



DIPK-11439/25
Dated: 28-02-2026

HPV VACCINE: A SHOT FOR PROTECTION A STEP FOR CARE



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 Register on the U-WIN digital platform to schedule your daughter's HPV vaccination. Visit <https://uwin.mohfw.gov.in/home> For more details, please contact your nearest health worker/ ANM at the nearest government health facility.

HPV vaccine is provided for free to all 14 year old girls at government health facilities.

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'GOONJ 2026'

Make higher edu campuses hubs of new ideas: LG Sinha

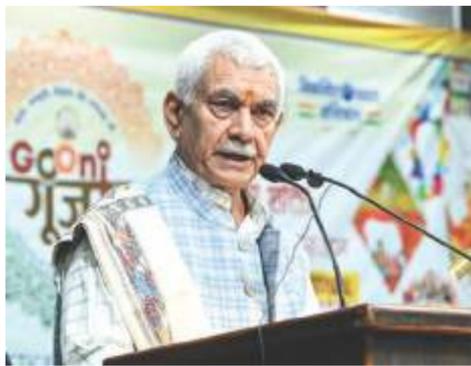
Urges students to embrace innovation, pursue fresh research, unlock nation-building doors

KNO Desk

Jammu, Feb 27: Asking the faculty members to make their higher education campuses the manufacturing hubs of new ideas, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Friday said that technological explosion has quietly transformed both educational institutions and industries alike.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of 'Goonj 2026', a unique Youth Festival, hosted by University of Jammu, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The pace at which the world is changing is almost beyond comprehension and it has become unpredictable."

"The effort must go beyond the curriculum. Let there be genuine dialogue across disciplines. Let every lecture in



every classroom become a doorway to new possibilities," he said. The 2-day event will offer a distinctive platform to youth from diverse disciplines to create one future. The festival will educate the mind, energize the body and ignite

innovation. LG Sinha said that the youth hold boundless power to steer society and nation toward the future. "We need to put in dedicated efforts to shape up balanced minds and bold innovators for sustainable development," he said,

adding, "Empowered youth engineers the future and I believe intellectual depth, creative strength and innovative youth leadership is essential for national advancement."

The Lieutenant Governor said when young people kindle the flame of courage within themselves and step forward with unshakeable belief, then new pathways open up for society and the nation.

He exhorted the students to embrace innovation, pursue fresh research, experiment boldly, unlock nation-building doors.

"Honor your traditions, respect your past and connect with your roots. This will deepen the profound sense of identity, confidence, and self-awareness that no classroom can ever fully teach," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The | [More on P6](#)

'Value-based tourism' key for J&K: CM Omar at SATTE

Says focus on improving destinations, cleanliness, facilities, not just footfall

Rehan Qayoom Mir

New Delhi/Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday highlighted the importance of the South Asia Travel and Tourism Exchange (SATTE) as a platform to boost tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. He reiterated the government's commitment to sustainable, value-based tourism rather than volume-driven footfall.

Speaking on the sidelines of SATTE, Abdullah said the event offers Jammu and Kashmir two major advantages: forging connections with tourism promoters and learning from best practices elsewhere. "SATTE is a very important B2B and B2C



event for J&K tourism," he said, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The Chief Minister expressed optimism that the ongoing season would witness increased bookings and tourist inflow. "We want tourists to return

happy and feel valued. For that, we need to constantly improve our destinations, cleanliness, facilities and also add new destinations," he said while addressing existing challenges.

Reaffirming that tourism in J&K is a year-round activity, he highlighted | [More on P6](#)

J&K set to shine as a year-round global tourism destination: CM

KT News Desk

New Delhi, Feb 27: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday asserted that Jammu & Kashmir is poised to emerge as a year-round global tourism

destination, backed by renewed confidence, expanded infrastructure and diversified tourism offerings.

He was addressing a grand promotional event held in New Delhi on | [More on P6](#)

Day temps soar across J&K, remain above normal

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Feb 27: Day temperatures continued to remain above normal across most parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Friday, with several stations recording departures of up to nine degrees Celsius above the seasonal average.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 21.0 degrees Celsius, which was nine degrees above normal, while the minimum settled at 1.5 degrees Celsius, slightly below the seasonal

average.

Qazigund registered a high of 20.8 degrees Celsius, 9.8 degrees above normal, and a low of 1.0 degrees Celsius. Pahalgam recorded a maximum of 16.2 degrees Celsius, 7.7 degrees above normal, while the minimum dipped to minus 2.1 degrees Celsius.

Kupwara recorded a high of 20.1 degrees Celsius, 8.7 degrees above normal, and a low of 0.4 degrees Celsius. Kokernag registered a maximum of 18.8 degrees Celsius, nine degrees above normal, with the minimum at 3.6 degrees Celsius.

The famous ski resort of Gulmarg | [More on P6](#)

Urban Governance

J&K amends building bye-laws to introduce digital building permission system

- Online submission of permission requests
- Automated compliance checks with master plans
- Self-certification for low-risk buildings
- Digital processing of NOCs from depts
- Online issuance of occupancy certificates



KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Feb 27: In a significant development, the Jammu & Kashmir Government has

amended the Unified Building Bye-Laws, 2021 (UBBL-2021), introducing a fully digital system for building permissions in the | [More on P6](#)

Tourism rebounds in Kashmir

Bookings rise steadily as reopened destinations witness growing footfall

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Feb 27: Tourism activity in Kashmir is showing signs of recovery nearly a year after the April 22 Pahalgam attack, with hoteliers and tour operators reporting a steady rise in bookings following the reopening of several major destinations.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has reopened 14 prominent tourist spots in a phased manner after reviewing security arrangements. The move, announced by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, includes destinations

such as Pahalgam, Yusmarg, Doodhpathri, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden in Srinagar and Wular Lake in north Kashmir.

The revival comes after a sharp decline in footfall in the immediate aftermath of the attack, which had led to temporary closures and cancellations at the peak of the spring season.

Speaking with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), hoteliers in Srinagar said bookings have improved over the past few weeks.

Manzoor Ahmad, who runs a hotel near Dal Lake, said occupancy at | [More on P6](#)

Ranji trophy coming home for first time as J&K near historic triumph

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Feb 27: Jammu and Kashmir stand on the cusp of history, inching closer to their maiden Ranji Trophy title after a commanding performance in the final at Hubli.

The atmosphere is charged with pride and anticipation as the team moves within touching distance of a landmark victory.

In a show of support, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah travelled to Hubli, Karnataka, to witness the historic moment firsthand.

Sharing his excitement, the CM, as reported by the



news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the team

has already made "lakhs of people proud" by reaching the final and expressed eagerness to cheer them from the stands as they close in on a famous win.

"On our way to Hubli to cheer the J&K cricket team as they play the final of the Ranji Trophy. They've already made lakhs of people so very proud of their achievements by reaching the final. I'm really looking forward to spending the day tomorrow in the stands cheering them on." Abdullah said in a post on 'X'.

The Chief Minister is accompanied by his advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA and NC Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq and MLA Pahalgam Altaf Wani.

On the field, Jammu and Kashmir maintained complete dominance, leaving the Karnataka cricket team struggling to find momentum. After securing a massive 291-run first-innings lead, J&K consolidated further in their second innings.

Despite an early setback at 11/2, Qamran Iqbal steadied the innings with a composed 94, anchoring the side during a crucial phase. He built important partnerships with Kanhaiya Dogra and Abdul Samad, frustrating the opposition and pushing J&K firmly into control.

By stumps, the lead had swelled to an imposing 477 runs, with | [More on P6](#)

IFAC 2026

RBI Dy Governor calls for principled performance for Viksit Bharat@2047

KT News Desk

Jammu, Feb 27: The Indian Institute of Management Jammu on Friday began the 3rd International Finance and Accounting Conference (IFAC 2026) on the theme "Financial Strategies for Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth to achieve Viksit Bharat@2047" at the IIM Jammu.

The two-day conference was inaugurated by Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India, Swaminathan J. Dean Faculty and Research, IIM



Jammu, Professor Ali along with Dean Academics, IIM Jammu,

Professor Nitin Upadhyay presided over | [More on P6](#)

Govt to enforce E-challan, GPS tracking, 'One Parchi-One Load' rule to curb illegal mining in J&K

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 27: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Friday directed for strict enforcement of e-Challan at crusher units, mandatory GPS tracking of all vehicles transporting mining material and implementation of the "One Parchi, One Load" rule to completely curb illegal mining across Jammu and Kashmir.

Chairing a high-level meeting of the Mining Department at Jammu, the Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, stressed the need for strengthening enforcement mechanisms in all districts.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Mining Department, Ashwani Kumar; Chairman, Pollution Control Committee; Director, Ecology, Environment and Remote Sensing; Deputy Commissioners (Chairpersons, District Level Task Force Committees) online; Director, Geology and Mining; MD, JKML; Special Secretary, Mining Department; Senior Superintendents of Police; Director Finance, Mining; DMOs and other senior officers.

Reiterating the government's zero-tolerance policy against illegal mining in both Jammu and Kashmir divisions, the Deputy Chief Minister issued strict instructions that no vehicle shall be allowed to transport mining material without a valid 'Parchi' (authorized e-challan).

"Only one load must be permitted against each Parchi and any misuse or duplication shall be inviting strict action against the violator," he said.

Making GPS tracking mandatory, the Deputy Chief Minister ordered that all vehicles involved in mining operations must have functional GPS devices installed. "Vehicles operating without GPS shall be seized immediately and stern action shall be taken against defaulters."

Emphasizing strict adherence to approved



excavation limits, the Deputy Chief Minister asserted that no excavation shall exceed the prescribed depth and mining beyond authorized riverbed zones and illegal night operations shall be dealt with firmly.

Calling for stronger inter-departmental coordination, the Deputy Chief Minister stressed that collective responsibility and joint action are essential to eliminate illegal mining and prevent attempts to defame the administration. He assured full administrative backing to enforcement agencies and gave a free hand to the District Level Task Force to act decisively against violators.

"I give DCs, who head District Task Forces and SSPs a free hand to take strict action against illegal mining offenders, including complicit officials. No external pressure will be tolerated while dealing with the offenders," he stated.

The Deputy Chief Minister strictly directed the Mining Department to intensify monitoring mechanisms and strengthen ground-level enforcement to safeguard natural resources.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the DCs to identify the mining blocks, environmental

clearance, fair demolition of illegal units, information on mining fund utilization and compliance on ensuring complete ban on illegal mining in all Districts.

He instructed on clearance of pending power dues by the crusher units, suspension of MDLs and adopting best mining policies from other states and UTs to curb the mining operations in J&K.

During the meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister undertook a detailed review of measures, including the status of mineral blocks, e-auctions, GPS tracking and IMSS implementation, enforcement actions against illegal mining, compliance of crusher units, proposed amendments in royalty and penalties, progress under DMFT, mineral exploration activities and overall regulatory position of the Department.

During the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary, stressed on maintaining tight vigil and effective action be taken to address the challenge of illegal mining in J&K.

At the outset, Director Geology and Mining Department, briefed the chair about the overall functioning and measures taken to curb illegal mining operations.

ACS Ashwani Kumar reviews infrastructure, operational performance of PDD

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 27: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Power Development Department (PDD), Ashwani Kumar, who recently took charge of the department, kicked off his tenure with a thorough review of all sectors, holding a series of meetings.

He held detailed interactions with the officers and staff and took stock of the infrastructure status and operational performance of the power sector.

The meetings, as per an official statement, were attended by the Managing Directors of all the Corporations, Director Finance, Director Planning, Chief Engineers, Chief Electrical Inspector and other senior officers of the department.

With regard to power supply, it was informed that the department has successfully met a peak demand of 3350 MW during the current winter season, which is 7 percent higher than the peak demand met last year. An average demand of 2600 MW is also being consistently met.

The ACS was briefed about the sources from which J&K receives power. He stressed the need to ensure regular and uninterrupted power supply during the Iftar and Sehri periods. He directed for avoiding the unscheduled power cuts, if any. He also emphasized for establishment of a robust load monitoring mechanism, reduction of energy losses and strengthening of consumer grievance redressal systems.

