

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

JK: Fire breaks out in commercial building near Lal Chowk



SRINAGAR, Apr 18 (Agencies): A fire broke out in a five-storey commercial building near the Lal Chowk city centre here on Saturday, but was doused before it could spread in the congested business hub, officials said.

They said firefighters recovered 19 gas cylinders during the operation and there were no casualties in the incident.

Assistant Director, Fire and Emergency Services, Aqib Mir, said, "The fire originated from the attic portion of the building, which houses the kitchen of a restaurant. The cause of the fire is being ascertained."

"The attic was severely damaged. There were no casualties," he said.

The firefighters managed to contain the damage by swiftly dousing the blaze using a hydraulic platform, Mir said.

During the firefighting operation, 19 gas cylinders were recovered from the spot, he said.

"We have informed the concerned police station," he added.

Mir appealed to people not to store combustible substances at home or commercial places.

5.6 Magnitude Earthquake in Afghanistan triggers tremors across J&K

SRINAGAR, Apr 18 (Agencies): An earthquake of magnitude 5.6 struck Afghanistan on Saturday, with its tremors felt across several parts of the Kashmir Valley, officials said. Government policy reports

The seismic activity caused brief panic among residents, including in Srinagar and other areas, where people rushed out of homes as a precaution.

However, officials confirmed that there were no immediate reports of damage to property or loss of life anywhere in the Valley.

Authorities said the situation is being closely monitored.

LG Manoj Sinha joined Padyatra in Rajouri under Drug-Free J&K campaign

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Apr 18: The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today joined Padyatra and addressed a public rally in Rajouri under Drug-Free J&K campaign.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that border district Rajouri is sensitive and prone to cross-border drug smuggling.

"But we are determined to crush these challenges, dismantle the drug trade and liberate society from addiction. From April 11, J&K Police had launched a relentless crackdown in Jammu Division. More than 45 FIRs were filed, 63 smugglers nabbed and massive drug hauls seized between the 11th and 15th. Regular Checks are now covering schools, pharmacies, drug agencies and



this drive will continue relentlessly," the Lieutenant Governor said. In his address, the Lieutenant Governor emphasised that not all wars rage on borders. He said some battles brew unseen and for years, countless Jammu Kashmir families have fought addiction within their walls and many have lost loved ones to it.

"On April 11, from

the hallowed grounds of Jammu's MA Stadium, we sounded the clarion call to total war by launching a resolute 100-day crusade against drug addiction. I believe addiction is no mere personal failing but it's a gaping wound in our society's fabric. Our terrorist neighbour deploys it as an insidious weapon, nurturing terror through drug smuggling and eroding our nation's

strength from within. We shall prevail in this battle by uniting as one and every citizen rising with unyielding resolve," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that cases registered before 11 April has witnessed a 3 times increase in last 7 days. "In 100 days, we must completely break the back of drug networks. When the power of society and the might of the administration come together, neither smugglers nor criminals will be spared," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted that prevention anchors Drug-Free J&K campaign and he considers that prevention is mightier than any cure in such cases.

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Govt approves 2% dearness allowance hike for Central Govt Employees, Pensioners



NEW DELHI, Apr 18 (Agencies): The Union Cabinet has approved a 2% increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) for government employees and pensioners, according to sources following the Cabinet meeting.

The Dearness Allowance is linked to inflation and is revised twice a year, usually in January and July. It is calculated using the Consumer

Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW), which is released every month by the Labour Bureau under the Labour Ministry.

This time, however, there was a delay in the announcement. The Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers (CCGEW) expressed concern, noting that normally the hike is announced in late

September and arrears are paid in early October.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister sharply criticised the Opposition over its refusal to support the Women's Reservation Bill. He said the Opposition had made a serious mistake by not backing the bill and would have to bear the political cost in the future.

He asserted that the Opposition's stance reflects a negative mindset towards women and stressed that this message must reach every village across the country. The Prime Minister added that Opposition parties are now trying to justify their position after opposing the bill, and said they had effectively "defeated" the women of

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LG Manoj Sinha inaugurates Dr Raj Kumar Thapa Memorial, Museum and library in Rajouri

Top News Report

RAJOURI, Apr 18: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha dedicated a Memorial, Museum, and Library in Rajouri to honor the lasting legacy of martyr ADDC Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa.

Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa attained martyrdom in unprovoked shelling by Pakistan during

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Over 64 Kg heroin recovered, 2 held in Amritsar: Punjab Police



CHANDIGARH, Apr 18 (Agencies): Punjab Police on Saturday claimed to have busted a cross-border drug smuggling module in Amritsar with the arrest of two persons and recovery of 64.62 kg of heroin from their possession.

Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said the Punjab government's anti-drug drive 'Yudh Nashian Virudh' achieved major success with the recovery of 64.62 kg of heroin.

The Counter-Intelligence wing of the Punjab Police and the

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First batch of 431 Haj pilgrims leaves from J-K; CM sees them off at airport

SRINAGAR, Apr 18 (Agencies): The first batch of 431 Haj pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir left for Saudi Arabia on Saturday. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah saw them off at the airport here, officials said.

The pilgrims, including 230 males and 201 females, left in three flights, they said.

Officials said all required arrangements for transportation, baggage handling and documentation have been



put in place at the Haj House in Bemina here to ensure a smooth departure process.

Hundreds of family members of pilgrims gathered outside the

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Census 2027: Jammu Kashmir Govt directs public to provide accurate unambiguous answers to all questions

SRINAGAR, Apr 18 (Agencies): Ahead of the commencement of the census exercise in Jammu and Kashmir, the administration has issued a directive, urging the public to extend full cooperation by furnishing accurate information during the headcount exercise.

The Planning, Development Monitoring

Department has issued a formal notification, urging the public to extend cooperation during Census 2027.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Rule 8(ii) of the Census Rules, read with Circular No. 15 dated 12.03.2026 issued by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, the Government of

Jammu Kashmir hereby directs the public to cooperate in furnishing accurate and unambiguous information in respect of all questions that may be put to them for the smooth conduct of the Census 2027," reads the notification.

The notification has been issued almost one-and-a-half month before commencement of first

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Property of drug peddler demolished in Jammu



known as Pappi, is currently lodged in jail. He was involved in drug-related activities, and the property he built over time was funded using the proceeds of crime. We have demolished the property," the local tehsildar told reporters.

Shamsdin hails from the border area in RS Pura and had built the property in Belicharana, he added.

According to officials, properties of more than 150 drug peddlers have either been seized or demolished in the Jammu region in the past year.

On Monday, L-G Sinha directed the police to prepare a list of top drug peddlers at every police station and take action to dismantle their networks within 30 days.

He also warned that the administration will launch a stringent crackdown on traffickers and syndicates, including

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J&K Admin takes over 58 Schools linked to banned Jamaat-e-Islami

SRINAGAR, Apr 18 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Saturday ordered the takeover of management committees of 58 schools linked to the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) and its Falah-e-Aam Trust, officials said.

Official sources said that the action follows adverse intelligence reports and the expiry



of the schools' management validity.

The School Education Department invoked

Ministry of Home Affairs notifications declaring JeI an unlawful association under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

"These 58 functional schools were found to be directly or indirectly affiliated with the banned outfit or its trust," an official said.

Deputy commissioners have been directed

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JAMMU, Apr 18 (Agencies): The local administration has demolished the residential property of a drug peddler in Jammu amid heavy security arrangements as part of its ongoing crackdown on narcotics, officials said on Saturday.

A large contingent of officials and police, armed with heavy-duty bulldozers, demolished the property owned by Shamsdin alias Pappi in Belicharana for his involvement in drug ped

dling, they said. The authorities demolished Shamsdin's house, removed grass huts and seized some two-wheelers, they added.

The action was part of the 100-day 'Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan' launched by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on April 11 to curb drug trafficking and dismantle the financial networks of those involved in it, the officials said.

"Shamsdin, locally

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **Late Avtar Krishan Raina** S/o Radha Krishan Raina of Darapora (Lolab), Kupwara & at present H. No. 80, Lane No. 2, Roop Nagar Enclave, Jammu, who left for heavenly abode on 15 April 2026.

The Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at "Muthi Ghat" near Directorate of School Education on 24 April 2026 at 8:30 AM.

Grief Stricken

(Mother & Father)

Smt. Raj Kumari & Sh. Radha Krishan Raina (Uncle & Aunt)

Smt. Usha Raina & Sh. Jager Nath Raina

(Brothers & Sisters-in-law)

Smt. Girja Raina & Sh. Mahraj Krishan Raina

Smt. Sweety Raina (Wife)

Smt. Seema Raina & Sh. Sanjay Kumar Raina (Brother & Sister-in-law)

Smt. Luxmi Raina & Sh. Dileep Kumar Raina (Brother & Sister-in-law)

Smt. Usha & Sh. Vinod Kumar Raina (Brother & Sister-in-law)

Smt. Dazy Bhat & Sh. Ramesh Kumar Bhat (Sister & Brother-in-law)

Smt. Bawana Kaul & Sh. Ankush Raina (Son & Daughter-in-law)

Mr. Ankit Raina (Son)

Smt. Savita Raina & Sh. Bharat Bushan Raina (Cousin & Sister-in-law)

Smt. Manju Raina & Sandeep Raina



Late Avtar Krishan Raina

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of **Karmyogi Shri Tota Ram Bhat**, son of Late Shri Shiv Ram Bhat, originally a resident of Trail, Pahalgam, Anantnag, and presently residing at Community Hall Lane No. 8, backside near Ration Depot, Jagti Colony, Nagrota, who left for his heavenly abode on 18th April 2026.

The 10th Day Kriya will be held at Muthi Ghat, near Directorate of School Education, on 25th April 2026 at 8:30 AM.

The Mourning from the in-laws' side will also be observed at the above-mentioned location.

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Smt. Jaya Devi - Wife

Son & Daughter-in-law

Shri Moti Lal & Smt. Lovely Koul

Ashan Bhat & Supriya

Sister & Brother-in-law

Shri Jagannath Tickoo & Smt. Tosha Devi

Samast Bhat, Tickoos, Koulos, and Panditas

Contact Numbers: 7889333352, 9149500532, 7006362782



KARMYOGI SHRI TOTA RAM Bhat

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we deeply regret to inform the sad demise of our mother **Smt Devki Below** W/o Late Sri Kanth Below R/o Zainapora Shopian A/p H. no 46 Lane No 5 Anand Nagar Bohri.

The Tenth Day Kriya will be held on 25th of April 2026 at Muthi Ghat near directorate of School Education Jammu at 9.00 am.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt & Sh. Roshan Lal Below - Son & Daughter in Law

Smt & Sh. Tej Nath Below - Son & Daughter in Law

Smt & Sh. Paray Lal Razdan - Daughter & Son in Law

Smt & Sh. Maharaj Krishan Pandit - Daughter & Son in Law

Smt & Sh. Bhopinder Kumar Koul - Daughter & Son in Law

MOBILE NO: 7889463987, 7006480551



SMT DEVKI BELOW

10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and untimely demise of **Sh. Bushan Lal** (Bhaisahab), S/o Late Sh. Janki Nath Pandita, originally from Waterkhan, Kupwara, and presently residing at H. No. 35, General Lane, Saraswati Vihar, Anand Nagar, Bohri, Jammu, who left for his heavenly abode on 13-04-2026.

The 10th Day Kriya will be performed on Wednesday, 22-04-2026, at Akhnoor Ghat, Akhnoor.

The condolence meeting (Assembly) will follow at our residence at 9:45 a.m.

Grief Stricken:

Mother: Smt. Jai Kishori

Wife: Smt. Suman Bala

Son and Daughter-in-law:

Sh. Anil Pandita and Smt. Shaleen Tiwari

Brothers and Bhabhis:

Sh. Suniti Pandita & Smt. Dura Pandita

Smt. Beauty Pandita, W/o Late Sh. Tej Kishan Pandita

Sh. Sanjay Pandita & Smt. Surja Koul

Sh. Rakesh Pandita & Smt. Princy Bhat

Sh. Kamal Kishore Pandita & Smt. Sheela Bhat

Nephew and Niece:

Sh. Yogesh Pandita and Smt. Shweta Bhat

Sh. Sumit Pandita and Smt. Riya Kaul

Ayush, Anish, Harshit, Anav, Tanishka and Dakshita



Sh. Bushan Lal (Bhaisahab)

Grandchildren:
Vivaan and Tiyaash
9419149956, 9682679719 & 9898768695

10th Day Kriya

It is with a heavy heart and bewailed grief to inform the sad demise of our Karmyogi and adored mother namely **Smt. Sham Rani Bhat**, W/o Late Sh. Sham Lal Bhat of Village Monghama (Pulwama) Kashmir, A/P Garhi Udhampur, on 16th April 2026, after a brief illness.

10th Day Kriya will be performed at holy Devika Ghat Udhampur on 25th April 2026, at 9.0 A.M.

Grief Stricken:

Inderjeet Bhat and Rajni Bhat (Son and Daughter in law)

Yog Ji Bhat - Son

Anjali and Anil Pandita (Daughter and Son in law)

Vinayak Bhat and Rupshi (GS and GDIL)

(Grand Children)

Rohit Bhat, Anmol Pandita, Anchal Pandit and Anshul Pandita

9419163659, 7006147295, 9320651014



Smt. Sham Rani Bhat

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we deeply regret to inform the sad demise of our father **Shri Chaman Lal Raina** S/o Lt. Prakash Ram Raina of Razdan Mohalla Handwara at present H.No. 63, Sec-2, Shanika Vihar Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu, who left for heavenly abode on 14-04-2026.

Tenth Day Kriya will be performed at Muthi Ghat on 23-04-2026 at 8.30 AM Near Directorate of School Education Muthi, Jammu.

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Raj Duleri

Smt. Shella Raina

Son & Daughter-in-law

Smt. & Sh. Rozi Raina & Setesh Kumar Raina

Daughter & Son-in-law

Smt. & Sh. Anju Pandita & Rupesh Pandita

Grand Children: Ayush, Dananjay, Vanshika

& Samast Parivaar of Raina, Pandita, Tickoo's

Phone No: 7006687676, 9796014397



SHRI CHAMAN LAL RAINA

TENTH DAY KRIYA IN ETERNAL REMEMBRANCE

With profound grief and sorrow we inform that our beloved **Sh Som Nath Bhat** S/o Late Sh. Amar Chand Bhat of Kilam, Kulgam presently residing at H No. 141, Sector 3, Durga Nagar Jammu has left for his heavenly abode on 11th April 2026.

The 10th Day Kriya will be performed at Muthi Ghat near Director's office at 9 am on 20/04/2026 (Monday)

Grief Stricken

Asha Bhat (Wife)

(Daughters and Son in laws)

Smt Princy and Sh Inder Ji Raina

Smt Ruboy and Sh Vikas Dulo

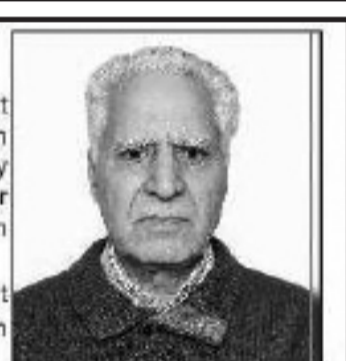
Son and Daughter in law

Sh Sunny and Smt Prerna Bhat

Smt Roopashri (Bhabhi)

Smt Meenaji Bhat (Bhabhi)

SAMAST BHAT, TRAKROO AND WALI PARMAR



Sh Som Nath Bhat
01-09-1935-11-04-2026

10TH DAY

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of my beloved wife **Smt Durga Sadhu (Labroo)** R/o 1035, Jawahar Nagar, Tallab Tillo, Jammu.

10th Day will be performed on 19th April 2026 at Muthi Ghat near Director School Education.

Time : 9.00 am

Grief Stricken

Moti Lal Labroo (Husband)

LABROO'S, SADHU'S, WAZIR'S

9419111500, 9796038064, 9810480924,

9682684188



Smt Durga Sadhu (Labroo)

10th Day/ KRIYA / UTHALA

With profound grief and sorrow it is to inform the sad demise of our beloved mother **Smt Nirmal Gupta** (Rtd ULB) W/o Sh Shakti Parkash Gupta R/o 229F Hari Singh Nagar Rehari Colony Jammu on 10-04-2026.

TENTH DAY will be performed on 19-04-2026 (Sunday) at Janj Ghar near Hari Mandir Rehari Colony Jammu at 11.30am to 12.30pm.

KRIYA will be performed at our residence on 22-04-2026 (Wednesday) at 12 noon

UTHALA will be performed on 22-04-2026 (Wednesday) at Janj Ghar near Hari Mandir Rehari Colony Jammu at 4-5 pm.

DEEPLY REMEMBERED BY:

Husband: Sh Shakti Parkash Gupta (Rtd Accounts Officer)

Daughters and Son in Laws:

Mrs Sonika and Mr Vikas Gupta

Mrs Monica and Mr Sanjeev Gupta (J&K Bank)

Mrs Suchika and Mr Ankush Shakti (J&K Bank) - Daughter in law and Son

GRIEF STRICKEN:

Bucha Family (Batote Waile)

Gupta Family

Gurkudu Family

Badyal Family

Contact : 7298107501, 9148562608



SMT NIRMAL GUPTA (Rtd ULB)

10TH DAY KRIYA

10TH DAY KRIYA of Karmyogni **Smt. Krishna Razdan** (Kishni, Rani, Behanji) wife of Late Shri Moti Lal Razdan of Razdan Mohalla, Anantnag at present 117/3 Dream City, Muthi Jammu shall be performed at Muthi Ghat on 19th of April 2026 with assembly at 9 am.

