

Trump Returns To White House Launches New Era of Upheaval



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Donald J Trump on Monday took oath for a second term as the United States President, announcing a raft of executive decisions, saying that the "golden age" of America had just begun.

In a fiery inaugural address, the 47th US president described January 20 as the "liberation day" and declared that "America's decline is over" as changes will come "very quickly".

"America will reclaim its rightful place as the greatest, most powerful, most respected nation on earth, inspiring the awe and admiration from the entire world," he said.

Trump storms back to the White House for the second term with a strongman persona and a vision of an all-powerful presidency with a promise to

aggressively reset US policies in a range of domains including immigration, tariffs and energy.

The new US president listed a series of actions he would roll out immediately including declaring a national emergency at the US-Mexico border, renaming the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America, and that the US would take back the Panama Canal.

"From this day forward, our country will flourish and be respected again all over the world. We will be the envy of every nation, and we will not allow ourselves to be taken advantage of any longer," Trump said.

The Republican leader vowed to put America "first" and that the country would "flourish and be respected" under his leadership as a "peacemaker and a unifier".

The American dream will soon be back and thriving like never before, he said.

"After years | More on P6

Rajouri's Silent Epidemic Central Team Searches For Answers

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: A high-level inter-ministerial team on Monday conducted an investigation for nearly six hours in the Badhaal village of Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district to ascertain the causes of deaths of 17 members of three families under mysterious circumstances, officials said.

The village also witnessed the burial of a 15-year-old girl who died in a Jammu hospital on January 19 and a subdued wedding of one inhabitant during the day amid massive activities



surrounding the 16-member central team's visit. The central team, headed by a director-rank officer in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and including | More on P6

SIT To Probe All Angles: LG

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday said Jammu and Kashmir Health Department and other departments probed the deaths which took place at village Badhaal in Rajouri district but the exact cause has not been found yet. "The Home Minister (Amit Shah) has constituted a team of | More on P6

Aslam's 6th Child Also Dies

The sixth and the last child of Mohd Aslam, hailing from 'crisis-hit' Badhaal village in district Rajouri also died in GMC Jammu Sunday evening. Medical Superintendent of SMGS hospital, an associated hospital of GMC Jammu, Dr Dara Singh told the Excelsior that Yasmeen (16), daughter of Mohd Aslam, who was on ventilator support for the last three days, passed away in the ICU of the hospital at 6.15 pm on Sunday. | More on P6

J&K Bank Reports 26.3% Rise In Net Profit

Observer News Service

Srinagar: J&K Bank today announced robust financial results for the October-December quarter (Q3 FY 2025), with net profit surging by 26.2% year-on-year (YoY) to Rs 531.51 Cr compared to Rs 421.08 Cr reported during the same period last fiscal.

The Bank's Board of Directors approved the numbers for the quarter and nine-months during a meeting held today at the Bank's Zonal Office in Jammu.

Well on its course to meet annual profitability targets, the Bank's net profit for the first nine months of the current financial year has jumped 32.7% YoY to Rs 1497.92 Cr, compared to Rs 1128.60 Cr recorded for the same period last year, reflecting its sustained growth trajectory. | More on P6

HC Quashes PSA Order Against Pulwama Man

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Monday quashed detention order under Public Safety Act against a 52-year-old man from Puvama and ordered his release if not required in any other case.

A bench of Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi passed the orders on a plea filed by the detainee, Abdul Ahad Bhat of Larkipora Awantipora Pulwama, through his son, seeking quashing. | More on P6

LG Registers Himself For Organ Donation



Observer News Service

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha pledged for organ donation by registering himself with the Ayushman Bharat Organ Donation Registry (ABODR) on Monday. Representatives from the State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (SOTTO), led by its nodal officer Dr Elias Sharma, visited | More on P6

J&K Govt Promotes 130 JKPS Officers

SSP Srinagar Among 5 Elevated To Super Scale

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has issued an order approving the promotions of 130 officers from the Jammu and Kashmir Police Services (JKPS).

The promotions, spanning batches from 2001 to 2008, were formalised through an order.

The promotions are subject to the outcome of any writ petitions currently pending before competent courts of law.

Some of the officers from the 2001 batch who have been elevated include Ms. Manjit Kour, Arun Gupta, Randhir Singh, Sheikh Zulfikar Azad, and Ms. Monika Sagar, among others. The list also features several officers from subsequent batches, including Dr. S.D. Choudhary, Tanveer Jeelani, and Al-Tahir Geelani from the 2002 batch; Muzaffar Ahmad Shah, Sajad Ahmad Shah, and Mamta Sharma from the 2004 batch; and | More on P6



THE JAMMU & KASHMIR BANK LIMITED
CIN : L65110JK1938SGC000048



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FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 2024

Net Profit Growth 26.20% | Interest Income 17.80% | Gross NPA Ratio 4.08% | Return on Assets 1.34% | Net Interest Margin 4.04% | Adequacy Ratio 15.09% (₹ in Lakh)

S. No.	PARTICULARS	STANDALONE						CONSOLIDATED					
		QUARTER ENDED			NINE MONTHS ENDED			QUARTER ENDED			NINE MONTHS ENDED		
		31.12.2024	30.09.2024	31.12.2023	31.12.2024	31.12.2023	31.03.2024	31.12.2024	30.09.2024	31.12.2023	31.12.2024	31.12.2023	31.03.2024
1	Total income from operations (net)	344840	341963	306330	1005651	890311	1203785	345171	342431	306697	1006880	891183	1205087
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	75791	75446	55996	212452	155569	238457	75846	75683	56086	212901	155766	238807
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period before Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	75791	75446	55996	212452	155569	238457	75846	75683	56086	212901	155766	238807
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	53151	55092	42108	149792	112860	176727	52860	55278	42277	149988	113778	177122
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	Refer Note No. 2						Refer Note No. 2					
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013	11013
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of previous year							1085664					
8	Securities Premium Account	291950	291950	291945	291950	291945	291945	291950	291950	291945	291950	291945	291945
9	Net Worth	1258761	1209036	1055628	1258761	1055628	1096677	1254662	1205227	1051855	1254662	1051855	1092381
10	Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt	238100	288100	288100	238100	288100	288100						
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	-	-	-	-	-	-						
12	Debt Equity Ratio	0.19	0.24	0.27	0.19	0.27	0.26						
13	Total Debts to total assets	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02						
14	Operating Margin (%)	21.69%	23.01%	17.97%	21.18%	18.12%	18.91%						
15	Net Profit Margin (%)	15.41%	16.11%	13.75%	14.90%	12.68%	14.68%						
16	Earnings Per Share (before extraordinary items) (₹1/- each) for continuing and discontinued operations												
	Basic : (* not annualized)	4.83*	5.00*	4.03*	13.60*	10.91*	16.80	4.80*	5.02*	4.05*	13.62*	11.00*	16.84
	Diluted : (* not annualized)	4.83*	5.00*	4.03*	13.60*	10.91*	16.80	4.80*	5.02*	4.05*	13.62*	11.00*	16.84
17	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-						
18	Debt Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-						

NOTE :
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarter and nine months ended Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 and Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the quarter and nine months ended Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites. www.nseindia.com, www.bseindia.com and on Bank's website www.jkbank.com
2. Information relating to Total comprehensive Income and Other Comprehensive Income is not furnished as Ind AS is not yet made applicable to Banks.

For and on behalf of the Board
AMITAVA CHATTERJEE
Managing Director & CEO
DIN : 07082989

Place : Jammu
Dated : 20th January, 2025



Study Relates Exposure To Air Pollution Prior To Conceiving With Higher BMI In Children

Press Trust Of India

Increased exposure to air pollution in the months prior to pregnancy is associated with higher body mass index (BMI) and obesity risk factors in children up to two years after birth, a study involving over 5,800 mother-child pairs from China has shown. The study, published in the journal Environmental Research, found that an increase in PM2.5 levels by 16.2 micrograms per cubic metre during preconception -- three months prior to pregnancy -- was linked to a rise of 0.078 in child BMIZ at age two. A BMIZ, or body mass index z-score, is used to compare a child's BMI with that of peers of the same age and sex. Risks of pollution during preconception

Researchers from the US and China recruited the mother-child pairs from maternity clinics in Shanghai to understand how exposure to PM2.5, PM10 and nitrous oxide pollution during preconception impacted children's growth in the first two years of life. The team also found that an increase in PM10 pollution by 21.1 micrograms per cubic metre was associated with an increase of 0.093 in the child's BMI at age two. Further, from the age of six months onward, children exposed to higher levels



of pollution during preconception were found to have higher weight, BMI and BMIZ growth rates. Air pollution exposure at the participants' home addresses was estimated using satellite data, pollutant modelling and meteorological factors. "The magnitude is small, but because air pollution is widespread and everybody is exposed, the risk of exposure on children's obesity may be substantial and may start before their mothers' pregnancy," senior author Zhanghua

Chen, an assistant professor of population and public health sciences at the Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California, US, said. Exposure of pregnant women to air pollution has been linked to negative effects on children's health, such as respiratory conditions and a higher risk for chronic ones, including obesity and heart disease. However, few studies have looked at preconception -- environmental exposures during this period can affect the



The magnitude is small, but because air pollution is widespread and everybody is exposed, the risk of exposure on children's obesity may be substantial and may start before their mothers' pregnancy

health of sperm and eggs, which are in their final stages of growth, the researchers said. "These findings imply that the three months before conception are important and that people who plan to bear children should consider taking measures to lower their air pollution exposure to reduce their children's risk for obesity," first author Jiawen Liao, a postdoctoral research associate in population and public health sciences at the Keck School of Medicine. While the study is observational and could not establish cause-and-effect links, the researchers suggested measures to lower potential harm, including wearing a mask, using air purifiers and staying indoors as much as possible when outdoor air quality is poor.

Study Estimates Life Expectancy In Dementia Depends Strongly On Age At Diagnosis

Press Trust Of India

How long one survives with dementia depends strongly on one's age at diagnosis, ranging from about nine years at age 60 for women to a little over two years at age 85 for men, a research has estimated. Overall, women were estimated to live for 4.5 to eight years to following a dementia diagnosis. The review of 261 studies, published in The British Medical Journal, also found that dementia shortened life expectancy by about two years for people diagnosed at 85 years of age, by three to four years at age 80, and by up to 13 years at age 65. Researchers at Erasmus MC University Medical Centre, the Netherlands, looked at studies published between 1984 and 2024 (largely from North America and Europe), involving over five million people with dementia. Over 60 per cent of the individuals, aged 80 years on average, were women.



As population around the world ages, cases of the ageing-related neurological disorder are projected to rise, with loss of vision and high cholesterol added to a list of 12 risk factors previously identified, including low education, air pollution, obesity, and depression, according to a 2024 Lancet Commission report. However, estimates of how long one survived with dementia varied widely, the researchers said. In the analysis, they wrote, "Median (typical) survival from diagnosis appeared to be strongly dependent on age, ranging from 8.9 years at mean age 60 for women to 2.2 years at mean age 85 for men." Overall, women were found to live four years fewer than men, which the researchers attributed to a later age at the time of diagnosis. Further, people in Asia were found to survive the ageing-related condition more than a year longer, compared to those in the US and Europe. The analysis of the "largest number of studies to date over a prolonged period" offers potential for personalised prognosis (outcomes) and planning for the care of the affected, the authors said.

From the office of Advocate Nasir Ahmad

Lie. No. 175/2019 Chamber No. 01 in District court complex Budgam
 Cell No. 6005165675

(1) Zeenat-ul-Tabasum
 W/O Mehraj-ul-din Hakeem
 (2) Mehraj-ul-din Hakeem
 S/O Mohammad Maqbool Hakeem
 Both resident of Sheikh-ul-aalam Colony Suthoo
 Kuthair Bagh BK pora Nowgam Budgam

Vs.
 Public at Large

In the matter of:
 Caveat petition in terms of section 148-A of Cpc. The caveator has reasons to believe/apprehension that the non-caveator may institute/file any lis in the form of appeal/suit/application or any other proceedings before this hon'ble court against the caveator by the non-caveator. The caveator be put to notice through his counsel and be heard before passing of any order therein.

