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HEAT WAVE : At 35.2 Degrees Srinagar Records Hottest Day Temperature in 20 Years

Qazigund records hottest June day in 37 years, Kokernag breaks 27-yr-old record

■ HT NEWS DESK/KNO

SRINAGAR, JUN 19:-Amid the forecast of an intense heatwave until Saturday, the Kashmir region has witnessed an unexpected rise in the maximum temperature, surpassing decades-old records at three stations.

According to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO)—Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded the highest June temperature in the last two decades. The station recorded a maximum temperature of 35.2 degrees Celsius, which was the season's hottest so far.

Independent Weather Forecaster Faizan Arif Keng stated that with 35.2 degrees Celsius, Srinagar has



surpassed the previous records of the last two decades. "It was the hottest June day in the last 20 years since June 25, 2005," Faizan said. He added that the all-time highest temperature in June was recorded on June 29, 1978.

Faizan said that Qazigund recorded a temperature of 34.7 degrees Celsius, the highest June temperature in 37 years. "This is the third all-time June temperature for Qazigund. The second highest is 35.3 degrees, recorded on June 27, 1988, and the all-time highest is 35.7 degrees, recorded on June 26, 1988," he added.

Kokernag has also surpassed previous figures, recording the all-time second-highest June temperature after a gap of 27 years, at 33.8 degrees Celsius. A

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CM Omar, Union Minister Shekhawat Hold Talks to Boost Tourism in J&K

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 19: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday evening held a detailed meeting with Union Minister for Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, to discuss strategic measures for strengthening the tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir. The one-on-one meeting focused on a broad range of initiatives aimed at boosting tourism infrastructure, promoting heritage and cultural sites, and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities. Both leaders underscored the significance of tourism as a key driver of economic

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Pahalgam Buzzes With Tourists Weeks After Operation Sindoor: Union Tourism Minister

■ HT NEWS DESK/UNI

SRINAGAR, JUN 19 (UNI) Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Thursday said the scenic town of Pahalgam in south Kashmir is once again bustling with tourists over a month after the Operation Sindoor.

The Union minister, who arrived in Srinagar on Wednesday, visited Pahalgam today

"A peaceful day in Pahalgam, buzzing with tourists and calm barely a month



after Operation Sindoor. It speaks volumes of the resilience of the people and the vision & commitment of PM @narendramodi ji for the development of the

region," Shekhawat posted on X while sharing a video of his interaction with tourists in Pahalgam. "Tourism-driven growth, grassroots

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Opposition hits out at NC govt for failing to act on its six-month-old deadline to resolve the reservation issue

■ HT NEWS DESK/UNI

SRINAGAR, JUNE 19 (UNI) A day after the cabinet sub-committee report on reservation was tabled in Cabinet meeting, Opposition leaders here have hit out at the J&K government for failing to act on its six-month-old promise to resolve the reservation



issue. The J&K Cabinet, according to government sources, has sent the report

of the cabinet sub-committee to the law department for their opinion. This came a day before the six-month deadline for the rationalisation of reservation in employment ended.

Peoples Democratic Party leader and MLA Waheed Parra said that six months ago, the J&K government promised

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Summer Vacations in Kashmir Schools from July 1st, School Timings Changed from Saturday : Sakina Yatoo

■ RIYAZ BHAT /KNO

SRINAGAR, JUN 1 : Amid Soaring Temperatures, Jammu and Kashmir Education Minister, Sakina Yatoo Thursday said that the private and government schools in Kashmir division shall observe ten days summer break from July-01. Besides, the minister also said that the government has decided to change the timing of schools from Saturday.

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CM Omar Abdullah Reviews Essential Services and Supplies For Summer Season in Jammu division

■ HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 19: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat Jammu to review the delivery of essential services and supplies and the steps taken by the Administration during the current summer season in Jammu division.



The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Itoo, Satish Sharma and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani. Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, several Administrative Secretaries, Inspector General of Police Jammu, heads

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CS Explores ways to Boost JK's Skill Ecosystem With Union Secretary MSDE

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 19: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today met with Union Secretary of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Atul Kumar Tiwari, to discuss strategies for enhancing the skill development and entrepreneurship initiatives across the Union Territory.