The ACS emphasised for early roll out of smart meters under the Smart Metering Programme, prioritizing installation in commercial and industrial sector and on distribution transformers. He directed the engineers to adopt an inclusive approach to integrate all connected components, noting that this reform would not only improve power supply but also enhance the financial sustainability of the sector.

Ashwani Kumar also reviewed major transmission projects across J&K and their timelines, which are expected to address the peak demand requirements of both the regions, summer in Jammu and winter in Kashmir. He stated that proposal for funding under central sector schemes or UT budget shall be pursued expeditiously. He directed that technical and infrastructure centric interventions are required to be fast tracked to address the low voltage issues in certain areas.

Regarding the power generation sector, the ACS was briefed about the progress of four major hydroelectric projects, Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar and Ratle. He stressed that pumped storage hydro projects should also be explored in coordination with the central agencies, considering their role in peak demand management. He further discussed policy interventions required to fast-track exploitation of the region's hydropower potential.

The ACS also reviewed the summer preparedness of both the regions by all the Corporations. He emphasised the need for an integrated and coordinated approach to ensure optimal utilisation of available resources. He directed for conducting a detailed review of summer preparedness shortly

PDD Graduate Engineers call on Javed Rana, seek resolution of long-pending issues

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 27: A delegation of Graduate Engineers from the Power Development Department (PDD) on Thursday called on Minister Javed Ahmed Rana and apprised him of several long-pending issues affecting the department and its engineering cadre.

During the meeting, as per an official statement, the delegation submitted a detailed memorandum outlining key concerns impacting the morale, financial security and career progression of engineers.

Among the major issues raised were the regularization of In-charge Engineers, clearance of pending promotions stalled since 2015, timely credit of National Pension Scheme (NPS) contributions, promotion of engineers regularized in 2014, and implementation of the Assured Career Progression (ACP) Scheme.

The engineers highlighted that prolonged delays in convening Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) and processing promotion cases have resulted in professional stagnation



and growing dissatisfaction among eligible officers.

Expressing concern over delays in the credit of NPS contributions, the delegation stated that irregular deposits undermine employees' long-term financial planning and security.

Seeking the Minister's intervention, the delegation requested expeditious resolution of these matters in accordance with rules and seniority norms.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured them that their genuine concerns would be examined on priority.

He stated that the issues raised would be taken up with the Chief Minister for appropriate consideration and necessary action as per

established procedures. The Minister also informed them that PDD has recently promoted several engineers and the Government is keen to streamline various cadres and ensure that service related issues of all employees are addressed in a proactive manner.

Reiterating the Government's commitment to fairness, transparency and prompt grievance redressal, the Minister emphasized that strengthening institutional mechanisms and ensuring timely career progression remain integral to improving the overall performance and service delivery of the Government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

DC Budgam reviews National HPV Vaccination Campaign preparedness

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, FEBRUARY 28: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan Friday reviewed the preparedness for the National HPV Vaccination Campaign against Cervical Cancer in the district.

During the review meeting, as per an official statement, arrangements related to micro-planning at health facility level, availability of vaccines, cold chain management, deployment of trained staff, U-WIN registration, IEC activities and AEFI preparedness were discussed in detail. The DC directed that all eligible girls in the target age group be identified and covered strictly as per guidelines.

He emphasised that vaccination sessions shall be conducted only at designated government health facilities with adequate logistics and functional cold chain points.

The DC further stressed the need for advance U-WIN registration and digital consent to ensure smooth conduct of vaccination sessions. He directed to intensify awareness and mobilisation activities through ASHAs,



AWWs and other frontline workers for achieving maximum coverage.

The DC called for close coordination among all concerned departments to ensure the smooth, safe and successful implementation of the HPV Vaccination Campaign in Budgam district. Besides, PO, ICDS Budgam, Samar Naik; CMO Budgam, Dr. Gulzar; CEO Budgam, MS Budgam, all BMOs and other concerned officials were present in the meeting.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
PHE MECHANICAL RURAL DIVISION,
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR.

Corrigendum-II

For E-NIT No. PHE/MRD/TS/ 70 of 02/2026 dt:- 10-02-2026 and published vide No.: 2026_PHE_302772_1 is hereby extended again due to poor response. The new closing and opening dates are given below:

S.NO.	Description	Date	Time
1.	Closing date	05-03-2026	11:00 AM
2.	Bid opening date	05-03-2026	02:00 PM

No: PHE/MRD/4086-90

Dated: 27 -02-2026

Sd/-

Executive Engineer,
PHE Mechanical Rural Division,
Srinagar.

DIPK-11410/25 DATED: 27-02-2026

HIGH COURT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND LADAKH (OFFICE OF THE CENTRAL PROJECT COORDINATOR, AT JAMMU)

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

No. 355 of 2026/CPC/J

Dated: 26.02.2026

The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has published a Tender for deployment of 22 number of contractual manpower from eligible service providing agencies/firms for both wings of the High Court and various District Courts of UT of Jammu and Kashmir. The tentative cost of the contract is Rs. 79,20,000/- (Seventy Nine Lakhs Twenty Thousand Only). The tender shall close on 05.03.2026 at 4 PM. Technical bid will be opened on 06.03.2026 at 12 Noon sharp.

Detailed information regarding the tender, including eligibility criteria, terms and conditions, scope of work, and submission guidelines, is available on the official website of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh with effect from 27th February 2026.

URL: <https://jkhighcourt.nic.in/tenders.php>

Faizan I Nazar

Central Project Coordinator

DIPK-11405/25 DATED: 27-02-2026

JAMMU AND KASHMIR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

RESHAM GHAR COLONY, BMW NAGAR, JAMMU • 180016

Website: <http://jkpsc.nic.in>

Subject: Conduct of Preliminary Examination for the posts of Prosecuting Officer (G), in J&K Home Department.

NOTICE

Dated: 27.02.2026

It is hereby informed to all the eligible candidates that the Preliminary Examination for the posts of Prosecuting Officer (G) in the J&K Home Department, notified vide Notification No. 13-PSC (DR-P) of 2025 dated 10.11.2025, shall not be conducted on the tentatively scheduled date of 28.02.2026. The revised date of examination shall be notified separately in due course.

Dr. Majad Jhangir JKAS

Additional Secretary/ DCoE, J&K Public Service

DIPK-11412/25 DATED: 27-02-2026

Commission.

No. PSC/Exam/P.O (Pre)/2026/09

Dated: 27.02.2026

Have faith in probe, says Dy CM as ACB raids his brother's premises

SAJID RAINA

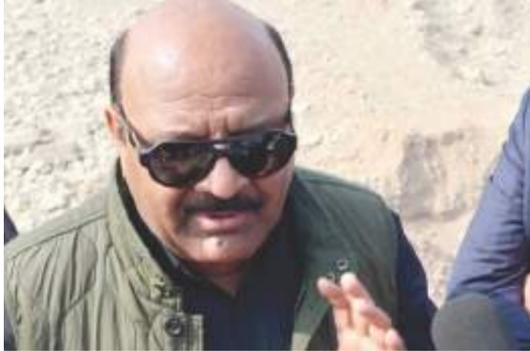
Jammu, Feb 27: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Friday said he has faith in a fair investigation after the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) conducted raids at premises linked to his brother in a disproportionate assets case. Speaking to reporters here, Choudhary said he has no hesitation in giving a free hand to the investigating agencies and expressed confidence that justice would be delivered.

"I have faith in a fair probe. Let the agencies do their work. We are giving them a free hand and expect that there will be no pick and choose," he said.

The ACB has widened its investigation against Vijay Choudhary in connection with alleged assets disproportionate to known sources of income. On Wednesday and Thursday, teams conducted searches at multiple locations in Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri, Reasi and Udhampur districts, officials said.

According to officials, preliminary findings point to movable and immovable assets worth crores of rupees. During the searches, documents related to properties and business establishments allegedly operated in the names of family members were seized.

Investigators have also found that two stone crushers are being run in Jammu and Kathua districts in the names of the accused and



his family members, officials said, adding that documents indicating properties outside Jammu were also recovered.

The ACB team also seized records related to mining licences, royalty payments and other approvals. At the mining department office in Udhampur and a construction site, officials collected documents pertaining to ownership and investments. Financial records and transaction details recovered during the two-day operation are being examined, they said. Reacting to the developments, the deputy chief minister said allegations cause distress, particularly to family members, but reiterated that if any wrongdoing is established, action should follow. "If we have done

anything wrong, we will face the law. If not, we trust the judiciary to ensure justice," he said.

Choudhary also said illegal mining in rivers will not be tolerated and directed officials to ensure strict enforcement. He said no vehicle should lift material from crushers without proper documentation and added that mining licences (MDLs) have been cancelled, while officials have been asked to frame a transparent mining policy for the Union Territory.

Referring to a court relief granted to Arvind Kejriwal in an excise policy-related case, Choudhary said the decision strengthened faith in the country's legal system—(KNO)

J&K fully prepared for HPV vaccination

M. Raju chairs State Task Force meet

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Feb 27: Commissioner Secretary Health & Medical Education Department, M. Raju on Friday chaired a high level meeting of the State Task Force regarding rollout of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination Programme.

The meeting was convened to review the preparedness and finalize implementation strategy for the UT-level launch of the HPV Vaccination Programme, which is scheduled to be observed across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir on 28th February, 2026, in consonance with the nationwide launch by the Prime Minister.

Director Family Welfare MCH & Immunization J&K presented a PowerPoint Presentation highlighting all operational aspects regarding launch of HPV Vaccine including microplanning, availability of HPV Vaccine across all 20 districts, training of vaccinators and supervisors, robust cold chain management through eVIN, logistics distribution, AEFI (Adverse Events Following Immunization) surveillance mechanisms and digital registration and certification through the U-WIN portal.

Target age group was also discussed viz. 14 year old girls (those who have celebrated their 14th birthday but have not yet celebrated their 15th birthday). Girls who will turn 15 years within 90 days of the



launch will also be eligible for vaccination during these three months campaign period.

It was informed in the meeting that a total of approximately 1,35,340 eligible beneficiaries have been identified for vaccination across the Union Territory.

Besides, roles and responsibilities of state, district and block-level stakeholders were discussed in detail. Special emphasis was laid on inter-departmental coordination, especially with the Education Department and ICDS for beneficiary mapping and community mobilization.

Key messages for caregivers were also highlighted, including the safety and efficacy of the vaccine, the need to wait for 30 minutes post-vaccination for observation, awareness about minor self-limiting AEFIs and availability of vaccination certificates through U-WIN.

The Secretary reiterated

the importance of supportive supervision, daily monitoring, timely reporting and functional AEFI committees at all levels. He also directed the Joint Director Information to spread awareness regarding the vaccination. He stressed the need for consistent communication to counter misinformation and ensure community confidence.

The Secretary directed all the stakeholders to ensure seamless implementation of the programme, robust monitoring and 100% coverage of eligible girls across the Union Territory. He also expressed satisfaction over the preparedness made by the concerned departments.

The meeting concluded with a collective commitment to make the HPV Vaccination Campaign a success in J&K and contribute towards the long-term goal of eliminating cervical cancer as a public

health problem.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner, Municipal Corporation Jammu/Srinagar; Mission Director, National Health Mission, J&K; Director, SKIMS Soura; District Development Commissioners J&K and Director, Health Services Jammu/Kashmir; Director, Family Welfare, MCH & Immunization, J&K; Director, School Education Jammu/Kashmir; Joint Director, ICDS, J&K; Joint Director, Information Jammu, Deputy Director, AYUSH, J&K; Principals of Government Medical Colleges and Principal, SKIMS Medical College Bemina along with their Medical Superintendents; Chief Medical Officers; State Immunization Officer J&K; Surveillance Medical Officer WHO Jammu/Kashmir and State Programme Officer, UNDP, among other senior officers.

DTF inspects Sumbal in Rescue & Rehabilitation Drive

KT NEWS DESK

Bandipora, Feb 27: District Task Force (DTF) Bandipora on Friday conducted an inspection drive at Sumbal under the ongoing Pan-India Rescue and Rehabilitation Campaign 3.0 being implemented under Mission Vatsalya.