IN GRIEF:

Veena Razdan/ Koul - Daughter in law

Daughters & Son in laws

Neeti Razdan & I K Raina

Anjani Razdan & Rakesh Goja

Grand Children

Naveen Raina & Khushboo Agrawal

Praveen Raina & Arushi Koul

Marut Razdan & Neha Talashi

Vikas Goja

Dr. Ridhi Goja

MOB: 9086495307, 7889563239, 9419108745



Karmyogni Smt. Krishna Razdan (Kishni, Rani, Behanji)

OBITUARY / 10TH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved **Smt. Raj Dulhari Kaul**, lovingly called "Didaji", wife of Late Shri Motilal Kaul (Bagh), originally from Bagh Jogilankar, Rahawari, and presently residing at 223-D, Pocket F, Dilshad Garden, Delhi - 110093.

She passed away peacefully at home on Tuesday, 14th April 2026.

The Tenth Day KRIYA will be performed on Thursday, 23rd April 2026 at Moradnagar Ghat (UP) at 8:00 AM.

Following the rituals, the 10TH DAY KRIYA Assembly will be held at our residence: 223-D, Pocket F, Dilshad Garden, Delhi - 110093, from 12:00 PM onwards.

GRIEF-STRICKEN:

Veena Kaul & Anil Kaul (Daughter-in-law & Son)

Bhawna & Ashutosh Hanjura (Daughter & Son-in-law)

Vandana & Vibhav Safaya (Daughter & Son-in-law)

Grandchildren: Kashish, Krishna, Abhay, Aabha, Paerastish

Great Grandchildren: Zuhie, Sitara, Kaavya

AND SAMAST KAUL & BHAN PARIVAR,

HANJURAS, SAFAYAS & KAMBOJS



SMT. RAJ DULHARI KAUL

OBITUARY

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad and untimely demise of our brother **Sh Rattan Lal Bakaya** S/o Late N N Bakaya R/o Shilang Habba Kadal II Bridge Srinagar Kashmir presently at Shahpora Stadium Colony Shahpora Wathoora Chadoora Budgam Kashmir who left for his heavenly abode on 14.4.2026.

10th Day Kriya will be observed on 23rd April 2026 at Purshya temple Haba Kadal Srinagar at 9 AM.

Grief Stricken

Smt. Sunita Bakaya (Wife)

Smt. Pooja Bakaya & Anil Handoo (Daughter & Son in law)

Smt. Usha Bakaya & A K Bakaya (Bhabhi & Brother)

Smt. Sarita Bakaya & Parveen Bakaya (Bhabhi & Brother)

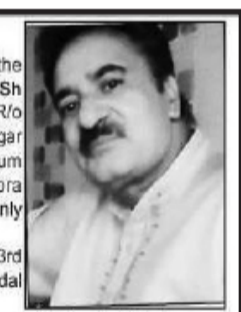
(Sister & Brother in law)

Smt. Krishna Karthikey & Late G K Karthikey

Deeply Remembered by Wali & Handoo Parivar

Mobile Nos : 7006462077, 9682196530, 6006087542

7051211647, 7006951827 & 9419265413



Rattan Lal Bakaya

TENTH DAY KRIYA

With profound grief and deep sorrow, we inform the sad and untimely demise of our beloved **SMT. PRINCY PANDITA** W/O SH KAMAL JI PANDITA R/O HUGAM, Anantnag, at Present H no. 04, Lane no. 03, Natar Kothian, Lower Barai, Jammu on 16 April 2026.

Tenth Day shall be performed on 25th April 2026 (Saturday) at Muthi Ghat (8.30A.M)

GRIEF STRICKEN

Smt. Binila Pandita : 9018333614

Smt. & Sh. Avtar Krishan Pandita : 9480203648

Sh. Kamal Ji Pandita : 9622101810

Kartik, Ashan & Vhan (Sons)

Smt. & Sh. Soom Nath Pandita : 9858199917

Smt. & Sh. Kaka Ji Raina : 9149304431

Smt. & Sh. A K Bhan : 7780826221

Smt. & Sh. Shubani Ji Hazari : 9796499004



SMT. PRINCY PANDITA

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LG Saxena chairs high-level meeting to review preparedness for holy exposition of sacred Buddha relics in Ladakh



Top News Report

LEH, Apr 18: The Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today chaired a high-level meeting to review preparations for the Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of Tathagata Buddha in Ladakh.

In the meeting, the Lieutenant Governor directed all departments to expedite preparations, ensure the cleanliness of venues and surrounding areas, remove debris, and intensify drives to manage stray animals. He also reviewed infrastructure readiness, including sanitation, power supply, and availability of toilets and drinking water.

The Lieutenant Governor also directed the incorporation of suggestions from stakeholders, including the provision of shuttle services for elderly devotees, decorative lighting and lighting of lamps, installation of prayer flags, and beautification of key routes, to enhance the overall experience.

Reiterating the importance of coordination and commitment, the Lieutenant Governor called upon all stakeholders to work collectively to ensure the suc-

cessful conduct of this spiritually significant and globally important event.

Since assuming office, the Lieutenant Governor has been personally monitoring the preparations through a series of meetings with venerable Rinpoches, religious leaders, government officials, stakeholders, and other concerned departments to ensure the successful and grand organisation of the exposition. These continuous engagements reflect the Administration's commitment to providing a seamless, enriching, and spiritually fulfilling experience for devotees from Ladakh, across India, and abroad.

In a proactive step, the Lieutenant Governor also visited Jivetsal—the main venue for the Buddha Purnima celebrations—along with representatives from the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre to assess on-the-ground arrangements and issue necessary directions.

As scheduled, the sacred relics are expected to arrive in Leh on April 29 and will be welcomed with a grand ceremony. The 2569th Buddha Purnima will be celebrated on May 1 at Jivetsal, followed by public exposition of the relics from May 2 to May

9. The relics will then be taken to Zanskar on May 11 and 12, and subsequently displayed at the Dharma Centre in Choglamsar on May 13 and 14, before returning to Delhi on May 15.

In addition to the main exposition, a series of parallel events will be organised across Ladakh. These include exhibitions of Buddhist artefacts and scriptures at the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies and Leh Palace, meditation and yoga sessions, medical health camps, and interfaith dialogues at the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre.

Major conferences and seminars on themes such as International Conference on Himalayan Buddhism, Peace in Times of Conflict, and the Past, Present and Future of Buddhism in Ladakh will also be held.

Highlighting the broader vision, Saxena stated that the event presents a unique opportunity to position Ladakh as a global hub for spiritual tourism and wellness. He stressed the importance of robust security arrangements, adequate public amenities, drinking water facilities, and the installation of CCTV cameras to ensure the safety and comfort of devotees.

BJP made a mockery of women with reservation bill: Rattan Lal

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Provincial President Jammu Rattan Lal Gupta launched a scathing attack on the BJP, accusing it of playing a "cruel political charade" with the women of India by mishandling the Women's Reservation Bill.

Addressing a gathering at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhavan in Jammu, chaired by District President Jammu Urban, Chander Mohan Sharma, Gupta said the BJP government "reduced a historic opportunity for women's empowerment into a hollow spectacle of political posturing." He argued that the ruling party introduced the bill despite being fully aware that it lacked the crucial two thirds majority required for its passage. "This was not legislative intent; it was legislative theatrics," Gupta remarked, adding that the government failed to build consensus or take the opposition into confidence. "When you bring a constitutional amendment without groundwork or dialogue, you are not empowering women you are merely exploiting their aspirations for political optics."

He further described the move as "a headline-hunting exercise rather than a genuine reform effort," asserting that such actions undermine both parliamentary credibility and public trust.

Calling upon women across the country to remain vigilant, Gupta urged them to unite and resist what he termed as "tokenism masquerading as empowerment." He emphasized the need for sustained, inclusive policies rather than "one-off symbolic gestures designed for applause, not impact."

Highlighting the stance of the Omar-led government, Gupta said it remains committed to substantive empowerment of women through meaningful participation in development across all sectors.

Referring to the 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill, Gupta reiterated that the BJP knowingly pushed forward legislation without the numerical strength to secure its passage. "Introducing a bill destined to fail is not governance, it's political grandstanding," he quipped, noting that the bill's defeat in the Lok Sabha exposed the government's lack of seriousness.

On this occasion Prabha Salathia former President Women Wing Congress and District President Women wing, Congress along with women supporters joined National Conference. The names are Kalish Jamwal, Sunita Jamwal, Sheetal Manhas, Narinder Kour, Kulbir Kour, Neema and others.

"In the end," Gupta concluded, "governance is not about staging dramatic moments in Parliament; it is about building consensus, delivering results, and respecting the intelligence of the people especially the women of this country."

Among others who were present in the



meeting included: Sheikh Bashir Ahmad Provincial Secretary Jammu, Deepinder Kour former MLC, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Laxmi Datta Senior leader, Rakesh Singh Raka, Dilshad Malik, Rita Gupta Vice Presidents Central Zone, S. Sandeep Singh Wazir Additional Spokesper-

son Jammu, Surinder Singh Jamwal, Aruna Thakur District President Ramban Women Wing, Sewak Singh Vice President District Jammu Urban, S. Gurnam Singh District Secretary Jammu Urban, Pinky Khalsa, Bahadur Lal Block President Bahu, Surinder Singh Jamwal, Ajay Singh, Ravinder Singh, Goutam Sharma and others.

Javed Rana inaugurates CFC, inspects sports stadium at Mankote

Top News Report

MENDHAR, Apr 18: Minister for Jai Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, on Saturday inaugurated a Community Facilitation Centre (CFC) at Mankote and inspected the under-construction Sports Stadium during a public outreach visit to the area.

The CFC, constructed by the Rural Development Department at a cost of Rs. 17 lakh, is aimed at strengthening the grassroots governance and service delivery by bringing multiple public services and community activities under one roof.

"The present administration is making all endeavours to extend necessary services to the people at their door steps and setting up of CFCs in the remote areas is a part of these initiatives," Javed Rana said while addressing the locals after inaugurating the CFC.

The Minister also inspected the ongoing construction of the Sports Stadium at Mankote, being developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 58 lakh. He directed the executing agencies to ensure timely completion with strict adherence to the set quality standards.

During the visit, several delegations and individuals called on the Minister and projected various

development related issues. A delegation of students from wGovernment Degree College Mendhar submitted a memorandum highlighting the concerns regarding the need for a girls' hostel and a multi-purpose hall.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegations and assured them that their genuine demands would be examined on priority for appropriate action. Reaffirming the government's commitment to balanced and inclusive development, the Minister said that strengthening infrastructure and addressing the public grievances remain key priorities to ensure improved facilities and opportunities for the people of the region.

Omar Abdullah reviews progress of work on LD Hospital Extension Block, stresses timely completion

New facility to augment healthcare infrastructure & provide advanced, high-quality care for women and newborns: CM

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Apr 18: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday inspected the ongoing construction of the Extension Block at Government Lalla Ded Hospital and conducted a comprehensive review of the project's progress, execution strategy and infrastructure development. The upcoming facility, being developed at the premier maternity care hospital, is designed as a dedicated Infertility and Gynaecological Oncology Centre and will significantly strengthen specialised maternal and neonatal healthcare services in Jammu and Kashmir.

During the visit, the Chief Minister assessed the pace and quality of construction, reviewed augmentation of critical facilities and emphasised adherence to timelines. He directed the concerned authorities to ensure expeditious completion of the project while maintaining the highest standards of quality.

He was accompanied by his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, Principal and Dean Govern-



ment Medical College Srinagar Dr. (Prof) Ifat Hassan, Administrator GMC Srinagar Mohammad Ashraf Hakak, Medical Superintendent LD Hospital, and senior officers from PWD (R&B), J&KERA Kashmir, among others.

The Chief Minister was briefed on the project, which is being executed under the World Bank-funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP) by the PWD (R&B) Department at an estimated cost of ₹118.22 crore. The facility is being constructed as a G+5+attic structure with a total built-up area of about 11,640 square metres and will house around 117 specialised beds (65 adults and 52 infants) for advanced


care. Officials informed that the centre will feature state-of-the-art infrastructure including modular operation theatres, ICU, HDU, NICU, Labour, Delivery and Recovery (LDR) suites, IVF laboratories and advanced fetal intervention facilities, in line with modern hospital standards followed at national and international levels.

Highlighting the project's structural resilience, it was given put that the building is being constructed using advanced base isolation technology with 43 friction pendulum isolators, ensuring high seismic safety in Zone-V. The design and engineering components have been

vetted by premier technical institutions to ensure quality and safety.

Reviewing the progress, the Chief Minister was informed that the foundation works and ground floor structural framework are fully in place. Installation of base isolators is at an advanced stage, while pre-engineered building (PEB) structural works are underway across multiple zones. Procurement of major medical equipment, as well as mechanical and electrical systems, has also been initiated. The Chief Minister stressed the need for close coordination among all stakeholder departments, particularly the Health Department, to ensure uninterrupted fund flow, timely approvals and clearances, and smooth operationalisation of the facility upon completion.

Emphasising the importance of the project, he said that the new facility will mark a major milestone in upgrading healthcare infrastructure and providing specialised, accessible and high-quality care to women and newborns across Jammu and Kashmir.



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
SCHOOL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
(HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SECTION)
CIVIL SECRETARIAT, JAMMU/SRINAGAR.

Subject: Final seniority list of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Dogri as on 01.10.2025. – Corrigendum thereof.

Corrigendum to Government Order No. 355-JK (Edu) of 2025,
Dated: 01.05.2025

In Government Order No. 355-JK (Edu) of 2025 dated 01.05.2025, issued under endorsement No. Edu-HRM/256/2021-01(85464), the particulars of the following incumbents shall and shall always be deemed to be read as under: -

S. No.	Sty. No. in Government Order No. 355-JK (Edu) of 2025, dated 01.05.2025	Correct particulars
1.	17 TILAK RAJ, MASTER, HS SERI PALAI, JAMMU.	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "13-A" instead of "17" & Date of promotion as Master "23.04.2013" instead of "27.07.2013"
2.	22 SURINDER SINGH, MASTER, GHS KATWALT	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "19-A" instead of "22" & Date of promotion as Master "11.02.2014" instead of "08.12.2014"
3.	25 ASHUTOSH SHARMA, MASTER, HS SERI PANDITAN.	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "16-A" instead of "25"
4.	26 KULJEET SINGH, MASTER, MS GOSWAN.	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "21-A" instead of "26"
5.	63 BHUSHAN KUMAR SHARMA, MASTER, HSS RAJPURA SAMBA	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "6-A" instead of "63", Name as "BHUSHAN KUMAR SHARMA" instead of "BUSHAN KUMAR SHARMA", Designation "Master" instead of "Teacher" & Date of promotion as Master "25.03.2013"
6.	83 ARTI SHARMA	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "16-B" instead of "83", Designation "Master" instead of "Teacher", Date of Birth as "27.01.1971" instead of "26.01.1971", Place of posting as "HSS PALOURA JAMMU" instead of "C/O ZEO KHOUR", Date of passing PG "28.11.1995" instead of "1996" & Date of promotion as Master "11.02.2014"

S. No.	Sty. No. in Government Order No. 355-JK (Edu) of 2025, dated 01.05.2025	Correct particulars
7.	87 VIJAY KUMAR	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "27-B" instead of "87", Designation "Master" instead of "Teacher", Date of Birth as "16.03.1978" instead of "10.03.1978" Place of posting as "HS Panya" instead of "GHSS DORI DAGER" & Date of promotion as Master as "21.06.2024"
8.	96 DR. KHEM RAJ SHARMA	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "27-A" instead of "96", Designation "Master" instead of "Teacher", Date of 1 st Appointment as "27.06.2005" instead of "26.06.2005", Place of posting as "HS PAPAN BRAHAMNA" instead of "C/O ZEO VIJAYPUR" & Date of promotion as Master "11.03.2024"
9.	103 DHARAM PAUL	The S. No. of the incumbent shall be read as "27-C" instead of "103", Designation "Master" instead of "Teacher", Place of posting as "GHS Salehar" instead of "C/O ZEO ARNIA" & Date of promotion as Master as "21.06.2024"

By Order of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. **Sd/-**
(Ram Niwas Sharma), IAS
Commissioner/Secretary to the Government,
School Education Department.

No. Edu-HRM/256/2021-01 (85464) **Dated: 13 .04.2026.**

EDITORIAL

SMART
GOVERNANCE

In an increasingly digital world, the adoption of QR code-based identification systems is emerging as a powerful tool for modern governance. Quick Response (QR) codes, once limited to product tracking and payments, are now being used for identity verification across sectors such as healthcare, education, transport, and public administration. While this shift promises efficiency and transparency, it also raises important concerns that must be addressed thoughtfully.

A QR code-based identification system allows individuals to carry essential identity information in a compact, scannable format—either on a physical card or a mobile device. With a simple scan, authorities can instantly access verified data, reducing paperwork and saving time. In countries like India, where digital transformation is progressing rapidly, such systems can significantly improve service delivery, especially in welfare schemes, attendance systems, and beneficiary tracking.

One of the key advantages of QR-based identification is efficiency. Traditional verification processes often involve lengthy documentation and manual checks, which can lead to delays and errors. QR codes streamline this process, enabling real-time authentication and minimizing fraud. For example, in public distribution systems or healthcare services, QR codes can ensure that benefits reach the intended recipients without duplication or leakage.

Another major benefit is cost-effectiveness. QR codes are inexpensive to generate and can be easily integrated into existing digital platforms. Governments can deploy them at scale without heavy infrastructure investments. Moreover, when linked with centralized databases, they allow seamless coordination between departments, improving governance outcomes.

However, the increasing reliance on QR code-based identification also brings serious concerns, particularly related to privacy and data security. Since QR codes can store or link to sensitive personal information, there is a risk of misuse if proper safeguards are not in place. Unauthorized scanning, data breaches, or hacking attempts could compromise citizens' personal data. Therefore, robust encryption, secure servers, and strict access controls are essential to protect user information.