Nasir Ahmad Teli
 Advocate
 High Court Of J&K & Ladakh
 mcb

From Office of the Advocate M.A Sofi And Associates

In the case of
 1. Nisar Ahmad Malik
 2. Mohammad Shafi Malik
 Both Sons of Abdul Jabbar Malik
 Both Residents of Oam Buran Pattan.
 3. Shakeel Ahmad Malik S/o Ghulam Hassan Malik.
 4. Tanveer Ahmad Malik S/o Ali Mohammad Malik
 5. Shazia Bano D/o Jabbar Malik
 Residents of Ganjipora Buran Pattan & District Baramulla.
 6. Fayaz Ahmad Malik S/o Mohammad Shafi Malik
 7. Bilal Ahmad Malik S/o Mohammad Shafi Malik
 R/o residents of Singhpora Tehsil Singhpora District Baramulla.
 (Caveators)

Versus
 Public At Large
 (Non-Caveators/Non-Applicants)

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seek in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.
 fko Sd/advocate

Monthly Fee Structure of Students of Allama Iqbal School of Excellence Magray Pora Pattan

(Session: 2024-2025)

S.NO	Class	Admission Fee	Monthly Tuition Fee
01	Pre- Nursery	Nil	300
02	Nursery	Nil	330
03	L.K.G	Nil	350
04	U.K.G	Nil	360
05	1ST	Nil	390
06	2nd	Nil	400
07	3rd	Nil	400

fko

Public Notice

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing number 748728194362 of my daughter the name is wrongly entered as SIMRAN NAZIR while her actual name is BISMA NAZIR. Now I want its correction. In this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.
 Nazir Ahmad Sofi
 F/o Bismah Nazir
 R/O HARDU BATHPORA BUDGAM CELL. 9682333801
 mcb

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Sub: Application of Habibullah Bhat S/o Mohammad Abdullah Bhat R/o Authoora, Reshipora Tehsil Kreeri for The Issuance of Legal Heir certificate.

NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, in this context, a report was sought from the patwari halqa Concerned which reveals that Habila Begum w/o Habibullah Bhat passed away on 04-10-2022. Moreover, the Death Certificate issued by the Competent Authority also depicts the same. Furthermore, the report of Patwari Concerned points out that the deceased has left behind following Legal Heirs, tabulated as below:

S. NO	NAME OF LEGAL HEIR	RELATION WITH DECEASED	AGE	OCCUPATION	Marital Status
1	Habibullah Bhat	Husband	65	Labour	Widow
2	Shameema Begum	Daughter	45	Housewife	Married
3	Gulshan Begum	Daughter	38	Housewife	Married
4	Mehmooda Begum	Daughter	29	Housewife	Married

The applicant has applied for issuance of Legal Heir certificate. As such the instant matter is published through newspaper, if anyone is having any kind of objection. He/she may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days) of the publication of this notice. After passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days). No objections will be entertained.
 fko Naib Tehsildar

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Subject: - Application of Ghulam Nabi Ganai S/o Ghulam Mohi ud din Ganai R/o Authoora, Reshipora lor issuance of Income Dependent certificate.

Sir,
 Regarding the subject cited above, in this connection a report was sought from patwari halqa concerned which reveals that applicants Family consists of 4 members and Annual Income of the applicant family is Rs 105000/= (One Lakh and Five Thousand Only).
 Moreover, family structure of the applicant is as under:

S. NO	NAME OF LEGAL HIER	RELATION WITH DEPENDENT	AGE	OCCUPATION	Marital Status
1	Ghulam Nabi Ganai	Self	59	Labour	Married
2	Saida Begum	Wife	46	Housewife	Married
3	Nighat Nabi	Daughter		Housewife	Un-married
4	Asmat Ara	Daughter	23	Housewife	Un-married

It is further submitted that Ghulam Nabi Ganai S/o Ghulam Mohi ud din Ganai is labour by profession and is sole earning hand in the said family. Report of patwari concerned further reveals that Nighat Nabi and Asmat Ara are dependent on the income of their father Ghulam Nabi Ganai.

The applicant has applied for issuance of Income Dependent certificate. As such the instant matter is published through newspaper, if anyone is having any kind of objection. He/she may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days) of the publication of this notice. After passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days) No objections will be entertained.

fko Naib Tehsildar

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.Application of Tanveer Ahmad Najar ,Adil Ahmad Najar ss/o Ghulam Hassan Najar R/o Nehalpora Tehsil Pattan for obtaining OBC certificate in favour of self.

Public Notice

Regarding the subject cited above applicant's OBC certificates are under process in this office in this matter report Was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicant's are residing in village Nehalpora with his father and belongs to Najar caste the monthly income of applicant family is 10000 . The family members are as under
 1 Ghulam Hassan Najar s/o Gh Mohd Najar Labour
 2 shareefa Begum w/o Ghulam Hassan Najar H/work
 3 Tanveer Ahmad Najar s/o Ghulam Hassan Najar student
 4 Adil Ahmad Najar s/o Ghulam Hassan Najar student
 In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained

SD
 fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub. Application of Rohani Ramzan,Aqif Ramzan S/d/o Mohd Ramzan Gojree R/o Pattan for obtaining OBC certificate in favour of self

Public Notice

Regarding the subject cited above applicant's OBC certificate is under process in this office in this matter report Was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicant's are residing in village pattan with his father and belongs to SheerGojree caste the monthly income of applicant family is 9000 . The family members are as under.

1 Mohd Ramzan Gojree s/o Kamal Gojree	Labour
2 Haleema Begum w/o Mohd Ramzan Gojree	H/work
3 Rohani Ramzan D/o Mohd Ramzan Gojree	student
4 Aqif Ramzan S/o Mohd Ramzan Gojree	student
5 Rabia Ramzan D/o Mohd Ramzan Gojree	Student
6 Kaifa Ramzan D/o Mohd Ramzan Gojree	Student

In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained

SD
 fko Naib Tehsildar pattan

Public Notice

I have changed my name from (old name) Nehla Mearaj Pirzada Nahla Gilani to (new name) Nahla Mearaj Pirzada. In future, I will be known as (new name) Nahla Mearaj Pirzada. If anybody is having any objection, he or she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar, within 7 days. After seven days, no objection would be accepted.
 fko

Public Notice

I have changed my name from (old name) Adeel Ajaz Wawa to (new name) Adeel Ajaz . In future, I will be known as (new name) Adeel Ajaz . If anybody is having any objection, he or she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar, within 7 days. After seven days, no objection would be accepted.
 fko

Public Notice

I have lost my Provisional certificate somewhere. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt Girls Higher Secondary Institute Magam Budgam within 1 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Samiya Bashir
 D/o Bashir Ahmad Khan
 Class 12th Roll No: 32403243 FKO
 fko_r

Public Notice

The name of my son in his adhaar records has been wrongly written as Arsalan Ahmad Ganie while his correct name is Arsalan Razaq which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Abdul Razaq Ganie
 F/o Arsalan Razaq R/o D.K. Pora Shopian
 fko

UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR NOTICE

The candidate whose particulars are given below has reported to the University that she has lost her University Certificate/s and has applied for issuance of Duplicate Certificate/s:-
 Name: SUBEENA AKHTER
 D/O : GH NABI KHAN
 Residence: NEWA PULWAMA
 Reg No.: 6086-PC-2004
 Certificate/s Lost: B.A Illrd Yr Marks card
 Roll No. 3114



Session/Year: June-July 2007
 Before University will consider issuance of Duplicate Certificate/s in favour of the candidate, any person having any objection shall report to the undersigned within one week from the date of issuance of the notice. The original certificate/s issued to the candidate be treated as cancelled.

Sd/-Asstt. Controller of Examinations
 (PG/UG/Prof)

E-Rickshaw Controversy

Authorities Assure "Fair Fare" Settlement

Agencies

Srinagar: The ongoing controversy between E-rickshaws and the transport department was finally settled on Monday after a meeting between authorities and representatives from the E-rickshaw association.

Officials from the E-rickshaw association stated that they met with the RTO Kashmir and SSP Traffic Srinagar, who assured them that the matter would be resolved within two to three days. According to details, the dispute escalated earlier when the Transport Commissioner announced the fare structure for E-rickshaws. Many E-rickshaw drivers disagreed with the rates and subsequently stopped operating.

In a tweet on X, (formally twitter), Transport Commissioner J&K, Vishesh Mahajan wrote: During the day while interacting with the media the rate of e rickshaw was elaborated. "I would like to clarify that it is 10 rupees per Km per vehicle and not per passenger. I have asked the RTOs Jammu/Kashmir to further clarify and issue rate lists."

Notably, the disruption impacted E-rickshaw operations across many parts of Srinagar city. On Monday, E-rickshaw drivers held protests in several areas of Srinagar city and Ganderbal district alike, expressing their dissatisfaction with the fare structure.

Auto drivers in Ganderbal district protested against

“The Traffic Police is an implementing authority. If the fares are revised, we will ensure compliance. The revision of rates is solely the responsibility of the Transport Department, and they are only working on it

the recently fixed fare rates by the government. "The drivers claim the rates are inadequate and unfair, and they are demanding a revision to protect their livelihoods," a protester said.

Meanwhile, Arshid Bhat, General Secretary of the All J&K E-Rickshaw Association, said that the issue has been resolved. "The protests that occurred yesterday and today were not called by our association. We met with the RTO Kashmir and SSP Traffic Srinagar, who assured us that the matter would be taken up with the authorities. E-rickshaws are now operating normally," he said.

A senior official from the Srinagar Traffic Police told KNO that they have no objection to E-rickshaws operating on city roads. "The Traffic Police is an implementing authority. If the fares are revised, we will ensure compliance. The revision of rates is solely the responsibility of the Transport Department, and they are only working on it," the official said.



File Pic

Sakeena Itoo Reviews Functioning Of SKIMS

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo on Monday chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat to review the performance and functioning of Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Raheed Shah, Director SKIMS, Dr. Ashraf Ganai; Director General Budget, Director Finance Health and Medical Education, Medical Superintendent SKIMS and other senior officers of Health and Medical Education department and SKIMS Soura.

Addressing the officers, Sakeena Itoo emphasized the critical role of SKIMS in delivering specialized medical care not only to the people of Kashmir valley but also to patients from neighbouring regions. She outlined that the contribution of SKIMS is unmatched for society. "SKIMS is the cornerstone of our health-care system and its performance

directly impacts the well-being of thousands of people on regular basis", the Minister stated.

She highlighted the importance of maintaining high standards in patient care, medical education and research at this prestigious institution. "We must work collectively to ensure that the institute continues to work with its full potential in delivering advanced and quality medical care to our people", Sakeena said.

While reviewing the current state of infrastructure at SKIMS, including inpatient and outpatient facilities, diagnostic centers as well as emergency services, the Minister urged the administration to expedite the works on ongoing projects aimed at modernizing facilities and ensuring patient comfort at the institute. She also asked them for decongestion of the emergency ward so that the patients are treated effectively.

Addressing the issue of manpower and staffing shortage, Sakeena Itoo asked the Director SKIMS to recruit the necessary paramedics and other medical professionals for key departments on contract

basis till regular recruitments are made. She asked the SKIMS administration to maintain due transparency during the entire process of recruitment.

Reviewing the financial and resource allocation of the institute, Sakeena Itoo called upon the SKIMS administration to maintain due transparency and accountability while executing different works. She asked them for timely updation of expenditure on BEAMS portal in coordination with the Finance department.

During the meeting, Director SKIMS gave a detailed presentation informing the meeting about various interventions being made for improving patient care at this prestigious institution. He informed the meeting that two major achievements will be accomplished by the institute this year with the start of Liver transplant and Neonatal/Paediatric cardiac surgery. He further informed that the institute caters to more than 260 patient admissions on daily basis besides it had more than 80% bed occupancy during the previous year.

DC Chairs DLIC Meeting; Accords Approval To 34 Cases

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A meeting of District Level Implementation Committee on Mission Youth schemes was Monday convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to review the execution of Mission Youth schemes including Mumkin, Tejaswini and Spurring Entrepreneurship Initiative (SEI) in the District.

