staff were among the various dignitaries present during the occasion.

## Shri Raghunath Ji Corridor Vikas Council announces Maha Arti Event at Tawi River Front on April 13

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: The Shri Raghunath Ji Corridor Vikas Council is delighted to announce a grand Maha Arti event at the newly developed Tawi River Front in Jammu. The event is scheduled to take place on the auspicious occasion of Baisakhi, on April 13, 2025, at 5:30 PM.

This Maha Arti marks the beginning of spiritual and cultural activities at the much-anticipated Tawi River Front, which has been developed by Jammu Smart City Limited following the model of the famous Sabarmati River Front in Ahmedabad.

The event will be graced by the esteemed presence of Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha, who will participate as the Chief Guest in the Arti ceremony.

Additionally, a grand Baisakhi Mela will be organized at the River Front by Jammu Smart City Limited, in collaboration with the Tourism Department. This promises to be a spectacular celebration, bringing together devotees, cultural enthusiasts, and tourists to experience the rich heritage of Jammu.

Taking inspiration from the sacred traditions of Kashi, Rishikesh, and Haridwar, the Shri Raghunath Ji Corridor Vikas Council is committed to promoting cultural and religious heritage while also emphasizing the importance of water conservation in Jammu.

The Maha Arti will take place on the banks of Surya Putri Tavishi, also known as the younger sister of Maa Ganga. The sacred river is further blessed by the divine presence of Bawe Wali Mata, making this event a deeply spiritual and significant occasion for devotees.

The Council has received official consent from Jammu Smart City Limited to conduct this event and is actively seeking support from the Directorate of Tourism Jammu to enhance promotion and ensure greater participation.

The Shri Raghunath Ji Corridor Vikas Council warmly invites devotees, tourists, and residents of Jammu & Kashmir to join this historic and divine celebration. Come and experience the spiritual grandeur of the Maha Arti, witness the enchanting beauty of the Tawi River Front, and immerse yourself in the festivities of Baisakhi.

## Siraj, Buttler guide Gujarat to easy win, end Bengaluru's winning start to season

BENGALURU, Apr 3 (Agencies): Gujarat Titans handed Royal Challengers Bengaluru their first defeat of the Indian Premier League season on Wednesday, sealing an eight-wicket victory thanks to pace bowler Mohammed Siraj's three-wicket haul and batsman Jos Buttler's half-century.

With 170 required for victory after Bengaluru batsman Liam Livingstone's battling 54 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Gujarat got home with 13 deliveries to spare with Buttler scoring an unbeaten 73 off 39 balls after Sai Sudharsan made 49.

Having reached his fifty with a six off Livingstone in the 15th over, Buttler produced some audacious shots to get his team across the finish line in style in the company of impact player Sherfane Rutherford, who made 30 not out.

"I really enjoyed it. I thought the bowlers did a fantastic job. If we had fielded a bit better, looking at myself there, we would be chasing a few (runs) less," said Buttler.

"But it's a nice clinical win and



well deserved. There was a bit in the wicket and the openers played really sensibly to take the sting out of that and set up the chase. I was trying to play with a lot of freedom and intent. I've had a few months of unenjoyable cricket, so I was trying to give my best and I'm excited to be here."

Earlier, Phil Salt was dropped by England teammate Buttler in the opening over but Gujarat shrugged off the disappointment to bag the prized wicket of

Virat Kohli in the next, as Arshad Khan had Bengaluru's talisman caught in the deep for seven.

Former champions Gujarat continued to pile the pressure on Bengaluru as Siraj (3/19) bowled out Devdutt Padikkal and Salt before Ishant Sharma trapped skipper Rajat Patidar lbw for 12, leaving the home side teetering at 42/4 in the seventh over.

Livingstone, who was dropped on nine and later survived a loud appeal for lbw, forged a 52-run

stand for the fifth wicket with the aggressive Jitesh Sharma, who smashed a 21-ball 33 to give the hosts hope.

Three massive sixes off Rashid Khan in the 18th over took Livingstone to his half-century before he was caught behind off Siraj, but Tim David took Bengaluru to a competitive 169/8 with an 18-ball 32 towards the end.

"It was emotional because I played for seven years here," said Siraj, who was released by Bengaluru ahead of the auction late last year.

"There was some nervousness ... but the moment I got the ball in my hand, it was full-on intensity ... as a bowler, I want to always have belief, that's important. I have the belief that I can do well irrespective of where I'm playing, that's my mindset."