Another challenge lies in digital inclusion. While urban populations may find it easy to adapt to QR-based systems, many people in rural or remote areas still lack access to smartphones or digital literacy. If not implemented carefully, such systems could unintentionally exclude vulnerable sections of society, widening the digital divide. Hence, parallel offline options and awareness campaigns are necessary to ensure inclusivity.

Reliability is another critical factor. QR code systems depend heavily on internet connectivity and functioning devices. In areas with poor network coverage or technical issues, the system may fail, leading to inconvenience and delays. This highlights the need for strong infrastructure and backup mechanisms to ensure uninterrupted services.

Furthermore, there is a need for clear legal and regulatory frameworks governing the use of QR-based identification. Citizens must be informed about how their data is collected, stored, and used. Transparency and accountability should form the foundation of any such digital initiative to build public trust.

Looking ahead, QR code-based identification systems have immense potential to transform governance and public service delivery. When combined with emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and blockchain, they can create a more secure, efficient, and citizen-centric administrative framework. However, the success of such systems will depend on balancing innovation with responsibility.

QR code-based identification is not just a technological upgrade—it is a step toward smarter governance. But for it to truly benefit society, it must be implemented with strong safeguards, inclusive policies, and a commitment to protecting citizens' rights. Only then can it serve as a tool of empowerment rather than exclusion.

World Heritage Day Viz a Viz its Scope for J&K

By: Omkar Dattatray

World Heritage Day is observed every year on 18 April across the globe to raise awareness about the importance of preserving cultural monuments, historical sites, and natural heritage. It serves as a reminder that the legacy of human civilization is not only written in books but also carved into stones, architecture, landscapes, and traditions that have survived for centuries. In an age of rapid modernization and urban expansion, this day encourages humanity to pause and reflect on what must be protected so that future generations can understand their roots and identity. Heritage, in its broadest sense, represents the collective memory of societies. It includes ancient temples, forts, churches, archaeological ruins, traditional villages, natural landscapes, and even intangible practices such as music, dance, language, and rituals. Each heritage site tells a story of human creativity, struggle, belief systems, and cultural evolution. When such sites are preserved, they serve as living classrooms that connect the present generation with the past, allowing people to understand how civilizations developed over time. In Jammu and Kashmir, there is much need to preserve historical monuments, cultural sites and other natural heritage and make people aware about the importance of their protection and preservation so that our young people and coming generation will know about these historical, cultural and natural sites. In Jammu and Kashmir, there is much scope for the preservation of the historical and other sites of far most importance. In Jammu, we should preserve Mubarak Mandi Complex, Bahu Fort, Harinivas, Poonch House and also preserve Natural Lake such as Mansar. In Kashmir, there is need to preserve Hari Parbat Fort, Old Secretariat building including Gadadar Temple which stands within the premises of old secretariat. Besides, Pandav Lari situated near Mattan, Carved stones and walls of the Raja Awantiwarman days situated at Awantiwarman [presently Awantipora] in Pulwama district, carved stones at Pattan Kashmir, Parihaspora in district Baramulla and other sites of cultural and natural importance need to be protected and preserved. Besides the world famous lake known as Jeel Dal as well as Jeel Wullar needs to be preserved and protected so that their beauty is kept intact.

The significance of World Heritage Day lies in its ability to foster global responsibility. Many historical sites are under threat due to pollution, neglect, urban development, war, and climate change. Once destroyed, these irreplaceable treasures cannot be recreated. This makes preservation not just a cultural duty but also an ethical obligation. The day reminds governments, organizations, and individuals that safeguarding heritage is a shared responsibility that goes beyond national boundaries.

The role of UNESCO is central in this global effort. UNESCO identifies and designates World Heritage Sites based on their outstanding universal value. These sites may be cultural, such as ancient cities and monuments, or natural, such as forests, mountains, and ecosystems. Once a site is listed, it gains international recognition and protection support. However, inclusion alone is not enough; continuous conservation efforts are required to ensure that these sites are not damaged by human activity or environmental changes. One of the most important aspects of World Heritage Day is education. Awareness campaigns, seminars, exhibitions, and heritage walks are organized in many countries to engage people, especially students, in learning about their cultural history. When young minds are exposed to heritage conservation early, they develop respect and appreciation for historical treasures. This helps in building a society that values preservation over destruction. Education also helps people understand that heritage is not just about the distant past but also about living traditions that continue to shape identity today. Another vital dimension of this observance is tourism. Heritage sites attract millions of visitors every year and contribute significantly to local and national economies. Cultural tourism provides employment opportunities, supports artisans, and promotes regional development. However, uncontrolled tourism can also lead to overcrowding, pollution, and physical damage to monuments. World Heritage Day highlights the importance of sustainable tourism practices, ensuring that while people enjoy and learn from these sites, they also respect and protect them.

The emotional connection between people and heritage is profound. A monument is not merely a structure of stone; it is a symbol of collective memory. For instance, ancient forts remind us of historical battles and governance systems, temples and churches reflect spiritual traditions, and archaeological sites reveal how early humans lived. Natural heritage sites such as forests, rivers, and mountains remind us of the harmony that must exist between humans and nature. Losing any of these elements means losing a part of human identity. In many parts of the world, however, heritage faces serious challenges. Rapid urbanization often leads to demolition of old structures to make way for modern buildings. In some cases, lack of awareness results in neglect and deterioration of historical monuments. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and wildfires also pose threats to heritage sites. Additionally, climate change is increasingly affecting fragile ecosystems and coastal heritage locations. These challenges make conservation efforts more urgent than ever before. Community participation plays a crucial role in protecting heritage. Local communities are often the true custodians of cultural sites. Their traditions,

knowledge, and practices help maintain the authenticity of heritage. When communities are involved in conservation efforts, the chances of long-term preservation increase significantly. Governments alone cannot protect all heritage sites; collective participation from citizens, NGOs, and international bodies is essential.

Technology has also become an important tool in heritage conservation. Digital mapping, 3D scanning, and virtual reality are being used to document and restore historical sites. These technologies help create digital archives that can be used for research and reconstruction in case of damage. Social media platforms further help spread awareness about endangered heritage sites, encouraging global support and attention. World Heritage Day is not only about looking back at history but also about shaping the future. It teaches that development and preservation must go hand in hand. Modern infrastructure can coexist with historical conservation if planned responsibly. Cities that integrate heritage preservation into urban planning often become more attractive, culturally rich, and sustainable. Ultimately, World Heritage Day is a call for respect—respect for history, for culture, and for nature. It reminds humanity that progress should not come at the cost of erasing the past. Every monument, every tradition, and every natural wonder carries a message from earlier generations. Preserving them is like preserving the voice of history itself. In conclusion, World Heritage Day stands as a global reminder that heritage is a priceless inheritance that defines who we are. It encourages awareness, responsibility, and action to protect the cultural and natural treasures of our planet. By valuing and safeguarding these irreplaceable assets, humanity ensures that future generations inherit not just stories of the past, but tangible links to their identity and civilization. On the occasion of World Heritage Day, let us preserve, protect the historical, cultural and natural sites of Jammu and Kashmir. We should not only resolve and pledge to preserve sites of heritage but also take concrete action to ensure the preservation of the sites and things of heritage and this will be the befitting way to observe the world Heritage Day in our part of the world. Besides we should do every possible thing to make people aware about the importance of preserving natural, historical heritage and resolve to do our bit in this regard.

(The author is a columnist, social, KP activist & Freelancer)

When plates are thrown away full and stomachs go to sleep empty

By: Dr. Satyavan Saurabh

The world faces a paradox: massive amounts of food are being wasted, while millions struggle with hunger. This is not just an irony, but a reflection of the profound flaws in our current food system. While production continues to rise, there are significant disparities in distribution, storage, and consumption, preventing food from reaching those in need. This is why food waste and hunger coexist globally.

The situation in India provides a striking example of this global landscape. Despite the country's abundant food production, hunger and malnutrition persist. While some improvement has been recorded in recent years, this improvement is too limited to be considered satisfactory. A large number of people still lack adequate nutrition, and the incidence of child malnutrition is a cause for concern. This situation clearly demonstrates that the problem lies not in a lack of production, but in the inefficiency of resource management and distribution.

The problem of food waste is not only economic, but also social and environmental. When food is wasted, the water, energy, and labor used in its production are also wasted. Furthermore, the gases emitted from rotting food harm the environment. Thus, food waste also contributes to climate change. It is a vicious cycle that involves both resource wastage and environmental damage.

The roots of this problem extend from production to consumption. Large quantities of crops are lost at the farm level, often due to a lack of proper storage facilities, transportation delays, and natural disasters. Fruits and vegetables, which are perishable, are particularly hard hit. Farmers lack adequate cold storage facilities, forcing them to either sell their produce early or let it spoil. This not only causes economic losses for farmers but also impacts food supplies.

Supply chain weaknesses exacerbate this problem. There are numerous stages between production and consumption, with potential for loss at each stage. Inadequate transportation, storage, and distribution systems result in large quantities of food being lost before reaching markets. Oversupply in markets also leads to food being discarded because there are no proper storage or transportation systems.

The situation is no less worrying at the consumer level. Food wastage is common in homes, hotels, and events. People often buy more food than they need and then fail to use it all. Excessive vigilance regarding expiration dates also often leads to unnecessary waste. This problem is even more pronounced at weddings and other social events, where, in the name of prestige, far more food is prepared than necessary, a large portion of which ultimately ends up in the trash.

Policy and institutional deficiencies also play a significant role in this entire scenario. Most government policies focus on increas-

ing production, while waste management receives relatively little attention. Investment in cold chain and storage infrastructure is inadequate, and the existing schemes have limited impact. Furthermore, no strict regulations or punitive provisions have been widely implemented to reduce food waste. This situation demonstrates the need to approach the problem holistically.

To address this challenge, a comprehensive and coordinated effort is required. First, infrastructure improvements are essential. Cold storage and modern warehousing facilities must be expanded to ensure the safe storage of perishable goods. Special attention is needed in rural areas, where such facilities are most lacking. Additionally, transportation and logistics systems must be strengthened to ensure timely and safe delivery of food to markets.

The use of technology can also play a crucial role in this direction. Digital platforms and data-driven systems can better predict demand and supply, preventing unnecessary production and wastage. Furthermore, modern technologies can be used to convert food waste into energy or compost, thereby reducing environmental impact.

Policy reforms are also crucial. The government should enact laws and policies that encourage the reduction of food waste and curb unnecessary waste. Mandatory provisions can be made for hotels, restaurants, and large events to distribute leftover food to those in need. Furthermore, farmers must be protected

against crop losses to ensure they remain financially secure.

Community and educational initiatives can also play an important role in this direction. There is a need to raise awareness among people so that they understand the importance of food and avoid wasting it. This topic can be included in the curriculum in schools and colleges, thus making the new generation more responsible. Furthermore, initiatives to distribute surplus food to those in need through social organizations and voluntary organizations should be encouraged.

Ultimately, solving this problem cannot be achieved through the efforts of a single party. It requires collaboration between the government, the private sector, farmers, and ordinary citizens. Only by adopting a holistic and circular approach can we reduce food waste and address hunger.

It's clear that food waste isn't just a waste of resources, but a systemic failure that calls into question our priorities and policies. If we take this challenge seriously and make a coordinated effort, we can not only reduce hunger but also move towards a more just and sustainable society.

(Dr. Satyavan Saurabh, PhD (Political Science), is a poet and social thinker)

GDC Ramnagar organises quiz competition on Nasha Mukti



Top News Report

RAMNAGAR, Apr 18: The NCORD Cell of Government Degree College Ramnagar organized a Quiz Competition on the theme Nasha Mukti (Drug-Free India) to spread awareness among students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of leading a healthy, addiction-free life.

The program commenced with a formal welcome address by Dr. Sham Singh Kotwal, NCORD Nodal Officer, who warmly welcomed the Principal, faculty members, and students. In his address, he highlighted the significance of organizing such awareness activities and stressed the collective responsibility of society, especially the youth, in combating the menace of drug abuse. The event was con-

ducted under the guidance of the worthy Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Bhavnaish Chand Anthal, who, in his address, emphasized the urgent need to sensitize youth about the dangers of substance abuse. He remarked that educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping responsible citizens and promoting the vision of a Nasha Mukti Bharat. He appreciated the efforts of the NCORD Cell in organizing such meaningful activities and encouraged students to act as ambassadors of positive change in society.

The quiz competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from three teams - A, B, and C - each comprising five students. The participants actively engaged in answering questions related to drug awareness, prevention strategies, and

government initiatives under the Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan. Team A emerged as the winner. The activity successfully enhanced awareness while fostering a sense of responsibility among the youth.

The program was organized by the NCORD Cell comprising Dr. Sham Singh Kotwal (NCORD Nodal Officer), Dr. Sunil Kumar, Dr. Jeevan Kumar, Prof. Anice Ahmed, Prof. Sanjay Malhotra, Prof. Tanmeet Kour, and Prof. Romesh Kumar. Their collective efforts ensured the smooth and successful conduct of the event.

The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks delivered by Prof. Tanmeet Kour, along with a strong message urging students to stay vigilant, make informed choices, and contribute actively towards building a drug-free society.

BJP SC Morcha lauds historic Women Reservation Bill, extends gratitude to PM Modi



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: In a resounding endorsement of a landmark moment in India's journey towards gender equality, the BJP State SC Morcha at a meeting held in Zila Jammu, expressed its heartfelt appreciation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the passage of the Women Reservation Bill. This monumental legislation marks a significant stride towards empowering women and strengthening the

fabric of our democracy, said the Morcha leaders R.L.Kaith, Asha Bharti, Vijay Anand Gill, S.K.Rana, Joginder Paul, Darshan Angurana, S.K.Rana, Manohar Lal Bhagat and Madan Lal.

The leaders hailed this decision as a testament to PM Modi's unwavering commitment to women's empowerment. The bill's passage is not just a legislative achievement but a beacon of hope for millions of women across the nation, sym-

bolizing their enhanced role in shaping India's future.

The leaders commended PM Narendra Modi Ji for his tireless efforts in championing women's rights and recognized this milestone as a reflection of his leadership in driving transformative change.

They believed this historic move would pave the way for greater representation and participation of women in governance, fostering a more balanced and progressive India.

ISTD Jammu Chapter hosts International Seminar on 'Role of Technology in Governance Landscape: Some Reflections'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: The Indian Society for Training and Development (ISTD), Jammu Chapter conducted an International Seminar in online mode on "Transformative Role of Technology in Governance Landscape: Some Reflections." The seminar was organized to address the pressing challenge of bridging the gap between high-level strategy and ground-level execution in governance and public sector reforms. It brought together senior policymakers, administrative leaders, and international experts from India and Singapore to

deliberate on systemic thinking, psychological safety, and collective resilience for driving sustainable results in complex organisational environments. On this occasion, the keynote address was delivered by Prof. T.V. Rao, Chairman of T. V. Rao Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd., who set the tone for the deliberations. The event featured four technical sessions. First Technical Session on 'Technology and Governance' was moderated by Prof. Feza Tabassum Azmi from FMSR, AMU. Ms Sripriya Venkataraman from Singapore, COO & Director-Innovation at Tripura Multinational and Global Coaching Lab, deliberated on a wide range of issues.

Speaking on the occasion, organisers said the event aimed to foster

cross-border dialogue on tech-enabled, inclusive and responsive governance with a special focus on Jammu & Kashmir's unique geographical and administrative challenges. The seminar saw active participation from more than 180 participants including academicians, researchers, government officials, and students from across the country. Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Vice-Chancellor of the Islamic University of Science and Technology, was the Chief Guest for this international seminar. The Seminar concluded with closing remarks delivered by Sh. Atul Shah, National Presi-

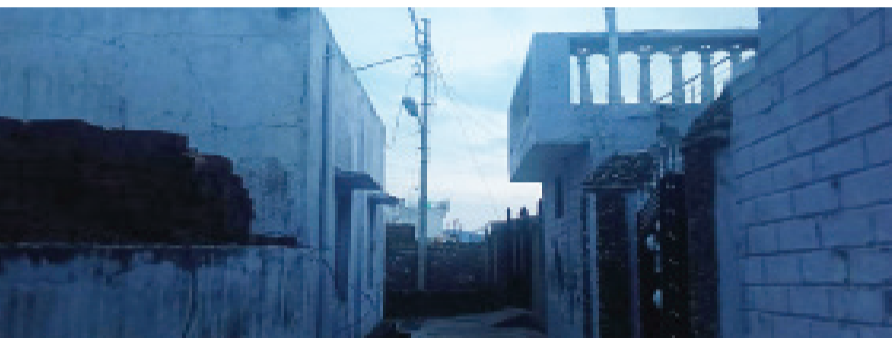
dent, ISTD. The event was organized under the Mentorship of Sr. Prof. K.S. Chandrasekar by Team ISTD Jammu Chapter including Dr. Shhaid Mushtaq, Secretary ISTD Jammu Chapter, Dr Sanjay Kumar, Treasurer ISTD Jammu Chapter, Faculty Members of Cluster University of Jammu including Prof. Vishal Sharma, Dean, School of Social Sciences and others. The vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Shahid Mushtaq, Secretary, ISTD Jammu Chapter and Dr Neetu, Coordinator, Department of Commerce, Cluster University of Jammu, who served as the Master of Ceremonies.

Street light defunct in Basohli's Ward 10 for over a year, residents face persistent darkness

Top News Report

BASOHLI, Apr 18: Residents of Ward No. 10 in Basohli town continue to struggle with poor visibility and safety concerns as a street light near the local Gurudwara has remained non-functional for more than one and a half years. The prolonged neglect has left the entire Gurudwara lane in darkness after sunset, causing inconvenience and anxiety among locals.