During the meeting, a total of 34 cases were approved under various Mission Youth schemes including 16 cases under SEI scheme, 14 cases under Mumkin scheme and 04 cases under Tejaswini scheme to provide self-employment to aspiring entrepreneurs.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC/Chairman DLIC highlighted the importance of these self-employment initiatives in fostering youth empowerment within the district. He stressed on giving wide publicity to these schemes so that maximum unemployed youth can avail benefits.

The Chairman DLIC

impressed upon all the stakeholders to create an enabling environment through Government sponsored schemes, where youth can think beyond Government jobs and opt for gainful self-employment.

While expressing his displeasure over poor performance of certain banks by rejecting the cases approved by DLIC, the DC advised the banks operating in district to go an extra mile and show empathy towards the unemployed youth in guiding them towards the path of prosperity and self-sufficiency through various Government sponsored self-employment schemes tailored in accordance to their entrepreneurial aspirations.

General Manager DIC Srinagar, Hamida Akhter; Chief Planning Officer Srinagar, Fayaz Ahmad; ARTO, Syed Farhana Asgar, Deputy Director Employment, Dr. Sheeba Inayat; District Social Welfare Officer, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Lead District Manager Srinagar, representatives from JKEDI & KVIB and other concerned were present in the meeting.

Lack Of Dedicated Stops For Smart City Buses Causes Traffic Woes

Agencies

Srinagar: The absence of designated bus stops for Smart City buses creates significant challenges for traffic management in Srinagar.

Commuters have raised concerns about the unregulated stops made by e-buses, which often occur every few meters. These frequent halts are leading to traffic congestion, especially during rush hours, making it difficult for people to reach their destinations on time.

"Being stuck behind a Smart City bus is incredibly frustrating," said Sajad Mir, a daily commuter. "The buses are so large that they block entire lanes, leaving vehicles trapped behind them for extended periods."

Many passengers believe that introducing spe-

cific bus stops is essential for the system to function efficiently. Without such stops, buses are forced to pick up passengers from random locations, adding to delays and disrupting traffic.

"If proper stops were established, people would gather at those points, and the buses wouldn't have to stop at irregular intervals," said Aijaz Ahmad, another commuter.

While the Smart City buses come equipped with modern technology and applications, locals say that their current operation mirrors traditional buses, defeating their purpose. "These buses are meant to provide a streamlined service, but they are creating more chaos instead. We benefit from them, but it shouldn't come at the expense of worsening the traffic situation," a local said. [KNT]

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

I did wash my hand ... but... did I clean it enough? ?Wash it again? is it clean now?

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- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

- Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)
- Mughal Road - (Closed)
- Srinagar- Leh- (Open)

HIJRI CALENDAR

20 Rajab
1446

PRAYERS

FAJR 6: 07

ZUHR 12:42

ASR 4: 11

Magrib 5:52

ISHA 7: 16

This Day In History

- 1287 - The treaty of San Agayz is signed. Minorca is conquered by King Alfons III of Aragon.
- 1324 - Zen Buddhist religious debate between Tendai & Shingon
- 1664 - Count Miklos of Zrinyi sets out to battle Turkish invasion army
- 1720 - Sweden and Prussia sign a peace treaty ending hostilities between them during the Great Northern War
- 1732 - Russia & Persia sign Treaty of Riascha
- 1793 - Prussia & Russia sign partition treaty, dividing Poland.
- 1864 - The Tauranga Campaign of the New Zealand Wars begins
- 1900 - The second contingent of Canadian troops sails from Halifax to fight in South Africa against the Boers
- 1910 - British-Russian military intervention in Persia
- 1913 - Aristide Briand forms French government for the 2nd time
- 1919 - Irish militant nationalist party Sinn Fein creates its own parliament in Dublin and declares Ireland independent of Great Britain, sparking the Irish War of Independence
- 1924 - Vladimir Lenin's Testament is handed over to the Communist Party; it calls for changes to the Soviet governing structure and criticizes Joseph Stalin, Leon Trotsky and other members
- 1925 - Albanian parliament announces itself a republic; Ahmed Zogoe president
- 1926 Belgian parliament accepts Locarno treaties
- 1932 - USSR and Finland stop non-attack treaty
- 1941 - Australian and British troops attack Tobruk, Libya
- 1943 - Soviet forces reconquer Worosjilowsk
- 1943 - Soviet forces reconquer Gumrak airport near Stalingrad
- 1944 - 447 German bombers attack London
- 1944- 649 British bombers attack Magdeburg
- 1945 - British troops land on Ramree, near coast of Burma1952 - Jawaharlal Nehru's Congress party wins general election in India
- 1954 - USS Nautilus, the first nuclear-powered submarine, launched on the Thames River in Connecticut
- 1960 - Little Joe 4 suborbital Mercury test reaches 16 km

From KO Archives

PDD Now Says Power Only For 2.5 Hours

SRINAGAR- With break-downs in two major transmission lines, the valley shall have to do with just 2.5 hours of electricity in every twenty four hours for some time to come. The near round-the-clock curtailment shall continue till such time as the tower, total damage to which has been cited as the cause of the crisis, has been re-erected.

Bomb blasts at transmission towers in Qazigund and Wagoora have reduced power supply to the valley by 90 per-cent, a chief engineer of the PDD said today in Srinagar.

Addressing a press conference summoned ostensibly to explain away unprecedented power cuts, the chief engineer, Abdul Majeed Mattoo, denied reports that power supply from the northern grid had been cut off following non-payment of dues by the state. "Power has not been cut off. There is a fault in the transmission line," he said. Mattoo said that efforts were on to re-erect the tower but declined to set a specific time-frame for the complete restoration of power supply. The chief engineer said that a mere 85 MW of power were available to the valley as against a requirement of 750 MW. Out of this 85 MW, thirty went to essential services like hospitals, telephone exchanges, army and broadcasting institutions, he said.

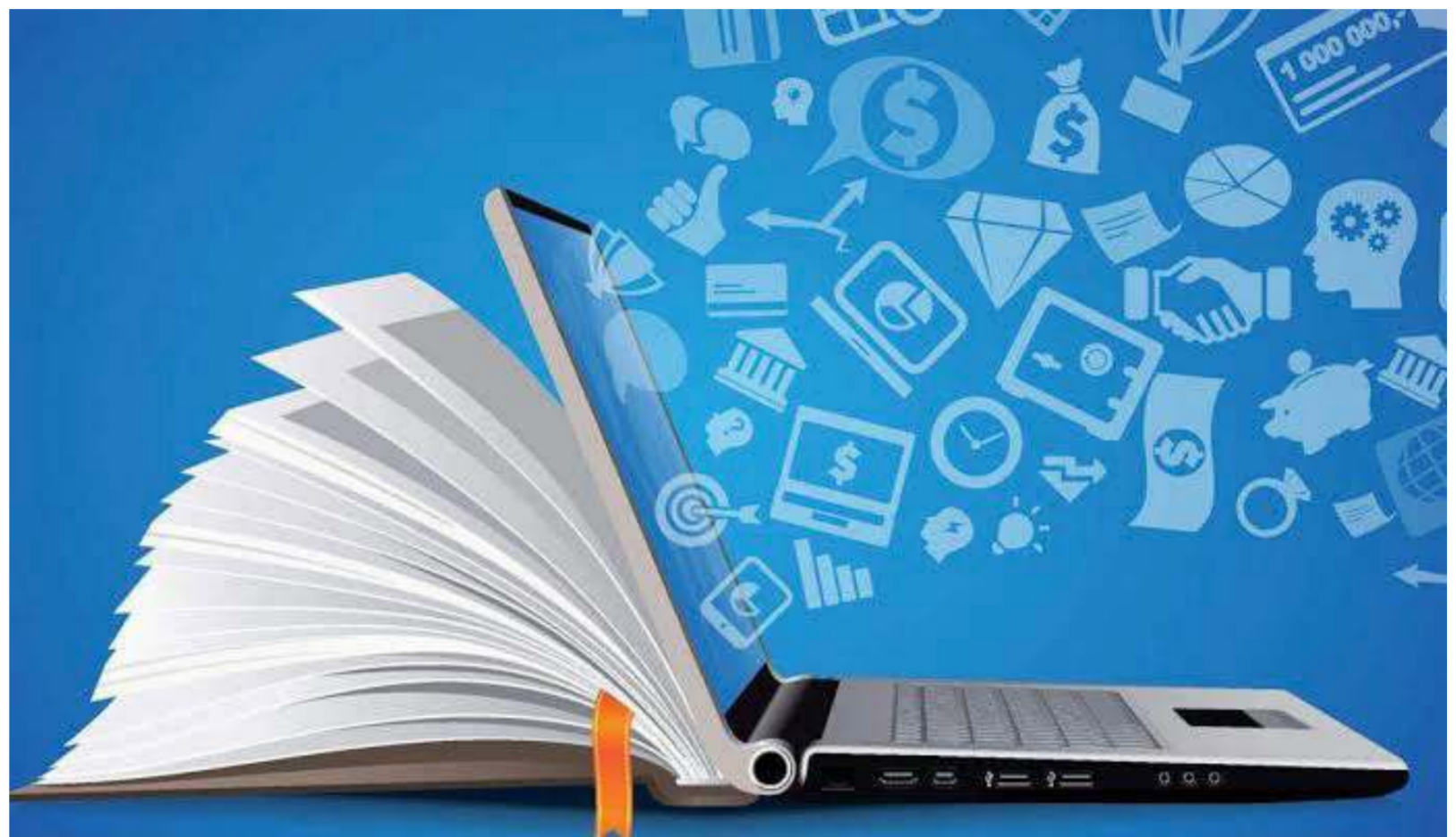
Abdul Majeed Mattoo said that on the night intervening the 13th and 14th of January a breakdown of the 220 KV Kishenpur-Pampore line and the 132 KV Udhampur-Srinagar line occurred because of a blast in one special 220 KV tower in Qazigund, completely damaging the tower. This, he said, had deprived the valley of 230MW of peak power and about 50 lakh units of energy. The chief engineer claimed that the department had quickly swung into action and restored the 132 KV Udhampur-Srinagar line thereby ensuring supply of about 60MW of power and 12 to 14 lakh units of energy.

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Upgrade The Curriculum



KO VIEW

The World Trumped

The inauguration of Donald Trump as the 47th US president marks a critical juncture not just for the United States but for the entire world. In his second term, Trump inherits a world that has dramatically changed. The war in Ukraine, the escalating US-China rivalry, and a global economy teetering on recession provide the backdrop for his administration. Trump's rhetoric, particularly targeting Canada, Mexico, and China, suggests that his "America First" agenda remains intact. His proposed trade tariffs and threats to neighboring allies reveal a willingness to strain diplomatic relationships.

A year ago, no one would have thought that Trump would return to power. But that was not to be. One major factor in his spectacular comeback may have been the liberal disillusionment with the incumbent president Joe Biden and his Vice President Harris - the defeated Democratic candidate - whose unqualified support for genocide in Gaza by Israel not just disappointed many of their admirers around the world but also within the US. More so, the Muslim voter base of the Democratic Party that felt betrayed by Biden and Harris' complicity in the carnage in Gaza, and Lebanon. To stop the Trump juggernaut, the Democratic party needed to get its supporters to believe in its liberal credentials, but that didn't happen, blurring the differences between the two parties.

But Trump as Biden's successor is akin to going from frying pan into fire. As some media commentary has pointed out, America has once again chosen for itself "a great disruption." In his first term in power, the US largely abdicated its global role, except in matters of protecting its core interests. And this abdication detrimentally impacted the world. His first presidency was defined by unpredictability, nationalist rhetoric, and a transactional approach to foreign policy. This time, however, Trump's strategies appear poised to be even more disruptive.

However, Trump's inauguration has started on a positive note: Israel and Hamas have finally agreed to a ceasefire. Already three Israeli hostages and 90 Palestinian prisoners have been freed. It would be interesting to see how the Trump administration will deal with the situation. The world will hope that it works towards not just a durable ceasefire but towards an abiding solution that brings the decades long conflict and bloodshed towards an end. In South Asia, the countries including India will watch keenly how Trump deals with China. Overall, Trump as the US president holds out a fraught prospect for the world. The coming weeks and months will make clear how the situation evolves. For now we can only wait and watch.