Brief scores: Royal Challengers Bengaluru: 169/8 in 20 overs (Livingstone 54, Jitesh 33, David 32; Siraj 3/19, Kishore 2/22); Gujarat Titans: 170/2 in 17.5 overs (Buttler 73\*, Sudharsan 49, Rutherford 30\*).

## Punjab batters reaping rewards of working with positive Ponting



LUCKNOW, Apr 3 (Agencies): Punjab Kings batsmen Nehal Wadhra and Prabhsimran Singh said new coach Ricky Ponting had already made a big impact with his positive approach after the team continued their winning start to the new Indian Premier League season.

Punjab appointed the Australian on a four-year contract in September after finishing ninth last season under Trevor Bayliss, and the former Delhi Capitals coach has guided his new team to two straight victories.

Wadhra scored an unbeaten 43 after Prabhsimran posted 69 to help Punjab chase down 172 with 22 deliveries to spare and the duo said Ponting's influence was obvious.

"He's one of the best coaches I've ever worked with," said Wadhra, who was inserted by Ponting as an impact player. "I've never heard any negative talk from him and that's the best thing about him. He talks positive, and when a coach gives you such positive remarks, that automatically boosts your confidence."

Prabhsimran said Ponting and his staff had already instilled a winning mentality in the Punjab ranks as they eye their first title in the 18th edition of the competition. "They're legends," he said. "Whenever they speak, it's always positive. There's no such thing as 'if' (in their thinking). They ask us to go with just one mindset, and that is of winning. They have asked us to back our game."

The Australian great asked his players to remain firmly committed to their task as it was a long and grueling tournament. "Let's not take anything for granted with anything we're doing. Our attitudes have been spot on. We're just starting to scratch the surface. So let's keep working hard together as a family, as one. And we're going to get better every day," he said.

## Cricket West Indies aims for day-night test against Australia at the Sabina Park in Jamaica

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (Agencies): Cricket West Indies representatives are optimistic that Sabina Park in Jamaica can accommodate its inaugural day-night Test when Australia comes for the third match of their series in July. Sabina Park has not hosted any day-night international cricket because of the inadequate lighting quality, as per a report by ESPNcricinfo.



the Jamaican government in achieving this goal.

"It is of course subject to the new lighting system that's being implemented at Sabina Park, that it is finished in time and of course to specification we have in place a very strong monitoring and support system to help the Jamaica Cricket Association and the Jamaican government achieve this. We are certainly looking forward to hosting the very first day-night match." Chris Dehring said as per quoted by ESPNcricinfo.

Cricket Australia supports the idea of the Test being a day-night event, and it is understood that officials will travel to Jamaica this month for a pre-tour inspection. Australia has never participated in a day-night Test match outside its home country.

West Indies Cricket Chief Executive Officer Chris Dehring expressed his excitement about hosting the first day-night match at Sabina Park, contingent on the timely completion of the new lighting system to the required specifications. He emphasized that they have a robust monitoring system in place to support the Jamaica Cricket Association and

an action-packed schedule for the senior men's and women's teams from May to December 2025, featuring a mix of home and away fixtures. The three home series against Australia, running from June 25 to July 16, will be Daren Sammy's first Test assignment as West Indies head coach since taking over from red-ball coach Andre Coley.

The first Test will begin on June 25 at Kensington Oval, Barbados, and the second game will be hosted at the Grenada National Stadium on July 3. The final Test of the series will begin on July 12 at Sabina Park, Jamaica. After the conclusion of the Test series, the action will shift to white-ball cricket, with the West Indies squaring off against Australia in five T20Is from July 20 to July 28.

## 15th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship 2025 set to feature new format in Jhansi

JHANSI, Apr 3 (Agencies): The 15th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship 2025 is set to take place from April 4 to 15 at the Major Dhyan Chand Hockey Stadium in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh. The tournament will be played in the same new Division-based format as the Senior Women National Championship was played in March.

The domestic competition, which will now also feature promotion and relegation battles, will see the 30 teams participating, divided into three Divisions: Division A, Division B, and Division C.

The Division A will be the highest Division as the teams will fight for the championship title. Division B will have teams competing for promotion to Division A next season while in Division C, the teams will fight for a spot in Division B for the next edition.

Division A includes the top 12 teams in India based on their overall performances in the tournament over the years. Defending champions Hockey Association of Odisha and runners-up Hockey Haryana are also part of the Division A.



