

# Second dose of anti-coronavirus vaccine to be administered to healthcare workers from Feb 13

NEW DELHI, Feb 4: The second dose of anti-coronavirus vaccine will be administered to healthcare workers from February 13, the Centre said on Thursday, highlighting that 45 per cent of them have been inoculated so far.

Addressing a press briefing, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said 45,93,427 beneficiaries have been vaccinated against COVID-19 till 1.30 PM on Thursday.

The states and Union Territories that have completed the first dose of vaccination for 50 per cent or more of their healthcare workers are Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tripura, Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Odisha, Kerala, Haryana, Bihar, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

The states and UTs that have covered 30 per cent or less of healthcare workers in the COVID immunization drive till date are Sikkim, Ladakh, Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and Puducherry.

These states are being given suggestions by the Union Health Ministry over video-conferences and meetings about how to increase the immunization cov-

erage, Bhushan said.

"The second dose of anti-coronavirus vaccine will be administered to healthcare workers from February 13. Also, 45 per cent of targeted healthcare workers have been vaccinated so far and by tomorrow almost half of the healthcare workers would be inoculated," NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul said.

In the COVID-19 immunization drive, 5,912 public health care centres and 1,239 private facilities are being used as vaccination session sites, he said.

"As we proceed, we would be involving the private healthcare sector in a much larger extent," Bhushan added.

Asked when these vaccines will be available for general public and senior citizens, Bhushan said, "Very soon. We have started frontline workers from February 3. Once this wave also stabilises, we will come to 50 years plus population. It will happen in the near future."

Supplementing it, Dr Paul said, private health sector is an integral part of India's healthcare system and there is an active, steady and highly satisfactory participation of the private sector facilities hand in hand with the public healthcare sector.

"This partnership will be further strengthened when we move to the next phase of our

vaccination drive," he said.

He also spoke about the apprehensions prevailing about the expiry of COVID-19 vaccine.

"There is no question of a single dose getting wasted because we could not administer it on time before their expiry. Not a single dose will be wasted. We are monitoring the vaccines twice daily and we are very well aware as of which batches are expiring when," Dr Paul said.

He further said a satisfactory picture is emerging in terms of the pandemic.

"We are consistently performing well on almost all parameters," he said while cautioning against lowering the guard and stressed on following the COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.

The health secretary said two states - Kerala and Maharashtra - with 69,365 and 38,762 active cases respectively presently are contributing more than 70 per cent cases in the country. While Kerala account for 44.8 per cent of these cases, Maharashtra's share is 25 per cent of the active cases. (PTI)

## Police seizes 155 kgs of poppy straw, arrests smuggler

*Excelsior Correspondent*

KATHUA, Feb 4: District police in its drive against drug dealings, recovered 155Kilograms of Poppy Straw like substance in the jurisdiction of Police Station (PS) Kathua and accused was arrested along with the seized contraband on spot.

Police said a team of PS Kathua led by Arvind Sambyal under the supervision of Dy SP, headquarter Bishen Dubey during naka checking at Satkey Chak stopped a vehicle bearing Registration No.RJ31GA-3901 for checking. On thorough checking of the vehicle nearly one quintal and 55 kilograms of poppy straw like contraband was recovered from the possession of driver namely Puran Singh, S/o Paid Singh, R/o Chack Arianwala Punjab.

Consequently, the accused was arrested and vehicle involved was also seized by the police party on spot.

On this, a case FIR No. 51/2021 U/S 8/15 NDPS Act stands registered in Kathua Police Station and further investigation is under process.

Meanwhile another police team of PS Kathua led by

## 201 institutions under Social Justice Ministry shut over violation of norms

NEW DELHI, Feb 4:

As many as 201 institutions funded by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment have been shut down by the Centre over violations of norms.

Secretary of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment R Subrahmanyam said a system of physical inspection of all institutions funded by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment said 280 organisations were identified which were malfunctioning or not functioning at all but were taking grants from the government.

"Last year, due to project monitoring unit which has been set up with bright youngsters from best campuses we identified 280 such organisations which are malfunctioning or not functioning at all but were taking grants from the government," he said.

"The ministry has cracked down on these institutions and already 201 such institutions have been closed down and grants have been stopped," the Secretary said.

## Police seizes 155 kgs of poppy straw, arrests smuggler

Inspector Arvind Sambyal, SHO PS Kathua and under the supervision of Additional SP, Kathua Ramnish Gupta while on patrolling duty, on National Highway (NH) near Sakta Chak intercepted a canter bearing Registration Number PB11CB-4171 which was being driven by unknown driver and rescued 12 bovine animals.

Police said as the driver was signalled to stop for checking by police party, he stopped the vehicle behind the naka point and fled away from the spot. During checking of the vehicle 12 bovines were found loaded in the vehicle in a cruel manner.