Subzar Ah Ganaie

“**Students who aspire to pursue careers in cutting-edge fields often face a steep learning curve in higher education due to a lack of foundational exposure in school. This gap not only limits their opportunities but also hinders the region's ability to produce skilled professionals in this transformative field**

In 1959, a well-known physicist Richard Feynman delivered a visionary lecture at California Institute of Technology titled "There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom," where he outlined the vast potential of manipulating matter at the atomic and molecular levels. Feynman's revolutionary ideas laid the groundwork for nanotechnology, a field that now drives innovation in medicine, energy, agriculture, and more. Decades later, his vision remains a guiding light for scientific progress worldwide. The subject emphasized the importance of bridging gaps between physical, chemical and biological sciences while transforming them into an interdisciplinary one. Until the invention of high-end microscopy, nanotechnology seemed to be an arbitrary word. Discoveries like, graphene, lysurgus cup-an ancient Roman glass, carbon nanotube, the setae of Gecko's feet, Deoxy Ribonucleic Acid etc. proved that nanotechnology plays an artistic role in shaping the design of this universe both physically and biologically. In other words, it transcends the objects both intrinsically and extrinsically. So, the question if it does so, why don't we dare to expose ourselves and the school going children to this much pre-existing knowledge system in 2025? Is it because we want to hang around the so-called basic sciences like chemistry, physics and biology which diversify themselves into multiple branches like organic, inorganic, physical chemistry; classical, quantum, nuclear, astro physics and zoology, botany, biotechnology, bioresources etc.? Why not identify a node of their existence? Surely this will boil down to the subject of Nanotechnology for the resolution!

As of 2025, Jammu and Kashmir is lagging behind in introducing this much needed revolutionizing subject at the school and college levels. Despite its immense potential, nanotechnology remains absent from the +2 curriculum in Jammu and Kashmir.

Students who aspire to pursue careers in cutting-edge fields often face a steep learning curve in higher education due to a lack of foundational exposure in school. This gap not only limits their opportunities but also hinders the region's ability to produce skilled professionals in this transformative field. Thanks to the policy makers, students in UT are still not aware about the name of this subject after a period of almost 7 decades. In-fact, to the high-school teachers, the introduction of this subject seems like summiting Mount Everest 8848m!

As per NEP 2020 vocational education will be imparted to the students. How do we expect that things and ideas like regenerative medicine, tissue engineering, targeted drug delivery, nano sensors, CNT based space ladders etc. will be inculcated into the young minds who are awaiting the futur-

belief "Education is a powerful weapon to change the behavior of a society positively" and really want to shape the future of this land to produce an intellectual mindset, be he a school teacher, Chief Education Officer, an assistant professor at college level or holding an official rank pertaining to education, it is impressed upon all, to jointly stand together and introduce Nanotechnology as a core subject at both school and college levels. By introducing nanotechnology at these places, Jammu and Kashmir can inspire its students to dream big and innovate solutions for global and regional challenges. As Richard Feynman famously said, "What I cannot create, I do not understand." Hence, it is high time to honor this saying by collaborating with experts to introduce the subject at all the levels and create a full-fledged multidisciplinary course of Nanotechnology. Policy-

“**Discoveries like, graphene, lysurgus cup-an ancient Roman glass, carbon nanotube, the setae of Gecko's feet, Deoxy Ribonucleic Acid etc. proved that nanotechnology plays an artistic role in shaping the design of this universe both physically and biologically**

istic educational initiative in the form of NEP 2020? Should this be linked to the principle of lethargy, which does not allow the chair holders to think like an iconic revolutionary mind allowing its budding blooms to nurture in the gardens of innovation and creativity or the students who do not want to dive into this space and desire to remain whorled in the basic fields of theoretical education, never sprouting to be smelled by the society? At the same time Thanks to the University of Kashmir for exposing us to this domain of knowledge at an age of 24. Although, it could have been done earlier, still, "Better late than never."

To those who abide by the

makers, educators, and industry leaders must come forward to ensure that students in Jammu and Kashmir have access to the opportunities they need to thrive in the 21st century. Introducing nanotechnology in schools is not just a choice—it's a necessity. The time to act is now. Let the seeds of nanotechnology be sown in schools today, so they may yield transformative breakthroughs tomorrow.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The author is a PhD Scholar, University of Kashmir



Did you know ? Understanding the Stock Market: Navigating Liquidity, Volatility, and Wealth Creation for Beginners

Irshad Mushtaq

The stock market is like a giant marketplace where you can buy and sell pieces of companies, known as stocks. One important thing to know is that it is a "liquid" market. This means you can pull your money out at any time, unlike some other types of investments that may require you to keep your money locked up. However, it's also highly volatile, which means that the value of your investments can change quickly and dramatically. For example, if the market drops, the value of your stock portfolio is likely to drop as well.

If managed wisely over time, your portfolio can grow in value. But to do this effectively, you need to understand several important concepts. Here are some key points to keep in mind:

1. Earning Money: Understand the foundational rules of making money in the stock market.
2. Money Management: Learn how to manage your funds effectively to maximize your investments.
3. Discipline: Stick to a plan and not let emotions dictate your trading decisions.
4. Risk Management: Know how to take calculated risks and minimize potential losses.
5. Portfolio Creation: Build a well-balanced portfolio that fits your financial goals.
6. Long-Term vs. Short-Term Investments: Recognize strategies for both long-term growth and short-term gains.
7. Seeking Guidance: Continuous mentorship and learning from experienced investors is crucial for success.

Entering the stock market should not be viewed as a game or purely for entertainment. Many new investors approach trading emotionally, leading to poor decisions and money loss. Instead, focus on building wealth through informed and strategic investing.

- Here's what you should consider as you embark on your investment journey:
 - Education: Invest time in learning essential trading strategies and financial principles.
 - Consistent Mentorship: Seek advisors who can guide you through the complexities of investing.
 - Cautions against Emotional Trading: Avoid impulsive decisions based on market fluctuations or personal feelings.
 - Discipline and Patience: Discipline is key — successful investing takes time and steady commitment.

The stock market offers various options, from trading stocks to options strategies, but be cautious. Avoid shortcuts based on emotions, and ensure every investment decision is made carefully. Just like in all businesses, investing requires a proper approach to achieve success.

Learn from the insights of @Irshad Mushtaq, Writer, Investor, Entrepreneur & Founder of M I Securities! Connect for valuable financial advice at misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com

Disclaimer: This article is for information only and doesn't offer investment advice. It's not an endorsement or an offer to buy or sell any financial products. If you decide to act on the information here, you do so at your own risk



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Driving in Kashmir: Where Frost meets Frustration.

If you're a frequent driver in Srinagar city, you're aware of the challenges that come with navigating its roads. Winters only add to the difficulty. Whether you're a working professional, a student, or simply someone trying to get from point A to point B, the struggle is real. From my own time behind the wheel, I had experience traveling from Humhama to Jahangir Chowk, then to Sour, and finally to Ganderbal to reach Central University. The struggle begins right from your doorstep, where frost-crusted windscreens require hot water to make it clear for the driver to drive, which itself is another struggle to obtain—either heating it on gas or relying on electricity,

which is a gamble; it appears and disappears anytime without any prior notice. And if you're careful enough to watch for your vehicle, you can escape this part by covering your vehicle. Once you're done with the first phase of struggle, you face the difficult task of starting your very cold and stubborn car, which often resists starting in this harsh chilla-e-kalan. Unceasing effort and pumping the accelerator give life to it.

The struggle becomes brutal on the road, where the wet and slippery surfaces make it dangerous to drive, even brakes become helpless here. Reckless bus and sumo drivers intensify this challenge, stopping abruptly without indicators or warnings, com-

pletely giving no damn to the vehicles behind them, ignoring the traffic jam caused by their actions, which obviously is an inconvenience for everyone except them. Sadly, this is a common sight throughout the valley, not just in Srinagar.

Haphazard parking adds salt to the injuries, blocking entrances and crucial thoroughfares. Not to forget the autos and now newly added electric autos - the ultimate agents of the chaos. No matter how hard you pray not to see them, they will find a way to show up uninvited, poking their nose out of nowhere, just like an elaichi in the biryani. And our young and adventurous drivers (mostly two-wheelers) driven by

adrenaline and a sense of invincibility further complicate the chaos, particularly in areas around Parraypora and Bazrulla. Fortunately, our police have made efforts to curb this menace to some extent.

Driving in Kashmir is a never-ending struggle. Frozen mornings, slippery roads, reckless driving and absolute disrespect for the traffic etiquette really make it a daunting misery. And if you make it home after all this nightmare, CONGRATULATIONS !!! You're a qualified driver. May your driving journey be safer and may your patience grow.

Muneeb Hamid
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Is AI Snatching Creativity from Our Children?

Newsheena Mushtaq

In the age of artificial intelligence, technology has enchanted education so deeply as to metamorphose the way and manner in which students learn and interface with knowledge completely. The integration of AI tools has made the classroom completely flawless, creating an artificial sense of convenience and efficiency. However, the implication here is that the use of AI invites a very basic question. Does it really paralyze the creativity levels of our children inadvertently?

Creativity flourishes, mostly because of the cognitive abilities that extend the knowledge exploration, eureka effects, contraption-driven observation, and solutioneering. Through these, the critical mind emanated from a near-archaic but time-immersive approach to foster thinking in the creative minds' untainted attempt at originality and ruggedness. AI shortcuts these processes, giving students instant answers to what were previously left to ingenuity and effort. Such a student, when requested to write the rough draft of a story, might instead end up asking an AI tool for inspiration or even a complete narrative thus avoiding character development necessary for plot lines and themes. The reliance on technology to do our reflection has other adverse effects on students and practically replaces curiosity and critical thinking with convenience.

But what about AI itself? AI's strengths and productivity rely on predefined rule sets concerned with standardized outcomes. And so creativity, instead of being seen in terms of original dimensionality and uniqueness, is made into something efficient—an AI-crafted poem or painting is



expected to sheer perfection, but at the same time it is cold and lacks all the emotion brought by human expression. This sometimes becomes a kind of vicious cycle, that of AI-created generations growing up lacking the capacity to think unconventionally or expressing personal constructs even if it is intrinsic, as

the skills of their creativity have been surpassed by the possibilities of the machine.

Another concern lies in the culture of instant gratification that AI fosters. Creativity is not an instant process; it demands time, effort, and the willingness to embrace failure. And what is AI but a means for instant, al-

most immediate results when one can get results the hard way by brainstorming, sketching or experimenting for hours? After one swift change, the whole essence of hard work is lost on working students. Patience and persistence at doing the real work will also be stripped from young learners.

Additionally, the very nature of AI's assistance can limit students' exposure to diverse ways of thinking. Human creativity is not only shaped by individual effort but also by collaboration, cultural influences, and varied experiences. AI, as we have been saying, is the game changer; it is still developed to observe its coding boundaries. An illustration of stifling creativity is one that narrows the number of ideas that might be synthesized. It is with more or less certainty and then becomes less than likely that les-

We should, as parents, educators, and policymakers, ensure that AI in education is not used in such a way that it kills the imagination. This is by allowing students to be independent thinkers and to take risks, to accept challenges, and to value the process of creating something. In this regard, students should have opportunities to say what they have to say and not just resort to AI-given solutions. An environment that encourages students to explore, experiment, and make mistakes will help them feel a sense of accomplishment and build creative confidence.

AI can be a powerful ally in the learning journey, but it should not replace the invaluable experiences that nurture the creative spirit. Creativity is the cornerstone of innovation, and its preservation is essential for building a future driven by ideas, originality, and human ingenuity. If we are to prepare the next generation for an increasingly technological world, we must ensure that they do not lose the essential skills that make them unique skills that machines can't replicate, no matter how advanced they become. With the introduction of Artificial Intelligence, every part of technology has significantly improved. Like so much other AI-created content, the off-the-shelf content has now made it possible to create text readable for people like the rest of what was ever grown in a lonely field somewhere, and that is where the cleanliness issues arise.