The drive was carried out in collaboration with the Labour Department and District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Bandipora, with the aim of identifying and preventing instances of child labour, trafficking and other forms of child exploitation.

During the inspection, the team visited various commercial establishments and workplaces to assess adherence to child protection laws and labour regulations. The officials also interacted with shopkeepers, workers and members of the public, sensitizing them about the legal provisions related to child labour and the

importance of protecting child rights.

Officials from the Labour Department highlighted the provisions of child labour laws and penalties for violations, while the DLSA informed stakeholders about the availability of free legal aid and support services for vulnerable children and their families.

The District Task Force reiterated its commitment towards ensuring a safe and secure environment for children in the district and emphasized that strict action will be taken against violators as per law. Authorities further informed that such inspection drives will continue across the district to strengthen child protection mechanisms and ensure rehabilitation and reintegration of rescued children.

The district administration urged the public to cooperate with authorities and report any cases of child labour or exploitation for timely action and protection of children.

Two drug peddlers arrested in North Kashmir

KNO

Srinagar, Feb 27: Continuing its sustained drive against drug trafficking, Police have arrested two drug peddlers in North Kashmir and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

According to a statement, a police party from Police Post Palhallan established at a checkpoint established at Gundbal near Government Primary School, intercepted a suspected individual person who after noticing police party, attempted to flee from the spot. However, he was tactfully apprehended by the alert police team. He has been identified as Mohd Ahsan Ganaie son of

Ab Ahad Ganaie resident of Shahgund, Hajin. During search, 115 grams of charas-like substance, one mobile phone, and cash amounting to ₹40,000 were recovered from his possession.

Meanwhile in Sopore, a Police team at a checkpoint established at Naseerabad, Chinkipora Sopore, intercepted a vehicle (truck) bearing registration number JK02BQ-6164. During search, substantial quantity of poppy straw was recovered and seized as per due procedure. The accused driver has been identified as Shamdin son of Sarajdin resident of Dhirti, Katra.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

Locals reject PHE clean water claim, allege supply of sewage

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Feb 27: Locals from Nishat, Brein and several downstream areas have rejected the claims made by the Public Health Engineering (PHE) department that the drinking water supplied from the Nishat Water Treatment Plant is safe. They reiterated the allegations that sewage-contaminated water from Dal Lake is being supplied to large parts of the city.

The reaction comes after Superintendent Engineer, PHE, Anbreen Anjum said before a section of the media that the water currently being supplied from the Nishat plant is "absolutely safe for drinking" and there is no reason to worry.

However, residents from the area said that a substantial portion of Srinagar's daily requirement of 19 million gallons per day (MGD) is being lifted from a polluted stretch of Dal Lake, particularly near Nishat, where they claim several open drains discharge sewage into the lake.

According to locals, nearly 10 MGD of water is presently being drawn from the lake, which they allege increases to around 14 MGD during the summer months, accounting for more than half of the total supply.

They further alleged that untreated sewage from areas including Nehru Park, Foreshore Road and up to Hazratbal flows into the lake, reportedly due to defunct Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) at Laam, Hazratbal and Habbak.

Residents claimed that one of



the major sewage drains has its outfall near the intake point of the Nishat water plant.

"If the department says the water is safe, they should make public the laboratory reports and the exact treatment process," a local resident said, rejecting the official assurance.

Meanwhile, Jammu & Kashmir-based climate action groups, JK Climate Action Groups (JKCAG), have also raised an alarm over the issue.

Environmental activist Raja Muzaffar, seen in a shared video alleging that highly polluted water from Dal Lake is being supplied to over six lakh population of Srinagar. In the video message, he questions how open drains are entering the lake around Nishat while water is being pumped from nearly the same location for public supply.

The activist has further sought a response from Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, PHE Minister Javed Ahmed Rana, the Lakes Conservation and Management

Authority (LCMA) and the Department of Information & Public Relations (J&K).

Residents from Rajbagh, Sonwar, Jawahar Nagar, Shivpora, Lal Chowk, Habbakadal, Munawarabad and Gawkadal alleged that tap water often emits foul smell, particularly during summers, which they say contradicts the department's safety claims.

Locals have demanded that the government place in the public domain the daily quantity of water lifted from Dal Lake, the exact intake locations, the status of STPs around the lake, a detailed treatment protocol at Nishat and recent independent water quality test reports.

"We are not convinced by verbal assurances. The authorities must back their claims with documented proof," another resident said.

The residents reiterated their demand for an independent technical audit of the water treatment system and immediate corrective measures if deficiencies are found—(KNO)

ACB cracks down on illegal mining in Udhampur, Reasi

KNO

Jammu, Feb 27: The Anti-Corruption Bureau has launched sweeping Joint Surprise Checks (JSCs) targeting illegal mining operations across the Udhampur and Reasi districts. In a statement, an ACB spokesman said that the crackdown is a decisive move to protect the region's environment and combat corruption.

"The operation was initiated following serious complaints of widespread illegal mineral extraction across the Jammu Division. Preliminary reports indicated a suspected nexus between mineral bidders and certain officials within the Mining and Ecological Departments, allowing these activities to operate unchecked," the statement said, adding, "To immediately halt the illegal extraction and misuse of natural resources, specialized ACB teams— spearheaded by Gazetted Officers—executed coordinated, surprise inspections at multiple stone crushing facilities throughout both districts."

While sharing the key findings from the operation, the statement said: "ACB sleuths conducted extensive searches, confiscating crucial electronic gadgets, critical records, and highly incriminating documents. Multiple allegedly forged 'Form-A' transit documents were recovered directly from the operational sites."

It said, "All inspected stone crushers were found to be actively indulging in illegal mining. Facilities were operating in grave violation of their mandated terms and conditions, causing irreversible ecological degradation to the region."

"The ACB remains steadfast in its commitment to dismantling corrupt networks and halting the exploitation of Jammu's natural resources. Further investigations based on the recovered evidence are actively underway," the statement added—(KNO)

Non-Bailable Warrants for UJC Chief, Deputy

KNO

Srinagar, Feb 27: Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK) on Friday secured Non-Bailable Warrants (NBWs) against four key operatives of banned terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen, including the chief of United Jihad Council (UJC) Syed Salahuddin and his deputy Ghulam Nabi Khan.

In a statement, a CIK spokesman said that NBWs against the accused is a significant step towards dismantling terror networks and reinforcing the rule of law. "The NBWs have been secured in connection with FIR No. 05/1996 registered at Police Station CIK under Sections 121, 121-A, 153-A, 153-B of the Ranbir Penal Code, read with Section 13 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Sections 2/3 of the EIMCO Act," it added.

The statement said that the court of Additional Sessions Judge TADA/POTA (Special Judge designated under the NIA Act), Srinagar, after hearing the prosecution as well as IO and carefully examining the case record, has issued

NBWs against the following four accused:

"Mohammad Yousef Shah also known as Syed Salah-ud-din, son of Ghulam Rasool Shah, resident of Soibugh, Budgam. "The absconding accused is the chief of the so-called United Jihad Council (UJC) and the proscribed terrorist organization Hizbul Mujahideen. He is a known terrorist operator and instigator. The absconder is involved in several terrorist related FIRs registered in various police stations across the Kashmir Valley." "Ghulam Nabi Khan also known as Amir Khan, son of Ghulam Rasool Khan, resident of Liver Srigufwara, Anantnag, J&K. The absconding accused is the Deputy Supreme Commander of the proscribed terrorist organization Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) and is a known terrorist handler. The absconder is involved in other numerous terrorist related activities which includes and not limited to recruitment into terrorists ranks, coordination of terrorists related activities and FIRs stand registered against him in various police stations across

the Kashmir Valley, and in central investigation agencies as well," the statement said.

"Sher Mohammad also known as Bahadur / Riyaz, son of Sher Ahmad, resident of Malangan, Bandipora, J&K. The absconding accused is a commander of the proscribed terrorist organization Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM). He is also involved in variety of terrorists related activities and cases have been registered against him under the provisions of the UAP Act, and provisions of the EIMCO Act as well," the statement said.

"Nasir Yousuf Qadri son of Mohammad Yousuf Qadri, resident of Sheeltang, Dar Mohalla, Habbakadal, later at Abu-Baker Colony, Bemina, Srinagar. The absconding accused is associated with the proscribed terrorist organization Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) and is working for the terror narrative machinery. The absconder is also involved in operating Kashmir Media Service (KMS), which is engaged in disseminating false narratives against the Indian State and issuing general threats against communities and

individuals," the statement said.

It said, "The case originated on 05 April 1996 following credible information received at Police Station CIK, Srinagar, revealing that Pakistan-based terrorist handlers and intelligence agencies were actively motivating and facilitating Kashmiri youth to undergo terrorist training in PoK/PAK with the objective of waging war against the Union of India. During the course of investigation, substantial material evidence was gathered establishing prima facie involvement of the accused affiliated with banned terrorist organization Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) in unlawful and anti-national activities, including radicalization, recruitment, and facilitation of terrorist operations." It said, "Despite sustained and continuous efforts by CIK to apprehend them, the accused have remained absconding and have deliberately evaded arrest." "Upon careful consideration of the evidence presented by CIK, the Court observed that the offences alleged are grave in nature, directly pertaining to waging war

against the State and activities prejudicial to national security. The Court further held that custodial examination of the accused is essential for effective investigation and for securing the ends of justice. Being satisfied that sufficient grounds exist, the Court allowed the application and directed the issuance of Non-Bailable Warrants, instructing the Station House Officer/Investigating Officer of Police Station CIK, Srinagar, to execute the warrants and produce the accused before the Court at the earliest," the statement said.

It said, "This decisive legal action underscores CIK's sustained and uncompromising resolve to pursue terror-related cases to their logical conclusion, irrespective of the passage of time. Counter Intelligence Kashmir remains steadfast in its mission to safeguard national security and ensure that individuals involved in activities threatening the sovereignty and integrity of the nation are brought firmly within the ambit of law."—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Time To Preserve Our Frozen Lifelines

The mercury touching 21°C in Srinagar this February is a catastrophic signal from a climate system in distress. Nearly 10 degrees above normal, this unprecedented warmth has robbed Kashmir's glaciers of their only season of recovery. Instead of accumulating fresh snow to sustain summer rivers, these frozen reservoirs are melting prematurely, sounding an alarm that demands immediate, collective action. This is a pattern of an accelerating crisis. The Kolahoi Glacier, Kashmir's largest and the

region's "water tower", has already lost 20-25% of its area since the mid-20th century. Its snout has retreated nearly three kilometres. Each warm winter pushes smaller glaciers beyond recovery thresholds, transforming perennial ice bodies into seasonal snowfields that cannot sustain the rivers of summer. The consequences cascade downstream. When glaciers melt early, rivers swell briefly in spring but dwindle in summer—precisely when agriculture, hydropower, and drinking water demand

peak. Repeated winters like this create a negative glacier mass balance. A negative balance means permanent loss, and permanent loss means a future where Kashmir's legendary rivers run dry when most needed. This demands an urgent, multi-pronged response. First, scientific monitoring must be intensified. Real-time glacier surveillance using satellite imagery and field observations is essential to track retreat rates and predict water availability. The establishment of a dedicated Himalayan Glaciology

Centre, as repeatedly recommended by experts, is no longer optional. Second, water management must become climate-resilient. We must invest in artificial glacier nourishment techniques, revive traditional water harvesting structures, and promote drought-resistant crop varieties. Every drop saved is a drop that can sustain communities through lean seasons. Third, carbon emissions are the root cause. While local action alone cannot reverse global warming, Kashmir must lead by example by

aggressively transitioning to renewable energy, protecting forests, and advocating for stronger climate policies at national and international forums. Fourth, public awareness is crucial. Every citizen must understand that these frozen reservoirs are not permanent; they are delicate, finite, and dying. Water conservation must become a daily practice, not an occasional sermon. It is high time to act, collectively and urgently, to preserve the frozen lifelines that have sustained Kashmir for millennia.