In this connection a case, vide FIR No. 50/2021 US 188/IPC 11/PCA Act has been registered at Police Station Kathua and further investigation has been taken up.

Kathua Police seek support from people to share information about bovine smuggling on 100 with Police for the cause. Your identity will be kept confidential.

It may be recalled that Kathua police under the directives of SSP, Shailendra Kumar Mishra has intensified the drive against the drug peddlers and bovine smuggling in the district.

He said the 201 institutions have been shut due to a number of factors, including management and infrastructural issues.

"In some cases it was found that everything was on paper but nothing on field. Many such instances have been found where there are management and infrastructural issues. At some places, the infrastructure is so poor that they don't qualify for any central grant. We gave a show cause notice to institutions, we heard their side of the story and then we took action," he said.

Subrahmanyam said the ministry will add two or three more layers of monitoring of schemes.(PTI)

## One killed in road mishap

*Excelsior Correspondent*

SAMBA, Feb 4: One person was killed in road mishap at Bari Brahmana in Samba district early this morning after an unknown vehicle hit him.

He has been identified as Falail Chand, 60, son of Hari Bhagat of Doda presently at Bari Brahmana. He was shifted by police to Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) Jammu in a serious condition where he succumbed to his injuries later.

His body was kept in the mortuary of GMC for post-mortem. The Bari Brahman, Police has registered a case under relevant sections of the law in this regard and started investigation.



BNP leaders and activists at a party workshop at Leh on Thursday.

## BJP holds training workshop for party workers at Leh

*Excelsior Correspondent*

LEH, Feb 4: The former Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC-Leh and senior BJP leader, Gyal P Wangyal organized a workshop regarding Central training of workers here, today.

The workshop was inaugurated by Mahesh Kumar Sharma, senior party leader. This was followed by the discussion on various topics by the guest speakers including BJP UT president and M P, Jamiyang Tsering Namgyal along with the most senior ad experienced members of BJP, Shiv Shakti, V Satish, Ravinder Sathe and Hemant Goswami.

The one day training workshop was organized by BJP Training Department under the leadership of former CEC ad BJP UT vice president, Gyal P Wangyal along with the UT general secretary, Dr Skalzang Dorje, UT vice president ,

# Oppn corners Govt on handling farm protests, seeks repeal of laws

NEW DELHI, Feb 4:

Opposition parties on Thursday launched a vociferous attack on the Centre over its handling of the farmers' agitation, calling its dialogues with the protestors "monologues", even as the ruling BJP defended the new laws asserting that its government is committed to the welfare of peasants and increase their incomes.

Attacking the government, Opposition parties said trenches have been dug, barbed wires put up and spikes installed at the sites of farmers' protests, whereas bridges should have been built to win over them. The BJP highlighted the farm welfare measures and tore into the shifting of goalposts by the Opposition.

Participating in the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, Congress MP Deepinder Singh Hooda said the government has no right to question the patriotism of farmers as they are the ones who have made the country self-sufficient in food.

He hit out at the government saying it should show a big heart and accept the demands of farmers by repealing the farm laws.

"You talk about making (the country) self sufficient. Let me warn you that a self-obsessed government cannot make Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-sufficient India)," he said.

Hooda lamented that there has not been a single word of condolence from the government yet on 194 farmers who lost their life during the ongoing agitation.

Resuming the discussion, Manoj Kumar Jha of the RJD said

the government has lost the patience to hear and any criticism is painted as anti-national.

He noted that one has not seen such an aggressive approach even towards the neighbouring nations who came into Indian territory.

"Patriotism is not be worn on sleeves but carried in heart," he said making use of poetry and sarcasm.

Contesting the government's claim of having 11 rounds of dialogue with agitating farmers, he said its ministers "believe in monologue and not dialogue".

Digvijaya Singh of the Congress lashed out at the government, saying measures like demonetisation to the CAA were "blunders that hit the people hard".

He said the void between the Modi government's promises and implementation was big and it could not win the hearts of people.

He said the prime minister had "lost their trust".

"You have got majority but dissent is essence of democracy," Singh noted.

Former prime minister and JD(S) leader H D Deve Gowda called farmers the backbone of the country. He said miscreants and anti-social elements were behind

the events on Republic Day and all political parties have condemned their actions and agree that they need to be punished. "But the farmers' issue should not be mixed with it, he said and added that the issue should be dealt with amicably."

However, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the government is committed to farmers welfare and will help increase their incomes. He said it will provide Rs 1 lakh crore additional income to farmers that will be generated by converting waste into energy. The minister said the heap of waste at Ghazipur will also be cleaned soon to create energy.

Pradhan also said the government has come up with a scheme to procure ethanol worth Rs 20,000 crore which will help increase farmer's income.