AI can be a powerful ally in the learning journey, but it should not replace the invaluable experiences that nurture the creative spirit. Creativity is the cornerstone of innovation, and its preservation is essential for building a future driven by ideas, originality, and human ingenuity.

The author is an educator at Birla Open Minds International School, pampore and can be reached at newsheena9051@gmail.com

students taught in school will motivate learners to think unconventionally or revert to seemingly meandering experiments.

Can AI Condense Two Years of Learning Into Six Weeks?

John Nosta

In a modest classroom in Edo State, Nigeria, an educational revolution unfolded. Over six weeks, students accomplished what would typically take two years. This wasn't a product of extra hours or an elite teaching corps. It was the result of generative AI—a large language model serving as a virtual tutor in an after-school program. The pilot program, supported by the World Bank and published on their website, delivered remarkable results: students made significant strides in English, digital literacy, and even foundational AI concepts. The numbers are extraordinary, but the story is even more compelling. Here, in a Nigeria classroom, we caught a glimpse of how AI might redefine learning for millions worldwide.

A Classroom Spark That Could Light the World

The Nigerian pilot program demonstrated something powerful: with the right tools, students can transcend the limits of traditional education. The efficiency was staggering. In just 30 school days, students achieved the equivalent of two academic years. That's a 1,200 percent improvement—a statistic that would make any policymaker or educator stand up and take notice. But the numbers, as impressive as they are, tell only part of the story. The deeper magic lies in the possibilities unlocked by AI and this program.

Imagine a young girl, previously held back by a lack of resources, now learning to code and write essays in English. Imagine classrooms where gender disparities shrink, as AI creates an egalitarian space for knowledge. One of the program's most remarkable outcomes was its ability to benefit all students, not just the highest achievers. Girls, who initially lagged behind boys in performance, seemed to gain even more from the intervention, highlighting its potential to bridge gender gaps in learning. The pilot gave these students not just lessons

but agency—a glimpse of futures once unimaginable. It's the kind of change that feels like the first spark of a transformation destined to illuminate classrooms globally.

The Template for Global Transformation

This success in Nigeria is more than a local phenomenon; it's a

for Scaling AI in Education

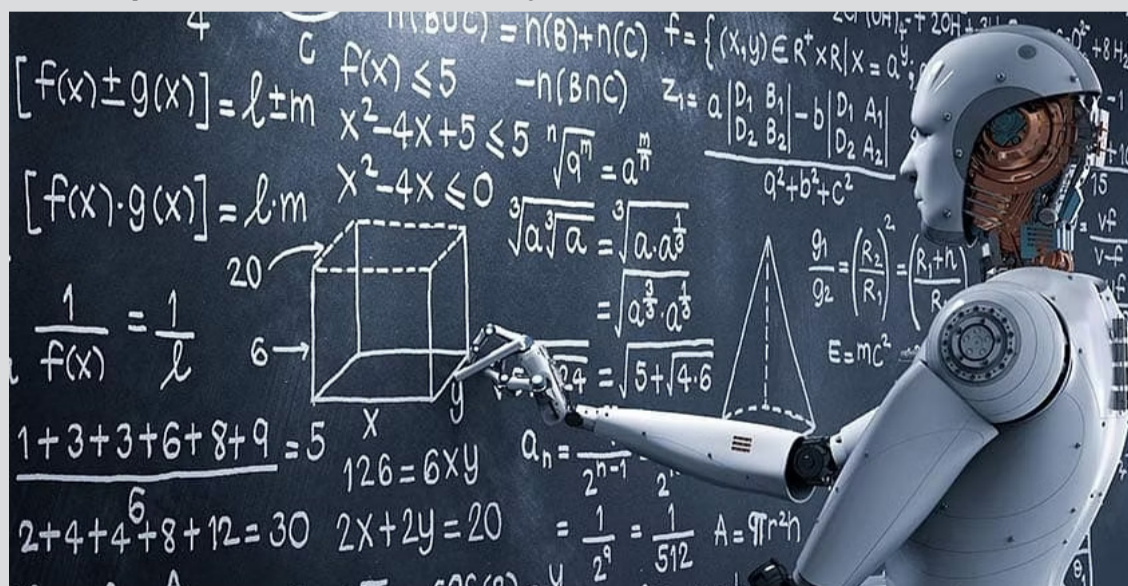
The success of the Edo State pilot is underpinned by seven key insights, summarized in the Pioneer Framework:

- **Prioritizing Students:** Students found joy and energy in learning with AI, showing enhanced engagement and curiosity.

aligned with its goals.

- **Reducing AI Risks:** Teachers mitigated challenges like misinformation by emphasizing responsible AI usage and critical thinking.

These insights provide a roadmap for scaling AI-driven education globally, particularly in resource-constrained environments.



template for the world. AI-driven tools like LLMs represent an extraordinary shift from static teaching to dynamic, iterative learning, making education learner-centric and transforming the experience from rote memorization to a process of exploration and critical thinking.

The Nigerian pilot underscores this potential on a global scale. In regions plagued by teacher shortages, outdated materials, or systemic barriers, AI offers a lifeline. It can deliver high-quality, learner-centric instruction to any learner with access to a device. The implications are profound. This isn't just about catching up; it's about leaping ahead, and redefining education for a generation that faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities.

The Pioneer Framework: Lessons

- **Inspiring Teachers:** Teachers embraced AI as a collaborator, sharing best practices and discovering new ways to support their students.
- **Optimizing Immersion:** A longer timeline would allow students to fully immerse themselves in mastering AI tools and applying their knowledge.
- **Nurturing Infrastructure:** Reliable power and internet connectivity are vital to ensuring smooth program execution and scaling.
- **Empowering Resources:** Structured toolkits and prompts made the AI sessions relevant and effective, adapting to local needs.
- **Enhancing Execution:** Real-time monitoring and feedback enabled course corrections, keeping the program

By addressing infrastructure challenges, empowering educators, and tailoring solutions to local contexts, generative AI can democratize personalized learning.

From Proof of Concept to Global Implementation

While the results from Nigeria are extraordinary, they remain a proof of concept, with more data due out soon. Scaling this success requires thoughtful implementation. It's not just about deploying technology; it's about integrating it into existing systems in a way that complements human teachers and respects local contexts.

One compelling feature of the Nigerian pilot is its adaptability. For example, AI tools can offer multilingual support, making education accessible to diverse populations. They can also help students bridge gaps created by

crises like pandemics or conflicts. This adaptability reinforces the idea that AI isn't merely a stopgap solution but a sustainable strategy for global education.

Balancing Acceleration with Sustainability

As we imagine scaling this model, one key question remains: Can such rapid learning be sustained without compromising depth? While this post avoids delving deeply into dynamic pacing, it's worth mentioning that any global rollout must consider how to balance speed with retention. Education isn't just about learning faster; it's about learning better. This means providing students with time to reflect, apply, and internalize their knowledge, ensuring long-term success.

Lighting the Road Ahead

The Nigerian pilot program is a spark, but sparks need fuel. To turn this concept into a global movement, it needs investment, policy support, and a willingness to reimagine education. The greatest lesson from Nigeria is that we don't need to reinvent the wheel—we need to scale what works.

Consider this: What if classrooms in Lagos, El Salvador, or rural Appalachia could replicate this model? What if AI could bridge the gaps in teacher shortages and resource scarcity while respecting cultural and contextual nuances? These are not just hypothetical questions; they are calls to action.

The true promise of AI in education isn't just about speed. It's about creating a system that adapts to the rhythms of human learning while breaking down barriers of geography, gender, and opportunity. The Nigerian classroom isn't just a story of what happened; it's a vision of what could happen—everywhere.

The spark has been lit. Now it's time to ensure it lights the world.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

IMAGINE A YOUNG GIRL, PREVIOUSLY HELD BACK BY A LACK OF RESOURCES, now learning to code and write essays in English. Imagine classrooms where gender disparities shrink, as AI creates an egalitarian space for knowledge

J&K Govt Forms High-Level Committee To Oversee Departmental Promotions

Agencies

Jammu: In a significant move to streamline and enhance the efficiency of departmental promotions, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has constituted a High-Level Committee. The committee, formed under Government Order No. 107-JK(GAD) of 2025, will oversee the functioning of Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) across all administrative departments in the Union Territory.

The committee comprises senior IAS officers and a secretary from key government departments: Shantmanu, IAS, Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Higher Education Department - Chairman, Shaleen Kabra, IAS, Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Jal Shakti Department - Member, Santosh D. Vaidya, IAS, Principal Secretary to the Government, Finance Department - Member, M. Raju, IAS, Commissioner/Secretary

to the Government, General Administration Department - Member, Achal Sethi, Secretary, Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs - Member.

The committee has been tasked with ensuring the timely conduct of DPC meetings across administrative departments and their subordinate offices, addressing stagnation and creating clear roadmaps for the career progression of employees and resolving issues of promotional vacancies, reducing the need for ad hoc promotions, and curbing additional charge assignments.

The committee will work closely with concerned departments to record decisions, take actionable measures, and report progress to the General Administration Department for appraisal.

This initiative is expected to bring greater transparency and efficiency to the promotion process, fostering career growth and addressing long-pending grievances of government employees. (ANB)

India's Social Protection Coverage Doubled from 24.4% to 48.8%: Mansukh Mandaviya

Observer News Service

New Delhi: Union Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated a two-day international seminar on "Formalization and Social Security Coverage for Workers in the Informal Sector: Challenges and Innovations" in New Delhi on Monday. Union Minister of State for Labour & Employment, Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, Secretary (Labour & Employment), Sumita Dawra, ISSA President, Dr. Mohammed Azman along with other dignitaries graced the inaugural session of this technical seminar.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Mandaviya highlighted the significance of the two-day seminar, stressing that social security must reach ordinary people to ensure they can live with their basic needs adequately met. He emphasized that the concept of social security dates back to ancient times and remains a continuous process. Quoting the great philosopher Chanakya, Dr. Mandaviya underscored that those living below the poverty line, particularly from the lowest strata of society, should be entitled to all benefits and ease of living. He further stressed that even self-employed individuals should also be provided with social security measures.

Dr. Mandaviya pointed out that, given India's size and demographic diversity, no other country has made as significant progress as India in improving social security for its citizens over the past decade. He highlighted that "India's social protection coverage doubled from 24.4% to 48.8%," according to



ILO's World Social Protection Report 2024-26. Nearly 920 million people, or 65% of the population, are covered by at least one social protection benefit—either cash or in-kind—through schemes initiated by the Central Government. The global average in social protection coverage increased by 5% points due to India's substantial advancements.

India has made notable strides in areas such as health security, pension security, livelihood security, and food security, ensuring comprehensive support for its population. Dr. Mandaviya shared specific achievements, such as 600 million Indians now being covered under health security, with free health coverage of up to 5 lakh available at over 24,000 hospitals across the country. He also mentioned that 800 million people benefit from free food grain distribution, and the launch of the eShram portal has been a key initiative, enabling more than 300 million informal workers to register and access social security benefits. In the past decade, 248 million people have escaped multidimensional poverty due to these social

security measures.

The Union Minister also highlighted India's impressive economic growth, with a GDP growth of 6.7% and a workforce of 643 million people. Women's participation in the workforce has risen from 23.3% to 41.7% in the last six years. Dr. Mandaviya also addressed the emerging gig economy, announcing that the new labour code has defined gig workers, and efforts are being made to bring them under the umbrella of social security.

Union Minister of State for Labour & Employment, Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, also addressed the gathering, emphasizing the significance of the seminar, calling it timely. She highlighted that this international event marks an important milestone in advancing social protection for informal workers. Sushri Karandlaje reiterated the government's strong commitment to promoting and protecting workers' rights, ensuring they are shielded from discrimination and exploitation, and provided with equal economic and social opportunities. She pointed out that this vision aligns with Prime Minister

Modi's clear direction, who acknowledges the crucial role of informal sector workers in nation-building, referring to them as partners in achieving a "Viksit Bharat" (developed India). She further stressed the need for both the government and social security institutions to innovate and collaborate in creating solutions that effectively address gaps in social protection for workers.

