

Dr Jitendra visits inStem Bengaluru, highlights India's Gene related medical breakthroughs

STATE TIMES NEWS
BENGALURU: Union Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh on Thursday inspected the various facilities at BRIC-inStem and inquired about ongoing clinical trials in collaboration with premier medical institutes and hospitals, including the landmark first successful in-human gene therapy trial for Haemophilia conducted with Christian Medical College, Vellore.

Calling it a "milestone in India's scientific journey," the Minister hailed the institute's contributions to preventive and regenerative healthcare.

Dr. Jitendra underscored the strategic importance of biotechnology in shaping India's future economy and public health infrastructure.

"This is not just about science-it's about nation-building," he said, commending the Department of Biotechnology's (DBT) recent successes and its emergence from relative obscurity into national relevance.

India's biotechnology sector has seen an extraordinary leap, growing 16-fold in the



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh going around different specialised sections and inquiring about ongoing clinical trials at BRIC-inStem, Bengaluru on Thursday.

past decade to reach \$165.7 billion in 2024, with a vision to touch \$300 billion by 2030. The Minister credited this growth to enabling policy reforms, including the recently approved BIO-E3 Policy that aims to boost economy, employment, and environment through biotechnology. "We now have over 10,000 biotech startups compared to just 50 a decade ago," he pointed out.

Dr. Jitendra praised the creation of the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC) that unified 14 autonomous institutions

always be prepared. Facilities like this will help us stay a step ahead," Dr. Jitendra stated.

The Minister also praised the newly launched Centre for Research Application and Training in Embryology (CREATE), which addresses birth defects and infertility by advancing developmental biology research. "With about 3 to 4 percent of babies born with some form of defect, this centre is vital for improving maternal and neonatal health outcomes," he said.

Calling for greater collaboration between scientific and medical institutions, he suggested that BRIC-inStem explore MD-PhD programs, integrate more with clinical research, and enhance visibility through coordinated communication strategies. "What's being done here should echo across the country-not for publicity, but because the nation needs it," he said.

Dr. Jitendra concluded by noting that India's economy of the future would be bio-driven, with institutions like BRIC-inStem serving as torchbearers of this transformation.



KP employees working in valley hold silent sit-in against Pahalgam attack



KP employees staging silent protest at Srinagar.

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: A group of Kashmiri Pandit employees working in the valley held a silent sit-in on Thursday against the Pahalgam attack, saying such killings were not acceptable.

The members of the community, employed under the Prime Minister's package, also asked the government to think about their safety and security as well.

"We, the PM package employees, have come from across the valley to pay homage to those who were killed in the Pahalgam attack. We have come here to condemn the killings. We want to say that such killings are not acceptable. We have also come here to seek justice," one of the employees, Amit Koul, told reporters.

He said the situation in Kashmir was peaceful over the last few years, but the Pahalgam massacre has disturbed the whole valley.

"We employees are also disturbed. We want to say that if tourists, who were here to enjoy for a few days, are not safe, then how come the minority employees who work here are safe. That is our issue, it is about our

Principal Secy Culture inaugurates rare Coins Exhibition

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Principal Secretary Culture, Brij Mohan Sharma, on Thursday inaugurated a two day Rare Coins Exhibition at Kala Kendra, Jammu.

The event was organized to mark observance of World Numismatic Week-2025 by Kala Kendra under the aegis of Department of Culture, Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

A galaxy of art lovers, painters, heritage collectors and dignitaries were present to witness the inaugural ceremony.

While addressing the gathering, Brij Mohan Sharma stated "each coin on display is not merely a piece of metal, it is a witness to history, culture and tradition. It stands as a silent storyteller of trade, govern-



Principal Secretary Culture, Brij Mohan Sharma at the exhibition in Jammu.

ance, empires and the everyday lives of our ancestors." He emphasized that through their inscriptions, materials, shapes and symbols, coins serve as vital carriers of our collective cultural memory.

