



Dignitaries displaying copies of MoU signed by KU, Azim Premji University, SMC to improve quality of education in Srinagar schools.

KU, Azim Premji University, SMC sign MoU for quality education in schools

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Feb 6: In a major initiative that aims to further the cause of universalisation of education, the University of Kashmir, Azim Premji University Bangalore and Srinagar Municipal Corporation on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to give a fillip to quality of education in 83 identified primary schools in Srinagar.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Nilofar Khan chaired the MoU-signing ceremony while Mayor Srinagar, Junaid Azim Mattoo and Commissioner SMC Athar Amir Khan represented the SMC. Azim Premji University was represented by Bijoy Shankar Das, Leader (NE States and J&K).

The tripartite MoU envisions joint collaboration in three critical areas, including visioning workshops with SMC core group, continuous professional development programmes for Zonal Education Officers, School Leaders and School Teachers, besides development of academic material like textbooks for these schools functioning under the ambit of SMC.

While the KU will provide all academic and technical support to finalise and contextualise the modules, Azim Premji University will bring in necessary technical resources for the initiatives. The SMC, on its part, shall extend necessary support in realisation of the desired

objectives. Urging seriousness at all levels to realise the MoU objectives with sustained attention and focus, Prof Nilofar said the University will share resources, infrastructure and expertise so that the identified schools are truly benefited.

Junaid Azim Mattoo underlining the need to evolve synergies and synchronisation to face the "challenges in the way." Commissioner SMC, Athar Amir Khan called for bringing in best practices and cross-learning in schools to improve the learning outcomes.

Bijoy Shankar Das from Azim Premji University said the MoU aims to develop internal capacities of various stakeholders in primary education, right from the foundational stage. This, he said, will be in sync with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) with emphasis on the need to offer quality education to children from socio-economically weaker sections of society.

Dean Academic Affairs KU, Prof Farooq A Masoodi also shared his views, while Dean Research Prof Irshad A Nawchoo delivered vote of thanks. Earlier, KU Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir highlighted the role of the University in the agreement.

Joint Registrar Dr Ashfaq A Zari coordinated the event and conducted proceedings of the MoU-signing ceremony.



Former Minister, Chander Parkash Ganga laying foundation of Rs one crore overhead tank at Pyt Kartholi on Monday.

Ganga, DDC member lay foundation of overhead tank

Excelsior Correspondent

SAMBA, Feb 6: Former Minister, Chander Parkash Ganga, DDC Member, Bari Brahmana-A, Asha Rani and Sarpanch, Pyt Kartholi Upper kick started construction of over Rs one crore overhead tank under Government of India's Jal Jeevan Mission scheme which will ensure clean drinking water to each and every inhabitant.

On the occasion, Ganga said, "We feel immense pleasure and satisfaction to tell all of you that the long pending demand of clean drinking water each and

every household will be fulfilled." Ganga lauded Sarpanch, Tarsem Singh on putting this Panchayat's development on priority and kind work that has already been completed under his leadership.

Others present were BJP senior leader, Jai Ram Sharma, senior leader, Pawan Bakshi, Mandal president, Atresh Dutta, Chairman MC, Bari Brahmana Capt (retd) Bachan Lal, Sarpanch, Angrej Singh, corporator, Ramji Dass, Tarsem Thapa etc.

Guru Ravi Dass Sabha Akhnoor elects office bearers

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 6: Madan Lal Bassan has been elected as president while Ashok Kumar as general secretary of Shri Guru Ravi Dass Sabha Akhnoor. The election of the president and general secretary of the Sabha for Akhnoor was held in general meeting held today under the chairmanship of Retd Executive Engineer Rattan Lal Bhasin in which Madan Lal Bassan was unanimously elected as president of the Sabha and Ashok Kumar as general secretary.

RC Uttama, former senior JKAS officer was the chief guest on the occasion. Speaking on the

occasion Madan Lal Bassan said that he will work for the betterment of society/community as per the teachings of Guru Ravi Dass, with help whole community.

Large number of people were present in the general body meeting.