Secretary (Labour & Employment), Sumita Dawra, highlighted India's commitment to providing adequate social protection and generating quality jobs. She emphasized harnessing the demographic dividend, noting that over 65% of India's population is below the age of 35 years. Dawra mentioned that to ensure social security for formal sector workers, the government is strengthening services and expanding coverage under the guidance of Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya through the EPFO and ESIC. She also highlighted the government's efforts to extend social protection to informal sector workers, pointing out the launch of several schemes, including the eShram portal, which serves as a one-stop solution providing easy access to central and state welfare schemes for over 300 million unorganized sector workers already registered on the platform.

Union Minister visited various exhibition stalls showcasing initiatives like e-Shram, National Career Service portal etc. undertaken by the Ministry of Labour & Employment to strengthen the social security cover in the country at the ISSA-ESIC international seminar.

Handicrafts Dept Warns Against Sale of Fake Products

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Handicrafts and Handloom Department, Kashmir Monday warned showroom owners dealing with hand-made craft products to desist from selling machine-made items in the garb of genuine handmade products, failing which strict action under the ambit of Tourist Trade and Quality Control Acts shall be initiated.

A spokesperson from the Handicrafts and Handloom Department stated that several complaints have been received by the department wherein machine-made Turkish carpets have been sold to tourists and other buyers in the name of Kashmir hand-knotted carpets, thus bringing a bad name to the rich heritage of Kashmir. "Acting swiftly, several showrooms are being inspected and unlabelled machine-made products confiscated," he said.

The spokesman further stated that the Central Inspection Squad from the Quality Control wing of the Department has been directed to intensify inspections of various showrooms in Srinagar City Centre and en route health resorts of Gulmarg and Pahalgam, besides other locations to crackdown on traders engaged in sale of counterfeit products, branded as hand-made Kashmiri Art.

In order to promote sale of exquisite hand-made products, the spokesperson urged the stakeholders to approach the Handicrafts & Handloom Department for GI tagging, testing and certification of their products at CDI & IIC, reaching out to the customer satisfaction and safeguarding the rich heritage of Kashmir.

"The department has worked out a plan to significantly increase the capacity of testing and certification of hand-made products especially at Pashmina Testing and Quality Certification Centre at CDI," he said, adding that various IEC campaigns are currently running at local as well as national level to motivate the customers to insist upon buying labelled hand-made products.

Reconstitutes Establishment-cum-Selection Committee

In partial modification of Government Order No. 1837-JK(GAD) of 2024 dated 29.10.2024, the J&K Government today accorded sanction to the re-constitution of the Establishment-cum-Selection Committee with Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, IAS, as its Chairman while M Raju, IAS, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, General Administration Department has been appointed as Member Secretary.

Shantmanu, IAS Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Higher Education Department, Shaleen Kabra, IAS Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Jal Shakti Department, Santosh D. Vaidya, IAS Principal Secretary to the Government, Finance Department and Achal Sethi, Administrative Secretary, Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs have been appointed as its members.

The Administrative Secretary of the department to which the case pertains shall be co-opted as a Special Invitee. The terms of reference of the Establishment-cum-Selection Committee and the procedure to be adopted by it, while making the selection for the posts within its purview, shall remain the same as contained in Government Order No. 1488-GAD of 2011.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Trump Returns

and years of illegal and unconstitutional restriction of expression, I will also sign an executive order to stop all censorship and bring back free speech to America," he said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar attended the inauguration ceremony as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's special envoy.

"The scales of justice will be rebalanced. The vicious, violent and unfair weaponisation of the Justice Department and government will end," Trump said.

In his remarks, Trump said America will not be "conquered or intimidated"

"We will not fail. From this day on, the United States of America will be a free, sovereign and independent nation," he says.

"The future is ours, and our golden age has just begun."

In his address, Trump also pledged to increase domestic oil production, establish a government entity to collect promised tariffs and revoke the programme promoting electric vehicles.

JD Vance was sworn in as the vice president ahead of Trump.

Trump registered a spectacular victory over his Democratic rival Kamala Harris in the November 5 presidential election, defying two assassination attempts, two presidential impeachments and his criminal conviction.

Four years ago, Trump had left Washington as a pariah in the face of his unsuccessful attempt to overturn the 2020 presidential election to stay in office.

His victory in the bitterly fought election was widely acknowledged as the most momentous comeback in American political history.

The inauguration ceremony was held indoors under the Capitol Rotunda as against the initially planned outdoor venue in view of frigid temperatures in the US capital city.

The ceremony was attended by Trump's wife Melania, his daughter Ivanka and her husband Jared Kushner, and billionaires Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Tim Cook.

Central Team

several experts, reached Rajouri district headquarters on Sunday.

The team members received a briefing from senior district, health and police officers before heading to the village early on Monday.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah ordered the constitution of the inter-ministerial team to ascertain the causes of the deaths in the three families related to each other in the remote village, about 55 kilometres from Rajouri town, between December 7 and January 19.

The officials said the team, accompanied by dozens of senior officers of various departments, reached Badhaal around 11.30 am and visited the bereaved families, even as grave-diggers were preparing the last resting place of Yameen Kousar (15) -- the sixth child of Md Aslam who breathed her last at the SMGS Hospital in Jammu on January 19.

The central team divided itself in two groups and undertook an investigation, including collecting samples, they said.

National Conference leader and local MLA Javid Iqbal Choudhary said the team's visit was meant to carry forward the ongoing investigation to ascertain the cause of the deaths.

"Earlier, health teams from the ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research), AIIMS (Delhi), PGI (Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh) and others from premier institutions visited the village along with a full-fledged laboratory. They were all experts in the field and the visit of this inter-ministerial team is to carry forward that investigation," he said.

The officials said Kousar's body reached the village late in the afternoon and was buried in the new graveyard set up adjacent to her five siblings and grandparents who died over the past week. Nine members of two families died in the village between December 7 and 12.

Additional District Magistrate (Kotranka) Dil Mir carried out the proceedings of sealing Aslam's single-storey thatched-roof home shortly after the experts accompanying the team collected samples from there.

"This is the house where eight of the deceased persons were living in and the seizure is routine work. The house, along with the house of another victim, Fazal Hussain, were sealed earlier and reopened to facilitate the experts to collect samples," Mir told PTI.

He said the government had already banned holding any feast, whether related to weddings or religious ceremonies of the dead, for the time being, similar to the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the investigation to ascertain the causes of the deaths was yet to be completed.

"The people are fully cooperating as they understand the gravity of the situation," the officer said.

While the village is in grief, one resident -- Ikhlaq Shah -- tied the knot in a simple function that saw the groom accompanied by four of his close relatives and friends visiting the home of the bride in the nearby Draj village and performing 'nikah'.

"We cancelled the marriage function due to the grief in the village but performed the nikah ceremony, according to the already-announced schedule," Shah's relative Md Hafeez said.

He said they had sought permission from the executive magistrate concerned and added that no one was invited to the function.

According to the officials, the central team, in collaboration with the local administration, would work on providing immediate relief as well as taking precautionary measures to prevent such incidents in the future.

Experts from some of the most reputable institutions in the country have been arranged to manage the situation and understand the causes of the deaths.

The patients complained of fever, pain, nausea, intense sweating and loss of consciousness before dying within days of their admission to hospitals.

Earlier, a Jammu and Kashmir government spokesperson had said that investigation and samples empirically indicated that the incidents were not due to a communicable disease of bacterial or viral origin and that there was no public health angle.

The police have also set up a special investigation team after certain neurotoxins were found in the samples of the dead.

Authorities recently sealed a spring in the village after its water tested positive for some pesticides or insecticides.

The additional deputy commissioner ordered the sealing of the spring, along with deployment of two to three security personnel round-the-clock, at the water resource in the village.

"It is a precautionary measure... We are already providing them (villagers) fresh water through tankers," he said.

SIT To Probe

inter-ministerial experts to Rajouri and they have reached here," Sinha told reporters on the sidelines of a function here.

He said police have set up a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the events from other angles.

"We will brief you once the reality comes to the fore," Sinha said.

Aslam's 6th

Dr Singh said her body was sent to the mortuary. He said the patient was shifted to GMC Jammu from Rajouri on January 12 and her condition was critical for the last three days.

With this unfortunate casualty, the death toll due to 'mysterious illness' at Badhaal village of Koteranka Sub Division in Rajouri, has reached up to 17. Eight members of the family of Mohd Aslam including his six children (two sons and four daughters) besides parents-- Mohd Yousof and Jatti Begum, have died. The family members, relatives and the villagers of the area alleged that JKUT Administration failed to shift serious children to AIIMS Delhi despite repeated requests of the relatives and left the hapless patients to die in Jammu's SMGS hospital.

J&K Bank Reports

Sustained Growth

The Bank's operating metrics reflected steady growth, with Net Interest Income (NII) growth of 17.8% YoY and 5.1% QoQ for the quarter to Rs 1508.68 Cr, while NII for Nine-months rose by 10.7% YoY to Rs 4313.83 Cr. Other income for the quarter has also surged by 32.9% YOY.

Net Interest Margin (NIM) for the quarter has improved to 4.04%, up 14 bps QoQ. Return on Assets (RoA) increased by 19 bps YoY to 1.34% for the quarter, while Cost-to-Income Ratio reduced for the quarter to 57.28% YoY from 62.36%.

Commenting upon the operating numbers, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "These Q3 results reaffirm our strong fundamentals and operational efficiency. A 26.2% YoY increase in quarterly net profit, along with a 32.7% rise for the nine-month period, highlights our sustained focus on delivering value to stakeholders while navigating dynamic market conditions. Driven by efficiency gains, our Cost-to-Income Ratio has also reduced by over 5% YoY."

He added, "On this occasion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our employees for their steadfast dedication and to our customers and stakeholders especially our promoters for their unwavering trust and continued support."

Asset Quality

The Bank's Gross NPA ratio declined YoY to 4.08%, down by 76 basis points (bps) from

4.84%, while the Net NPA stood at 0.94%. The Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) for the quarter was at 89.67%.

In his comments on asset quality, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee remarked, "Asset quality will continue to be our focus with added emphasis, so that we meet our market guidance of GNPA 3.5 % comfortably by the end of the fiscal."

Business Growth

The Bank recorded significant growth in business volumes with Net Advances increasing by 7% YoY to Rs 95990.38 Cr. Deposits grew by 9.7 % YoY to Rs 140947.14 Cr, while maintaining one of the best CASA ratios in the industry at 48.17%.

Commenting on the growth, Amitava Chatterjee said, "We are on track to achieve our annual profitability targets, supported by strong growth in business volumes, improving asset quality and enhanced capital adequacy. This performance aligns with our strategic focus on expanding our presence in the rest of the country while maintaining leadership in core markets."

Capital Adequacy

The Bank's Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) under Basel III improved to 15.09 % from 14.18% last year.

Regarding capital position, MD & CEO remarked, "We are well-cushioned in terms of capital with our CAR at over 15%, which will be further boosted by internal accruals on account of net profit for current fiscal. It provides us with ample headroom for expanding our lending operations."

He also pointed to a positive factor in the Bank's shareholding pattern. "Despite financial services sector witnessing heavy FPI outflow during 2024, there is an increase in FII/FPI shareholding to 7.07% as on 31st December, 2024 from 5.81% recorded a year ago", he said.

Future Focus

Speaking about the Bank's focus going forward, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee remarked, "As we are in the final quarter of the current fiscal, our objective remains to scale up growth while delivering superior value to stakeholders through quality customer engagement and enhanced operational efficiency."

"We plan to strengthen our focus on priority sector lending, particularly agriculture and MSMEs, while exploring growth opportunities in emerging markets in the rest of the country. With a robust foundation and clear strategic direction, I think, we are well-positioned to enhance our growth momentum and deliver long-term value to all our stakeholders", he added.

HC Quashes PSA

of the detention order (No. DMP/PSA/23/11) dated 31 March 2023.

"The detainee (detainee) cannot be expected to make a meaningful exercise of his Constitutional and Statutory rights guaranteed under Article 22 (5) of the Constitution of India and Section 13 of Jammu and Kashmir Public

Safety Act, 1978, unless and until the material on which the detention order is based, is supplied to detainee," the court said.