He attacked the Congress for not bringing a law on MSP of crops despite being in power for long. "You question those working honestly for farmers' welfare farmers," he said.

"The Opposition Congress cannot appreciate such government efforts as it has never done except for hailing its dynasty," he said.(PTI)

## Senior citizens' delegation calls on DC Kishtwar

*Excelsior Correspondent*

KISHTWAR, Feb 4: A delegation of Senior Citizens Council district Kishtwar led by its chairman K Ahmed Dev and its president, Roshan Lal Parihar called on Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar Ashok Kumar Sharma and discussed various issues concerning public with him.

As per release, the delegation expressed concern over the unscheduled distribution of PHE water supply in the Kishtwar and also showed serious concern over leakages in supply pipes. It also brought the problems being faced by the people due to unscheduled power curtailments due to which entire area is plunged into darkness during night hours.

It demanded that proper allotment of slots be made to vegetable vendors and shopkeepers be asked not to occupy the footpaths as it creates a public nuisance and pedestrians face problem in walking on footpaths, besides the parking of vehicles on footpaths be restricted.

N Sharma, Bansilal Parihar, Ghulam Qadir Malik, Sagar Chand and Sewa Ram were the other members of the delegation.

## Plus 2 Lecturers' Association meets DSEJ, apprises her of core issues

*Excelsior Correspondent*

JAMMU, Feb 4: A delegation of central working committee (CWC) Jammu of All J&K Plus 2 PSC Lecturers' Association led by its convener Manjeet Singh Chib today met Director School Education Jammu (DSEJ) Anuradha Gupta and discussed the overall educational scenario.

The delegation expressed serious concern over the issues confronted with direct recruited lecturers and sought her intervention in this regard. The delegation informed DSEJ that the department has updated combined seniority list but still about 87 lecturers are figuring in the list falling under Directorate Jammu who have either left the department or joined some other departments.

The members said that the

new entries made at concerned CEOs' level are not reflecting in the combined list of lecturers. DSEJ showed serious concern over the issue and assured that all the correction will be made and after rectification the Directorate shall depute its officials to administrative department for updating the same. She said that she has already discussed the issue with administrative secretary.

A threadbare discussion was made over some other important issues pertaining to service protection of direct recruits. The delegation also requested DSEJ to repatriate those lecturers who have been working outside locality for last so many years.

Those who were part of the delegation include M A Katoch, Sanjeev Gupta, Yasir Ahmed Malik and Dr Zahir Ahmed Mir.

## 2 arrested with 2290 intoxicant capsules, tablets

*Excelsior Correspondent*

JAMMU, Feb 4: Akhnoor Police arrested two drug peddlers and recovered 2290 intoxicant capsules and tablets from their possession.

As per police sources, during checking at old bridge a team from Police Station Akhnoor intercepted a scooter bearing registration number JK02CE-8339.

During checking, police team recovered 2290 intoxicant capsules and tablets from the possession of two persons riding on the scooter and arrested them.

The arrested persons were identified as Anmol Bhat, son of Hirday Nath Bhat of Laxmipuram, Chinore and Naresh Kumar, son of Shail Singh R/o Kot Maira Khour.

During initial questioning, the accused persons stated that they used to sell these intoxicant capsules and tablets among the youngsters and have purchased the same from Mohit Medicos, Bari Brahmana.

A case under FIR Number 30/2021 under Sections 8/20/21/22/29 NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Akhnoor and investigation started.

The arrest was made by

## AAA highlights problems of artists, slams Academy

*Excelsior Correspondent*

JAMMU, Feb 4: Slamming J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages for its apathy towards problems and difficulties of Artists of Jammu Division, All Artists Association (AAA) of Jammu expressed its anguish over alleged poor working of the Academy.

In a press conference here today Surinder Singh Manhas, president AAA claimed that the Academy was doing nothing as was expected from it though the government spends hefty amount

**\* Watch video on [www.excelsiornews.com](http://www.excelsiornews.com)**

in terms of salaries to officers and employees of the Academy.

"Many deserving and graded artists are given step motherly treatments by the Academy," he further said adding that few employees have monopolized the whole system of treating the Artists as per their whims to appease few and annoy many with regard to booking of artists and the officers heading the offices are clueless about this anarchy prevailing in the organisation.

AAA chairman, Rakesh Anand said that payment of

artists in lakhs is lying pending since years together with the Academy for performances made at the behest of Divisional Office Jammu.

He also said that last year a deputation of artists met the incumbent Secretary of the Academy and brought into his notice the non-payment of artists fees and the Secretary assured to take up the matter with concerned authorities for early payment but despite lapse of over a year nothing has been done in this regard.