According to residents, the street light installed on an electric pole stopped working long ago, yet repeated con-



cerns have failed to draw any effective response from the authorities. The absence of basic lighting infrastructure has made everyday movement difficult, particularly during evening and night hours. Children, elderly residents, and women are among the most affected, as the dark sur-

roundings increase the risk of accidents and create a sense of insecurity. Locals say that even routine activities become challenging due to the lack of visibility in the area. Expressing concern, resident Naresh Kohli urged the administration to act promptly and repair

the faulty street light without further delay. He emphasized that such basic civic issues should not remain unresolved for such a long period. Another resident, Neelam Mishra, highlighted that the problem is not limited

to a single light. She pointed out that several solar lights in the locality are also non-functional, along with other street lights installed on electric poles. As a result, the entire lane remains engulfed in darkness, discouraging people from stepping out of their homes after dusk.

The residents have appealed to the concerned authorities to take immediate notice of the situation and restore proper lighting facilities in the area to ensure safety, convenience, and improved living conditions.

BJP leaders inspire slum dwellers with Modi Govt's tribute to Ambedkar

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: In a heartening visit to a slum basti in Gopinath Vihar Udhewala, BJP State SC Morcha leaders R.L.Kaith, Ash Rani, Vijay Anand Gill, Darshan Angurana, S.K.Rana, Joginder Paul, Manohar Lal Bhagat and Madan Lal, enlightened the residents about the tireless efforts of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji towards fulfilling the dreams of Dr. B.R.Ambedkar.

The leaders highlighted the landmark achievements of the Modi government, including the historic 33% reservation for women in legislature and local bodies, a monumental step towards empowering women and realizing Ambedkar's vision. They recalled how Modi Ji honoured Ambedkar with the Bharat Ratna in 1990, a testament to his enduring legacy.



The leaders also shared how Modi transformed Ambedkar's residence in London into a memorial, a symbol of his commitment to preserving the legacy of the great leader.

The organization of programmes in 125 countries on Ambedkar's 125th birth anniversary and the presentation of a Yanki on Ambedkar on January 26, 2016, were cited as examples of the government's dedication to his ideals.

The declaration of November 26 as Constitutional Day was hailed as a fitting tribute

to Ambedkar's role in shaping India's Constitution. The residents, moved by the Modi government's initiatives, expressed their gratitude and resolved to stand by him in the years to come.

The visit underscored the BJP's commitment to social justice and empowerment, echoing Ambedkar's dream of a just and equitable society. The event concluded with a renewed sense of hope and determination among the residents, inspired by the Modi government's unwavering dedication to the welfare of the marginalized.

NC Leader flags alleged corruption and environmental damage in Kishtwar Hydropower Projects

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Apr 18: Senior leader of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference and Chenab Valley spokesperson Ajeet Bhagat has raised serious concerns over alleged corruption and environmental damage linked to hydroelectric power projects in Kishtwar district.

Addressing the issue, Bhagat stated that corruption in hydropower projects across Jammu and Kashmir has reached an alarming level. He alleged that several power project companies operating in the district are exploiting natural resources without adequate safeguards, leading to significant ecological harm.

He further pointed out that despite the presence of major hydro-

power projects in the region, the local population continues to face basic challenges such as poor infrastructure, lack of employment opportunities, and environmental degradation. According to him, the expected benefits of development have not reached the people living in project-affected areas.

Expressing concern over the situation, Ajeet Bhagat urged the district administration to take immediate and transparent action. He appealed to Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police Naresh Singh to initiate a fair and independent inquiry into the allegations.

He emphasized that such an investigation is essential not only to curb corruption but also to prevent further environmental damage and ensure that the rights and entitlements of local residents are protected. Bhagat reiterated the need for accountability and responsible development, calling for strict monitoring of project activities in the district.

The issue has once again brought attention to the balance between development and environmental sustainability in the Chenab Valley region, with local stakeholders demanding greater transparency and inclusive growth.

GDC R S Pura organizes quiz competition and pledge ceremony under "100 days campaign" of NMBA

Top News Report

R S PURA, Apr 18: Drug De-addiction committee of Government Degree College (GDC), R. S. Pura organized a Quiz Competition and Pledge Ceremony as part of the ongoing "100 Days Campaign" under the NashaMukt Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA), an initiative aimed at spreading awareness about the harmful effects

of drug abuse and promoting a healthy, drug-free lifestyle among youth. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students across various departments, who actively engaged in the quiz competition designed to test their knowledge on substance abuse, its consequences and preventive measures.

The competition not



only served as an educational activity but also encouraged students to reflect on the importance of making informed and

responsible life choices. The quiz competition was followed by a pledge ceremony, where students, faculty mem-

bers and staff solemnly pledged to remain committed to the cause of a drug-free society. Participants reaffirmed their

responsibility to spread awareness and support efforts to eradicate drug abuse from society.

The Principal of the College, Prof. (Dr.) Preetpal Kour appreciated the efforts of the organizing committee and highlighted the significance of such initiatives in shaping a responsible and aware youth community. She also addressed the students,

emphasizing the need for collective action in combating the menace of drug addiction.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Akriti Parihar, Co-convenor Drug De-addiction Committee and the faculty members presented during the event were Prof. Geetika Goswami, Prof. Meeshu Pandita, Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch, Dr. GurleenKour and Roma Gandhi.

Amitabh Bachchan urges people to keep the body and mind mobile

Amitabh Bachchan is one of the most well-known actors in India and is known for his prolific body of work that spans over five decades. The veteran actor has worked in several languages and continues to win over audiences with his performances. He also meets fans every week outside his Mumbai residence, Jalsa. In his latest blog post on Tumblr, Amitabh has shared his take on actively staying motivated to work so that there is always a sense of mobility.

Amitabh shared a quote from his father's (Harivansh Rai Bachchan) work that said the days move on quite fast. He then shared, "A few thoughts from Babuji's works and the days pass by, it was the previous month just now and the next is upon us... coercing us to be reminded how time passes away so soon. Mobility is the key. Keep the body mobile, keep the mind mobile and the strength of mobility shall be evident, suddenly, rather than sit-



ting around without any reason."

He added, "Patience, be the cross word that needs solution each moment... even a moment is a test on patience. But it pays and pays well. Not monetarily speaking, but philosophically. A

study on the subject would have been a huge benefit... actually a study per se on any topic would have been several arrows to pull out through the bow in the terms of battle, or any battle of life. The bow and arrow... such

importance given to it... and its presence in our lives both within and without... bow and arrow... it was the first weapon that fought from a distance... then it matured to the cannon... and now missiles. The purpose be the same... battle from distance... the era of hand to hand or as the present vocabulary expression says, "boots on the ground" a rarity. Sitting miles away and cause the damage results of battle is a nonchalant modern day warfare. There is the tale of my great grandfather and his act on this but will tell some other day for now, love and peace."

On the work front, Amitabh was last seen in Kalki 2898 AD. Directed by Nag Ashwin, the film also starred Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, and Kamal Haasan in lead roles. Big B's portrayal of Ashwatthama in the sci-fi drama won hearts, and the film became a massive success, grossing over 1,000 crore worldwide. He is currently shooting for the sequel to the film.

Akshay Kumar shares disappointing news for Hera Pheri 3 fans amid legal trouble



The wait for Hera Pheri 3 may get longer. Akshay Kumar has confirmed the film is not moving ahead anytime soon, with legal and contractual issues slowing it down. A copyright claim over the franchise's rights, challenging producer Firoz Nadiadwala's ownership, has further added to the uncertainty.

Speaking with agency, the actor addressed ongoing speculation around the film and said it is currently not on track. "Hera Pheri 3 abhi filhaal toh nahi ban

rahi (The film is not happening as of now)," he said, adding that even he was taken aback by the developments.

Akshay noted that while fans are eager to see the original trio reunite, several unresolved issues have stalled the project. "For the next one year, the film is not on track. There are many issues, but not with us three actors," he said, referring to Suniel Shetty and Paresh Rawal. He added that certain matters cannot be discussed publicly, hinting

at ongoing agreements and complications behind the scenes.

The film has faced multiple hurdles in recent months, including reported legal disputes over the franchise's rights and Paresh Rawal's unexpected exit from the project, which came as a surprise to both fans and Akshay, who had acquired the rights.

Despite the uncertainty, the actor struck a hopeful note. "It will happen when the time is right. I just hope we are not too old by then," he said with a touch of humour.

The Hera Pheri franchise, helmed by Priyadarshan, began with Hera Pheri (2000), which introduced audiences to the iconic trio of Raju, Shyam and Baburoo. Its sequel, Phir Hera Pheri (2006), directed by the late Neeraj Vora, further cemented its cult status.

For now, fans may have to wait a while longer before the beloved characters return to the big screen.

Feel like the King of the world: SRK reacts as Academy shares Om Shanti Om speech

Leave it to Shah Rukh Khan to turn a throwback into a moment. After The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences shared a clip of his iconic Om Shanti Om speech, the actor responded with his trademark wit, saying he now feels like the "King of the world".

The Academy posted a snippet of the film's much-loved monologue with the caption, "One thing about destiny... it doesn't miss." The scene, set during an awards night sequence in the film, remains one of Shah Rukh's most quoted moments.

And SRK clearly enjoyed the nostalgia trip. Reposting the clip on social media, he wrote, "Thank you The Academy for sending

me down memory lane with Om's speech. Now I truly feel like the King of the world. Ha ha."

Directed by Farah Khan, Om Shanti Om released in 2007 and marked the Bollywood debut of Deepika Padukone. The film, also starring Arjun Rampal and Shreyas Talpade, went on to become a major box office success and a pop culture favourite.

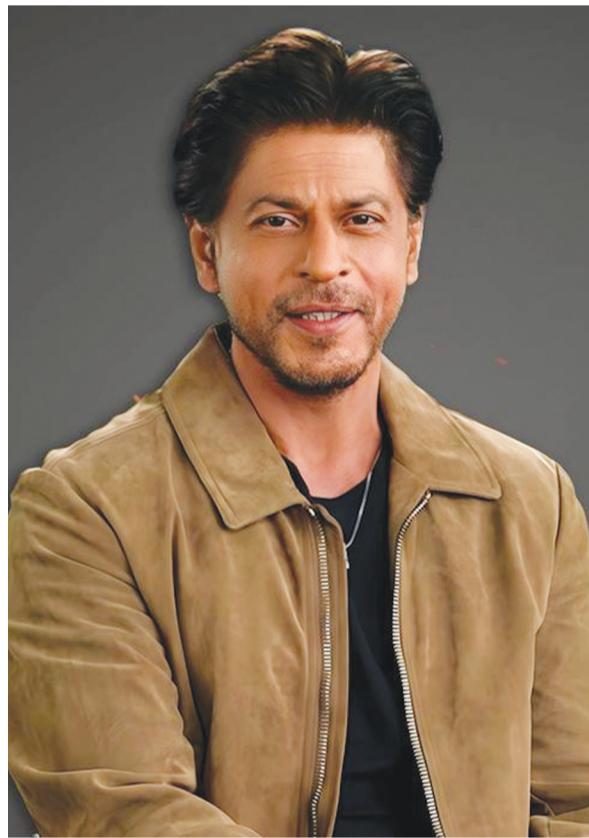
Farah Khan, too, joined in on the moment, reacting to the post on Instagram Stories. Thanking those who sent it her way, she added a nostalgic nod with the film's iconic line, "#pictureabhi baaki hai meredost."

Actor Shah Rukh Khan is reportedly set to make a brief appearance in Allu Arjun's Raaka, reuniting with direc-

tor Atlee after Jawan. According to sources, the cameo stems from his association with Atlee, Allu Arjun and Deepika Padukone. An official confirmation is still awaited.

Meanwhile, Shah Rukh will next be seen in King, directed by Siddharth Anand. The film also stars Suhana Khan, Abhishek Bachchan and Deepika Padukone, alongside Arshad Warsi, Jaideep Ahlawat and Raghav Juyal. There is also buzz around Anil Kapoor and Rani Mukerji joining the cast, though this remains unconfirmed.

Backed by Red Chillies Entertainment, King is slated for a Christmas Eve release on December 24, 2026.



Elli AvrRam says people on Bollywood sets don't care if you faint

Actor Elli AvrRam, who has worked across Tamil, Kannada and Hindi cinema, has opened up about the stark contrasts between working in Bollywood and the South. Reflecting on her journey, Elli revealed that while both industries have given her valuable experiences, she found the working environment on South film sets to be far calmer, more organised and respectful.

In a recent interview with agency, Elli clarified that she has had positive experiences in both industries, but noted a clear difference in their working styles. She said, "I have had good experiences in both the South and Bollywood. But I have found it more peaceful on set in the South. In Bollywood, it's more hurried. In the South, they prefer to use walkie-talkies instead of shouting and screaming. My experience in Bollywood has been that even if you are eating, you are told your shot is ready. It's like, we don't care if you've eaten or if you faint, the shot is ready."

However, the actor was quick to point out that such experiences can vary depending on the team one is working with. She shared that she recently worked on a Netflix project



where the crew ensured that all actors were well-fed, comfortable and properly looked after, describing it as a "beautiful experience". Elli also highlighted differences in storytell-

ing, particularly when it comes to opportunities for female actors. She said, "I definitely feel the South has more opportunities for content-driven films for female actors than Bollywood. In Bollywood, it's still more about being typecast. That's why I am grateful I was cast in Malang, because that was the first time I was portrayed in a different way. A lot of filmmakers were surprised to know that Elli is a serious actor and enjoys roles like these."

Elli made her Bollywood debut opposite Manish Paul in the 2013 film Mickey Virus. The same year, she participated in Salman Khan's reality show Bigg Boss 7, where her charming personality and interactions with the host grabbed attention. She later gained wider recognition for her role in Kapil Sharma's Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon (2015), a box-office success.

Over the years, she has appeared in films such as Malang, Naane Varuven alongside Dhanush, Goodbye with Amitabh Bachchan, Ganapath and Conjuring Kannappa. She was last seen in a special appearance in Be Happy, starring Abhishek Bachchan and Nora Fatehi.

Hansika Motwani says therapy helped her heal post divorce

Actor Hansika Motwani was granted a divorce by mutual consent on March 11 this year by a family court in Mumbai after 3 years of marriage with Sohael Khaturiya. In a recent chat with Hauterfly, the actor spoke about her separation and recalled how her parents and brother supported her through a "dark phase".

Hansika Motwani reveals how therapy helped after divorce

Talking about her bond with her brother, Hansika said, "My brother and I are very close. He supported me throughout; he was rock solid. Both my mother and brother told me, 'If you are not comfortable, don't go through it.' They have seen me in a very dark space. I am usually a very happy person, so for them to see me like that was alarming. They told me, whatever you decide, we are with you."

Talking about taking therapy, Hansika revealed that she has been focusing on her mental health for the last two years. She said, "I was in a very dark space and didn't understand mental health. A friend picked me up during my dark phase and said let's try therapy. After that, it's been two years and it has helped me, guided me, showed me how to be a better person. Taught me how to handle situations that I didn't know how to." She added that therapy taught her how to deal with anxiety.

Hansika further stated that, to this day, no one knows what truly happened between her and her ex-husband. She revealed that she has no regrets about her decision and would never clarify the details, as it no longer matters to her.

Hansika Motwani's wedding and divorce

Hansika and Sohael Khaturiya tied the knot in a grand ceremony at Mundota Fort and Palace in Jaipur in December 2022. Their wedding was also documented in the 2023 Disney+ Hotstar show Hansika's Love Shaadi Drama.

In 2025, Hansika deleted her wedding photos and pictures with Sohael from Instagram, fuelling separation rumours.



According to reports, their families reportedly made several attempts to reconcile them. However, they eventually decided to part ways.

Hansika's lawyer told NDTV, "It is pertinent to clarify that our client has made no claims whatsoever for alimony or maintenance, as her sole intention was to bring a dignified and peaceful closure to the marriage. Our client now wishes to move forward with her life and professional commitments."

Hansika Motwani's recent and upcoming work

Hansika was last seen in the 2024 Tamil film Guardian, which also featured Suresh Chandra Menon and Sriraman in key roles. She was also seen as a judge on the Telugu reality show Dhee Celebrity Special 2.

She will next be seen in the Prime Video original series Gully. Helmed by Praveen Sattaru, the show also stars Sudheer Babu, JD Chakravarthy, Shraddha Srinath and Prince, among others. The release date of the series is yet to be announced.

Learn to be kind: Patralekhaa calls out paparazzi over post-pregnancy body comments

The actor was subjected to a wave of body-shaming, with several social media pages targeting her appearance

Actor-producer Patralekhaa slammed paparazzi pages for comments about her appearance following the birth of her child, saying her weight gain is a natural result of pregnancy.

Patralekhaa and husband, actor Rajkumar

Rao, were recently seen attending the premiere of their maiden production venture "Toaster", which released on Netflix on Thursday. The actor was subjected to a wave of body-shaming, with several social media pages targeting her appearance. In response to

the trolling, Patralekhaa shared a brief note on her Instagram Stories. "Pap pages! What's happened to me is that I have just given birth. Yes I have gained the weight, which seems like an unnatural phenomenon to you all. I have not sat and eaten a mountain,



I just delivered a baby and produced two films simultaneously which are not easy jobs," she said.

The couple welcomed their first child, a daughter, in November 2025.

Patralekhaa, known for movies and shows such as "Citylights", "Phule"

and "IC 814", said her body's response to pregnancy was not within her control. "If I could I would not be this way. But that's how my body has reacted to pregnancy," she wrote, before signing off with an appeal for basic empathy - "For God's sake please learn

to be a little kind," she concluded.

"Toaster", a dark comedy starring Rao, is produced by Patralekhaa and the actor under their banner Kampa Film. Their next production venture, "Raftaar", will feature Rao alongside Keerthy Suresh.