The representations by Bhat's wife and the son were moved after the detention order was approved by the Government on 5 April 2023, the court observed. It implies he has been deprived of his right of making a representation against his detention before the detention order was approved by the Government, for, having not been informed to do so, the court said.

"It has consistently been held by the Courts of law that violation of any of the constitutional rights of the detainee, by the detaining authority, puts under cloud the whole detention order."

Furthermore, the court said that it was not convinced to accept the plea of the authorities that Bhat was not showing the signs of remorse after having been bound down under Section 107 Cr.PC read with Section 151 Cr. PC, as there is nothing on record in support of such contention.

"The respondents (authorities) cannot be expected to take recourse to hollow assertions only, as they were obliged, by law, to see that the detainee has indeed indulged in the similar activities for which he was bound down and there was a reasonable prognosis about his future conduct, in light of the well-articulated circumstances, that similar activities would likely be repeated by the detainee," the court added.

LG Registers Himself

Raj Bhawan and presented the organ donation pledge certificate to the Lieutenant Governor.

"The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, registered himself with the Ayushman Bharat Organ Donation Registry (ABODR) of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India," said a spokesperson from Raj Bhawan.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed his willingness for organ donation during a programme organised by the Bharatiya Jain Sansthan on Sunday. Sandeep Jain, president of Bharatiya Jain Sangathan, was also present.

J&K Govt Promotes

Gurmeet Singh, Rasheeq Ahmad, and Mohd Ibrahim from the 2007 batch.

The 2008 batch, which has the highest number of promoted officers, includes Ayaz Ahmad Sheikh, Vivek Shekhar Sharma, Bharat Bhushan Sharma, and Zulafqar Ahmad, among others. This batch comprises dynamic officers who are expected to take on increased responsibilities in maintaining law and order in the Union Territory.

The high-powered committee as per the officials convened a meeting on Wednesday and approved the names of five officers for promotion to the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police.

SSP Srinagar city Intiyaz Hussain Mir, has also been promoted to the Super Time Scale (Level 13A) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police Service.

The order was issued by the Principal Secretary to the Government, Home Department, Chandraker Bharti under the directives of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir

1330 Schools With 31,000 Enrolment Run By 'Single Teachers'



Agencies

SRINAGAR: In Jammu and Kashmir more than 31,000 students are enrolled in those schools that function with a single teacher posted or deployed—thus raising a question on quality of the education in educational institutes.

The updated official figures reveal that in Jammu and Kashmir, 31,054 students were enrolled in those educational institutes wherein only one teacher was posted or deployed.

According to the recent official figures, more than 1300 schools in Jammu and Kashmir were those institutes that were functioning with only a single teacher.

It has been learnt that "At least 1330 schools in Jammu and Kashmir were functioning with single teachers."

Principal Secretary, School Education Department was not available to comment on the issue. Besides, Project Director of Jammu and Kashmir Samagra Shiksha could not answer the repeated calls.

President of the Private School Association of Jammu and Kashmir (PSAJK) G N Var said that "In more than 5400 private schools in Jammu and Kashmir, we have a Pupil

Teacher Ratio of 1:20. Besides, in every school, we have a minimum of seven teachers in each private school."

On asking about the closure of any private schools owing to low or zero student enrolment, Var said, "Right from the very inception, not even a single private school has remained with zero student enrolment. However, because of government restriction, intimidation and harassment by way of imposing filing of NOCs and other documents, some private schools may have got closed due to the government restriction."

On Saturday, it was reported that the updated official figures reveal that in Jammu and Kashmir, at least 119 schools were functioning in the region with no student enrolled in the institution.

The figures have revealed that at least 238 teachers were posted or deployed in the schools wherein no student was enrolled.

It also states that on an average at least seven teachers were posted or deployed in schools of Jammu and Kashmir.

In July-2024, the news agency reported that there were a total of 23,117 government run schools in Jammu and Kashmir out of which 4394 have been deleted from the UDISE data—(KNO)

J&K Cabinet Clears Key Proposals

Recommends Convening Of Assembly Session In March



Agencies

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet which met under the chairmanship of Chief Minister here on Monday cleared several administrative proposals.

Sources revealed that the Cabinet cleared the proposal of revision of Dearness Allowance (DA) rates payable to government employees, pensioners, and family pensioners, effective from July 1, 2024.

It also gave its nod for implementation of a 3-tier faculty structure in Government Dental College, Srinagar, and Indira Gandhi Government Dental College, Jammu, as per the norms of the Dental Council of India (DCI) on staffing patterns. It also cleared the proposals

relating to grant of administrative approval for key proposals mooted by the Housing & Urban Development Department. The proposals included dumpsite remediation through bio-mining/bio-remediation of 11.00 Lakh MTs of legacy waste at Achan dumping site, Srinagar, at an estimated cost of Rs. 60.50 crore (Rs. 33.00 crore from 14th FC and Rs. 27.50 crore from SBM 2.0), pollution abatement and conservation of River Jhelum at Chuntkul and Gawkadul areas in Srinagar, at an estimated cost of Rs. 6445.68 lakh (Rs. 6380.68 lakh under the National River Conservation Plan) and pollution abatement and conservation of River Banganga at Katra Town, at an estimated cost of

Rs. 92.10 crore under the National River Conservation Plan.

The cabinet also cleared the proposal of construction of a new hospital block for the emergency operation theatre at SMHS Hospital, Srinagar.

It also cleared the proposal on dispensing with oral tests/interviews for posts in pay level-6, as recommended by the J&K Service Selection Board.

The amendments to the Jammu and Kashmir Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, were also cleared by the cabinet.

Sources disclosed that the cabinet also recommended to the Lieutenant Governor to convene a session of J&K Assembly from the first week of March.

The proposals would now go to LG for the approval, sources added—(KNO)

J&K To Import 900 High-Quality Sheep From Australia

Agencies

SRINAGAR: In a bid to meet the rising demand for meat in Jammu and Kashmir, the state government has approved the import of 900 sheep from Australia under the Integrated Agriculture Development Program (IADP).

The initiative, with a budget of Rs 26 crore, focuses on two high-yield breeds, Dorper and Texel, renowned for their superior meat production capabilities.

As per the details, the Jammu and Kashmir government has decided to import 900 high-quality sheep from Australia to meet the increasing demand for meat in the region. These sheep, belonging to the Dorper and Texel breeds, are known worldwide for their superior meat production. The initiative is part of the Integrated Agriculture Development Program (IADP) and comes with a budget of Rs 26 crore. The plan aims to make the state self-sufficient in meat production, reducing dependency on imports.

Currently, Jammu and Kashmir consume approximately 15 lakh sheep annually, with 41% of the demand being met through imports from other parts of the country, costing the state Rs 1,400 crore. The new project is part of a broader Rs 329 crore, five-year



"UT consumes more than one lakh sheep every month, 41% demand met through imports"

plan to boost wool and mutton production while cutting down on imports.

Official sources said that the imported sheep will undergo a thorough quarantine process, spending one month in quarantine in Australia before being transported to India, where they will stay in dedicated quarantine centers for another two months. A center has already been set up in Rajbagh Srinagar, Kathua-Jammu, and the sheep will later be housed at government sheep rearing farms in Reasi. Out of the 900 sheep, 450

Dorper sheep will be allocated to the Jammu division, while the same number of Texel sheep will go to the Kashmir division.

Dorper sheep, originally from South Africa, are known for their high fertility, adaptability to different climates, and rapid muscle development. Lambs of this breed can grow to 35-40 kilograms in just four months, with adult sheep weighing up to 90 kilograms. Texel sheep, a Dutch breed from the Netherlands, are equally prized for their exceptional muscle development. They have smooth heads and legs, short height, broad faces, black noses, and small ears, making them ideal for meat production.

Reports inform that a team of six sheep farming experts from Jammu and Kashmir will soon leave for Australia to oversee the selection and transportation process. (KNO)

Army Man Killed In Sopore Gunfight

Observer News Service

SOPORE: An army man was killed in an encounter that erupted in the Sopore area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Monday. The operation marks the first gunfight in Jammu and Kashmir in the year 2025.

The operation, conducted in the Gujjar Pati, Zaloor, under the jurisdiction of Sopore police district, was based on intelligence inputs regarding the presence of terrorists, an official said.

He, however, said that after an extensive search, the terrorists managed to flee the encounter site. The operation was then called off.

The official said the operation began with a joint team of the Army, CRPF, and Jammu & Kashmir Police cordoning off the area. The search intensified after fire was observed from inside a busted hideout.

The operation, which was halted due to darkness, resumed at first light. Security measures had already been heightened across the valley ahead of Republic Day celebrations.

In the ensuing gunfight, an army man, Swr Pangala Kartheek of 22 Rashtriya Rifles, sustained fatal injuries and succumbed, the official said, adding that despite sealing all entry and exit points, the terrorists escaped.

The Indian Army's Chinar Corps paid rich tributes to Swr Pangala Kartheek for his "supreme sacrifice".

In a post on social media platform X, Chinar Corps said: "All ranks of the Chinar Corps salute the supreme sacrifice of Braveheart Swr Pangala Kartheek, who laid down his life in the line of duty. Chinar Warriors salute his immense valour and sacrifice, express deepest condolences, and stand in solidarity with the bereaved family."

J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also paid homage to the martyred soldier. "I salute the supreme sacrifice of our Army braveheart Swr Pangala Kartheek. His valour and sacrifice will never be forgotten. The entire nation stands firmly with the family of the martyr in this hour of grief".

GMC Anantnag Introduces Diet Facility For Patients

Agencies

ANANTNAG: To enhance patient care and uphold hospital decorum, the administration of Mirza Mohammad Afzal Begh Memorial (MMABM) Associated Hospital, Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag, has prohibited outside food for patients while introducing a dedicated diet facility tailored to their medical needs.

A hospital official said that this decision is aimed at improving hygiene, discipline and overall care standards within the hospital.

He said attendants are now allowed to visit patients strictly between 3:00 pm and 4:30 pm, adding that this restriction ensures minimal disruptions to patient care and helps medical staff focus on their duties efficiently.

"The hospital now provides four meals daily, from breakfast to dinner, specially prepared to meet the nutritional and medical needs of patients. Attendants can access food from outside facilities such as the hospital canteen," he said.

To ensure hygiene and pre-

vent health hazards, patients are no longer permitted to bring outside food into the wards, the official said, adding that the use of polythene bags within hospital premises has been strictly banned to maintain cleanliness and align with eco-friendly practices.

The measures were introduced following concerns about improper hygiene and issues such as rodent infestation, which were exacerbated by food brought from outside.

The hospital's Incharge Security Officer has been directed to enforce these rules diligently, with strict action to be taken against any violations.

The administration has urged patients, attendants and staff to cooperate with the new measures, saying these changes aim to create a safe and conducive environment for patient recovery.

"This initiative ensures patients receive hygienic and nutritionally balanced meals while also contributing to better hygiene and discipline within the hospital," the official said—(KNO)

KASHMIR DIVISION

Traffic Enforcement Generates More Than Rs 28.36 Cr Of Revenue

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The traffic enforcement authorities in Kashmir have made significant strides in improving road discipline, generating a revenue of Rs 28,36,03,261 from 8,25,304 challans issued between January and December 2024.

In addition to this, a total of 12,612 vehicles were seized across the region for various traffic violations.

In Traffic City Srinagar, 4,13,150 challans were executed, leading to a revenue collection of Rs 16,56,97,211.

December saw the highest number of challans at 43,947, followed by 41,225 in July and 37,506 in August. August also recorded the highest revenue collection at Rs 1,61,85,600, while February brought in Rs 1,52,42,000.



April had the lowest, with 528 impounded vehicles.

Meanwhile, in Traffic Rural Kashmir, 4,12,154 challans were executed, generating Rs 11,79,06,050 in revenue. March recorded the highest number of challans in rural areas, at 40,410, followed by October with 39,583 and January with 37,883. October also witnessed the highest revenue collection of Rs 1,26,35,630, followed by Rs 1,08,10,850 in July.