The teams are split into four pools in Division A: Pool A: Hockey Association of Odisha, Hockey Punjab, Hockey Madhya Pradesh

Pool B: Hockey Haryana, Hockey Maharashtra, Hockey Jharkhand

Pool C: Uttar Pradesh Hockey, Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu, Hockey Bengal

Pool D: Manipur Hockey, Hockey Karnataka, Le Puducherry Hockey

Each team will play every opponent once in their respective pools. This will be the only division featuring a knockout stage as the top two teams from each pool will advance to the quarterfinals, scheduled for April 12, followed by the semifinals on April 13, and the final and 3rd/4th place match on April 15. The bottom two teams from Division A will be

relegated to Division B for the next edition.

In Division B, 10 teams will compete for promotion to Division A. The teams are divided into two pools:

Pool A: Hockey Chandigarh, Goans Hockey, Telangana Hockey, Hockey Andhra Pradesh, Hockey Uttarakhand

Pool B: Delhi Hockey, Hockey Mizoram, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu Hockey, Kerala Hockey, Assam Hockey

The top two teams from Division B will earn promotion to Division A for the next season, while the bottom two will be relegated to Division C.

Eight teams in Division C will compete for promotion to Division B. The teams are divided in two pools:

Pool A: Hockey Raj,

Hockey Arunachal, Hockey Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura Hockey

Pool B: Chhattisgarh Hockey, Hockey Himachal, Hockey Association of Bihar, Hockey Gujarat

Similarly, the teams in Division C will only play league matches, with the top two teams securing promotion to Division B.

The points system in all three divisions is the same. Each team will be awarded three points for a win, one point for a draw, and no points for a loss. In Division A, the league stage will be followed by the knockout rounds, while Divisions B and C will conclude with final standings determined by points won in the pool matches.

Commenting on the tournament, Hockey India President Dilip Tirkey said, as quoted from Hockey India, "The new format worked out really well during the senior women national championship, and we are looking forward to see how it unfolds this time as well. With promotion and relegation at stake, I expect to see teams give it their all on the pitch and play some exceptional hockey."

Hockey India Secretary

General Bholu Nath Singh added, "This is a very crucial tournament for us in terms of scouting upcoming talent for the international tournaments coming ahead. Over the recent years, we have seen a brilliant level of hockey being played in domestic tournaments, and I am sure the players will push themselves and grow a lot due to the tight competition. We wish all the participating players, coaches and support staff good luck."

The Division B and C matches are scheduled to begin on April 4, while the Division A matches will commence on April 8. On the first day, Hockey Raj will face Tripura Hockey, Hockey Arunachal will take on Hockey Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh Hockey will play Hockey Gujarat, and Hockey Himachal will face Hockey Association of Bihar in Division C.

Later in Division B, Hockey Chandigarh play Hockey Andhra Pradesh, Goans Hockey clashes against Hockey Uttarakhand, Delhi Hockey faces Kerala Hockey, and to end the proceedings of day one, Hockey Mizoram will face Assam Hockey.

## "I think still BCCI would like to have a little bit of control over it": Sanjay Bangar on IPL pitch conditions

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (Agencies): Former Indian batting coach Sanjay Bangar believed that while franchises should have some say in pitch preparation, the BCCI should maintain a degree of control in the Indian Premier League to ensure fairness and prevent extreme imbalances in the game.

While speaking on ESPNcricinfo's IPL show, Time Out, he said that while allowing for variations based on regional soil types, some uniformity is necessary to prevent home teams from having too much advantage.

"I think BCCI would still like to have a little bit of control over it and main-

tain the characteristics of a particular surface. If you totally give it to the hands of the franchise, you do not really want the game to be too lopsided as well, so I'm of the opinion [of having] a little bit of uniformity wherein not having too much of a say for the home side, still there is enough variety in terms of the vast nature of our country wherein cricket is played all across the nation, in itself has variations in terms of red soil, black soil and all of that. I'm of the opinion that a little bit of direction or guideline is always better." Sanjay Bangar said while speaking on ESPNcricinfo's IPL show, Time Out.



Bangar proposed that it could be more challenging for teams to develop pitches with diverse characteristics at smaller venues like the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, where only the center two pitches are used for IPL matches.

"In RCB, Chinnaswamy, there are only

two pitches on which you can play games because of the size of the ground, and generally, you can't have a lot of variation [between] those two surfaces because it is practically impossible to do that," he added.

These have been key discussion points during the initial weeks of IPL

2025. Kolkata Knight Riders' head coach Chandrakant Pandit has stated that his team has minimal or no influence over pitch preparation at Eden Gardens.