'Opposition made a mistake, will face consequences': PM Modi on women's quota bill failing parliament test

Opposition must face the consequences and answer the women, sources have said, quoting PM Modi during a cabinet meeting.

NEW DELHI, Apr 18 (Agencies): The opposition has committed a mistake by not supporting the Women's Reservation Bill and will face consequences, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has told his cabinet. His criticism comes a day after the crucial legislation failed the parliament test amid opposition backlash over the government's approach.

The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill aimed to reserve 33% of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. But it failed to secure a two-thirds majority to pass the Lok Sabha. The Bill received only 298 votes in its favour, while 230 MPs opposed it, after a heated debate that began on Thursday and went past midnight into Friday.

Opposition must face the consequences and answer the women, sources have said, quoting PM Modi during a cabinet meeting. "They have let down the women of the country. This message must be taken to every single person, to every



single village," the prime minister further said, according to sources.

Opposition parties had earlier said they supported women's reservation in parliament but found the government's approach to be politically motivated. There were also opposition concerns that once delimitation occurs, the southern states might see a drop in their representation in parliament.

However, the PM had sought to allay such concerns while speaking in parliament during

the three-day session that ended today.

He had given a personal guarantee that no injustice would be done to any southern state once the seats in Lok Sabha go up to 816 from 543. "Let all of us not miss this important opportunity to give reservations to women. This is in national interest," PM Modi said.

The southern states' current representation would be preserved or even increase slightly,

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had also assured parliament. The two leaders also accused the Congress and other opposition parties of manufacturing issues to oppose the Bill and deprive women of reservations.

Leading the Opposition charge, Rahul Gandhi had claimed that the government was using the issue of women's reservation as a smokescreen in an attempt to redraw the country's electoral map in its favour.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, a senior Congress MP, today dubbed the Bill's defeat as a victory of opposition unity.

Slamming the opposition, Union Minister Kiren Rijju said that the Congress and its allies will face the anger of women across the country for blocking the Bill. Speaking to reporters in parliament complex, he said it is a "black stain on the Congress and its allies - one that they will never be able to erase."

"This Bill was about giving historic representation to women. What objection could there have been?" he told reporters.

G20 satellite expected to be launched in 2027: ISRO chief Narayanan



HYDERABAD, Apr 18 (Agencies): ISRO Chairman V Narayanan said on Saturday that the G20 satellite, designed to study climate, air pollution and monitor weather, is expected to be launched in 2027.

Addressing scientists from DRDO, ISRO, and the Aeronautical Society of India at the Engineering Staff College of India, Dr Narayanan also said India is the

first country to succeed in placing 104 satellites, more than 100 satellites using a single rocket without any collision.

"Right now we are also working on a G20 satellite for G-20 countries, India is taking the lead role, and we are going to have the launch by the 2027 timeframe," he said.

The ISRO chief further said a lot of commercial missions were car-

ried out, including 433 satellites of 34 countries launched, and the heaviest satellite lifted from India was again a commercial satellite.

Narayanan said ISRO is working towards sending a human to the moon by 2040.

"If we make it happen by 2040, we will be on par with any other space-faring nation in terms of launcher technology, satellite technology, application area, and human space flight program. And we are working towards the Viksit Bharat-2024," he said.

According to him, ISRO is in the process of making a 2.2 m diameter with 100 mm thickness titanium vessel for Samudrayaan, a project for the Deep Ocean Mission.

BJP chief Nitin Nabin holds meet with CMs; calls for special Assembly sessions for Women's Reservation Bill

NEW DELHI, Apr 18 (Agencies): Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National President Nitin Nabin on Saturday convened a meeting via video conferencing with Chief Ministers of BJP-ruled states and senior party functionaries to discuss the ongoing political developments surrounding the Women's Reservation Bill.

According to the source, during the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on the opposition's move to block the passage of the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament.

The party expressed strong concern over what it termed as an obstruction to a land-



mark reform aimed at enhancing women's representation in legislative bodies.

The BJP leadership has directed Chief Ministers to convene a one-day special session of their respective State Legislative Assemblies. In these sessions, the party has recommended the passage of a "condemnation resolution"

against the opposition's stance on the Bill.

The move is aimed at taking the issue to the people and reaffirming the party's commitment to women's empowerment and political participation.

On Friday, the BJP-led government failed to secure the required two-thirds majority to pass the amendment Bill.

4 cheetahs from South Africa arrive at Bannerghatta Biological Park

This initiative aims to strengthen conservation efforts, enhance genetic diversity within captive populations, promote visitor awareness, and support scientific research

BENGALURU, Apr 18 (Agencies): Bannerghatta Biological Park on Saturday announced the successful arrival of four cheetahs, including two females from South Africa.

The animals from Induna Primate and Parrot Park in South Africa reached Kempegowda International Airport at approximately 1.15 am on Saturday under an approved animal exchange programme in accordance with the Wildlife Protection Act, it said.

According to a statement issued by Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP), this initiative aims to strengthen conservation efforts,



enhance genetic diversity within captive populations, promote visitor awareness, and support scientific research.

Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre received the cheetahs at the airport cargo terminal.

The Minister asked

officials and veterinary teams to ensure strict quarantine protocols, a prescribed diet, and close health monitoring for 30 days to help the animals acclimate smoothly.

Emphasising that cheetahs, once locally known as "Sivangi," have disappeared from

Karnataka's forests, he highlighted the importance of public awareness through zoological institutions.

He also instructed Dr Sunil Panwar, Member Secretary, Zoo Authority of Karnataka (ZAK), to prioritise the safety and well-being of the animals.

The BBP officials said that before transportation, the cheetahs underwent thorough health inspections and quarantine in South Africa as per the guidelines of the Department of Animal Husbandry.

Necessary No Objection Certificates (NoC) were obtained from Animal Quarantine Services before import, they

said. "Upon arrival at BBP, the animals have been placed in a designated quarantine facility for post-import health checks and observation, after which they will be shifted to their enclosures for public viewing," the BBP said in the statement.

This import underscores BBP's commitment to international collaboration in wildlife conservation, scientific management of animals, and strict adherence to regulatory protocols. It further strengthens the park's role in ex-situ conservation and environmental education, it added.

4 arrests, 3 states, online radicalisation: Delhi cops bust terror module

NEW DELHI, Apr 18 (Agencies): In a coordinated intelligence-led operation, the Delhi Police Special Cell has arrested four radicalised men on Saturday from Maharashtra, Odisha and Bihar in connection with a terror module inspired by extremist ideology and online radicalisation networks.

While speaking to agency, DCP Special Cell Praveen Kumar Tripathi said that the accused were influenced by narratives advocating the formation of a "Khurasan-based lashkar" and the establishment of a caliphate and were preparing for participation in "Ghazwa-e-Hind" while also attempting to radicalise others through encrypted digital platforms.

Further commenting on it, the officer said, "An FIR has been registered at Special Cell Police Station under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023. We have also recovered material



suspected to be used in the preparation of an IED, along with mobile phones and digital devices used for communication."

The arrested accused have been identified as Mosaib Ahmad alias Sonu alias Kalam from Thane, Mohammad Hammad from Mumbai, Sheikh Imran from Bhubaneswar, and Mohammad Sohail from Bihar's Katihar. Police officials stated that the module operated through closed encrypted social media groups where discussions reportedly centred on violent extremism, recruitment, and fundraising.

The accused are also alleged to have attempted crowd-funding through QR codes and bank accounts in the name of ideological activities.

Investigators further stated that some members were allegedly involved in collecting locally sourced materials for assembling an IED, while others focused on recruitment, training plans, and propaganda dissemination. One accused is also believed to have conducted reconnaissance of sensitive locations in Delhi, including Red Fort and India Gate, during December 2025.

During questioning,

police said the accused were found to be influenced by a mix of online ideological content and sermons from multiple religious speakers, including Zakir Naik, which investigators are examining as part of the broader radicalisation pathway assessment.

Officials added that the module was at a developing stage but showed indications of coordination across states with intent to expand its network.

Further investigation is underway to trace financial transactions, digital links, and possible external contacts connected to the group.

Minor girl, lover held for plotting mother's murder over marriage dispute in Gujarat's Mahisagar

AHMEDABAD, Apr 18 (Agencies): What first appeared to be a tragic drowning in Gujarat's Mahisagar district has turned into a chilling murder case, with police alleging that a woman was strangled to death in a planned conspiracy led by her minor daughter and the daughter's lover after the mother opposed their relationship.

In a shocking development from Mahisagar district, police have cracked the mystery surrounding the body of a woman found floating in Naka Lake in Kothamba a few days ago, exposing what investigators describe as a cold blooded and carefully plotted murder.

Investigators said the victim, a resident linked to a village in Panchmahal district, had arranged the marriage of her minor daughter elsewhere.

However, the daughter was in a relationship with a young man identified as Kamlesh, and both strongly opposed the alliance.

As tensions within the family deepened, the couple decided to eliminate what they saw as the biggest obstacle the girl's own mother.

Police said Kamlesh had repeatedly tried to disrupt the proposed marriage earlier as well. When those efforts failed, the duo moved towards a more sinister plan.

According to investigators, the minor daughter encouraged her lover to "remove" her mother so they could marry on their own terms.

The conspiracy widened further when Jayesh, an acquaintance of the deceased woman, joined the accused. Police said Jayesh also held a per-

sonal grudge against the victim, making him a willing participant in the murder plot.

Acting on the plan, the woman was lured late at night to a millet field. Once she arrived, the waiting accused attacked her and strangled her using a shoelace. After the killing, the accused worked swiftly to erase evidence and mislead investigators.

To stage the crime as an accident, the body was transported nearly 18 kilometres on a motorcycle before being dumped into Naka Lake in Kamalpur. Police believe the intention was to make the death appear as a drowning so the accused could escape suspicion.

However, the plan began to unravel when police examined the body and noticed suspicious injury marks around the neck, im-

mediately raising doubts about accidental death. That clue prompted a deeper investigation.

Under the guidance of Mahisagar SP Safin Hasan, Kothamba Police and his team launched an intensive probe.

Using technical surveillance, local intelligence and field-level questioning, officers pieced together the sequence of events and solved the case within days.

Mahisagar DySP Kamlesh Vasava said the minor daughter did not accept the marriage arranged by her mother and joined hands with her lover to hatch the conspiracy.

"A total of six accused have been arrested so far. Those held include main accused Kamlesh, Jayesh and two minors. Further legal action is underway," the DySP said.

Trump signals weekend talks with Iran, says nuclear red line 'non-negotiable'

WASHINGTON, Apr 18 (Agencies): US President Donald Trump on Saturday indicated that fresh negotiations with Iran are set to take place over the weekend, expressing optimism that ongoing diplomatic efforts could yield results even as Washington maintains pressure through a naval blockade.

"We're negotiating over the weekend... As you know there has been a blockade which has been very successful. I expect things to go well," Trump said while speaking to reporters aboard his airplane, suggesting that key elements of a potential understanding may already be in place.

Emphasising Washington's core objective, Trump asserted that preventing Iran from acquir-



ing nuclear weapons remains an absolute priority. "The main thing is that Iran will not have a nuclear weapon. You cannot let

Iran have a nuclear weapon — and that supersedes everything else," he said. His remarks come amid

heightened tensions in West Asia, with the Strait of Hormuz remaining central to global concerns over energy security and maritime stability.

In a parallel development, Trump also pointed to improving coordination with China, stating that President Xi Jinping was "very happy" with the reopening, or expected reopening, of the Strait.

"President Xi is very happy that the Strait of Hormuz is open and/or rapidly opening. Our meeting in China will be a special one and, potentially, historic. Much will be accomplished," he posted on Truth Social, signalling a possible diplomatic convergence between Washington and Beijing on stabilising the region.

"Want to see Strait of Hormuz opened; no privatisation, no tolls": Australian PM Anthony Albanese



CANBERRA, Apr 18 (Agencies): Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Saturday called for de-escalation in West Asia and the reopening of the critical Strait of Hormuz, stressing the need to keep the route free from tolls and privatisation amid the ongoing conflict.

In a post on X, following his participation in a virtual Leaders' Summit on the Strait of Hormuz co-hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Albanese said 49 countries had come together with a "consistent approach" focused on ensuring freedom of navigation.

He said, "Last night, I joined the Strait of Hormuz freedom of navigation summit. There were 49 countries participated. There was a consistent approach. We want to see de-escalation."

He added that the aim was to see the Strait of Hormuz "opened" and to see "no privatisation and

no tolls." He said, "We want to see the Strait of Hormuz opened and we want to see no privatisation and no tolls."

Shifting his focus towards the Australians, he said, "Our focus, of course, has also been on doing what we can to shield Australians from the worst of the impacts that are occurring right around the globe. We're not immune. What we are doing, though, is making every effort that we can, leaving no stone unturned, to make sure that we defend Australia's national interests. That's what my government will continue to do."

Meanwhile, Australia is taking emergency steps to manage its domestic fuel situation. According to Al Jazeera, the Australian Energy Minister Chris Bowen announced an extension of the relaxed fuel-quality standard until September, following the impact of the Iran conflict on Australia's fuel supply.

"I've decided to extend

the period of higher sulphur for petrol in Australia," Bowen said on Friday.

The measure allows fuel to contain up to 50 parts per million (ppm) of sulphur, five times higher than the usual 10 ppm limit, aimed at easing supply constraints caused by the crisis.

The decision, initially introduced in March, is to be implemented as Australia faces localised fuel shortages triggered by disruptions in West Asian supply routes.

As reported by agency, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has visited three Asian countries this week in a bid to secure additional fuel for his country.

Earlier, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Friday (local time) welcomed the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and cautioned that prolonged conflict in the region could have serious consequences for the global economy and energy markets.

He said, "Overnight, I joined a virtual Leaders' Summit on the Strait of Hormuz co-hosted by President Macron and Prime Minister Starmer. Australia has consistently called for an end to this conflict. The longer the war goes on, the more significant the impact on the global economy will be, and the greater the human cost."

Lebanon president says ceasefire should move to permanent agreements

BEIRUT, Apr 18 (Agencies): Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said that a ceasefire agreed to by his country should be transformed into "permanent agreements," without saying whether he was referring to a prospective peace deal with Israel.

The televised address was his first speech since the U.S. brokered a ceasefire to end six weeks of fighting between Israel and Iran-backed armed group Hezbollah on Thursday. The text of the deal says Israel and Lebanon would hold direct talks to produce "peace between the two countries."

Aoun thanked U.S. President Donald Trump and regional countries

for helping secure the ceasefire.

"A NEW PHASE" "Now, we all stand before a new phase: the transition from working towards a ceasefire to working towards permanent agreements that preserve the rights of our people, the unity of our land, and the sovereignty of our nation," he said.

Hezbollah has said it opposes direct talks with Israel and its lawmakers on Friday criticised the government for agreeing to hold such negotiations.

Without mentioning Israel, Aoun said, "These negotiations are not a sign of weakness, nor a retreat, nor a concession."

He only mentioned

Israel when saying his goal was to stop Israeli attacks on Lebanon and secure the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanese territory. Israel's defence minister said on Friday Israeli troops would continue to demolish homes in southern Lebanon that he said were being used by Hezbollah.

Aoun said he was prepared to "bear full responsibility for these choices, and I am ready to go wherever necessary to liberate my land, protect my people, and save my country."

Trump on Thursday said he would invite Aoun and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the White House for talks between the two countries. It was



not immediately clear if a date was set for the talks, which would be a major milestone for Lebanon and Israel.

Aoun made several apparent references to Iran and Hezbollah in his address, without mentioning them directly.

Hezbollah pulled Lebanon into the regional war by firing into Israel on March 2 in support of

Tehran.

"Today, we negotiate for ourselves and decide for ourselves. We are no longer a card in anyone's game, nor an arena for anyone's wars, and we never will be again," he said.

"To those who gamble with the fate of Lebanon and the lives of the Lebanese, I say enough!"

Passage through Strait of Hormuz to be based on "designated route" and "Iranian authorisation": Iran's Parliament Speaker

TEHRAN, Apr 18 (Agencies): Iran has asserted that maritime movement through the Strait of Hormuz will be strictly controlled by Tehran, stating that passage will be allowed only through designated routes and under Iranian approval, amid escalating tensions with the United States over regional security and negotiations.

Speaker of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Parliament Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf sharply criticised recent remarks by US President Donald Trump on X and rejected Washington's claims regarding ongoing developments.

"1- The President of the United States made seven claims in one hour, all seven of which were false. 2- They did not win the war with these lies, and they will certainly not get anywhere in negotiations either. 3- With the continuation of the blockade, the Strait of Hormuz will not remain open," he wrote.

Reiterating Iran's position on maritime control, Ghalibaf said, "4- Passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be conducted based on the 'designated route' and with 'Iranian authorisation.' 5- Whether the Strait is open or closed and the regulations governing it will be deter-



mined by the field, not by social media."

He further accused the US of information warfare, stating, "6- Media warfare and engineering public opinion are an important part of war, and the Iranian nation is not affected by these tricks."

Earlier, Iran had warned that it would take reciprocal measures if the United States continues its maritime blockade targeting Iranian ports, even as it outlined conditions for shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, agency reported.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei offered clarification on an earlier statement by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, Al Jazeera reported, citing the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

According to agency, Baghaei said that "Ship-

ping through the Strait of Hormuz will be allowed along a pre-determined route by Iran." He added, "If the maritime blockade of Iran's ports continues, Iran will take reciprocal measures," and asserted that "Iran is the guardian of the Strait of Hormuz and will show leniency where necessary."

Separately, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy detailed conditions for vessels seeking to transit through the Strait of Hormuz, agency.

As per agency, it stated that all ships would require its permission to pass, with civilian vessels allowed only through designated Iranian routes, while military vessels remain barred from transit.