The Principal Secretary invited all the collectors and cultural organizations to join hands with the government for resolving issues faced by the heritage collector community. He announced that the Department of Culture has devised a new scheme to recognize and reward Non-

Governmental Organizations working with commitment and zeal in the field of culture, heritage preservation and promotion.

Dr. Javaid Rahi, Secretary Kala Kendra, informed that the exhibition is featuring around 1000 rare coins from various historical periods. These included those of Kanishka, Indo-Greek rulers, Pre and post Islamic Kashmir, the Mughal Empire, British era, Sikh and Dogra regimes besides post-Independence India. He said the primary objective of the event is to provide a platform to the collectors to showcase their prized coin collections.

Prominent collectors whose collections are on display included Dr. Suresh Kumar Abrol, Founder, Shashvat Art Gallery, Jammu), Inder Singh,

J&K celebrates National Panchayati Raj Day with over 1 Lakh participation across UT

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday joined the rest of the nation in commemorating the National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD) 2025 with unprecedented enthusiasm and overwhelming public participation.

More than one lakh people from across 4,291 Gram Panchayats took part in the vibrant programmes held at the Panchayat, Block and District level, reaffirming the Union Territory's commitment to grassroots democracy and community driven development.

The national highlight

was a historic event at Lohna Uttar Gram Panchayat in Bihar's Madhubani district, presided over by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi.

Addressing the nation, the Prime Minister called for a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, offering prayers and condolences to the bereaved families.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister also presented the National Panchayat Awards, recognizing best-performing Panchayats from across the country for their excellence in governance and

development.

The NPRD 2025 observance also commemorated the continued legacy of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, which institutionalized Panchayati Raj in India and empowered local self-governance at the village level.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the celebrations focused on promoting transparency, accountability and citizen participation. Gram Sabhas were held across the UT, with a special focus on Water Management & Conservation, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and

Director, Panchayati Raj, J&K, Sham Lal, lauded the efforts of all districts in organizing special Gram Sabhas and reaffirmed the administration's commitment towards strengthening grassroots democracy. "We are committed to the development of all Panchayats and will ensure that the benefits of democracy reach every corner," he asserted.

On the National Panchayati Raj Day, PM Modi presented National Panchayat Awards, recognizing and incentivizing best-performing Panchayats.

Satish, Mian Altaf visit GMC Anantnag; meets injured of Pahalgam attack

STATE TIMES NEWS
ANANTNAG: Minister for Transport, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Satish Sharma, Member of Parliament, Mian Altaf Ahmad along with MLA Anantnag West, Abdul Majeed Bhat on Thursday visited the Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag to meet the injured of the tragic Pahalgam terror attack.

The visit was aimed to assess the medical condition of the injured, inspect the healthcare facilities and take stock of the treatment



Cabinet Minister Satish Sharma along with MP Mian Altaf Ahmad at GMC Anantnag.

being offered to the attack victims there.

The Minister and the MP were briefed extensively on

and the logistical and clinical support being extended to the victims and their families.

They interacted with the injured and their families, assuring them of complete support from the administration. They expressed deep concern over the traumatic episode and conveyed heartfelt wishes for the victims' speedy recovery.

They praised the medical teams for their rapid and effective response, expressing hope that they will continue their yeoman service with the same zeal and spirit.

Dy CM, Advisor meet Maharashtra Dy CM Expresses condolences, raises concern for J&K people residing in Maharashtra

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, along with Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, on the instructions of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, on Thursday met Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister, Eknath Shinde, to express their deepest condolences on the death of Maharashtra civilians in Pahalgam terrorist attack.

The J&K Dy CM also raised the concern regarding safety of Kashmiri people residing in Maharashtra with Eknath Shinde.

Shinde assured full support



Dy CM Surinder Kumar Choudhary meeting Maharashtra DyCM Eknath Shinde.

from his government, assuring committed towards taking care of J&K residents in Maharashtra. He assured

establishment of a dedicated helpline number with a Nodal Officer to assist those in need.