Chennai Super Kings' head coach Stephen Fleming has rejected the idea that his team has a considerable home advantage at Chepauk, noting that they have had difficulties interpreting their home pitches in recent seasons. Following his team's loss to Punjab Kings, Lucknow Super Giants mentor Zaheer Khan indicated that the Ekana pitch appeared as though it had been prepared by the curator from the opposing team.

## Reigning champions KKR face SRH in bid to reignite campaign



KOLKATA, Apr 3 (Agencies): Defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders and last season's finalists Sunrisers Hyderabad find themselves in troubled waters, having lost two of their first three games, and both teams will be desperate to revive their campaigns when they lock horns in the IPL here on Thursday.

KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane had initially downplayed concerns surrounding his team following a heavy defeat

to Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the season opener, insisting there was "no need to panic".

However, with two losses already — considering KKR lost just three games in their triumphant campaign in IPL 2024 — the mood in the camp is slightly muted.

The focus has now shifted to the Eden Gardens pitch, which has come under scrutiny after KKR's seven-wicket defeat to RCB.

Former KKR opener Phil Salt and Virat Kohli took the home attack to the cleaners, stitching a 95-run stand off just 51 balls in a one-sided chase of 175.

The Cricket Association of Bengal has been under pressure to produce a track that aids KKR's spin-heavy attack, comprising Sunil Narine, Moeen Ali and Varun Chakravarthy.

Chakravarthy, fresh from his exploits in the Champions Trophy triumph, struggled on a flat deck against RCB, leaking 10.75 runs per over.

## Shiv Sena warns protest on visit of Union Ministers, day will be declared 'Jumla Divas'

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: The Jammu and Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (UBT) has warned the central government to declare a time limit for returning the statehood, otherwise peacefully protest will be held by wearing black bands during the visits of all the Union Ministers to Jammu and Kashmir and 'Jumla Day' will be declared.

In a press conference held today at the state central office of the party, state chief Manish Sahni has demanded from the Modi government at the Center to restore the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir in the ongoing Parliament session.

Sahni said that only verbal assurances are being given for the last five years. Questioning the intention of the central government, he said that after 2019, no proposal was put forward to restore the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir in any session of Parli-



ment. Not only this, BJP MPs from Jammu division also never raised their voice for restoration of statehood during the session.

Sahni said that despite claims of 'all is well', our statehood is not being restored. At the same time, the Jammu and Kashmir Police Force has been placed under the Union Home Ministry. Recently, the LG has reminded the elected Omar government who holds the reins of power by transferring and reshuffling dozens of officers.

Sahni said that the lack of power to the people elected government is undemocratic, proves

the voter's right to vote to be hollow.

Sahni warned that if the time limit for restoration of statehood will not be announced, Shiv Sainiks will protest peacefully by wearing black bands on the upcoming visit of Home Minister Amit Shah to Jammu and Kashmir and the visit of all Union Ministers of BJP in future and that day will be declared as 'Jumla Divas'. Sahni has also appealed to the public to register their protest by wearing black bands and support the campaign for restoration of statehood. On this occasion Rohan Malwal was also present

## CRC Jammu celebrates World Autism Awareness Day with drawing competition for children with Special Needs



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Jammu (Samba)-PDUNIPPD, New Delhi, under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPWD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MOSJE), Government of India, marked World Autism Awareness Day by organizing a special drawing competition for children with special needs (CWSN). The event aimed to foster awareness, promote inclusivity, and provide a creative platform for children to express themselves.

A total of 20 children, accompanied by their parents, enthusiastically participated in the competition. The event was structured into three categories based on the children's understanding and capabilities, ensuring a fair and encouraging environment.

In group A, Chetanya Gupta, Dikshant Sharma and Kanishk Sharma got first, second and third prize respectively whereas in Group B, Aastha Kak got first and Eklavya Gupta bagged second prize. Sonali Gupta, Saanvi Sharma and Dilbag Singh got first, second and third prize respec-

tively in Group C.

Under the guidance of Dr. Rohnika Sharma, Director of CRC Jammu, the event was successfully conducted, highlighting the artistic talents of children with special needs. The initiative aligns with CRC Jammu's ongoing commitment to autism awareness, inclusivity, and empowerment of children with special needs and their families.

CRC Jammu remains dedicated to fostering a supportive environment where children with special needs can explore their potential, pursue their passions, and gain the recognition they deserve.

## From infiltration to crime wave: Rajesh Gupta urges swift Govt action in Jammu

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Senior National Conference leader Rajesh Gupta has raised serious concerns over the escalating security challenges in Jammu, including increased infiltration attempts, drug smuggling, and a surge in crime post the abrogation of Article 370.