Prominent among them included outgoing president Manoj Kumar, Girdhari Lal, Pritam Dass, Bachan Lal, Kewal Kumar, Om Parkash, Ashok Kumar president SGRDS Tacharwan, Mohan Lal, president SGRDS Godhan, Darshan Kumar Godhan, Subash Chander from Payan, Surinder Kumar, Rakesh Kumar and many others.

Speaker assures enough time to raise issues Parl stalled as Oppn goes ahead with protests over Adani issue

NEW DELHI, Feb 6:

The Government's hopes for the start of a debate on the President's address in Parliament in the new week were dashed today as a determined Opposition stalled proceedings in both Houses again, raising the allegations of fraud against the Adani group and demanding a JPC probe.

Following the presentation of the Union Budget on February 1, little business has been transacted in either Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha due to the Opposition's protests over the issue.

Ruling BJP members have maintained that the affairs involving private entities cannot be discussed in Parliament and opposition parties can raise the issue during the customary debate on the President's address at the start of the Budget Session on January 31.

The Government was hopeful that the discussion on the Motion of

Thanks on the President's Address will start on Monday. The Prime Minister generally replies to the discussion in both Houses.

As soon as Lok Sabha met after the weekend break, opposition members, mostly Congress MPs, entered the Well shouting slogans such as "Adani sarkar shame-shame".

They reiterated their demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into the allegations of fraud and stock manipulation by a US-based short-selling firm against the port-to-power conglomerate. The Adani Group has denied the allegations against it.

Speaker Om Birla urged them to go back to their seats and participate in the debate.

"This is not good. Sloganeering is against the dignity of the House. People have elected you to raise their issues in Parliament but you are not interested in participating in

debate," he said.

Birla said the Opposition members should come to his chamber and discuss with him their demands.

He assured them that he would give the Opposition enough time to raise their issues in the House.

"This is Parliament. Maintain some dignity. This is a respected House. The House is for debate and discussions. The way you are disrupting the House is not good," he said.

The Speaker told the opposition members that slogan shouting is not a good practice and also not good for the country.

"Have people elected you for sloganeering in Parliament? You have ruled this country for a long time. Such behaviour is not good on your part. You are not interested in allowing the House to function properly," he said.

However, the Opposition ignored his pleas and continued their protests and slogan-shouting, forcing the Speaker to adjourn the House till 2 pm.

TMC members were also on their feet but protested from their seats.

As the House resumed after 2 pm, the opposition parties continued their protests.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi requested them to calm down and allow the tradition of discussing the President's address.

"I request you to let the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address be allowed to take place as it is part of the Parliamentary convention. Whatever you want to say you can say during the debate and the Government will reply," said Joshi.

He also said that the Government's stand has been stated by the Finance Minister and is in the public domain.

Rajya Sabha proceedings were similarly adjourned for the day without transacting any business as a united Opposition continued to raise in the House allegations of fraud against the Adani Group.

As soon as the Upper House reassembled for the afternoon session, having been adjourned till 2 pm in the morning, the Opposition members asked for a discussion on the issue.

Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, however, did not allow their request, asking them to let the listed business conclude. With the Opposition parties unrelenting, he adjourned the House for the day.(PTI)



Office bearers of Performing Arts Association presenting memento to a dignitary at Reasi on Monday.

Dance, acting, singing competitions held

Excelsior Correspondent

REASI, Feb 6: A national level dance, acting and singing competition was organized by Performing Arts Association of J&K, run by Harman Cultural and Educational Society in the premises of Spiritual Growth Centre Auditorium, Katra.

The event was inaugurated by Saraf Singh Nag, DDC Chairman and Shiv Kumar Sharma, president, J&K Wrestling Association in which about 300 children and youth from 21 States participated and exhibited their talent in the field of acting/singing.

Kavinder Gupta, former Deputy CM and Gaurav Gupta, general secretary Chamber of Commerce and Industry, J&K and honorary secretary Jammu Club was the special guests,

while Rajnikant Thakur, national secretary, PAAI and president, Dance Sports Association Bharat was present as celebrity guest alongwith Sandeep Singh, president Muskan Foundation.

The event began with traditional lighting of lamps by the chief guest and other dignitaries present on the occasion. The children gave mesmerizing performances which enthralled the audience and guests.