Ramadan And Its Benefits

The month of Ramadan is supposed to provide training. So why not start with this Ramadan? Who knows what will happen until next Ramadan?

Mansoor Alam

The holy month of Ramadan is once again upon us. While most of us will be fasting and praying and seeking Allah's blessings in this month some would be spending even more time in extra prayers and remembrance of Allah. Every year Ramadan offers a kind of transcendental experience for many Muslims.

Fasting has many benefits for the body as well as for the mind. It gives the body some needed respite provided one does not indulge in the night. And the rigorous discipline and code of conduct that have to be observed daily as part of fasting and for as long as thirty days contribute to one's patience, tolerance, and overall wellbeing. These are by themselves great benefits of fasting.

But beyond that we should also strive for spiritual benefits. This month should bring out the best in us despite the controversy surrounding moon sighting. We should be kind to one another in our dealings, no matter what our differences. We must respect each other no matter what our status. We should try to inculcate these qualities in us during this month as much as possible so that it becomes part of our nature for the rest of the year.

Backbiting, attaching labels, insulting one another by nicknames, spreading rumors and suspicions about others are major sins in Islam (49:11-12). So, we must always try to avoid them at every level: individual, social, or political. But since in this month we are in a heightened spiritual state of God-consciousness we must be extra careful not to go near them. This is how we achieve self-purification - one of the important goals of fasting. Also, we should be aware of those who offer short cuts to Heaven in this month. According to the Qur'an there are no short cuts to Heaven (2:214). So, we must be careful of



the merchants of salvation.

Life has a serious purpose. Our time is very precious. Therefore, we should not engage in trivial talk. But it is not easy to shun it. It pervades everywhere. Without realizing we get sucked into it. So, it requires deliberate conscious effort to avoid it. Fasting helps us in this direction because we are more God-conscious in this month than any other month. Fasting is not just for the stomach but also for the tongue. If someone wants to engage in loose talks one should simply point to fasting.

Islam is about giving and this month is especially about showing that commitment. As our duty to Islam we must help the poor and the needy, as much as we can and by all means at our disposal: by our wealth, by our knowledge, by our

labor. As the Prophet (PBUH) said we should give until it hurts. If all the fortunate Muslims whom Allah has blessed sincerely practiced this pillar of Islam the poverty in the world will be greatly reduced. But our Prophet (PBUH) also established a system for this giving. No amount of giving will help in the long run until we have a unified system in place. This is a challenging task and we must work hard towards this goal especially during this month of Ramadan.

Instead of indulging in luxurious life styles the well to do among us should follow the Sunnah of our Prophet (PBUH) by living modestly. Living comfortably does not mean excessive indulgence. Caliph Othman (R) should serve as a role model for the rich among us. We are supposed to

practice the injunction of the Quran: "They ask thee how much they are to spend; Say: "What is beyond your needs. (2:219)." [Translation: Yusuf Ali]

Determining our need must be based on our capacity to use and not on our capacity to accumulate or on our capacity to fulfill socially induced desires. Following verses further amplify this situation very clearly:

Verily, (the ends) ye strive for are diverse. So he who gives and fears (Allah), And (in all sincerity) testifies to the best, - We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Bliss. But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, And gives the lie to the best, - We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Misery; Nor will his wealth profit him

when he falls headlong (into the Pit). Verily We take upon Ourselves to guide, And verily unto Us (belong) the End and the Beginning. Therefore do I warn you of a Fire blazing fiercely; None shall reach it but those most unfortunate ones Who give the lie to Truth and turn their backs. But those most devoted to God shall be removed far from it, - Those who spend their wealth for increase in self-purification. [Surah Al-Layl 92:4-18, Translation: Yusuf Ali]

To help check our irrational passions we should try to feel the pain and suffering of our fellow human beings in the spirit of Caliph Abu Bakr (R) who kept his daily allowance equal to an average worker. On being asked as to why he was doing this he answered that he wanted to experience himself directly how an average worker was meeting his daily needs; and that if he (Abu Bakr (R)) were to find that it was hard to meet his daily needs then he would raise the allowance of the workers and that would automatically raise his allowance as well. He showed by this example what it means to be a true servant of Allah. What a beautiful world would be for Muslims - and a shining model for others - if our Muslim rulers were to emulate his example even partially?

This is the spirit of Ramadan. This is what Ramadan is all about: feeling directly for a month what millions of human beings are going through daily throughout the year, and trying our best to change their situation for the better in the long term. This requires that we prepare and train ourselves for this important task. The month of Ramadan is supposed to provide that training. So why not start with this Ramadan? Who knows what will happen until next Ramadan?

Source: IslamiCity

The Economy Through A New Lens: Understanding India's GDP Base Revision

Saurabh Garg

Gross Domestic Product or GDP, is a way to measure the size and health of a country's economy, more like a report card for a nation, it tells us how much the country is producing in terms of goods and services. When GDP is growing, it usually means businesses are producing more goods and services, more people are getting jobs, and incomes are rising. GDP also matters on the global stage. India currently ranks among the world's top five economies and is projected to become the third largest by 2030.

GDP, as an instrument to measure the economy, needs regular calibration to capture the economy's accurate pulse and this is achieved through updating the base year of GDP at regular intervals to keep pace with a changing economy. As the economy reshapes itself, new industries emerge, consumption patterns change and new data sources evolve, revisions help the official data catch up with the realities and make the estimates more accurate and robust.

Availability of new data sources since the last base revision have helped us view the sectoral and regional contributions to GDP more clearly and adopt better methods, for instance, to estimate the



value added by the unincorporated sector broadly covering the informal sector also.

In the intervening period since the last base revision, among others, some new data sets like Management & Administration related data (MGT-7/7A) for companies has become available that provides information on the number of business activities undertaken by the enterprise, description of business activity as per NIC 2008 and percentage turnover from each business activity (industry) for each year. So, while rebasing, for multi-activity enterprises, value added is now allocated across activities based on newly

available MGT-7 data rather than entirely to the major activity as was done earlier. This change allows us to capture sectoral contributions more accurately, providing a clearer view of how each business activity drives the economy.

Just as new company-level data helps us measure sectoral contributions more accurately, enhanced use of GST data in the new series allows for a finer, more precise view of regional contributions of GDP by inter alia, improving regional allocation pertaining to private corporate sector and through better compilation of expenditure-side estimates at state level.

Availability of annual data from surveys like ASUSE and PLFS that wasn't available earlier has also allowed us to adopt a better methodology for estimating value added by unincorporated sector annually, instead of inferring its contribution to GDP indirectly from other indicators, as was done before. This matters because this sector, comprising of millions of household businesses, small shops, and self-employed workers, forms a huge part of the economy and plays a vital role in jobs and livelihoods.

The base revision is more than just use of new data sources, it is also about improvements in methodology as well, and in this regard, the new GDP series has seen a number of methodological improvements.

Earlier, double deflation, a detailed method to adjust the GDP for changing prices was applied only to agriculture sector. In the new 2022-23 series, double deflation has been expanded to manufacturing sector where sufficient data is now available and single extrapolation/volume extrapolation is used in all other sectors. This approach makes the best use of the data at hand, keeping the estimates as accurate and reliable. Double deflation is very data-intensive, as it requires detailed information on prices for both outputs and inputs. As more of this data becomes

available over time, we will be able to expand its use to more sectors.

A notable methodological improvement is the alignment of estimates of the economy based on what is produced (production side) and what people and businesses spend (expenditure side). The two often don't match perfectly, a common occurrence in countries around the world, especially in quarterly GDP. To address this issue, in the new series, the framework of 'Supply & Use Tables' is being used to ensure that discrepancies are limited in the early estimates and finally eliminated when full set of data becomes available at the time of final estimates.

The updated GDP is like looking at the economy through a sharper lens. Every economic activity, big or small, comes into clear focus, accurately revealing its contribution to the nation's growth. By using better data, refining methods, and aligning with international best practices, the Ministry has brought the economy into sharper view. For citizens, this means that policies and public services are guided by an accurate understanding of how the economy works, making growth something that is felt in everyday life, not just on paper.

The writer is Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper

Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament: Students debate democracy, governance at GDC Kulgam

KT News Desk

KULGAM, FEBRUARY 27: Government Degree College Kulgam Friday organized the Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and MY Bharat.

The programme, as per an official statement, was conducted by the NSS Unit of the College at the Conference Hall and witnessed enthusiastic participation from students representing various colleges across District Kulgam and the programme.

The theme of the Youth Parliament was "50 Years of Emergency: Lessons from Indian Democracy."

During the programme, MLA Kulgam Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami addressed the participants virtually.



Drawing from his firsthand experiences, he reflected on the challenges faced by the nation during the period of Emergency. He emphasized the importance of safeguarding constitutional values, protecting civil liberties,

and ensuring the independence of democratic institutions.

Sharing his personal insights, he urged the youth to remain vigilant, informed, and actively engaged in upholding democratic principles, stressing that

the lessons of the Emergency must guide future generations in preserving the democratic fabric of the country.

Addressing on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam highlighted the importance of youth engagement in democratic processes and underscored the vital role of educational institutions in fostering responsible citizenship and critical thinking.

Principal of the College, Prof. Dr. Mohd Abass Shah underlined the significance of organizing such theme-based academic programmes to deepen student's understanding of constitutional history and democratic responsibilities.

He also appreciated the dedicated efforts of the NSS Unit for successfully organizing the event.

Reopening of Schools

Director SEK orders CEOs, ZEOs to verify school preparedness

Conducts surprise inspection at Dream School GGSS Kothibagh

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 27: To ensure smooth reopening for Classes 1st to 8th on Monday (02 March 2026) after the winter break, the Director School Education Kashmir conducted a surprise visit to Dream School GGSS Kothibagh.

During the inspection, the Director, as per an official statement directly visited Kindergarten classes and assessed basic facilities for young learners. He interacted with the concerned teacher and reviewed preparations for students returning to school.

The institution is equipped with modern facilities including smart classrooms with digital learning support, a STEM and Robotics Lab, air-conditioned classrooms, art-integrated learning, and provision of free books, uniforms,



and mid-day meals.

"Every arrangement must be personally verified to ensure a smooth and inspiring start for our young students. Let us work in close coordination to make 2026 the Year of Academic Excellence," the Director stated.

He directed all Chief Education Officers (CEOs), Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs), and Cluster Heads across the Kashmir Division

to personally inspect schools and confirm readiness before reopening.

The Directorate reiterated its commitment to providing a safe, well-prepared, and quality learning environment for all students.

The Director was accompanied by Chief Accounts Officer, DSEK, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Khanday and Chief Education Officer Srinagar, Ghulam Mohiud-Din Bhat.

Public welfare utmost priority of district administration: DC Anantnag

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, FEBRUARY 27: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat, chaired the introductory meeting with all district and sectoral heads and other officers Friday at Khanabal.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Principal GMC Anantnag, ADCs, GM DIC, DPO, SES Jal Shakti, PWD and KPDC, Registrar Anantnag, ACR, ACD, SDMS, Principals of Degree Colleges, CPO, CMO, CEO, DFOs, CAO, CAHO, DyDEO, DTO, DFO, Exens of various engineering departments, Deputy Director Fisheries, ARTO, DMO, Tehsilars, DSHO, DSWO, AD FCS&CA, DEPO, DYSSO, BDOs, AD Tourism, Wildlife Warden, AD Handloom & Handicrafts, LMO, DRC, CEO MCA, BDOs, EOs MCs, AD F&E, AD LDM, representatives of various programmes and projects and other officers of the district.

At the outset, the officers briefed the chair about working

of their respective departments.

Addressing the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner said that public welfare is the utmost priority of the district administration and stressed upon the officers to work with commitment and dedication for taking the district to newer heights of progress and development. He noted that proper team work and coordination are necessary for effective implementation of all government schemes, welfare initiatives and development projects.

Expressing confidence in abilities of officers, Dr. Bhat observed that enhancing access of offices and outreach activities help the departments to receive public feedback, ultimately leading to better public service delivery.

At the conclusion, the DC advised the officers to properly monitor the functioning of their respective departments so the subordinate offices work in sync and alignment with the district goals of public welfare and overall development.