Satish Chander, vice chairman said that relief granted by the government during Covid pandemic for artists was disbursed in a haphazard manner without any criteria of needy artists.

Shashi Gupta, general secretary said that Abhinav Theatre is still not put to operation for artists.

He appealed the Lt Governor, Manoj Sinha to intervene and redress the grievances of artists.

Sahil Jasotra, vice president; Abhishek Bharti, joint secretary; Darbari Lal and Tilak Raj Tagotra, chief advisors; Garu Ram, Neeraj Verma and Kuldeep Saproo, advisors were also present in the press conference.

## Various Panchayat members from Pulwama join Apni Party

*Excelsior Correspondent*

SRINAGAR, Feb 4: Various Panchayat members hailing from Halqa Gangoo, in district Pulwama joined Apni Party at its office in Lal Chowk here today.

Panchayat representatives who joined Apni Party included Ghulam Hassan Mir, Panch Halqa Vircherai); Mohammad Ishaq Ganie, Ghulam Mohammad Ganie, Nigeena Hassan, Samana Zehra, Yawar Abbas Nengroo, all Panchs from Gangoo Panchayat Halqa.

The joining ceremony was presided by Apni Party president Syed Mohd Altaf Bukhari, senior vice president and former minister Ghulam Hassan Mir, vice president Zaffar Iqbal

## Burglars decamp with gold, cash from ex-serviceman's house

*Excelsior Correspondent*

SAMBA, Feb 4: Burglars decamped with gold and cash from the house of Sukhdev Singh an ex-serviceman at border village Pangdhour, in Samba district late last night.

According to the Sukhdev Singh whole family members slept around 11 PM last night and when his wife woke up early this morning at 4 am, she was astonished to see the door of the lobby was open. She informed her husband and both made the round of the rooms around.

Sukhdev Singh said that he

## Dr C L Raina, Jagannath Sibhu's books hit stands

*Excelsior Correspondent*

JAMMU, Feb 4: Dr C L Raina's Maha Maheshwaracharya Stutih and Jyeshtha Pradurbhava of late Pandit Jagannath Sibhu hit the stands today.

The two books were released through online function by Miltars Television Sangat Noida in collaboration with Maha Maheshwaracharya Swami Shri Ram Research Centre Faridabad at Laleshwari Vatika Faridabad, Haryana by Padamshri, Dr Sudhir Kumar Sopory, ex Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). The online programme was conducted by the renowned singer , Music

Director, Dilip Langoo and various speakers took part in the event. They included Ramakrishna Jyotshi from Pune, Jyoti Razdan from Faridabad, Rajinder Premi from new Delhi, Dr C L Raina from Ajmer , Pt. Rakesh Koul from Bengaluru, Veronica Peer from Jammu and Malni Sara a Trika student from Australia.

During the proceedings, it was suggested that the ancient scriptures texts should be reproduced and republished as such works are under tremendous threat of extinction. The vote of thanks was proposed by Kalhan Raina a Shaivism student from USA and by author, Dr C L Raina from Ajmer.

## Ensure fair elections of DDC chairpersons: Ex-MLC

*Excelsior Correspondent*

SRINAGAR, Feb 4: While urging the Lt Governor, Manoj Sinha to ensure free and fair elections to elect chairpersons of District Development Councils, Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) vice president and former MLC Gulam Nabi Monga today said any attempts of horse- trading or pressurizing elected members to vote for a particular party will further undermine the credibility of democratic institutions and will render the DDC elections meaningless.

In a statement issued to the press, Monga said already there are allegations that a particular political party and its proxy was resorting to horse-trading and arm twisting of the elected candidates from other parties to change their loyalties.

"Even some elected DDC members have on record said that they are being pressurized to leave their parties and join a particular political party. Some candidates were reportedly abducted with the help of the police and forced to change sides. They are being threatened with police cases and the will of the voters is being undermined," Monga rued.

"To facilitate a particular

party and its proxies to clinch the DDC chairperson posts, some elected DDC members have been reportedly put in preventive custody. This is nothing but murder of democracy which in long run will be disastrous," the Congress leader warned.

He urged the Lieutenant Governor to direct the J&K UT administration and the police to ensure that no muscle power is used to facilitate switchovers and defections. "The LG needs to act fast to stop horse trading to save the sanctity of democratic institutions," Monga cautioned.

## Mohalla Welfare Committee constituted

*Excelsior Correspondent*

JAMMU, Feb 4: The residents of Sector-A Subash Nagar Jammu constituted a Mohalla Welfare Committee.

Satish Singh, Som Nath Khajuria, Basant Dutta, Rajesh Kumar and Davinder Khajuria have been nominated as members of the Committee.

The committee has been constituted for the welfare activities including repair of lanes and drains of the mohalla through funds raised by monthly contribution of the residents.