The best performers were felicitated by the chief guest and by the dignitaries with certificates and medals on the basis of their performance. The chief guest appreciated the performance and congratulated organizers for organizing such a great event in J&K UT.

The anchoring was done by renowned anchor of Jammu and Kashmir, Rajni Sharma.

RAWS organizes workshop for artisans

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 6: Rural Artisans Welfare Society (RAWS) here today organized a one day workshop for the development of handicrafts and handcraft artisans at Hari Niwas Palace.

The workshop was organized to provide knowledge of differ-

ent about various schemes meant for artisans in their respective departments.

Representative of banks, e-marketing companies and Chartered Accountants were also part of the workshop as professional experts and resource persons.

The workshop proved to be very beneficial for Handicraft Artisans.

The programme was attended by Pawan Raina, Anirudh Kapil and Ambika Sambyal, Assistant Directors of Development Commissioner for Handicrafts.

Other officials who attended the workshop were Gulam Abbas, Joint Director, Central Bureau of Communication; Anil Sharma, Assistant Director KVIC; Sonika Parihar, Assistant Director J&K Handicrafts Department.



Dignitaries addressing a workshop for development of handicrafts and handcraft artisans in Jammu on Monday.

ent handicraft development schemes to artisans of J&K and it was sponsored by Development Commissioner for Handicrafts, Union Ministry of Textiles.

Officials present in the workshop provided related informa-



JKAAP during a protest against anti-encroachment drives in Srinagar on Monday.

JKAAP protests against anti-encroachment drives

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Feb 6: J&K Awami Aawaz Party (JKAAP) today staged a protest against the anti-encroachment drive which is currently ongoing across J&K.

Leading the protest, Suhail Khan, president of JKAAP, said that the administration was resorting to excesses and injustice on the behest of RSS.

"This protest is against what was done with the poor people at Padshahi Bagh; they are poor

Budget a 'silent strike' on poor by Modi Govt: Sonia

NEW DELHI, Feb 6:

Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Monday said Union Budget 2023-24 is a "silent strike" on the poor by the Modi Government and hits at the heart of all far-reaching rights-based legislation enacted during the UPA rule.

In an opinion piece in The Indian Express, Gandhi also made an apparent reference to the allegations against the Adani Group, saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his ministers are resorting to loud chants of 'vishwa guru' and 'Amrit Kaal', even as "financial scandals" erupt over his 'favourite and favoured businessman'.

"The prime minister's policy to benefit his few rich friends at the expense of poor and middle-class Indians has led to continuous disasters - from demonetisation to a badly-designed GST hurting small businesses, to the failed attempt to bring about the three farm laws and the subsequent neglect of agriculture," Gandhi alleged.

"Destructive" privatisation has handed over priceless national assets to selected private hands cheaply, leading to unemployment, especially for the SCs and STs, she charged.

"Even the hard-earned savings of crores of poor and middle-class Indians are threatened as the government forces trusted public institutions like LIC and SBI to invest in poorly-managed companies owned by its chosen friends," she said in an apparent reference to the allegations against the Adani Group.

Adani Group stocks have taken a beating on the bourses after US-based activist short-seller Hindenburg Research made a litany of allegations, including fraudulent transactions and share price manipulation, against the Gautam Adani-led group, which has dismissed the allegations as lies.

Opposition parties, including the Congress, have alleged that the meltdown in Adani Group shares is a scam that involves common people's money as LIC and SBI have invested in them.

"Bereft of ideas, the Prime Minister and his ministers are resorting to loud chants of 'vishwaguru' and 'Amrit Kaal', even as financial scandals erupt over the PM's favourite and favoured businessman. This will be of

scant help to crores of vulnerable Indians worried about their livelihoods, savings and futures," Gandhi said.

It is now the duty of like-minded Indians to join hands, oppose this Government's harmful actions, and together build the change which people long to see, she said in her piece in the English daily.

"In the recently-concluded



Bharat Jodo Yatra, yatrias walked from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and interacted with lakhs of Indians from all walks of life. The voices they heard expressed deep economic distress and widespread disappointment about the direction in which India is head-

ed," Gandhi said. Whether poor or middle class, rural or urban, Indians are being "punished" by the triple menace of price rise, unemployment and falling incomes, she said.