NC MLA Pardesi reviews development works in Lal Chowk constituency

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Feb 27: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Provincial Vice President and MLA Lal Chowk Ahsan Pardesi Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting with party functionaries of the Lal Chowk constituency to review and evaluate the progress of ongoing developmental initiatives and assess implementation status of various public welfare works across the constituency.

The meeting, as per a party statement, witnessed detailed deliberations on infrastructure augmentation, upgradation of civic amenities, and strengthening of basic facilities. Pardesi informed the functionaries that developmental projects amounting to Rs 4 crore were initiated through his Constituency Development Fund (CDF), while an additional



Rs 21 crore has been secured under the Capex Budget to fast-track priority works, address infrastructural deficiencies, and ensure systematic urban transformation.

Highlighting the importance of food security and welfare delivery, Pardesi stated that he has been personally monitoring the timely distribution of

ration supplies to ensure that beneficiaries receive essential commodities without delay. He noted that continuous coordination with the concerned departments is being maintained to guarantee transparency, efficiency and uninterrupted public distribution services.

On the occasion, Provincial Women's Wing President Sabiya Qadri also addressed the gathering and underscored the importance of inclusive governance, women's participation in developmental processes, and sustained grassroots engagement to resolve civic grievances.

In addition to developmental matters, organizational and party-related issues were also discussed. The leadership reviewed strategies for strengthening booth-level structures, enhancing cadre outreach, improving coordination mechanisms, and consolidating the party's grassroots network.

DC Shopian reviews smart meter installation, RDSS works

KT News Desk

Shopian, February 27: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at Mini Secretariat Shopian to assess the progress of Smart Meter installation and works under RDSS.

During the meeting, deliberations were held on the pace of smart meter installation and mobilization of field staff for improving the progress under the initiative.

Concerned agencies involved in the project execution were instructed by DC Shopian to speed up the pace for improving progress while reviewing feeder-wise progress, emphasizing strict monitoring and regular field inspections.

The DC also took stock of the progress of works under Revamped

Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS). He was informed that nearly 85% of the works under the scheme have been completed so far, making significant progress in strengthening the power infrastructure.

He emphasised for maintaining close coordination among stakeholders for achieving desired results in the power sector upgrade.

Highlighting the importance of Suriya Ghar scheme initiative, the DC underscored the need to promote rooftop solar installation and ensure maximum beneficiary coverage in the district.

ADDC Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone; ACR, Shakoor Ahmad Dar; SDM, Zainapora, Bilal Ahmed; Executive Engineer, KPDC and other concerned officers and agencies representatives were present.

DDC Kupwara chairs DLRC meeting

KT News Desk

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 27: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, Friday chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) meeting for the third quarter of 2025-26 to review the performance of banks and line departments in achieving financial inclusion and saturation of government schemes.

In his address, the DDC, as per an official statement, underscored the importance of universal coverage of flagship schemes, with particular focus on social security and self-employment initiatives. He directed banks and departments to work in close coordination to ensure that benefits reach the grassroots in a timely and



transparent manner. Detailed deliberations were held on the progress of schemes including PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, PM Vishwakarma, PMEGP, KCC, PM-SVANIDHI, HADP, PMFME, NRLM, and PM Mudra Yojana.

The DDC also instructed the Lead District Manager and Cluster Head JK Bank to conduct daily reviews of branch-wise performance under Mission YUVA, ensuring accountability and accelerated

implementation.

Highlighting the district's progress under the Annual District Credit Plan (ACP) 2025-26, it was informed that Kupwara has already achieved 79.5% of its annual credit target, with disbursements amounting to 2279.7 Crores by the end of the third quarter.

The meeting also reviewed achievements under social security schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana,

Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, and Atal Pension Yojana, reflecting the administration's commitment to inclusive welfare.

Expressing concern over the poor performance of certain banks in meeting key indicators, the DDC conveyed strong displeasure and directed them to improve outcomes in the final quarter. He reiterated that intensive efforts, transparency, and timely monitoring are essential to ensure full saturation of schemes and to maximize benefits for citizens.

The meeting was attended by CPO Kupwara, Parvaiz Ahmad Lone; LDM Kupwara, Tanveer Bashir Mir; LDO RBI, DDM NABARD, Cluster Head JK Bank, CAHO, DSHO, AD Fisheries, officers from line departments, and representatives of various banks.

JKTPO organises digital financing awareness drive in Reasi

KT News Desk

REASI, FEBRUARY 27: In continuation of its outreach initiative, Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) organised a District-Level Digital Financing Awareness Workshop at Reasi under the World Bank supported Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Programme.

Initiating the district-level series at Kathua, the Reasi workshop marks another significant step towards deepening credit penetration and promoting digital financial inclusion among MSMEs at the grassroots level across Jammu and Kashmir.

The primary objective of these awareness drives is to on-board

local and small MSMEs and SHGs and facilitate them improved access to digital financial services.

The Awareness Workshop, as per an official statement, witnessed the participation of over 150MSMEs/SHGs from diverse sectors. They were sensitized to the importance of digital integration in financial management and expanding their access to formal and alternative credit channels.

Delivering the welcome and inaugural address, Faculty JKTPO, Vishal Ray briefly underscored the importance of financial literacy and digital adoption for enhancing MSME competitiveness and strengthening SHG-led micro-enterprises. He encouraged entrepreneurs and

SHG members to proactively engage with participating financial institutions and leverage digital lending platforms for sustainable business growth.

Participating Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs/MFIs) conducted detailed awareness sessions on their lending products, microfinance models, digital loan processing systems and flexible repayment mechanisms tailored for micro and small enterprises.

The representatives elaborated on their credit assessment methodologies, digital onboarding processes and collateral-light financing options, enabling MSMEs to better understand practical pathways for accessing timely finance.

NCORD meeting reviews drug control measures in Kathua

KT NEWS DESK

KATHUA, FEBRUARY 27: Additional Deputy Commissioner Kathua Vishavjeet Singh Friday chaired a meeting of the District Level National Coordination and Monitoring Committee (NCORD) here in the Conference Hall to review and strengthen measures aimed at curbing drug trafficking and substance abuse in the district.

A comprehensive review of enforcement actions, intelligence sharing, awareness campaigns, rehabilitation initiatives and surveillance mechanisms was conducted.

The ADC, as per an official statement, emphasized the need to further strengthen inter-departmental coordination and intensify checking at vulnerable points. Stress was also laid on close monitoring of pharmaceutical sales and



launching intensive awareness drives in educational institutions and rural areas.

Reiterating the administration's zero-tolerance policy against drug peddling, the ADC directed the officers to enhance intelligence gathering, fast-track investigations and ensure stringent legal action against offenders. He called for a coordinated and

mission-mode approach under the NCORD framework to effectively tackle the menace and achieve a drug-free Kathua.

SDM Hiranagar Phulail Singh, RTO Kathua Surinder Sharma, ACD Akhil Sadotra, Chief Education Officer, CAO, DySP Headquarters and officers of concerned departments attended the meeting.

SWD organizes special health & awareness camp for senior citizens at Kuchal- Kishtwar

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, FEBRUARY 27: Social Welfare Department Kishtwar on Friday organized a special awareness and health camp for senior citizens at the Kuchal Village.

The initiative was conducted in collaboration with the Department of AYUSH and NGO Asariya Institute of Technical Education, which also operates an Old Age Home in the District.

The event was held under the overall supervision of DSWO Tariq Parveez Qazi. More than 150 individuals attended the camp and received various health and welfare services which included comprehensive health check-up, distribution of prosthetic aids such as hearing aids, walking sticks and wheelchairs.

Additionally, a wheelchair was handed over to the local



Panchayat to address any kind of urgent requirement. Similarly, the Department of AYUSH provided free medicines to the patients as per their requirement.

A special Digital Life Certificate (DLC) camp was also held, where beneficiaries were

guided in generating DLCs under the NSAP scheme. As a goodwill gesture, shawls and warm water bottles were distributed among the senior citizens.

Awareness sessions were held to educate participants about the welfare schemes

implemented by the Social Welfare Department for the elderly.

TSWO Chatroo Rajesh Sharma, Dr. Amjad Hussain (Medical Officer) and other officials and staff were present on the occasion.

Rubio to visit Israel next week as US-Iran tensions soar

AP

Tel Aviv, Feb 27: Secretary of State Marco Rubio will make a quick trip to Israel early next week as tensions between the United States and Iran soar amid a massive buildup of US forces in the Middle East, the State Department said Friday.

The department said in a statement that Rubio would visit Israel on Monday and Tuesday to "discuss a range of regional priorities including Iran, Lebanon, and ongoing efforts to implement President Trump's 20-Point Peace Plan for Gaza." It offered no other details.

The announcement comes just hours after the US Embassy in Jerusalem implemented "authorised departure" status for non-essential personnel and family members, which means that eligible staffers can leave the

country voluntarily at government expense. The US Embassy in Israel on Friday told its staff that it could leave the country and urged anyone considering departure to do so immediately.

In an email US Ambassador Mike Huckabee urged staff considering departure to do so quickly, advising them to focus initially on getting any flight out of Israel and to then make their way to Washington.

"Those wishing to take AD should do so TODAY," Huckabee wrote, using an acronym for "authorised departure."

"While there may be out-bound flights over the coming days, there may not be," he added. Huckabee said that there was no need for panic, but for those desiring to leave, it was important to make plans soon.

The email was recounted to The Associated Press by

someone involved with the US mission who wasn't authorized to share details.

The email came a day after Iran and the United States walked away from nuclear negotiations without a deal, in their third round of nuclear talks in Geneva. Technical discussions are scheduled to take place in Vienna next week.

US Vice President JD Vance is scheduled to meet later Friday in Washington with Oman's foreign minister, Badr al-Busaidi, who has been mediating during the talks, according to a person with knowledge of the meeting who spoke on condition of anonymity because the meeting is private.

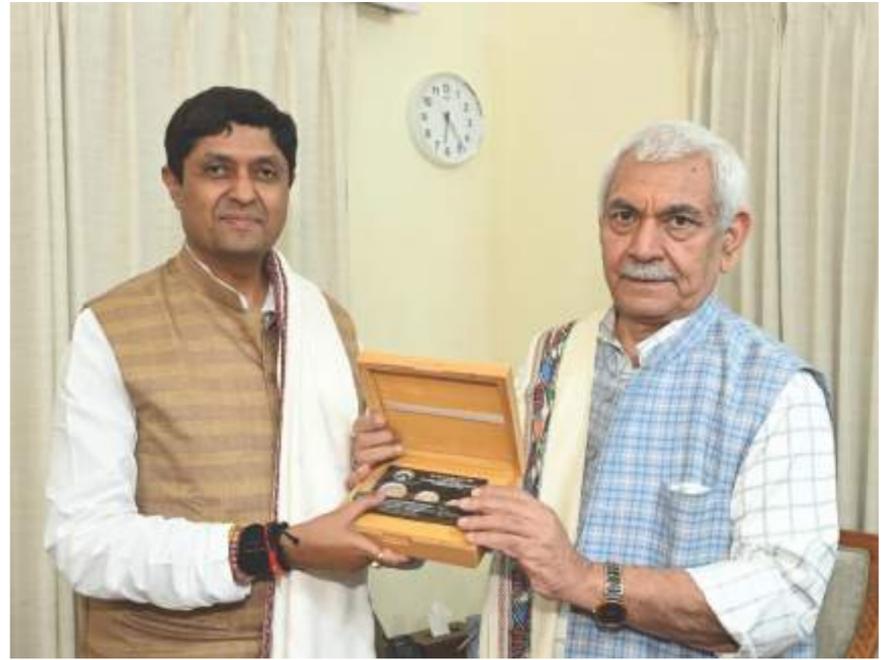
Earlier, al-Busaidi said that there had been significant progress made on Thursday, though officials from Iran and the United States haven't announced steps forward.

Iranian Foreign Minister

Abbas Araghchi on Thursday offered no specifics, but said "what needs to happen has been clearly spelled out from our side."