Surinder Choudhary said that the brutal targeting of innocent civilians in this cowardly attack is highly reprehensible. He added that targeting innocent tourists, is extremely condemnable and painful.

Condemning the cowardly terrorist attack, the Dy CM also expressed his condolences to the families of the deceased.

Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani, while expressing his condolences, said that the entire nation is united in fighting the scourge of terrorism. He added that these dastardly targeted attacks are a blot on humanity.

Adjudicating Officer FSSA Jammu imposes Rs 1.79 lakh fine for food safety violations

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: As part of ongoing efforts to ensure food safety and safeguard public health, the Adjudicating Officer under the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSAI) in Jammu on Thursday imposed a fine of Rs 1.79 Lakh on various commercial establishments for violations of food safety norms.

The penalties were levied on manufacturers, distributors, and retailers found guilty of selling or distributing substandard and misbranded food items in the district.

The enforcement authorities have urged all food business operators to comply with the prescribed guidelines under FSSAI 2006 to avoid punitive measures. Citizens can also report food safety violations by calling the toll-free number 104 or messaging on WhatsApp at 9484002101.

Pahalgam: BSF scales down retreat events at Attari, 2 other locations on Pak border

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The Border Security Force (BSF) on Thursday said it has "scaled down" the retreat ceremony held at Attari, Hussainiwala and Sadki along the India-Pakistan border in Punjab in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

The Jalandhar-headquartered BSF's Punjab frontier, which guards 532 km of this front out of the total 2,200 km, said in a statement that as part of a "calibrated decision", it was "suspending" the symbolic handshake of the Indian guard commander with its counterpart and the border gates will remain closed during the ceremony.

These steps, it said, reflected "India's serious concern over cross-border hostilities and reaffirms that peace and provocation cannot coexist".



Officials said all other drills will continue and common people will be allowed to witness this daily flag-lowering ceremony.

Twenty-six men, mostly tourists and including a Nepalese citizen, were gunned

down in cold blood in a terrorist attack that took place in Jammu and Kashmir's tourist location of Pahalgam on Tuesday.

India has launched a diplomatic offensive against Pakistan and taken several counter-measures

linking these attacks to the neighbouring country.

The biggest event among the three locations takes place at the Attari border front, a joint or integrated land border check post. It is located about 26 km from Amritsar, opposite Wagah in Pakistan.

Hundreds of domestic visitors, foreign tourists and locals visit the Attari-Wagah border on either side daily to watch the flag-lowering and retreat ceremony conducted in a synchronised fashion by smartly-dressed BSF personnel along with their counterparts Pakistan Rangers.

Similar, but smaller, ceremonies take place at Hussainiwala (Ferozepur district) and Sadki (Abohar district) in Punjab.

India and Pakistan have been traditionally hosting the evening

flag-lowering ceremonies at the Attari-Wagah border since 1959. The ceremony goes on for 45-50 minutes.

The synchronised ceremony is held in coordination between the two forces involving foot stomping manoeuvres and aggressive body postures by the troops with patriotic songs playing in the background on both sides.

The ceremony was stopped for a few months during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The drill at Hussainiwala, opposite the Ganda Singh Wala village of Pakistan, also attracts a good number of people while the one at Sadki experiences very few footfalls from the public. It involves just the lowering of flags.

A fourth such drill takes place at Suchetgarh in Jammu but there are no locals involved there.

The India International Border runs from Jammu in the north to Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat on India's west.

Power shutdown

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Superintending Engineer, (Distribution), JPDCL, O&M Circle Kathua has informed that the power supply to Nandpur-1, Nandpur-2 and its adjoining areas will remain affected on April 26 from 7 am to 12 noon.

Meanwhile, Superintending Engineer, O&M Circle-III, JPDCL, Batote has informed that the power supply to Sunetar, Marta, Dheeran, Hhanwalt, R. C. Peak, Amroh, Kulwanta, Joffer and Jandrari will remain affected on April 25, 27 and 28 from 9 am to 1 pm.