"Movements will only be permitted with the permission of the IRGC Navy," it added, as per

agency.

"This movement is in line with the agreement on the period of silence on the battlefield and after the implementation of the Lebanese ceasefire," the IRGC Navy Command added in a statement, according to agency.

The announcement comes after Iran's Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi, who had earlier said on X that passage for all commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz during the ceasefire was "completely open."

"In line with the ceasefire in Lebanon, the passage for all commercial vessels through Strait of Hormuz is declared completely open for the remaining period of ceasefire, on the coordinated route as already announced by Ports and Maritime Organisation of the Islamic Rep. of Iran," Araghchi wrote on X.

The strategic waterway had been obstructed by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) following joint US and Israeli airstrikes on Tehran on February 28.

As a conduit for 20 per cent of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas, the disruption to the Strait of Hormuz has had significant global economic repercussions, impacting supply chains and energy prices worldwide.

Australia, Japan seal USD 6.5B warship deal with 3 Mogami frigates ordered first

MELBOURNE, Apr 18 (Agencies): Australia and Japan signed contracts on Saturday to deliver the first three of a 10 billion Australian dollar (USD 6.5 billion) fleet of Japanese-designed warships, with the first due for delivery in three years.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries will build the first three Mogami-class frigates in Japan. Australia plans to build another eight in a shipyard in Western Australia.

Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi and his Australian counterpart Richard Marles attended a signing ceremony aboard the Mogami-class frigate JS Kumano, which is part of the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force, docked off the Australian city of Melbourne.

The Kumano had taken part in the recent Exercise Kakadu, biennial multinational mari-

time drills hosted by Australia.

Australia announced in August last year that the Japanese bid had won the contract to provide Australia's next generation of general-purpose frigates over Germany's MEKO A-200 from Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems. The deal gave a major boost to Japan's still-underdeveloped defence industry after it lost out on Australia's submarine contract to a French company in 2016.

The Japanese-designed fleet will replace Australia's ageing ANZAC-class frigates that are considered increasingly vulnerable to modern missile and drone attack.

Marles said the Japanese frigates were a major step toward delivering Australia a larger and more lethal surface combat fleet. The first of the Mogami-class frigates is due to arrive in

Australia in 2029.

"The timeframe that we've announced is the fastest acquisition of a surface combatant into service in the Royal Australian Navy ever, and so this is a very rapid timeframe," Marles told reporters.

Japan has been accelerating its military build-up while expanding its defence ties beyond its only treaty ally, the United States. It now considers Australia to be a semi-ally.

Marles said Australia welcomed Japan's relaxation of export controls on defence equipment and technology with "trusted partners like Australia."

"Japan is an industrial powerhouse, and it offers so much opportunity for Australia and the development of our own defence industry as the Mogami project represents," Marles said.

Koizumi said that the introduction of Japa-

nese vessels into the Australian navy meant "a major step is finally being taken to elevate our bilateral defence cooperation to a greater height."

He said Japan continued to be Australia's "indispensable partner" in a new Australian defence strategy announced this week, in which AUD 53 billion (USD 38 million) will be added to the defence budget over a decade.

Koizumi said a "decisive factor" in Australia choosing the Japanese frigate was that it could be operated with just 90 personnel, around half the crew of Australia's current ANZAC-class version.

Australia says its Mogami-class frigates will be equipped with surface-to-air and anti-ship missiles and could operate combat helicopters. They will be crewed by 92 sailors and officers.

Sri Lanka sees drop in tourist arrivals in March due to West Asia war

COLOMBO, Apr 18 (Agencies): Tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka fell significantly in March due to the war in West Asia, the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) said on Saturday.

January and February recorded 277,327 and 279,328 arrivals respectively, however this positive trend was disrupted in March as arrivals dropped significantly to 183,979, the SLTDA said.

"The sudden dip can be largely attributed to the ongoing conflict in the Gulf/Middle East regions,"

it added.

The war had disrupted Sri Lanka's key transit hubs and affected travel plans leading to reduced arrivals, the SLTDA said.

In March, India again emerged as Sri Lanka's largest inbound market with 47,533 arrivals with a market share of 25.8 per cent.

British tourists were placed second with 18,092 arrivals with 9.8 per cent share of the market. Russian and Chinese tourists were placed third and fourth.

"India has overtaken all other

markets to become Sri Lanka's undisputed largest source market, growing by over 21 per cent year on year," SLTDA said.

India's proximity, extensive air connectivity and flights between Sri Lanka and India not having to transit through Middle Eastern hubs have insulated the market, it added.

"For Sri Lanka, India now represents a stable high volume short haul anchor that can partially offset losses from Europe," the release said.

GDC Kathua organizes field visit for Semester 8 students to interact with women entrepreneurs of Kathua



Top News Report

KATHUA, Apr 18: Department of Economics, Government Degree College (GDC) Kathua organized a one-day educational field visit for Semester 8th students on April 18, 2026, at Kathua under the guidance of Principal of the college, Dr. Manohar Lal.

The visit was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Rupinder Kour, Head, Department of Economics as part of the academic curriculum to provide students with practical exposure to women entrepreneurship and its role in economic development.

The primary objective of the visit was to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-life experiences by enabling students to directly interact with successful women entrepreneurs in the region. The initiative aimed to enhance students' understanding of the concept, challenges, and opportunities associated with women entrepreneurship.

During the visit, students engaged with women entrepreneurs involved in various economic activities such as small-scale businesses, handicrafts, food processing, tailoring, and boutique work. The entrepreneurs shared their inspiring journeys, highlighting their

background, motivation, initial challenges, and the role of financial support and government schemes in establishing their ventures.

The visit proved to be highly informative and enriching. Students developed a deeper understanding of socio-economic barriers faced by women in business and recognized the importance of financial literacy, self-confidence, and innovation in entrepreneurship. The experience also enhanced their communication, observation, and analytical skills while encouraging them to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

The Head of the department emphasized that such field visits are essential for experiential learning and for connecting academic concepts with real-world applications. The initiative also highlighted the significant role of women entrepreneurs in socio-economic transformation and community development.

The programme concluded on a positive note, with the Department of Economics expressing gratitude to the participating women entrepreneurs for their time and valuable insights. Appreciation was also extended to the faculty members who joined the students in the visit and college administration for their support in making the visit a success.

BJP OBC Morcha holds monthly organisational meeting at Billawar, focuses on strengthening grassroots structure

Top News Report

BILLAWAR, Apr 18: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) OBC Morcha convened its monthly organisational meeting for Pahari Zilla Basohli-Bani-Billawar at the PWD Guest House today, with a strong emphasis on strengthening the party structure and expanding outreach among Other Backward Classes (OBC) communities.

The programme was organised under the direction of Braham Jyot Satti and was led by District President Dharam Chand Malgotra (Retired Headmaster). The meeting witnessed active participation from key party functionaries and grassroots workers, reflecting a collective commitment to organisational growth. Among those present were prominent office bearers including Ashok



Kumar Acharye, Mohan Lal Verma (Retd. ZEO), Mohesh Chander, Dev Dutt Verma, Naresh Kumar Acharye, Varinder Kumar, and Captain Tara Chand Verma. The gathering was further strengthened by the presence of senior leaders such as Gopal Krishan, Roomi Khajuria, and Puran Chand,

along with several OBC community representatives and dedicated party workers.

Deliberations during the meeting centred on enhancing booth-level management, ensuring effective implementation of party programmes, and increasing engagement with local communities. Speakers

highlighted the need for unity and coordination at all levels to ensure that government welfare schemes reach every deserving beneficiary without delay.

In his message, Braham Jyot Satti underlined the importance of regular organisational meetings in reinforcing the party's

grassroots presence. He stated that such interactions not only strengthen internal coordination but also help in maintaining close contact with the public.

He further emphasised that under the leadership of Narendra Modi, the country has witnessed significant development and empowerment of weaker sections, particularly OBC communities. He urged party workers to remain dedicated to public service, focus on strengthening booth-level structures, and actively communicate the government's policies and achievements to every household.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment from party members to intensify organisational efforts and ensure inclusive development across the region.

Interactive session on drug awareness organized at GDC Bani

Top News Report

BANI, Apr 18: Government Degree College (GDC) Bani organized an interactive session on drug awareness and its ill effects on Saturday, under the esteemed patronage of the Worthy Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Neena Gupta. The session aimed to sensitize students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and to promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle among the youth.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, faculty members, and NSS volunteers. On the occasion, Dr. J. S. Soodan, Department of Physical Education, delivered an insightful awareness



lecture highlighting the physical, mental, and social consequences of drug abuse. He said the sports in particular offer a rare space, where people meet not as adversaries but, as fellow human beings. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through sports and physical activities, and encouraged students to stay away from substance abuse.

The interactive nature

of the session allowed students to actively participate, ask questions, and clarify their doubts. The speaker also shared practical strategies to resist peer pressure and make positive life choices.

The chief guest of the interactive session Prof (DR) Neena Gupta, Principal GDC Bani in her address appreciated the efforts of Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan committee (NMBA) and directed the students to follow the

righteous way of health living. She encouraged the students to take active part in sports and physical activities. She advised the young students to follow the principle of Sound Body and Sound Mind.

Among the faculty members present on the occasion were Prof. Naseeb Kumar Bhagat (EVS), Dr. Prof. Akash Zutshi Department of History, Dr. Reeha Sharma, Depart-

ment of Education, Dr. Nisha Devi Department of Hindi, Prof. Vishab Thappa Department of English, Dr. Sayeed Ahmed Department of Chemistry, Prof. Firdos Bhat Department of Political Science, Dr. Farooq Ahmed Dar Department Political Science, Dr. Mulkh Raj Department of Education, and Prof. Rajneesh Kumar (Department of Sociology, who have witnessed and appreciated the initiative and encouraged students to actively participate in such awareness programmes.

The overall programme was coordinated by Prof. Vishab Thapa and Dr. Nisha Devi, both are the members of NMBA GDC Bani.

NMC condemns defeat of Constitution Bill 2026 which linked to woman Reservation Act

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: President of the National Mazdoor Conference (NMC) Subash Shastri on Saturday condemned the defeat of Constitution (one hundred and thirty first Amendment) Bill 2026 which linked to the Woman Reservation Act in the Lok Sabha yesterday which failed to secure the required two thirds majority causing it to fall leading to accusations of a betrayal of women right.

In a statement issued here, while accusing the anti-bill forces of blocking women empowerment bill, Shastri termed the failure a black day for the Indian democracy and accusing these forces for anti women mind set" and 20

years history of blocked the Bill.

Shastri further stated that the anti women forces denied India a historic steps towards women's empowerment and betrayed millions of women.

Calling it's delay a betrayal of women aspirations, Shastri asserted that the opposition actions were a reprehensible insult to Nari Shakti and alleged that these forces is again and again trying to divide country along north south lines using the delimitation issue also.

By blocking this bill, opposition has denial India a historic steps towards women's empowerment. This is not just political obstruction, it is a betrayal of millions of women who deserve voice and rightful representation in parliament. The Nation will remember it, he added.

School Secretary Elections conducted at GPS Hakdaji Sheikhpura

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Apr 18: The School Secretary elections at Government Primary School (GPS) Hakdaji Sheikhpura were conducted successfully in a well-organized and democratic manner, reflecting the spirit of real electoral practices and

active student participation.

In these elections, Salem Reyaz Malla emerged victorious and was elected as the School Secretary, while Naseer Ahmad Malla was elected as the Deputy Secretary. To ensure a transparent and smooth electoral process, a polling station was established within the school, where more than 30

students enthusiastically participated and cast their votes in favor of their respective candidates. The entire election process was carried out in a professional manner, closely resembling real-life elections. The polling staff was appointed from among the former students of the school. Gowhar Abdullah served as Polling Officer I,

Momin Ahad as Polling Officer II, and Iqra Shafi as Polling Officer III.

Meanwhile, Abdul Qayoom and Kausar Akhtar were appointed as Observers to ensure fair elections, and the Head of the Institution, Haseena Bano, served as the Presiding Officer.

From Page No: 1

LG Manoj Sinha joined Padyatra in Rajouri under Drug-Free J&K campaign

"We must reach our children before drugs do, igniting awareness and self-respect in every school, college, playground, and community hub," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also called upon J&K Police and other enforcement agencies to ensure exemplary punishment for drug smugglers.

"Make sure no culprit escapes. We should unleash exemplary crackdowns on traffickers poisoning our youth. Those ruining generations won't slip away," the Lieutenant Governor said further adding that administration has crafted an SoP to obliterate drug smugglers networks and ensuring swift justice.

The Lieutenant Governor said that from detection and counseling to detox, rehab, and aftercare, our pledge is total rehabilitation. He asked the officials to audit weekly activities including list of rehabbed lives, list of arrested smugglers while ensuring that fake centers are shuttered.

"We will restore the people's dignity, reconnect them to our shared society, and unleash their potential to build Rajouri's brighter future. This mission demands more than government efforts. I call upon every social organization and NGOs to join us in this noble endeavor," the Lieutenant Governor said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor administered the Anti-Drug pledge and also launched Rajouri Premier League and Rajouri Football Club under the Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan.

Govt Employees, Pensioners

the country. The Cabinet also approved the creation of a Sovereign Maritime Fund with a corpus of Rs 13,000 crore. The fund aims to provide stable and affordable insurance coverage for Indian-flagged vessels, as well as ships operating to and from India.

In addition, the Cabinet cleared the extension of the Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) till 2028, with an additional allocation of Rs 3,000 crore.

LG Manoj Sinha inaugurates Dr Raj Kumar Thapa Memorial, Museum and library in Rajouri

Operation Sindoor. Lieutenant Governor paid tribute to Dr. Thapa, recalling his selfless service and steadfast dedication to public welfare. "This memorial will inspire generations to come," he said.

The event also featured a documentary on Dr. Thapa's life.

Family members of Dr Raj Kumar Thapa and senior officials of security forces, police and civil administration were also present.

Over 64 Kg heroin recovered, 2 held in Amritsar: Punjab Police

State Special Operations Cell in Amritsar were involved in the operation.

The accused have been identified as Sarwan Singh alias Gujjar and Shamsher Singh alias Shera, both residents of Amritsar.

Preliminary investigation revealed the accused's links with Portugal-based handlers and Pakistan-based smugglers, Yadav said.

An FIR has been registered at Police Station SSOC in

Amritsar. Further investigation is underway, Yadav said.

First batch of 431 Haj pilgrims leaves from J-K; CM sees them off at airport

Haj House to bid them farewell. A total of 4,764 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir will embark on the pilgrimage this year.

The chief minister saw off the first batch of Haj-2026 pilgrims at Sheikh ul-Alam International Airport, here, his office said in a post on X.

"He extended his best wishes to the pilgrims for a safe and spiritually fulfilling journey and requested them to pray for peace, progress, and prosperity of Jammu & Kashmir," the CM's office said.

It said the chief minister also directed officials to ensure smooth facilitation and adequate arrangements for all pilgrims, focusing on seamless coordination, passenger convenience, and timely assistance at every stage of the journey.

Census 2027: Jammu Kashmir Govt directs public to provide accurate unambiguous answers to all questions

phase of census in JK. The Houselisting Operations (HLO), considered first phase of census- would be carried out from June 01 to June 30 in the UT.

The notification states that Census is the primary source of information at the lowest administrative unit on housing conditions, household amenities, assets, demography, literacy, religion, economic activity, migration, and fertility.

"Census data are extensively used for planning, policy formulation, effective public administration, and delimitation/reservation of constituencies of Parlia-

ment, Assembly, Panchayats, and other local bodies," it states.

The Department has also invoked different provisions of the Census Act, 1948

The law makes it legally binding for every person to answer census questions truthfully "to the best of his knowledge and belief."

It, however, exempts citizens from disclosing the names of female household members if prohibited by custom.

The law also requires dwellers to give census officers reasonable access to premises and allow the affixing of house numbers or marks.

It has also invoked provisions that lay down penalties for misconduct during census operations. These specify fines and imprisonment for refusing duties, obstructing officers, giving false information, or neglecting responsibilities.

The law further states that individual census records are confidential and cannot be used as evidence in civil or criminal proceedings, except for prosecution under the Census Act itself.

Property of drug peddler demolished in Jammu

revocation of passport, driving licence, Aadhaar card and arms licence.

J&K Admin takes over 58 Schools linked to banned Jamaat-e-Islami

to assume control of the schools and propose fresh, verified committees to ensure that students' academic future remains unaffected, the officials added.

Authorities said the move aims to maintain quality education as per National Education Policy (NEP) norms without disruption. Government teams have been deployed to all 58 schools, they said.

TNWS & MPDA Jammu raise civic and power supply issues with PDD authorities



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: A joint delegation of Team TNWS and the Motor Parts Dealers Association (MPDA) Jammu today met Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) of the Power Development Department (PDD), Er. Balbir

Kumar, at the Sub-Division office in Gandhi Nagar to highlight pressing electricity and infrastructure-related issues affecting residents of Trikuta Nagar and Transport Nagar.

The delegation, led by President Rajinder P. Kakkar, held a detailed discussion with the

officer, placing multiple concerns for immediate redressal in the interest of the general public.

In Trikuta Nagar, members pointed out that recently completed tile work under the Jammu Smart City project has been severely damaged due to excavation carried out by the PDD for laying underground power lines. This has disrupted pedestrian movement and contributed to environmental pollution due to the slow pace of work. The worst-affected areas include Sector 6 (Ward 54, houses 20-28) and Sector 1 (Ward 53, Lochan Nursing Lane).

The delegation also demanded the removal of unused and hanging cables and extra poles, stating that they pose safety risks and sanitation concerns in what is considered a prime locality. Additionally, they stressed the need to install electricity meters on vacant plots currently occupied by tenants, vendors, and

labourers, to prevent power leakage and improve revenue collection.