According to a confidential report by the International Atomic Energy Agency circulated to member states and seen Friday by The Associated Press, Iran hasn't granted the UN nuclear watchdog access to its nuclear facilities affected by the 12-day war in June, and as a result can't confirm whether or not Iran has stopped its enrichment or the size of its stockpile.

Airlines such as Netherlands-based KLM have already announced plans to suspend flights out of Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion International Airport, and other embassies have also made plans for authorized departures from Israel and neighboring countries.



Ujjwal Raman Singh, Member of Parliament, and Convenor, Second Sub-Committee of Parliament on Official Language called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Make higher edu

Lieutenant Governor observed that the purpose of education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge but creation of enlightened citizens who are sensitive towards their duties.

"True education prepares youth to forge entirely new answers and solutions that the world has not yet imagined.

Students enter campuses not merely for degrees, but to nurture culture, explore new ideas, choose bold paths, and courageously drive societal progress," the Lieutenant Governor said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor also launched the Podcast "JU Vaachan", an initiative of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies, Jammu University.

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Prof. Neelu Rohmetra, Dean Research studies; Prof. Prakash Anthal, Dean Students Welfare; Heads of Departments, faculty members, senior officials and students in large numbers were present.

Padma Shri Dr Jitendra Udhampuri; Padma Shri Dr SP Varma; Padma Shri Romalo Ram; Ashok Bhan, former DGP, and prominent citizens from different walks of life also attended the inaugural ceremony. (KNO)

'Value-based tourism'

key attractions: "Whether it is the yatri of Vaishno Devi Temple, border tourism, or destinations in Kashmir such as Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Srinagar, Yusmarg, Sonamarg and Gurez, we are continuously working to improve our product."

Referring to the proposed development of nine new world-class destinations in coordination with the Government of India, Omar said the initiatives aim to provide tourists with more options while emphasising sustainability. "Instead of volume-based tourism, we want value-based tourism with high-spending visitors," he said.

On attracting international travellers, the CM said his immediate priority is domestic tourism. "The Indian traveller today is sought after worldwide. If we attract a good share of Indian tourists, they spend far more. For me, it is more important to market J&K to the rest of India. The world will take care of itself," he added.

Welcoming improved rail connectivity to Srinagar, Abdullah said that while the service is beneficial, enhanced capacity is needed. "At present, tickets have to be booked months in advance. I hope the Ministry of Railways increases frequency and carrying capacity to further strengthen tourism promotion," he said.

He further stated that a new airport has been sanctioned for Jammu and Kashmir, and work will commence soon, while construction of a new terminal building in Jammu is underway. "Once these projects are completed, air connectivity will significantly improve," he added.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani; MLAs Pirzada Feroq Ahmad Shah (Gulmarg), Tanvir Sadiq (Zadibal) and Altaf Ahmad Wani (Pahalgam); and Director Tourism Jammu, Vikas Gupta.

Jammu & Kashmir's participation at SATTE 2026 featured nearly 70 tourism stakeholders as co-exhibitors, showcasing destinations, services and promotional material highlighting the region's tourism, heritage, adventure & pilgrimage tourism potential. Live performances by traditional folk musicians added cultural vibrancy to the pavilion and attracted significant visitor interest.

The Tourism Department said its officers shall be engaging with travel trade representatives during the exhibition to strengthen tourism promotion and increase tourist footfall in Jammu & Kashmir. (KNO)

J&K set to shine

Thursday evening, which was graced by the Union Minister of Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, along with diplomats, travel trade representatives and key stakeholders from the hospitality sector.

Highlighting Jammu & Kashmir's spiritual richness, breathtaking landscapes and vibrant cultural heritage, the Chief Minister said J&K embraces visitors from across India and around the world. He emphasized that the government is actively working to broaden the tourism canvas beyond traditional destinations.

CM Omar Abdullah announced the development of new tourism circuits and the

identification of nine emerging destinations aimed at offering fresh experiences to travellers.

Reflecting on recent challenges, the Chief Minister said the government has drawn important lessons from past experiences. "Have lessons been learned from what happened last year. The fact that it took us so long to open many of our closed destinations is indicative of the lessons we have learned," he remarked, adding that the focus now is firmly on the future and on building a more resilient and responsive tourism ecosystem.

The event was organised by the Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Forum under the leadership of noted hotelier Mushtaq Chaya. Honorary Secretary General of the Forum, Wahid Malik, described the gathering as a historic moment in positioning Jammu & Kashmir as a safe and vibrant all-season tourism hotspot.

Mushtaq Chaya termed the present phase as one of "unprecedented progress and development," assuring visitors of world-class hospitality and improved facilities across Jammu and Kashmir.

The event witnessed the presence of Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani; MLAs Pirzada Feroq Ahmad Shah, Tanvir Sadiq and Altaf Ahmad Wani; Director Tourism Jammu Vikas Gupta; ambassadors from several countries; travel association leaders; senior government officials; and prominent tourism stakeholders, making it a landmark occasion in the promotion of Jammu & Kashmir tourism.

Day temps soar

recorded a maximum of 9.7 degrees Celsius, 7.3 degrees above normal, and a minimum of minus 1.4 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a maximum of 26.3 degrees Celsius, 3.2 degrees above normal, and a minimum of 12.9 degrees Celsius. Banihal registered a high of 20.8 degrees Celsius, 7.4 degrees above normal, while Batote recorded 20.4 degrees Celsius, 7.2 degrees above normal.

Katra recorded a maximum of 26.0 degrees Celsius, 5.1 degrees above normal, and Bhadarwah registered 20.9 degrees Celsius, 6.5 degrees above normal.

There was no significant rainfall reported across the Union Territory during the past 24 hours, except for a trace recorded at Bhadarwah. Relative humidity levels remained moderate across most stations.

The Met department has forecast mainly dry weather over the next few days. (KNO)

J&K amends building

Union Territory. The Housing & Urban Development Department has made key changes to the UBBL-2021 under powers vested in it by the Jammu & Kashmir Municipal Corporation Act, the Jammu & Kashmir Municipal Act, and the Jammu & Kashmir Development Act.

According to the amendments, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), all building permission requests must be submitted online through the Housing & Urban Development Department's portal, along with computer-aided design-based building plans and other requisite documents, through an empanelled Registered Technical Person (RTP).

The request will be submitted online through the empanelled RTP, who is registered with the Architects Organisation or such other authority as notified by the Housing & Urban Development Department.

Applications for permissions will be automatically scrutinized for compliance with the Master Plan/Zonal Plan, Unified Building By-Laws, Development Control Regulations, and other applicable norms.

The automatic scrutiny will also verify adherence to mandatory parameters including plot size, setbacks, ground coverage, FAR/F.S.I, height restrictions, parking requirements, and permissible land use. A scrutiny report will then be generated, highlighting compliance and deviations, if any, for applicant and authority review.

"In case of any deficiencies, discrepancies, or shortfalls observed during automated scrutiny, the system shall communicate the same online to the applicant through the Building Permission Portal. The applicant shall be required to submit the compliances or rectify the shortfalls within

fifteen (15) days from the date of such online intimation," the amendments state.

According to the bye-laws, low-risk buildings (such as small residential houses up to G+2 floors on plots under 500 sqm, or small commercial buildings up to 15m height on plots under 300 sqm) can be approved on the basis of self-certification and third-party certification by the RTP.

"Upon acceptance of a complete application accompanied by a valid Self-Certification and Auto Approval Certificate, the Competent Authority shall be exempted from conducting mandatory pre-construction or during-construction site visits for verification of parameters certified in the certificate for low-risk buildings stated above," the amendments read.

The amendments also provide that No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) from departments such as Revenue, PHE, Power, Forest, Fire Services, Railways, and Airports Authority will be processed online through the designated portal of the Housing & Urban Development Department.

The new bye-laws provide that applicants must apply online for the occupancy-cum-completion certificate upon completion of construction. The Building Permission Issuing Authority (BPIA) will issue the certificate online within 15 days of application submission, after conducting field verification of the site (unless exempted under the bye-laws) and obtaining the digital inspection report from the designated inspection team. (KNO)

Tourism rebounds

his property has reached around 65 per cent. "There was uncertainty earlier, but enquiries have increased. Families from Maharashtra and Gujarat have confirmed bookings for the coming weeks," he said.

Tour operators attribute the uptick to improved security measures and sustained outreach by the administration led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

Nisar Ahmad, a tour coordinator, said warmer weather has also contributed to the rise in arrivals. "People are calling regularly to check packages for Gulmarg and Pahalgam. The situation is much better compared to a few months ago," he said.

Shopkeepers in tourist hubs echoed similar views. Abdul Rashid, who runs a handicrafts store in Lal Chowk, said sales had been hit badly after the incident. "Now we see customers walking in again. Even if business is not at its peak, there is hope," he said.

Tourists visiting the Valley said they felt reassured by the visible security presence and local hospitality.

Ritu Sharma, a visitor from Delhi, said her family decided to go ahead with their trip after speaking to friends who had recently returned. "We felt safe and welcomed. The natural beauty is as breathtaking as ever," she said.

Another tourist, Aditya Menon from Bengaluru, said Kashmir remains on the bucket list for many travellers. "Incidents can happen anywhere, but the arrangements here are professional," he said.

Officials said the tourism sector contributes significantly to the Union Territory's economy and expressed hope that a sustained inflow of visitors will further stabilise livelihoods linked to the industry. (KNO)

Ranji trophy coming

Sahil Lotra holding firm at the other end, underlining J&K's authority in the contest.

Earlier, J&K's bowling unit set the tone for dominance with a clinical display. Led by Auqib Nabi, who claimed his seventh five-wicket haul of the season, the side dismantled Karnataka's batting lineup with precision.

Though Mayank Agarwal stood tall with a resilient 130 off 207 balls, the lack of support from the rest of the batting order left Karnataka in deep trouble. Regular breakthroughs ensured they never recovered from early setbacks.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh commended the players' discipline and determination, while also acknowledging the role of the Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association in ensuring transparency in team selection.

Best wishes to the spirited team of #JammuAndKashmir for their outstanding performance in the ongoing Ranji Trophy.

Your grit, discipline and determination on

the field have made the entire region proud. The way you have showcased talent and resilience at the national stage is truly inspiring.

"Equally deserving of appreciation are JKCA's Brig Anil Gupta and Sh Mithun Manhas, who have painstakingly sought to introduce a culture of fair, transparent team selection in J&K... and the results are there for everybody to see." Dr Jitendra Singh said in a post on 'X'.

Meanwhile, Waheed ur Rehman Para described the achievement as more than just a sporting milestone, calling it a symbol of unity, resilience, and hope for the youth of the region.

"Winning #RanjiTrophy by the Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Team is not just about lifting a trophy. It's not just about winning, it's about showing the way.

At a time when so much around us feels fractured, when institutions become flashpoints, when young people feel unheard, when debates over region, religion, and identity grow louder, this victory feels different. It feels personal to all of us.

On the field, there were no divisions. Hindus and Muslims stood shoulder to shoulder, playing for one badge, one dream. They transcended religious, regional, and geographical divides, taking on and defeating elite teams from across the country. That's no small feat.

The J&K Cricket Association, once weighed down by controversy and allegations of corruption, now reflects something far more powerful: renewal. Change. A system slowly finding its feet again.

But what truly makes this special is the emotion behind it. These young men didn't just play cricket. They played with pride. With a quiet determination that said: we belong here. Every run, every wicket, every dive on the field carried more than sporting intent; it carried hope.

And among them shines Aqib Nabi, a name that now echoes beyond the boundary ropes. A symbol of resilience and raw promise from a land that has endured so much. Your journey inspires not just aspiring cricketers, but an entire generation searching for light.

This is more than sports news. This is a story coming from a region where many young people battle anxiety, uncertainty, and hopelessness. And yet, here is a team that chose belief over bitterness. Effort over excuses. This is about turning despair into determination. Turning doubt into dignity. Turning hopelessness into hope." He said in a post on 'X'

With just one day remaining, Jammu & Kashmir are firmly in the driver's seat. Even in the event of a draw, their substantial first-innings lead puts them in a commanding position to be declared champions—potentially securing their first-ever Ranji Trophy title in over six decades.