"The 2023-24 budget not only fails to address these critical challenges but also worsens them by slashing allocations meant for the poor and the vulnerable," the chairperson of the Congress' parliamentary party said.

"It is a silent strike on the poor by the Modi Government, hitting at the heart of all far-reaching rights-based legislations enacted by the UPA era was a deliberate cohesive step towards this goal, she added.(PTI)

Gandhi said that the promise of independence was of a good life for every Indian, not only to satisfy their basic needs but to have equal opportunities to empower themselves socially, economically, and politically.

The rights-based legislation of the UPA era was a deliberate cohesive step towards this goal, she added.(PTI)

Choudhary starts developmental work at Urban Health Centre

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 6: Councillor of Ward number 46 of Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Dwarka Choudhary here today

inaugurated construction work of Doctor's Duty Room, tile work in Laboratory section, repair and renovation of wash-room and tiling of stairs at the Urban Health Centre (UHC) in Sanjay Nagar which will incur an expenditure of Rs. 20 lakh.

Speaking on the occasion Dwarka Choudhary said that other works of the Ward shall also be completed soon.

He asked the residents of his Ward to keep their localities neat and clean and avoid throwing garbage here and there and use the service of garbage collecting autos for proper disposal of garbage.

The JMC Councillor asked the people to cooperate in making the city neat and clean.



JMC Councillor, Dwarka Choudhary starting developmental works at UHC in Sanjay Nagar.

Members of newly elected team of Bari Brahmana Unit of Akhil Bhartiya Poorva Sainik Seva Parishad posing for a group photograph.

work for the welfare of the nation, society and soldiers. He further said that we must groom our younger generation properly so that they become patriotic citizens and future of our motherland may remain in safe hands.

On this occasion election of the Parishad for Tehsil Bari Brahmana Unit was also held under the supervision of Col. Sukhvir Mankotia (retired), Parishad general secretary and Col. Narinder (retired) was elected as president, Birbal as vice president and Rakesh Kumar, secretary.

The newly elected president said that ex-servicemen are always ready to work for the betterment of society.

Narinder is president of ABPSSP Bari Brahmana Unit

Excelsior Correspondent

BARI BRAHMANA, Feb 6: A meeting of Akhil Bhartiya Poorva Sainik Seva Parishad (ABPSSP) was held at village Patti of Bari Brahmana.

A large number of ex-servicemen from the neighbouring villages also attended the meeting which started with a two minute silence to pay homage to fallen heroes who gave supreme sacrifice for our motherland.

In the beginning Col. V.S Mangotra (retired) briefed the gathering about the Parishad and its role in nation building.

Brig. Balbir Singh Sambyal (retired), president ABPSSP while addressing the gathering said that it was time for the ex-servicemen to get united and

work for the welfare of the nation, society and soldiers.

He further said that we must groom our younger generation properly so that they become patriotic citizens and future of our motherland may remain in safe hands.

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Kathua's Shiv Nandan is Chairman KRMB Hyderabad

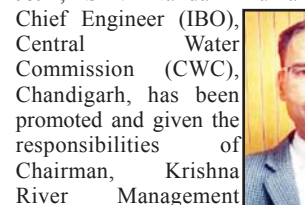
Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 6: Son of the soil from Kathua District of J&K, Shiv Nandan Kumar, Chief Engineer (IBO), Central Water Commission (CWC), Chandigarh, has been promoted and given the responsibilities of Chairman, Krishna River Management Board (KRMB), Hyderabad.

Assistant Director to Chief Engineer since last 35 years.

During his professional journey till date, he has been involved in survey & investigation, DPR and designs of various national and international hydroelectric and multipurpose projects namely Kirthai I & II, Ujh MPP, Nathpa Jakhri in India, Tala Project, Kurichu Project in Bhutan, and Pancheshwar in Nepal.

On his transfer and promotion, a warm farewell was today accorded to Shiv Nandan Kumar by officers & staff of CWC at Jammu, wherein Director, Executive Engineer, Deputy Directors, and all other officials of CWC Jammu participated.



After doing Civil Engineering from REC (NIT), Srinagar, He joined CWC in 1988 through Engineering Services and has held several important positions in various organisations under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources ranging from