In rural areas, 3,497 vehicles were seized, including 1,504 two-wheelers, 112 three-wheelers, and 1,861 four-wheelers. The highest number of seizures occurred in April, with 386 vehicles, while

March recorded 265.

Officials emphasized that the enforcement drive aims to enhance road safety and ensure compliance with traffic regulations. The implementation of modern technology has allowed for online fine issuance, and vehicles are seized for violations to maintain order.

An official stated that while the enforcement drive plays a key role in regulating traffic, it is not a standalone solution to reducing accidents. "We can fine and seize vehicles, but road safety is everyone's responsibility. It is essential for people to follow traffic rules, wear helmets, and avoid reckless driving," he remarked.—(KNO)

J&K Election Commission Concludes Annual Revision Of Panchayat Electoral Rolls

Agencies

JAMMU: The J&K Election Commission concluded annual revision of Panchayat Electoral Rolls with publication of Final Electoral Rolls, with January, 1st 2025 as qualifying date.

During the annual revision of Panchayat Electoral Rolls, which was started on 11-11-2024 with the publication of draft electoral rolls, several additions, deletions and changes in the entries of electoral rolls were incorporated.

A total of 341072 new voters have been added and 110768 names have been deleted because of death, shifting or other reasons. Besides, corrections were carried out in details of 10726 voters and 31180 voters were transposed to other Panchayat Halqas/Wards.

The final panchayat electoral roll has a total of 7000670 voters which includes 3566475 males, 3434048 females and 147 third gender voters and are available in the offices of



District Panchayat Election Officers, EROs, AEROs and PBEOs.

The Commission appreciated the cooperation of all stakeholders including political parties, District Panchayat Election Officers, Panchayat Observers, EROs, AEROs, PBEOs and youth in particular who turned up in huge numbers to register their names in the Panchayat Electoral Rolls.

It is pertinent to mention here that the process of Revision of Panchayat Electoral Rolls is a continuous updation exercise. All eligible voters who are 18 years of age as on 01-01-2025 and their names are not figuring in the Final Electoral Rolls can get themselves enrolled by filling the requisite form and depositing the same with the concerned ERO/AERO.(KNS)

SPVLG Foundation Launches Project Mamta With Medical Cum Awareness Camp



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The SPVLG Foundation inaugurated its flagship initiative, Project Mamta (Maternal Assistance through Monitoring and Treatment Assurance), with an Awareness cum Medical Camp held in Dessu, Kokernag, Anantnag. This initiative aims to address critical maternal health challenges in tribal communities by providing accessible medical services and promoting health awareness.

The project is funded by J&K Bank under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, underscoring the bank's commitment to community welfare.

The camp saw a significant turnout of tribal women, who benefited from free medical consultations, essential medicines, and health education sessions. Medical professionals highlighted key aspects of maternal health, including the importance of prenatal care, nutrition, and regular health check-ups to ensure the well-

being of mothers and children. Syed Shahid Hussain, Branch Head of Larnoo, Kokernag, attended the event and reiterated the bank's dedication to community welfare. "At J&K Bank, we are committed to driving meaningful change through impactful CSR initiatives. Project Mamta is a step forward in ensuring better maternal healthcare in underserved regions," he stated.

A representative from SPVLG Foundation expressed gratitude to J&K Bank for supporting this initiative. "Project Mamta is our effort to bridge healthcare gaps in marginalised areas. With the support of J&K Bank, we aim to provide sustainable healthcare solutions, ensuring healthier futures for mothers and children," they said.

The SPVLG Foundation plans to organize more such programs under Project Mamta, reaffirming its mission to improve maternal health outcomes and foster community development in remote regions.

Choudhary Replaces Hina Bhat As KVIB Chairperson

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Monday ordered reconstitution of board of directors of Jammu and Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB).

An order, a copy of which lies with the Kashmir Observer, reads: "In supersession of all previous orders issued on the subject, Board of Directors of J&K Khadi and Village Industries Board is reconstituted."

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Industries and Commerce Department, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, has been appointed as the chair-

man of the board. He has replaced the incumbent chairperson of the board, senior BJP leader, Dr Hina Bhat.

Administrative Secretary Finance, Administrative Secretary Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department, Administrative Secretary Industries and Commerce Department, Registrar Cooperative Societies, J&K, Director General (Codes), Finance Department, Director MSME DL, J&K, Director Industries and Commerce, Jammu, Mission Director Rural Livelihood Mission J&K and Director Industries and Commerce Kashmir have been appointed as directors of the board—(KNO)

Minor Boy Dies After Hit By Vehicle In Awantipora

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A minor boy lost his life after he was hit by a vehicle in Awantipora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district. An official said that a minor boy was hit by an unknown vehicle at Beighpora, Awantipora in which he received critical injuries.

He said the boy identified as Furqan Muzaffar (11) son of Muzaffar Ahmad Shah resident of Renzipora Awantipora was shifted to hospital where he succumbed to injuries.

Furqan, according to locals, was the lone son of the Shah family. Meanwhile, police have registered a case and started investigation in this regard.

With Hunger, You Can Fight Back From Injuries Anytime: Shami

Press Trust of India

KOLKATA: A sports person can overcome multiple injury setbacks as long as he has an insatiable hunger to play for the country, said India pacer Mohammed Shami, who is set to make a national comeback after 14 months.

Shami last played for India in the ODI World Cup final in November 2023. He had sustained an ankle injury on his left leg that required surgery.

The veteran fast bowler is expected to make his India comeback with the first T20 against England at his home ground here on Wednesday. He has also been picked in the ODI Champions Trophy squad.

"Country ke liye jo khelne ki



bhoonkh hai woh kabhi khatam nahin honi chahiye. Appko agar

usse pyar hai toh aap hamesha fightback karte rahenge, injured chaha aap 10 baar ho jaye (The first thing I feel is that the hunger to play for the country should never end," Shami said at an organised by Cricket Association of Bengal.

"If you have that hunger, you will always fight back, no matter how many times you get injured.

"Mere dimaag mein hamesha yehi rehta hai mein kitna bhi match khel loon woh mere liye kam hai, kyunki ek baar agar meine cricket chhod toh shayad woh dobara na hoga (No matter how many matches I play, it always feels like less. Because once I leave cricket, I may never get this chance again)," he added.

He was speaking at CAB's felicitation ceremony of the victorious Under-15 women's cricketers at Eden Gardens here.

"It has never happened that players who represent their state or country think about leaving the game after an injury. Whenever we get injured, the only thought in our mind is -- when can we return?" Shami added.

Shami, who missed key assignments including the T20 World Cup and Border-Gavaskar Trophy five-match Test series, stressed that overcoming injuries is part of an athlete's journey.

"If you are hardworking and committed, no injury can keep you away for too long. You will always find a way to return."

JKCA's District Kulgam Carrom Championship Concludes

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The two-day District Kulgam Carrom Championship 2024-25 concluded on Monday, drawing participation and talent in all categories. Organised by the J&K Carrom Association under the "My Youth My Pride" initiative of the J&K Sports Council, the event aimed to encourage youth participation in sports and nurture budding talent.

The competition included four categories—Cadets, Sub-Junior, Junior, and Senior—for both boys and girls.

During the closing ceremony, Mohd Shafi, Manager of the Multi-Purpose Sports Complex, Quimoh Kulgam, distributed medals and certificates to the winners and runners-up. The event was also graced by the presence of Mir Tajamul, Kho Kho Coach; Mr. Arif Sultan, Treasurer of the JKCA; and several senior players

Results:



SENIOR MEN

1st Place: Aijaz
Runner-up: Sameer
3rd Place: Yawar

JUNIOR BOYS

1st Place: Faizan
Runner-up: Javaid
3rd Place: Farik

SUB-JUNIOR BOYS

1st Place: Lihaan
Runner-up: Furqan
3rd Place: Hazik Khanday

CADET BOYS

1st Place: Soman
Runner-up: Azhar
3rd Place: Ilham

JUNIOR GIRLS

1st Place: Sadia Sabzar
Runner-up: Muntaha Bilal
3rd Place: Tamana Mehraj

SUB-JUNIOR GIRLS

1st Place: Aisha Showkat
Runner-up: Adeena Sajad
3rd Place: Hadifa Amin

CADET GIRLS

1st Place: Fatima Khalid
Runner-up: Arooba Adil
3rd Place: Aisha Bint Ishaq

Up next, the JKCA and District Shopian Carrom Association will organise the District Shopian Carrom Championship 2024-25 at Batpora, Shopian, on January 21 and 22.

J&K To Face Rohit Sharma & Mumbai In Ranji Trophy

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Rohit Sharma, the captain of India's Test and ODI teams, is set to play his first Ranji Trophy match since 2015 after he has been included in Mumbai's squad for their upcoming match against J&K, starting on Thursday, January 23, at the MCA Sharad Pawar Cricket Academy in Bandra-Kurla Complex, Mumbai.

This marks Sharma's return to domestic cricket after a gap of nearly nine years, with his last appearance in a first-class match being in September 2016.

Besides Sharma, young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal has also been named in the squad, which will be led by Ajinkya Rahane, who guided Mumbai to the Ranji Trophy title last season.

Notably, Mumbai has played five matches in the ongoing season, winning three, losing one, and drawing one. They currently sit third in the Elite Group A points table, behind Baroda and J&K.

The J&K squad will be led by the experienced Paras Dogra, who has been appointed as the captain, with Shubham Khajuria serving as the vice-captain.

The 15-member squad will have



players like international pacer Umran Malik, Abdul Samad and Vivrant Sharma, a versatile all-rounder. Shivansh Sharma will take on the role of wicketkeeper-batter.

Other notable members of the squad include Ahmed Bandy, Abhinav Puri, Shubham Pundir, Sahil Lotra, Abid Mushtaq, Yudhvir Singh, Aquib Nabi and Rasikh Salam. (KNO)

Short TAKES

Rishabh Pant Named Captain Of Lucknow Super Giants

Dynamic keeper-batter Rishabh Pant was on Monday named the captain of Lucknow Super Giants for the upcoming IPL and he vowed to give his "200 percent" to win the team's maiden title.

Pant was picked at the mega auction for an IPL record Rs 27 crore by the franchise owner Sanjiv Goenka.

"I will give my 200 percent. That's my commitment to you. I will try whatever is there in my power to repay the faith. I am really excited and looking forward to new beginning and new energy. And have a blast out there with lot of fun," Pant said.

"We start with new hope and aspirations. And most importantly, new confidence. I wanted to introduce you all to our new captain Rishabh Pant," Goenka said.

This is Pant's second stint as a leader in the IPL.

Worst Man United Team Ever? Numbers Behind Amorim's Claim

It has never been this bad at Manchester United.

Well, that's the opinion of the club's latest manager, anyway, with Ruben Amorim saying Sunday about his underperforming team: "We are being the worst, maybe, in the history of Manchester United."

After all, United is a record 20-time English champion, and one of the biggest sports teams and brands in the world.

13th - Current position of United in the 20-team Premier League after 21 of 38 games. With 26 points, United is closer to the relegation zone than the European qualification places and on course for its lowest finish in the Premier League era (since 1992), which is eighth last year.

24 - Number of points United is behind Premier League leader Liverpool, its great rival.

7 - The number of losses in 15 games under Amorim since he took charge in November to replace Erik ten Hag.

10th Amorim is the 10th manager — either permanent or interim — appointed by United since Ferguson's retirement.

Lewis Hamilton Arrives In Maranello For 1st Day At Ferrari

Seven-time Formula 1 champion Lewis Hamilton arrived at Ferrari's headquarters on Monday to get down to work with his new team.

First up was a short visit to the Fiorano track followed by a meeting with Piero Ferrari and then "a day-long total immersion program," the team said.

"There are some days that you know you'll remember forever and today, my first as a Scuderia Ferrari HP driver, is one of those days," Hamilton said. "I've been lucky enough to have achieved things in my career I never thought possible, but part of me has always held on to that dream of racing in red. I couldn't be happier to realize that dream today."

The 40-year-old Hamilton is expected to drive a 2022 or 2023 Ferrari car over the next few days at Fiorano.

Hamilton announced last year that he was leaving Mercedes for Ferrari.

28th year OF PUBLICATION

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