As the team prepares for the final push, all eyes remain on Hubli, where Jammu and Kashmir stand just one step away from scripting a golden chapter in their cricketing history. (KNO)

RBI Dy Governor calls

the inaugural ceremony. Professor Pranab Ranjan, Conference Chair and Dr. Ashish Kumar, Joint Conference Chair, also graced the momentous occasion.

In his keynote address, Swaminathan J highlighted Institute's growing stature as a premier academic institution in the country and across the globe.

Speaking to an audience of distinguished experts and MBA students, he framed his address as a conversation with the future leaders, emphasizing that the financial system India builds towards 2047 must rest on three pillars: safety, fairness and reliability. He underscored that development extends beyond GDP to quality of life and that finance, at its core, is a people-centric enterprise built on trust, clarity and integrity.

Encouraging principled leadership, he highlighted key lessons for sound decision-making: respecting customers, understanding financial sustainability, encouraging constructive challenge and discussing risks transparently. He stressed that in an era where technology scales rapidly, both value and vulnerabilities multiply, making responsible design and fair customer outcomes critical for inclusive growth.

He concluded that achieving Viksit Bharat@2047 demands principled performance and platforms like IFAC 2026 connecting

academic learning with real-world financial transformation.

Professor Jabir Ali, Dean Faculty and Research, IIM Jammu, emphasized that education must transcend classroom learning to foster a deeper understanding of public policy and its real-world impact, particularly in advancing inclusive and sustainable economic development.

Underscoring the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, he highlighted the critical role of higher education institutions in shaping responsible leaders and policy thinkers who can contribute meaningfully to India's growth journey. He reaffirmed that IIM Jammu is committed towards setting the tone for this national vision through research-driven insights, strong academia-industry-government collaboration and ethical leadership rooted in innovation and sustainability.

Referring to collaborative engagements with the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, he noted that such platforms as IFAC 2026 enable students to develop a holistic understanding of industry, governance and economic transformation.

Professor Nitin Upadhyay, Dean Academics IIM, acknowledged the guiding influence of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in shaping India's financial architecture. He appreciated the conference's timely and forward-looking theme, "Financial Strategies for Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth to achieve Viksit Bharat@2047."

He emphasized that the deliberations at IFAC 2026 would explore multiple dimensions of finance and accounting, offering valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners to design robust mechanisms that contribute meaningfully towards the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

During the interactive question and answers session with the students, Swaminathan J addressed queries on monetary policy transmission, global spillovers, financial sector vulnerabilities and the balance between growth and inflation management, encouraging young scholars to contribute meaningfully to India's financial policy ecosystem.

Professor Pranab Ranjan Das, Conference Chair, IIM Jammu, while presenting the theme, Financial Strategies for Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth to achieve Viksit Bharat@2047, highlighted the financial reforms, sustainability and strategic pathways for long-term transformation. He expressed confidence that the conference would generate actionable policy insights and emphasized collaboration among academia, industry, and policymakers to build a resilient, future-ready economy aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Dr. Saugata Bhattacharya, Member, MPC; Madan Sabnavas, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda; CMA Dr. S K Gupta, MD, ICMAI Registered Valuers Organization; Prasanna Balachander, Executive Director, ICICI Securities; Dr. Narendra Ahlawat, MD & CEO, MCX Clearing Corporation Ltd. and Akshay Panth, CIO, SBI Ventures, along with Tamal Bandyopadhyay, Consulting Editor, The Business Standard, also graced the inaugural ceremony.

The discussion offered a multidimensional perspective on India's financial transformation toward Viksit Bharat@2047, highlighting structural shifts in global savings and liquidity amid quantitative tightening and the imperative for India to compete effectively for limited global capital while deepening domestic financial markets.

Panelists drew attention to slowing deposit growth and the migration of retail investors toward capital markets, underscoring the importance of strengthening the savings ecosystem alongside sustained credit expansion.

The panel converged on a clear message that India's journey toward inclusive and sustainable growth will require adaptive institutions, deeper and more diversified capital markets, strengthened domestic savings, and principled financial leadership aligned with long-term national development goals.

IFAC 2026 continued with concurrent technical sessions featuring research presentations by the scholars and practitioners, reinforcing IIM Jammu's commitment to academic excellence, policy engagement and national development.

Modi asks India Inc to invest, take advantage of Budget announcements

PTI

New Delhi, Feb 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday urged the Indian industry to step up investment and innovation, saying the government has laid the groundwork through aggressive capital spending and by creating a conducive policy environment in successive Budgets, and that it is now time for the private sector to drive the next phase of globally competitive growth.

Addressing the first post-Budget webinar on 'Technology, Reforms and Finance for Viksit Bharat', Modi said public capital expenditure has risen from Rs 2 lakh crore 11 years ago to over Rs 12 lakh crore in the Union Budget 2026-27, laying a strong foundation for expansion.

The higher allocation, he said, signals the private sector to invest with renewed vigour and leverage Budget announcements for 2026-27.

"India Inc should come forward with fresh investment and innovation. Financial institutions and analysts should help design practical solutions and improve market confidence," he said, calling for closer collaboration between government, industry, and knowledge partners to ensure reforms translate into tangible outcomes. "We need greater



participation in infrastructure and innovation in financial models... we must strengthen project sanction methodologies and improve the quality of appraisal," he said.

Over the past decade, the government has anchored India's growth strategy around record capital expenditure, sharply scaling up spending on highways, railways, ports, airports, digital infrastructure and energy networks to crowd in private investment and lift medium-term productivity. However, the private sector is yet to unleash the so-called animal spirit.

Modi said India's resilience

over the past decade was driven by conviction-led reforms and sustained efforts to improve ease of doing business.

India has undertaken technology-led governance, strengthened institutions and even today the country is on the path of reforms.

"To sustain the reform express momentum, we not only need to focus on policy intent but also have to focus on delivery excellence. The evaluation of reforms should be on the basis of its impact on the ground. We should extensively use AI, blockchain, data analytics to improve transparency, speed and accountability," he said. He proposed the creation of

a 'Reform Partnership Charter' to formalise collaboration among government, industry, financial institutions and academia as part of the goal of achieving Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Modi said when government, industry and knowledge partners come together, "reforms translate into results", and "announcements on paper turn into achievements on the ground".

Listing out investor-friendly policies announced by the government, he said, foreign investment framework has been simplified and greater predictability has been brought in.

Besides, measures have been taken for deepening of the bond market, he said, adding that new instruments with less risk should be developed to attract sustained foreign investment.

Observing that the Budget is often evaluated on different parameters, Modi said "the national Budget is not a short-term trading document. It is a policy roadmap. Therefore, the effectiveness of the Budget should also be assessed on solid and substantive parameters".

"Every year, the Budget webinar held after the Budget is important. My desire is that the webinar should not remain limited to a formal exchange of views, but focus on meaningful brainstorming," he added.

Amit Shah reviews internal security in Bihar's Seemanchal region

PTI

Patna, Feb 27: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday held a meeting with top Bihar government officials in Purnea district to review internal security in the strategically located Seemanchal region, before winding up his three-day state tour.

Those present at the meeting included Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, besides the state's Chief Secretary Pratay Amrit and Director General of Police Vinay Kumar.

Snapshots of the high-level meeting, held at a hotel in Purnea, were shared on X by Choudhary, who holds the Home portfolio in the Nitish Kumar government in Bihar.

"A meeting is scheduled with the honourable Home Minister, who is expected to brief officials of all the departments concerned on effective management of borders and putting a check on activities like smuggling and narcotics," the BJP had told reporters ahead of Shah's visit.

Shah had kicked off his tour on February 25, when he chaired a meeting of the Land Ports Authority of India, a statutory body functioning under the Ministry of Home Affairs, which is responsible for creating,



upgrading, maintaining and managing border infrastructure in the country.

On Thursday, he visited Araria, where he dedicated to the nation a couple of border outposts and launched projects worth Rs 175 crore of the Sashastra Seema Bal.

He also asserted that "driving out every infiltrator from the country is the top priority of the Narendra Modi government".

The home minister had noted that states like Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal had become vulnerable to "demographic changes" caused by unchecked infiltration.

The former BJP president had also expressed confidence that his party would win the upcoming assembly polls in West

Bengal and flush out infiltrators from the state, which, incidentally, has a sizeable minority population.

Shah had also thanked the people of Bihar, where "we fought the assembly polls a few months ago on the issue of infiltration", for giving a resounding mandate to the BJP-led NDA.

He had vowed to make the Seemanchal region "free from infiltrators", and ordered the removal of "all encroachments within 10 kilometres of the border with Nepal".

Besides Nepal, Seemanchal shares borders with West Bengal and is seen as a "gateway" to the strategically important Siliguri Corridor, which is colloquially referred to as the "Chicken's Neck".

Excise scam

Delhi court discharges Kejriwal, Sisodia, K Kavitha, and 20 others; CBI to appeal

PTI

New Delhi, Feb 27: A Delhi court on Friday discharged former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, his deputy Manish Sisodia and 21 others in the politically charged liquor policy case, pulling up the CBI by saying its case was wholly unable to survive judicial scrutiny and stood discredited in its entirety.

Among the 21 people given a clean chit in the case is Telangana Jagruthi president K Kavitha.

"This court has no hesitation in holding that the material placed on record does not disclose even a prima facie case, much less any grave suspicion, against any of the accused persons. Accordingly, Accused Nos 1-23 are discharged of all the offences alleged against them in the present case," special judge Jitendra Singh said.

The CBI has been probing alleged corruption in the formulation and execution of the erstwhile AAP government's now scrapped excise policy.

The probe agency said it would immediately appeal in the Delhi High Court against the trial court's judgement.

Several aspects of the probe have been either

ignored or not considered adequately, a CBI spokesperson said.

In his order, Singh said the investigation appears to have proceeded on a predetermined trajectory, implicating virtually every person associated with the formulation or implementation of the policy to lend an illusion of depth and credibility to an otherwise fragile narrative.

"A cumulative appraisal of the record further reveals an investigative approach marked by an attempt to stitch together disparate fragments so as to create an impression of a vast and complex conspiracy, unsupported by legally admissible material," he said.

The judge said that the endeavour to further connect such allegations to the Goa Assembly elections, to project, layering, and utilisation of alleged proceeds of crime, rests more on inference and assumption than on legally sustainable material.

"Once the formulation of the (excise) policy is shown to be the product of deliberation, institutional scrutiny, and procedural compliance, any subsequent attempt to attribute criminality to its implementation becomes wholly untenable," he said.

Watching developments in US; joint statement on trade deal provides for rebalancing: Goyal



PTI

New Delhi, Feb 27: Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said India is watching developments following the US Supreme Court's verdict against tariffs, pointing out that the joint statement on the proposed interim trade deal provides for a rebalancing of the pact "should circumstances change".

The minister's remarks came on the heels of US President Donald Trump's 10 per cent tariff against all trading partners for 150 days. The temporary 10 per cent tariff was imposed on February 24 after the US Supreme Court struck down President Trump's April 2025 decision to impose reciprocal tariffs on all imports.

On February 24, Trump also announced further increasing the tariffs to 15 per cent.

"We'll have to watch. And by the way, you must have read my joint statement that we had finalised with the US. It has categorically said that should the circumstances change, the deal would be re-balanced...to ensure that the balance of the deal is maintained on both sides," he said when asked if India's negotiating position will change after the verdict.

A joint statement issued on February 7 stated that in the event of any changes to the agreed-upon tariffs of either country, the US and India agree that the other country may modify its commitments.

Referring to this statement, Goyal said: "It provides that the sanctity of the deal is both ways".

The minister was speaking at the News18 Rising Bharat Summit 2026 here.

Stock markets fall: Sensex, Nifty tumble over 1 pc

PTI

Mumbai, Feb 27: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled over 1 per cent on Friday due to fresh foreign fund outflows and subdued global trends amid rising geopolitical risks.

The lack of progress in US-Iran nuclear talks has intensified concerns of further escalation of Middle East tensions, experts said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 961.42 points or 1.17 per cent to settle at 81,287.19. During the day, it dropped 1,089.46 points or 1.32 per cent to 81,159.15.