In a strongly worded statement, Gupta highlighted the alarming lapses in border security and law enforcement, questioning the administration's ability to ensure public safety. "Despite heightened security measures, infiltration and narcotics trafficking persist, exposing gaps in surveillance and enforcement. The BSF



must adopt advanced technology, intensify patrolling, and improve coordination with local police to curb these threats," he asserted. Expressing dismay over the deteriorating law and order situation, Gupta stated, "The revocation of Article 370 was promised to bring stability, but instead, Jammu has seen a rise in crime and robberies. The administration's

failure to hold criminals accountable has eroded public trust."

Calling for urgent action, he demanded modernized border security, enhanced intelligence networks, and swift justice to restore peace. "Jammu's security cannot be compromised. The government must act decisively—excuses won't suffice anymore," Gupta emphasized.

The National Conference leader urged transparency and accountability in governance, warning that further negligence could lead to a complete breakdown of order. "The people of Jammu deserve safety and justice. The time for action is now," he concluded.

## Dimple leads protest in against liquor sale in Jammu

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Sunil Dimple, president of Mission Statehood J&K, led a strong protest on Janipur High Court Road demanding the passage of a bill in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly to ban the sale of liquor in the Union Territory.

The protest saw copies of the J&K Government Excise Department's tenders being burned, as a mark of opposition to the 300 new wine shops approved for the financial year 2025-26, set to open in April.

Dimple also used the occasion to highlight his demand for the restoration of J&K's Dogra statehood. Addressing the protesters, he appealed to women and residents to resist the establishment of liquor shops in their neighborhoods, cautioning that the expansion of liquor sales would negatively impact future generations.

In his speech, Dimple accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its 28 MLAs of failing to take a stand against liquor sales and neglecting the crucial issue of restoring J&K's statehood. He further criticized the administration for allowing liquor and



meat shops to operate across Jammu during the holy Navratri festival, calling it an attack on religious sentiments.

Expressing his frustration, Dimple lashed out at the J&K Excise Department, claiming that despite public opposition, the tender process for the 300 new wine shops had been completed.

Apart from the liquor ban, Dimple put forth several key demands before Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

These included the immediate restoration of the Darbar Move from April 2025 to support struggling traders, free 200 units of electricity, 12 LPG cylinders per year, and double ration for J&K residents.

He also demanded a debate in the Assembly on the delay in restoring Articles 370 and 35-A and called for the rejection

of the Waqf Bill, alleging it could create

communal divisions in India.

Dimple issued a stern warning that if the bill to ban liquor sales in J&K is not passed by April 7, 2025, he and his supporters would launch a widespread agitation across the region.

Several prominent leaders joined the protest, including Dev Raj, Vicky Mahajan,

Th Bishan Das, Sanjay Sethi, Bramu Sharma, Babu Mahajan, S. Happy Singh, Akbar Khan Shafi, Khan Nazir Ahmad, and many others. The protest reflected a growing wave of public discontent over government policies, with Dimple vowing to escalate the movement if his demands were not met

## ABSMS demands permanent jobs, end to contract system

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 3: Akhil Bharatiya Safai Mazdoor Sangh (ABSMS) led by General Secretary Amar Moman staged a strong protest in Jammu demanding the regularization of sanitation workers by ending the contract system.

The protestors emphasized that according to the Supreme Court's directive, those responsible for keeping the environment clean cannot be subjected to contractual employment and must be provided dignified wages. The organization urged the Jammu and Kashmir government to implement one of these directives at the earliest

or ensure that sanitation workers receive direct salaries from the Union Territory administration.

Drawing attention to the recent salary hike by the Waqf Board, Amar Moman stated that the government should learn from this initiative, which sets a benchmark for fair wages amid rising inflation.

He warned that if the government fails to take immediate action, Jammu and Kashmir's sanitation services could come to a halt. He further stated that the workers would not return to duty until one of the three demands is fulfilled.

Sending a clear message to the administration, Moman asked

whether this should be taken as a warning or a threat. If the demands are ignored, he warned that the Akhil Bharatiya Safai Mazdoor Sangh along with sanitation workers across Jammu and Kashmir would launch a massive protest against the government. Otherwise, the shutdown of sanitation services in the region would begin.

Several prominent leaders were present at the protest, including Hardev Singh Lucky, Chidda Bittu, Randhawa Bittu, Amanat Mattu, Parvithi Raj, Ajay, Rita Bhatti, Simran Khokhar, Rajan Azad, Sunny, Akash, Peter, and representatives from 75 wards.



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