Another key demand was the replacement of an overloaded transformer on the main road between the mini market and main market in Sector 5, Ward 54, to ensure reliable electricity supply.

For Transport Nagar, the delegation raised issues regarding inadequate infrastructure in Yard No. 1, specifically the need for installation of new electric poles between Shop Nos. 168 and 176. They also urged proper metering of all shops to maintain fair billing and improve supply quality.

Further, it was highlighted that the existing poles and supply lines in several yards—particularly Yard Nos. 1, 3, 5, and 7—do not meet engineering standards and require realignment to ensure efficiency and safety in the power distribution system.

Responding to the

concerns, Er. Balbir Kumar patiently heard the issues and assured the delegation that most of the problems would be addressed within two to three days using available resources and field teams. However, he clarified that the installation of new smart meters depends on supply from empanelled companies—Garnus, Anvil, and Techno—and is subject to decisions by higher authorities.

The meeting was attended by key representatives including Pardeep Sharma and S. Jaswinder Singh from the Motor Parts Dealers Association, as well as Shailja Gupta, Vijay Gupta, and S. Amarjeet Singh from the Trikuta Nagar Welfare Society (Regd.), Jammu.

The delegation expressed hope that the issues raised would be resolved promptly to improve infrastructure, safety, and quality of life for residents and business owners in both areas.

Grand Parshuram Jayanti celebrations begins in Jammu with Rath Yatra



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: The Shri Parshuram Brahma Sabha has announced a grand celebration of Parshuram Jayanti, to be observed with great religious fervor and enthusiasm across the city.

To mark the birth anniversary of Lord Parshuram, the Sabha will organize a Bike Rally, Car Rally, and a traditional Rath Yatra. The procession will

commence from JDA Park and culminate at Maha Sabha Ground, where a large gathering of devotees is expected.

Office bearers of the Sabha stated that Lord Parshuram represents courage, truth, discipline, and justice, and his life continues to inspire society.

They emphasized that such events not only strengthen spiritual values but also promote unity and cultural awareness among people.

The Sabha has made a special appeal to the youth to participate actively in the celebrations and draw inspiration from the ideals of Lord Parshuram. They highlighted the crucial role of the younger generation in preserving cultural heritage and fostering social harmony.

In addition to the rally and Rath Yatra, a community Bhandara will also be organized, allowing devotees to

77th Incarnation Day of Madhu Paramhans Ji Maharaj observed at Ranjri



Top News Report

RANJRI, Apr 18: On the sacred occasion marking the 77th Incarnation Day of Sahib Bandji's Sadguru, Shri Madhu Paramhans Ji Maharaj, devotees from far and wide gathered to seek darshan and receive spiritual guidance. Sahib Ji blessed the congregation with a profound discourse, focusing on the true nature of the soul (Jivatma) and its entanglement in worldly illusions.

During his address, Sahib Ji explained that the soul, in its pure essence, has no connection with worldly attachments, yet it continues to be "plundered" due to its association with the mind and

intellect. He described how the human being, influenced by desires and tendencies, loses awareness of the soul's original purity. Drawing a simple analogy, he compared this condition to that of an addict who, driven by habit, compromises everything for temporary satisfaction.

Referring to the teachings of Kabir, Sahib Ji said that the common people once understood divine truths through Kabir's verses, and similar reflections can be found in the couplets of Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. However, he observed that Kabir Sahib's teachings were suppressed over time. Emphasizing the enduring nature of truth, Sahib Ji stated that no matter how much truth is concealed, it eventually reveals itself, just as every action ultimately comes to light.

He further elaborated that the soul is inherently free from vices such as lust and anger. These negative tendencies arise only due to the influence of the material world and the

mind. Even after death, he noted, the soul often remains bound by attachments, returning again due to its lingering connections.

In a deeper philosophical explanation, Sahib Ji highlighted that the soul has neither parents nor a creator. It is eternal—without beginning or end—and cannot be destroyed, increased, or diminished. He clarified that while many people equate the individual soul (Atma) with the Supreme (Paramatma), the soul is actually just an ansh (a fragment), and not the ultimate reality itself.

Sahib Ji also distinguished the teachings of Kabir Sahib by referring to the concept of a "Fourth Realm," beyond the commonly described Trilok (Three Worlds). In this higher realm, he explained, there exists no lust, anger, attachment, or greed. These vices, he said, are creations of Niranjan, the governing force of the material universe, which keeps beings entangled in worldly illusions.

Concluding his discourse, Sahib Ji stressed that liberation from these influences is possible only through the guidance and naam (divine word) of the True Guru. He urged devotees to seek inner awakening and remain

steadfast on the path of spiritual truth.

The event concluded with a deep sense of devotion and reflection among the gathered followers, who expressed gratitude for the spiritual insights imparted on this auspicious day.

Dr. Ritu Singh leads Nasha Mukta J&K initiative at DPS Jammu under aegis of 100-Day Abhiyan

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: Under the guidance and visionary leadership of Dr. Ritu Singh, Founder and Pro Vice Chairperson of DPS Jammu, Nagbani, and Katra, Delhi Public School, Jammu, organised a Special Assembly on "Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Pledge Campaign" here today, aligned with the flagship Nasha Mukta Abhiyan led by the Lieutenant Governor of J&K. The programme was graced by Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, as the Chief Guest.

The Chief Guest was accorded a warm and ceremonial welcome with a reception by the school band and a traditional tilak. The programme commenced with the auspicious lighting of the ceremonial lamp, invoking divine blessings for the noble cause. Delivering an impactful address, Ramesh Kumar administered the Nasha Mukta Bharat Pledge to the students and staff. He sensitised the gathering about the causes and far-reaching consequences of substance abuse, emphasising that addiction adversely affects health, families, careers, and society at large. He highlighted practical strategies to combat stress and prevent substance abuse, including maintaining discipline, engaging in sports and creative pursuits, seeking guidance from mentors and family, and building emotional resilience.

Livasa Hospital Khanna saves newborn baby with severe sepsis and multi-organ complications

Top News Report

JAMMU/ KHANNA, Apr 18: Demonstrating excellence in advanced neonatal critical care, Livasa Hospital, Khanna managed a highly critical case involving a pre-term newborn suffering from severe sepsis, meningitis, and acute renal failure.

A female neonate, born at 35 weeks of gestation with a low birth weight of 1.97 kg, was brought to the emergency on the fourth day of life in respiratory failure. The baby had been incubated at an outside facility prior to arrival. Upon admission, detailed evaluation revealed severe neonatal sepsis with acute renal failure. Blood cultures confirmed Escherichia coli (E. coli) infection, indicating gram-negative septicemia, while cerebrospinal fluid



examination suggested meningitis, pointing to central nervous system involvement.

Dr. Shekhar Singla, Consultant-Livasa Hospital, Khanna said that the infant was critically ill and anuric at presentation, indicating significant kidney dysfunction.

Despite immediate initiation of broad-spectrum intravenous antibiotics, the response remained suboptimal. Recognizing the severity of the condition, the

clinical team escalated care and administered intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) therapy. Following IVIG therapy, the neonate showed remarkable clinical improvement, with gradual stabilization, recovery of renal function, and resolution of infection. The baby was discharged in a haemodynamically stable condition with a normal neurological examination.

Dr. Singla said, "Managing such a complex neonatal case with multi-organ involvement requires not only clinical expertise but also seamless coordination and advanced critical care infrastructure. This successful outcome reflects our team's commitment to delivering high-quality, lifesaving care even in the most challenging situations."

BJP's Women Reservation cover to push delimitation exposed & defused: Tony

Top News Report

SUCHETGARH, Apr 18: Senior Congress leader and former DDC Suchetgarh Taranjit Singh Tony today issued a strongly worded statement asserting that the BJP-led Central Government's "hidden agenda" to alter India's electoral framework under the guise of women's reservation has been exposed and decisively defeated in Parliament.

Citing Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, Tony said that the Women's Reservation Bill had already been passed unanimously in 2023 with full support of Congress and other opposition parties. He alleged that the recent move by the government was not about empowering women, but about "hiding delimitation behind the women's bill" to push a larger political agenda.

He emphasized that



the Congress Party has consistently been the strongest advocate of 33% reservation for women and had extended full support to the legislation in 2023 despite raising concerns over its linkage with delimitation and census. "Congress had clearly warned the government not to link women's reservation with delimitation. Ignoring those concerns has now exposed the BJP's real intentions," he said, while chairing a meeting at Suchetgarh.

Tony further stated that the manner and

timing of the notification made it evident that the government was more interested in creating confusion than ensuring implementation. He noted that the united opposition, led by Congress, stood firm and successfully resisted what he described as an attempt to weaken the democratic and federal structure of the country. Referring to Rahul Gandhi's remarks, he said the opposition's intervention ensured that democracy was protected and the Constitution safeguarded.

He alleged that linking delimitation with women's reservation would have reduced the representation of southern states like Tamil Nadu, as well as northeastern and smaller states, thereby disturbing the federal balance.

Reiterating Congress's position, Tony said that the Women's Reservation law must be implemented immediately on the existing 543 Lok Sabha seats without any delay or conditions. "Postponing implementation until 2029 clearly reflects lack of political

will. If the government was sincere, it could have ensured women's representation in the 2024 elections itself," he said.

He also accused the BJP of politicizing the issue for electoral gain. "If the intention was genuine, separate bills for delimitation and women's reservation would have been brought and passed independently. Instead, the BJP attempted to merge them to push its hidden agenda," he added.

Concluding, Taranjit Singh Tony said that the developments in Parliament have exposed both the policy and intent of the BJP. "The hidden agenda has failed. Congress and the opposition have once again stood firm to protect democracy, uphold the Constitution, and ensure that women's rights are not delayed or denied," he asserted.

3rd Annual Shyam Sankirtan held with devotion in Jammu



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: Shree Shyam Parivaar Jammu successfully organized its 3rd Varshik Shyam Sankirtan at Satyam Resort, drawing a large number of devotees for an evening filled with devotion and spiritual fervor.

The event was dedicated to Shyam Baba, where devotees gathered to immerse themselves in soulful bhajans and kirtans. The atmosphere resonated

with positivity and divine energy as renowned singers and participants offered heartfelt renditions, creating a deeply spiritual experience for all present.

Marking the third consecutive year of programme, the Sankirtan reflected the organisation's consistent efforts to promote spiritual awareness and preserve cultural traditions within the community. The growing participation each year highlights the increasing devo-

tion and enthusiasm among followers. The programme concluded with collective prayers seeking peace, prosperity, and well-being for society. This was followed by the distribution of prasad among all attendees, symbolizing unity and blessings.

Shree Shyam Parivaar Jammu expressed sincere gratitude to devotees, volunteers, and supporters whose dedication and cooperation ensured the grand success of the event.

India seek better finishing, sharper pace attack against South Africa in 2nd Women's T20I

Mandhana says the team has found its rhythm and will reflect on areas to improve

DURBAN, Apr 18 (Agencies): A scratchy India will look to address their batting frailties in the backend and hope for an improved show from the pacers as they aim to bounce back against South Africa in the second women's T20I here on Sunday.

India never really got any momentum and from 119 for 2 in the 15th over, the visitors ended up with 157 for seven, a target that was comfortably chased down with five balls to spare, with South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt smashing a 39-ball 59.

India got off to a flier with Shafali Verma (34 off 20) leading their charge, but her more accomplished opening partner Smriti Mandhana (13 off 14) did not last long. The fall of two wickets late in the powerplay put the brakes on India's scoring rate.

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (47 not out off 33) and Jemimah Rodrigues (36 off 29) then steadied the innings with a 71-run stand off 51 balls in the middle overs, but India failed to produce the final flourish, managing only 33 runs in the last five overs while losing three wickets.

Come Sunday, India will need to capitalise on the foundation, with the onus on the lower order to deliver in the backend



and provide a defendable total. "We could not capitalise as a batting unit. But positives for us is that even though we lost our way in the bowling innings, we came back really well to take this match to the last over. A lot of learnings for sure," Mandhana said.

India, who have won their last four series, were also wayward with the ball, conceding 14 wides—their second-highest tally in T20Is.

Pacers Renuka Singh Thakur (0/25), Arundhati Reddy (1/28) and Kashvee Gautam (0/29) struggled for control in their three overs each, while spinners Shreyanka Patil (2/26) and Shree Charani (1/26) were effective.

India were also sloppy in the field, with Renuka Singh and substitute Anushka Sharma dropping catches at the death

— an area they would look to improve.

"We've had one month almost after the Australia series. Everyone's getting into the groove, so I'm sure this match, we'll all go back and think about what we have to work on and come back stronger," Mandhana said.

"Next match, day match, we had two sessions in the afternoon here when we came. So, I'm sure that all the girls will be well prepped." With the T20 World Cup scheduled in the UK in a couple of months, the ODI champions India will look to maximise this five-match series.

South Africa, on the other hand, were disciplined in all three departments, with Wolvaardt setting up the chase with a clinical fifty and Chloe Tryon and Annerie Dercksen completing the job with some big hits towards the end.

The hosts carried the momentum of restricting India below 160 into the chase, with Sune Luus providing a brisk start with three boundaries in her seven-ball cameo.

Wolvaardt then added 48 and 52 runs with Tazmin Brits (10) and Dercksen (44) respectively as South Africa never looked under pressure.

In the bowling department, pacer Ayabonga Khaka (3/16) produced a Player of the Match performance, including the wicket of Mandhana, while Tumi Sekhukhune impressed with timely strikes, dismissing Shafali and Rodrigues.

Nonkululeko Mlaba was the pick of the spinners.

Teams (from):

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (captain), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Bharti Fulmali, Anushka Sharma, Deepti Sharma, Arundhati Reddy, Shree Charani, Kashvee Gautam, Richa Ghosh, Uma Chetry, Renuka Singh Thakur, Kranti Gaud, Shreyanka Patil.

South Africa: Laura Wolvaardt (captain), Anneke Bosch, Kayla Reyneke, Nadine de Klerk, Annerie Dercksen, Sune Luus, Eliz-Mari Marx, Chloe Tryon, Tazmin Brits, Sinalo Jaffa, Tebogo Macheke, Ayanda Hlubi, Ayabonga Khaka, Nonkululeko Mlaba, Tumi Sekhukhune.

KKR co-owner Juhi Chawla Mehta kickstarts this year's 'Runs to Roots' initiative, pledging 10 trees per run



KOLKATA, Apr 18 (Agencies): Three-time Indian Premier League (IPL) champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) today kicked off the 2026 edition of their flagship environmental initiative, 'Runs to Roots', with a plantation drive at Subhas Sarovar Lake Park in Kolkata. KKR co-owner Juhi Chawla Mehta inaugurated the drive, joining hands with NGO 'Grow Billion Trees' to champion environmental responsibility.

This year, the initiative takes a significant leap forward, with KKR pledging 10 trees for every run scored during IPL 2026 - a tenfold increase from previous seasons, according to a release.

KKR's sustainability journey has evolved steadily over the years - from the 'Plant a 6' campaign in 2017 to the more expansive 'Runs to Roots' movement. From planting over 6,000 trees in the ecologically sensitive Sundarbans to adding 4,669 trees across Kolkata in just the past two IPL seasons, the fran-

chise is now dramatically scaling its ambition to deliver deeper, measurable impact.

In addition to this, KKR's Smart Waste Management initiative at the Eden Gardens and beyond continues to set the benchmark for sustainable sporting ecosystems, having successfully recycled 53,858 kgs of waste over the past two years. Driven by a commitment to influence beyond the boundary, KKR is leveraging its platform to champion eco-conscious fan behaviour and demonstrate how sport can lead meaningful, large-scale environmental change.

At its core, 'Runs to Roots' transforms the passion of cricket into tangible ecological action - reinforcing the Knight Riders' long-term commitment to sustainability and community-driven change.

Speaking on the initiative, Juhi Chawla Mehta said that cricket is more than just a sport in India and has the power to inspire meaningful change. She added that

KKR believes in using sport to drive positive action, and through the 'Runs to Roots' initiative, the franchise is channelling fan energy into creating a lasting environmental impact.

"Cricket has always been more than a sport in our country - it is a way of life for millions, and has the potential to create an indelible impact. At KKR, we truly believe that sport has the power to drive meaningful action. With 'Runs to Roots', we're harnessing the incredible energy of fans to create a lasting impact for our future. We're incredibly proud of how this initiative has continued to evolve and has inspired people over the years," she said.

Venky Mysore, Chief Executive Officer at KKR, said the franchise is aiming to grow 'Runs to Roots' into one of cricket's leading sustainability initiatives. He noted that by committing to planting 10 trees per run this season, KKR is significantly increasing its ambition and impact.

"At KKR, we are committed to scaling 'Runs to Roots' into one of cricket's most impactful sustainability programmes. This season, by pledging 10 trees per run, we are significantly raising the bar - both in ambition and execution. The momentum from planting close to 5,000 trees in the past two seasons gives us a strong foundation to deliver meaningful, measurable impact in 2026," he said.

Wounded Rajasthan Royals eye rebound as struggling KKR seek spin spark at Eden Gardens

KOLKATA, Apr 18 (Agencies): A bruised Rajasthan Royals will look to bounce back strongly and deepen the misery of a floundering Kolkata Knight Riders when the two sides with contrasting fortunes clash in an afternoon IPL fixture, here on Sunday.

The match pits one of the stronger outfits this season against arguably the most out-of-sorts side.

While Rajasthan had surged with four consecutive wins before being halted by Sunrisers Hyderabad, KKR have progressed in the opposite trajectory, still searching for their first win after six matches.

Under Ajinkya Rahane, defeats have been the only constant, often from winning positions, leaving the side short on confidence and momentum. Their only point has come through a rain washout against Punjab Kings here.

KKR's struggles have been compounded by an understrength pace attack, with Harshit Rana and Akash Deep ruled out due to injuries, while Matheesha Pathirana is yet to join.