The 50-share NSE Nifty tumbled 317.90 points or 1.25 per cent to end at 25,178.65.

From the Sensex pack, Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finserv, InterGlobe Aviation, Mahindra & Mahindra and Maruti were among the major laggards.

HCL Tech, Trent, Infosys and Eternal were the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,465.99 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs), however, bought stocks worth Rs 5,031.57 crore.

"Indian markets continued to consolidate amid weak global cues and rising geopolitical risks, with investor sentiment turning increasingly cautious. The lack of progress in US-Iran nuclear talks has intensified concerns of further escalation of Middle East tensions, while persistent AI-related



uncertainty is also supporting safe-haven flows.

"Domestically, a risk-off tone prevails as the earnings season winds down and global macro factors take precedence," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi fell by 1 per cent. Japan's Nikkei 225, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index ended in positive territory.

Markets in Europe were trading on a mixed note.

The US market ended mostly lower on Thursday.

"Weak global cues and rising geopolitical uncertainty following inconclusive US-Iran

talks weighed on investor confidence, triggering broad-based profit-taking across auto, FMCG and pharma stocks after recent advances. The absence of fresh domestic triggers further accelerated the downside momentum, especially during the final hour of trade," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong Wealth, said.

Brent Crude, the global oil benchmark, jumped 1.26 per cent to USD 71.64 per barrel.

On Thursday, the Sensex dipped marginally by 27.46 points, or 0.03 per cent, to settle at 82,248.61.

The Nifty eked out a marginal gain of 14.05 points or 0.06 per cent to end at 25,496.55.

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'Trump's Iranian missile claim unsupported by US intelligence'

REUTERS

Washington, Feb 27: US President Donald Trump's claim that Iran will soon have a missile that can hit the United States is not backed by US intelligence reports, and appears to be exaggerated, according to three sources familiar with the reports, casting doubt on part of his case for a possible attack on the Islamic Republic.

In his State of the Union address to Congress on Tuesday, Trump began making his case to the American public for why the US could launch strikes against Iran, saying Tehran was "working on missiles that will soon reach" the United States.

But there have been no changes, two sources said, to an unclassified 2025 US Defense Intelligence Agency assessment that Iran could take until 2035 to develop a "militarily viable intercontinental ballistic missile" (ICBM) from its existing satellite-launching space-launch vehicles (SLV).

"President Trump is absolutely right to highlight the grave concern posed by Iran, a country that chants 'death to America,' possessing intercontinental ballistic missiles," said White House spokesperson Anna Kelly.

One source said that even if China or North Korea — which closely cooperate with Iran — provided technological assistance, Iran



would probably take up to eight years at the earliest to produce "something that is actually ICBM level and operational."

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss sensitive intelligence, said they were unaware of any US intelligence assessments that Iran was developing a missile that could soon range the US homeland but did not rule out the possibility of a new intelligence report they were unaware of.

The New York Times first reported that US intelligence agencies believe Iran is probably years away from having missiles that can hit the United States.

Trump's claim about Iran's missile capability came as representatives from the US and Iran negotiate over Tehran's nuclear program, with no signs of a breakthrough that could avert potential US strikes amid a massive

military buildup in the region.

The US president has done little to explain publicly why he might be leading the US into its most aggressive action against the Islamic Republic since its 1979 revolution.

In his address on Tuesday, Trump pointed to Tehran's support for militant groups, its killing of protesters and the country's missile and nuclear programs as threats to the region and the United States.

Without providing evidence, Trump said that Tehran was beginning to rebuild the nuclear program that he claimed had been "obliterated" by US airstrikes last June on three major sites involved with uranium enrichment.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday referred to Iran's ballistic missile program in less definitive terms than Trump, saying that Tehran is "on a pathway to one day being able to develop weapons that could reach the

continental US"

Iran denies seeking a nuclear arsenal, saying its enrichment of uranium — a process that produces fuel for power plants and nuclear warheads depending on its duration — is strictly for civilian uses.

In an interview with India Today TV released on Wednesday, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi denied that Iran was expanding its missile capabilities.

"We are not developing long range missiles. We have limited range to below 2000 kilometers intentionally," he said. "We don't want it to be a global threat. We only have (them) to defend ourselves. Our missiles build deterrence."

Weapons program shuttered in 2003, according to IAEA

The US intelligence community and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog, have said that Iran shuttered a nuclear weapons development program in 2003.

But according to the IAEA, Tehran has in recent years continued enriching uranium, including to near weapons-grade.

Trump has threatened to attack Iran if it executes people arrested during nationwide anti-government protests in January or fails to agree a deal on its nuclear program in talks with the US

Auqib Nabi on his way to national colours, says Sourav Ganguly

PTI

New Delhi, Feb 27: Former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Friday showed praise on Jammu and Kashmir for their exploits against Karnataka in their maiden Ranji Trophy final, picking out pacer Auqib Nabi as a player who deserves to represent the country.

Nabi has claimed 60 wickets so far in this Ranji season, including five for 54 against Karnataka in the first innings of the final. Nabi's exploits put



J&K in control as they bowled out the eight-time winners Karnataka for 293 in 93.3 overs after posting a massive 584 in Hubballi. "J&K has shown the

world what effort and intent can do. They have made that region so proud of them. Tuff environment makes tuff people," Ganguly wrote on 'X'. "Auqib Nabi on his way to

national colours.. England is the place to start in the summer," (sic) he added, tagging the BCCI, senior men's selection committee chairman Ajit Agarkar, and BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia.

Resuming Day 4 at 220 for five, Karnataka lost their last five wickets for 73 runs, with Nabi dismissing their top batter Mayank Agarwal (160) and also claiming the wicket of Shikhar Shetty.

J&K thus secured a vital 291-run first-innings lead.

China calls on Pakistan, Afghanistan to reach ceasefire

PTI

Beijing, Feb 27: China on Friday called on Pakistan and Afghanistan to work out a ceasefire while expressing concern over the escalation of the conflict between the two countries. China is closely following the developments of the situation in the conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here, responding to questions on the current conflict between the two countries.

Pakistan and Afghanistan are close neighbours, and both are neighbouring countries of China. As a neighbour and friend, China is deeply concerned about the escalation of the conflict and deeply saddened by the casualties caused by the conflict, Mao said.

She said China supports combating all forms of terrorism and calls on both sides to exercise calm and restraint, properly resolve their differences and disputes through dialogue and consultation, and realise a ceasefire as soon as possible to avoid more suffering. The de-escalation

serves the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples, and will help uphold peace and stability in the region, she said.

She also said China has been mediating between the two countries through its own channels and stands ready to continue to play a constructive role in de-escalating the situation and improving relations between the two countries, Mao said. In response to a question on whether China is considering evacuating Chinese nationals and companies from Pakistan and Afghanistan or suspending relevant flights due to the fierce cross-border clashes between the two countries, Mao said, "We are closely following the development of the situation and will provide necessary assistance to Chinese nationals in need."

China maintains close ties with Pakistan and Afghanistan through a tripartite mechanism, conducting periodic meetings to iron out differences over Islamabad's repeated allegations against Kabul of hosting Pakistan's militant groups, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and Baloch Liberation Army.

Nepal to hold first election since deadly protests

Three rivals vying to be prime minister

PTI

Kathmandu, Feb 27: A former rapper who ran Kathmandu as a mayor. The young leader of Nepal's oldest political party. And a communist veteran politician hoping to return to power after being ousted in youth-led protests in which dozens were killed last year.

They are the three leading contenders as Nepal heads into a crucial nationwide election, the first since the protests led to the fall of former Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli's government in September.

Whoever prevails will become Nepal's 16th prime minister in less than two decades, underscoring the recurring political instability that has marked the Himalayan nation since the monarchy was abolished in 2008. The protests in Nepal last year revealed the extent of young people's frustration



with corruption and a lack of opportunity in the country, where around a fifth of young people are unemployed, but where the children of the political elite seem to enjoy luxury lifestyles and numerous advantages.

After public outrage led to the resignation of the government, millions of Nepalese voters are now gearing up to elect members of the House of Representatives, the powerful lower chamber of parliament. The next prime minister will be chosen after securing a

majority in the house.

Balendra Shah, widely known as Balen, is seen as front-runner after emerging as a popular figure during the campaign. He was elected mayor of the capital, Kathmandu, in 2022 and later left the post to become the National Independent Party's candidate for prime minister.

The 35-year-old Shah trained as a structural engineer and later gained modest fame as a rap artist, using his music to take on social issues and politics.

AFI to introduce SRY Gene Test in national-level competitions this year

PTI

New Delhi, Feb 27: The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) will conduct SRY Gene Test in national-level competitions from this year onwards in a bid to ensure that only biological females compete in the women's category.

The Executive Council of the AFI in its recent meeting also approved the conduct of DNA testing of the upcoming athletes for "research and development", with the records to be kept confidential.

"The EC unanimously approved the mandatory conduct of the SRY Gene test in the national-level competition. The details will follow," the AFI said in a circular.

The EC meeting was held in Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands on February 14 and 15.

"The EC also approved to conduct DNA tests of the upcoming athletes for Research & Development, and the AFI will maintain all records confidentially in its Office," it added.

A top source told PTI that the SRY (Sex-determining Region Y) Test may be introduced during the National Inter-State Senior Championships (July 24-28) this year, after working out the logistics.

"We have to pick a reputed laboratory, fix the charges for the tests, etc. So, may take a few months to start the tests. But it should be done during the National Inter-State, or during National Open at the latest," he said.

"After that we will start the tests in other national events also from next year," he added.

The SRY gene test was introduced in India last year to all the women athletes who competed in the World Championships in Tokyo in September.

The AFI had sent a notice to all its affiliated units in this regard on August 13 last year to ensure compliance. The AFI in its communication mentioned that it was following a directive from the World Athletics.

The test is primarily used to identify the presence or absence of the SRY gene, which plays a crucial role in male sex determination during fetal development.

On July 30 last year, World Athletics had made it mandatory for all athletes wishing to compete in the female category at the World Championships to undergo a once-in-a-lifetime test for the SRY gene — a reliable proxy for determining biological sex.

WA had said that the test is to be conducted via a cheek swab or blood test, whichever is more convenient.

In another important decision, the Executive Council of the AFI ratified the appointment of two High Performance Directors — Michael Khmel and Karl Gunter Lange — for junior and senior respectively.

Khmel is an experienced coach who has earlier worked in Australia, United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Lange, an experienced distance running expert from Germany, has worked in many countries, including in Vietnam.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

رمضان المبارك

1447 H / 2026 CE

وقت افطار	اعتقاسمحرى	رمضان المبارك	تاريخ
06:34 PM	05:31 AM	16	06
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06:35 PM	05:28 AM	18	08
06:36 PM	05:27 AM	19	09
06:37 PM	05:26 AM	20	10
06:38 PM	05:25 AM	21	11
06:38 PM	05:24 AM	22	12
06:39 PM	05:23 AM	23	13
06:40 PM	05:20 AM	24	14
06:41 PM	05:19 AM	25	15
06:42 PM	05:18 AM	26	16
06:42 PM	05:16 AM	27	17
06:43 PM	05:15 AM	28	18
06:44 PM	05:14 AM	29	19
06:45 PM	05:12 AM	30	20

وقت افطار	اعتقاسمحرى	رمضان المبارك	تاريخ
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06:28 PM	05:40 AM	9	27
06:29 PM	05:39 AM	10	28
06:30 PM	05:38 AM	11	01 MAR
06:31 PM	05:37 AM	12	02
06:32 PM	05:36 AM	13	03
06:33 PM	05:34 AM	14	04
06:33 PM	05:33 AM	15	05

DUA FOR SEHRI
وَبَصُومٍ غَدٍ نُؤْتِيكَ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ
I intend to keep the fast for tomorrow in the month of Ramadan

DUA FOR IFTAAR
اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ [وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ] وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ
O Allah! I fasted for You and I believe in You and I put my trust in You and I break my fast with Your sustenance

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Phone: +91-9906797575, +91-9419006285
Info@kashmirnewsobserver.com | www.kashmirnewsobserver.com | www.kashmirthunder.com