Yet, their on-field decisions under Rahane and head coach Abhishek Nayar have also come under scrutiny.

Selection calls and match management have raised eyebrows.

The 'entry points' of Chakravarthy has been particularly

puzzling. Low on confidence from the T20 World Cup, the premier India spinner was used in the power play early in the season, conceding heavily, including a 25-run over to Abhishek Sharma, denting his confidence early on.

It took him four matches to open his wickets tally with scalps of Jos Buttler and Washington Sundar in Ahmedabad.

There have also been questionable selection calls, with New Zealand's top T20 World Cup scorer Tim Seifert featuring only in the last match, while star allrounder Rachin Ravindra still warming the bench.

Several promising domestic talents too are yet to get a look-in.

Despite a decorated support staff featuring Shane Watson, Tim Southee and Dwayne Bravo, Kolkata Knight Riders have looked short of ideas on the field.

With time running out fast, it's for the management to take some bold calls especially in terms of captain Rahane and coach Nayar.

Rahane's toss decisions have been questionable.

Against GT, he opted to bat on a "two-paced surface with early moisture", a call exposed by Kagiso Rabada as KKR slumped to 32/3 inside four overs.

For KKR, Chakravarthy returning to wickets is a major positive,



as is Cameron Green rediscovering form with a sparkling 79.

If the spinners can exploit the afternoon conditions, KKR might finally find a foothold against the top-heavy RR.

Rajasthan have arrived in Kolkata early to acclimatise after their defeat in Hyderabad.

But their top order -- Yashasvi Jaiswal, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Dhruv Jurel, Lhuan-dre Pretorius and Riyan Parag all got out for single digit scores -- will be wary after a collective failure against SRH.

That leaves the contest delicately poised.

With a break of about a month looming due to the upcoming Assembly polls, Kolkata Knight Riders will be desperate to secure their first win in front of home fans.

They return to Eden Gardens only on May 16, with three more matches scheduled there thereafter.

Teams (from)

KKR: Ajinkya Rahane (captain), Manish Pandey, Rovman Powell, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Ramandeep Singh, Rinku Singh, Sunil Narine, Anukul Roy, Vaibhav Arora, Umran Malik, Varun Chakaravathy, Cameron Green, Rahul Tripathi, Tim Seifert, Tejasvi Dahiya, Rachin Ravindra, Akash Deep, Blessing Muzarabani, Navdeep Saini, Prashant Solanki, Finn Allen, Daksh Kamra, Kartik Tyagi, Sarthak Ranjan, Saurabh Dubey.

RR: Riyan Parag (c), Dhruv Jurel, Donovan Ferreira, Lhuan-Dre Pretorius, Ravi Singh, Aman Perala, Shimron Hetmyer, Shubham Dubey, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ravindra Jadeja, Sam Curran, Adam Milne, Brijesh Sharma, Jofra Archer, Kuldeep Sen, Kwena Maphaka, Nandre Burger, Ravi Bishnoi and Sandeep Sharma.

Sunrisers Hyderabad pick Gerald Coetzee as injury replacement for David Payne

HYDERABAD, Apr 18 (Agencies): Sunrisers Hyderabad announced the signing of Gerald Coetzee as a replacement for David Payne for the remainder of the IPL season ahead of their home match against Chennai Super Kings, here on Saturday.

English left-arm pacer Payne, who played two games for SRH in the ongoing season and picked two wickets, was ruled out of the remainder of the season due to an ankle injury.

"South African right-arm pacer Coetzee was named the replacement and will join SRH for Rs



2-crore," stated an IPL media advisory.

Coetzee has played four Tests, 14 ODIs and 18 T20Is for South Africa and has 67 international wickets against his name.

Coetzee, who replac-

es Payne at SRH, has played 14 IPL games in the past, representing Gujarat Titans (2025) and Mumbai Indians (2024).

He has taken 15 wickets across the two seasons.

Stay in the present, control the moment is Shreyas Iyer's success mantra

MULLANPUR, Apr 18 (Agencies): Last season's runners-up Punjab Kings have made a strong start and are the only unbeaten side so far this IPL season, but skipper Shreyas Iyer insists the focus must remain on staying in the present even as they chase their maiden title.

Reuniting with Ricky Ponting at PBKS, Iyer, who joined the franchise after leading Kolkata Knight Riders to the 2024 title, has been central to their resurgence.

Punjab, who finished runners-up to Royal Challengers Bengaluru last season, have looked formidable with four wins from five matches, while one game against Kolkata Knight Riders ended in a washout.

"The mission, obviously, is to lift the trophy. But I always feel that the more you stay in the present, the more you stay in control of what is in your hands at that moment and you just have to go full throttle," Iyer said on JioStar.

"You don't have to think too far ahead or dwell on the past. I reiterate the same point to my teammates as well - when we are out there, we are playing for ourselves, not against the opponents. We just want to improve each day and make sure we put our best foot forward. When everything comes together and that synergy builds, everything falls into place." Iyer has marshalled the middle order with authority, striking three successive fifties in as many innings.

His PBKS stint began with a match-winning 97 against Gujarat Titans in IPL 2025, setting the tone for his fine run as skipper. Reflecting on that innings, where he fell short of a hundred, Iyer said he prioritised the team's total over personal milestones.

"Honestly, at that moment, I told Shashank Singh not to over think because there were 10 balls left. I thought I would get at least one ball out of those 10. So, I told him, 'You can play freely, don't think too much'. In the

last over as well, I gave him that belief - that it's okay to take it on and not worry about my hundred.

"In the back of my mind, I felt I would get at least one ball somehow. But then he played the entire over, and I was happy that we got 240 on the board. To get that score in the first match of the season sets the rhythm." Iyer also highlighted the importance of trusting players' instincts, recalling how lead pacer Arshdeep Singh suggested bringing in Vijaykumar Vyshak as an Impact Player in that game, where he returned tidy figures.

"When you are on the ground, every individual is involved in the game and everyone's inputs matter. When bowlers come and say they can execute a certain plan, it's important to back them because their instincts can be strong as well.

"At the same time, there are situations when they run out of ideas and ask what they should do, and that's when I step in.

It goes hand in hand - it's not like I always dictate terms. Even in team meetings, players come up with solid points and you have to value what they bring.

"We had discussed bowling wide yorkers to Sherfane Rutherford because wherever else we pitched, he was going bonkers. The plan worked, and Vyshak ended up being the hero." One of PBKS' most morale-boosting wins last season came when they defended a modest 111 against KKR, bowling them out for 95 despite the opposition cruising at 62/2. Yuzvendra Chahal starred with 4/28.

"As soon as we got two wickets, they stitched together a solid partnership. I wanted them to feel a bit of pressure, so with close-in fielders, I tried to make them feel like we were right in their face.

"The idea was to push them into doing something extra or playing a shot that wasn't necessary, and that worked well. I made

the field more attacking when a new batter came in, and they tried to play improvisational shots.

"Credit goes to the bowlers - they were very consistent with their lines and lengths and had an attacking mindset. I keep telling them in every game that it's not over until the last ball is bowled or the last run is scored. You never give up, you fight till the end." On a lighter note, Iyer also spoke about the 'Sarpanch' tag he has earned within the squad.

"I love it. I was clueless at the start of my journey with Punjab Kings about how the 'Sarpanch' tag came up and what it meant. But later, when I asked a couple of my teammates, they explained that 'Sarpanch' means the head of a family, a group, or even a district. That gave me clarity, and from there onwards, my journey started." PBKS take on Lucknow Super Giants in their sixth game of the season here on Sunday.

Dogra Heritage is our identity, it needs protection, not neglect: Shiv Sena Demands Dedicated Heritage Board



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: On the occasion of World Heritage Day, the Jammu & Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (UBT) expressed deep concern and strong resentment over the continued neglect of Jammu's rich Dogra cultural heritage, historical monuments, and traditional identity.

The party strongly demanded the immediate formation of a dedicated "Dogra Heritage Conservation Board" for the Jammu region.

Addressing a press conference held at the party headquarters, State President Manish Sahni said that although the Jammu & Kashmir Heritage Conservation and Preservation Act, 2010 provides for a statutory authority for heritage protection, Jammu's Dogra legacy has not received the priority and attention it rightfully deserves.

Sahni accused the Lieutenant Governor's administration and the Archaeology Department of serious negligence towards Jammu's historical identity. He stated that the restoration work of the iconic Mubarak Mandi Palace Complex, a symbol of Jammu's pride and

Dogra Pride, has been progressing at a painfully slow pace for years. He added that despite crores of rupees being announced earlier for its preservation, both the pace and quality of work on the ground remain deeply concerning.

He further said that it is not just Mubarak Mandi, but also Jasmergarh Fort in Hiranagar, the ancient forts of Samba, Akhnoor Fort, and Bhimgarh Fort in Reasi that are on the verge of losing their existence due to lack of proper conservation. The administration, he said, merely indulges in sloganism by calling Jammu the "City of Temples", while completely failing to place its historical heritage on the national and international tourism map.

Sahni demanded that under the Jammu & Kashmir Heritage Authority, a dedicated "Dogra Heritage Conservation Board" or at least a separate regional cell be constituted immediately for the protection of Dogra art, architecture, Takri script, Dogri language, folk music, and cultural legacy. He said that the proposed board must be granted autonomous powers, an independent work-

ing mechanism, a team of technical experts, and an adequate budget to ensure planned and time-bound conservation efforts.

He added that scientific preservation, restoration, and tourism-linked integrated development of these historical sites would not only strengthen Dogra identity but would also significantly boost local tourism, employment generation, and the regional economy. Sahni also reiterated the demand that the glorious history of Dogra heroes — Maharaja Gulab Singh and General Zorawar Singh — must be made a compulsory part of school curricula and official cultural programmes.

Issuing a strong warning, Sahni said that if within the next three months no concrete policy and time-bound action plan is announced for the preservation of Mubarak Mandi and other major Dogra heritage sites, the party will be compelled to launch a mass public movement to safeguard Jammu's identity and heritage.

Prominent leaders present on the occasion included Sanjay Bhatt, Aditya Mahajan, and Raju Kapoor.

LG Saxena lays foundation stone for India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park at Sindhu Ghat in Leh

Top News Report

LEH, Apr 18: In a landmark initiative to preserve Ladakh's ancient heritage, the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today laid the foundation stone for India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park, on the banks of the Indus River in Leh, on World Heritage Day.

The Petroglyph Park aims to serve as a dedicated conservation space for centuries-old rock carvings (petroglyphs) that are increasingly under threat due to unregulated tourism, rapid infrastructure development, and a lack of awareness. The park will house petroglyphs collected from vulnerable and isolated locations across Ladakh, ensuring their preservation for future generations while also making them accessible to visitors in a curated and educational setting. Notably, Petroglyphs are prehistoric images, symbols, or carvings etched, pecked, or engraved directly onto rock surfaces.

On this occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) for the preservation of heritage for future generations through joint intervention.

Officials informed that nearly 400 sites across Ladakh con-



tain petroglyphs, found either in clusters or in isolation. While cluster sites are relatively easier to conserve, isolated petroglyphs — especially those along the banks of the Indus River and Zaskar River — face significant risk of damage due to construction activities and lack of awareness among people. These endangered artefacts will be carefully relocated to the Petroglyph Conservation Park for protection and display. Officials said some of the oldest petroglyphs have inscriptions in Chinese, Arabic, Sanskrit and other ancient languages.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that the Petroglyph Conservation Park would

serve as a vital step towards preserving the region's ancient art and history for generations to come. He termed Ladakh as a "repository of ancient heritage" and said the region hosts one of the most extensive collections of prehistoric rock art in South and Central Asia.

"Beyond natural weathering and climate stress, human activities, such as road construction, blasting of rocks, and unregulated tourism, pose serious risks to these petroglyphs. Conservation of these heritage sites must be treated as an ethical responsibility and integrated into development planning," Saxena said, while addressing a workshop on the occasion of World

Heritage Day, themed "Ancient Art, Modern Challenges: Safeguarding Petroglyphs and Shaping Tourism Circuits in Ladakh."

He noted that these rock carvings depicted early human life, including hunting scenes, animals like ibex and snow leopards, and later, symbols of Buddhist faith such as stupas and inscriptions. This, he said, showcased the cultural transition over the centuries.

The Lieutenant Governor also emphasised the creation of curated heritage circuits, including petroglyph and Buddhist circuits, to manage tourist flow responsibly while promoting lesser-known sites.

He described the petroglyphs as "open-air museums" and "civilisations carved on stone," representing a continuous record of human history from the Palaeolithic Age to later historic periods. Found in regions such as Domkhar, Dah Hanu, Alchi, Chilling, and Tangtse, these carvings depict ancient trade routes, migration patterns, belief systems, and ecological histories.

Calling for community participation, the Lieutenant Governor urged local residents, monks, youth, and stakeholders to act as custodians of Ladakh's heritage. He reiterated that sustainable preservation requires collective effort, awareness, and respect for cultural and ecological sensitivities.

Pressed wrong button again: Bali Bhagat slams Congress for derailing Women's Reservation

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: In a scathing attack following the dramatic developments in Parliament, senior BJP leader and former Health Minister Bali Bhagat on Saturday accused the Congress party of "decades-long betrayal" of women's empowerment, saying the party has no moral right to speak on the Women's Reservation Bill.

Reacting to the failure of the latest constitutional amendment in the Lok Sabha, Bhagat said the truth has finally come out before the nation. "When the moment came to walk the talk, Congress once again chose politics over women's empowerment. This is not new—this is their 30-year history," he said.

The bill, which aimed to push forward 33% reservation for women in Parliament, failed to secure the required two-thirds majority, with opposition parties—including Congress—voting against it citing delimitation concerns.

Bhagat lashed out at the Congress leadership, stating that their stand exposes a pattern of obstruction. "From the 1996 Bill to the 2010 version that lapsed in Lok Sabha, and now again in 2026—Congress has consistently ensured that the Women's Reservation Bill never saw the light of day," he said, referring to how earlier versions of the bill repeatedly failed due to lack of consensus and political will.

Taking a direct dig at the party's legacy, Bhagat said, "It is ironic that a party which claims to stand for women had a woman Prime Minister in Indira Gandhi and has been led for years by Sonia Gandhi, yet failed to ensure reservation for

women in Parliament." He further accused Congress of hypocrisy, pointing out that even during its decade-long UPA rule, the party failed to pass the bill in the Lok Sabha.

"They hid behind coalition compulsions then, and today they hide behind technical excuses like delimitation. The truth is simple—they never wanted this reform," he asserted.

Referring to recent statements by opposi-



tion leaders, Bhagat said Congress is now trying to "mislead the nation" by supporting women's reservation in principle

but blocking it in practice. Notably, Congress leaders argued they backed women's quotas but opposed linking it to constituency redrawing, calling the move unconstitutional.

Bhagat also highlighted that Parliament had already passed the landmark women's quota law in 2023 after nearly three decades of debate, calling it a "historic step finally delivered after years of Congress inaction."

"History will remember this clearly—Congress delayed, diluted, and derailed women's reservation for decades. And when the opportunity came to fast-track it, they once again pressed the wrong button in Parliament," he said, taking a swipe at the opposition.

He concluded by saying that the people of India, especially women, will not forget who stood for their rights and who used the issue merely as a political slogan.

Ganie Nazia Farooq nominated as Provincial President, Female Wing JKTF

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 18: The All Jammu and Kashmir Teachers Forum (JKTF) on Saturday announced the nomination of Ganie Nazia Farooq as the Provincial President of its Female Wing for Jammu Province.

The decision reflects the organization's continued commitment to strengthening its structure and ensuring inclusive representation within the teaching fraternity.

The nomination has been formally approved by the State President JKTF, Mohammed Ashraf Sheikh, in consultation with the Provincial President Jammu, Gulshan Sharma. The leadership emphasized that the selection was made after careful consideration of Ms. Ganie's consistent dedication, leadership qualities, and active engagement in addressing issues faced by teachers, particularly women educators.

Ganie Nazia Farooq has earned a reputation as a committed and dynamic member of the teaching community. Over the years, she has actively contributed to various initiatives aimed at improving working conditions, advocating for teachers' rights, and promoting gender equity within the education



sector. Her appointment is expected to provide renewed momentum to the Female Wing and strengthen its outreach across Jammu Province.

While expressing confidence in her capabilities, the JKTF leadership stated that Ganie's Nazia Farooq nomination would play a crucial role in amplifying the voice of female teachers and addressing their concerns more effectively. The Forum believes that her leadership will contribute significantly toward the welfare, empowerment, and professional growth of women in education.

The organization also acknowledged the valuable recommendation put forward by District President Reasi, Rail Singh. The leadership noted that the nomination reflects the democratic and consultative decision-making process within JKTF, where inputs from grassroots leadership are given

due importance.

In his message, State President Mohammed Ashraf Sheikh, along with members of the central leadership, extended heartfelt congratulations to Ganie Nazia Farooq. He expressed optimism that she would rise to the expectations of the teaching community and work with dedication, integrity, and a sense of responsibility.

The JKTF reiterated its unwavering commitment to safeguarding the rights and interests of teachers across Jammu and Kashmir. The Forum emphasized that it will continue to address genuine demands of the teaching fraternity through constructive dialogue, collective efforts, and democratic means. Strengthening organizational unity and promoting inclusive leadership remain key priorities for the Forum.

The appointment of Ganie Nazia Farooq is seen as a significant step toward ensuring greater participation of women in leadership roles within JKTF. The organization expressed hope that her tenure will bring positive change and inspire more women educators to actively engage in organizational and professional development initiatives.

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

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

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STATE MALARIOLOGIST/STATE PROGRAMME OFFICER,
NATIONAL VECTOR BORNE DISEASES CONTROL PROGRAMME (NVBDCP) J&K
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