Present on the occasion were Regional Director, V Babu, MSDE; Director, National Council for Vocational Education & Training,



Colonel Gunjan Chowdhary; Secretary SDD, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan; Director, Employment, Shahzad Alam besides other

concerned officers.

The productive discussions centered on leveraging the new central schemes and strengthen-

ing the existing programs to create a more robust skill ecosystem in J&K.

The Union Secretary provided a comprehensive overview of the newly launched Centrally Sponsored Scheme aimed at modernizing the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) across the nation. He said that this innovative scheme would operate on a Hub and Spoke model with identified Centres of Excellence (CoEs) serving as the central hubs. He encouraged the UT to

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Javed Rana Inaugurates WSSs Worth Rs 15.68 cr Under JJM in Baramulla

■ HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JUNE 19: In a major stride towards strengthening the rural infrastructure and ensuring safe drinking water for all, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmad Rana, today inaugurated three Water Supply Schemes (WSS) under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in Baramulla district.

Among others present were MLA Baramulla Javid Hassan Beigh, MLA Uri Sajad Shafi, MLA Pattan Reyaz Bedar and Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Minga Sherpa along with senior officers of Jal Shakti Department, engineers and local representatives.

The three schemes inaugurated included



WSS Kitchama, WSS Kanispora and Retrofitting of WSS Khadniyar established with an expenditure of Rs 353.37 lakh, Rs 1065.96 lakh and Rs 149.23 lakh respectively. These schemes

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TEMP

similar day temperature was recorded on June 29, 1999. "The all-time highest temperature in Kokernag stands at 34.9°C, recorded on June 25, 2005," he said.

Moreover, another independent weather forecaster, Adil Maqbool, predicted a further rise in mercury, saying the day temperature could touch 35.5 degrees Celsius tomorrow or even 36 degrees in Srinagar and other lower areas of Kashmir. He added that mostly dry and hot weather will continue to dominate until June 21.

Furthermore, Pahalgam recorded a day temperature of 29.6 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara and Gulmarg recorded 33.1 degrees Celsius and 25.9 degrees Celsius, respectively. However, some parts of Jammu division continued to record below-normal temperatures, including Jammu city and Katra, where the mercury settled at 36.5 degrees Celsius and 33.1 degrees Celsius, respectively.

In Banihal, Bhaderwah, and Batote, maximum temperatures of 30.6 degrees Celsius, 31.6 degrees Celsius, and 28.2 degrees Celsius, respectively, were recorded today.

According to the weather forecast, Kashmir is set to witness an intense heatwave for the next two days, followed by heavy rains at isolated places. Generally dry weather with the possibility of brief spells of rain and thundershowers with gusty winds at isolated places is expected until Friday.

Between June 21 and 22, Director of Met, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, said that generally cloudy weather with intermittent spells of rain and thundershowers is expected at many places. He added that on June 23 and 24, the weather is expected to remain dry, with a brief spell of light rain and thundershowers at isolated places. From June 25 to 27, generally cloudy weather with the possibility of intermittent light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places is forecasted.

The Met has also issued an advisory urging farmers to continue farm operations until June 20. According to the advisory, there is a possibility of moderate to heavy rain with intense showers at a few places, mainly in Jammu division, on June 21 and 22. "Flash floods are expected at a few places, along with landslides, mudslides, and shooting stones," it added—(KNO)

CM

growth and cultural exchange in the region. During the interaction, Union Minister Shekhawat emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts, stating that such engagements reflect "our collective commitment to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a global tourism destination that celebrates its culture, nature, and people."

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed appreciation for the Centre's continued support and reiterated the Government of Jammu and Kashmir's resolve to revive and reimagine the tourism sector to unlock its full potential for inclusive development.

IGP

comprehensive security strategies and route plans in their respective districts so as to prevent any untoward event.

The meeting was attended by IG CRPF Srinagar, JD SIB Srinagar, DIsG of Kashmir Zone, CID Kashmir, SSB Srinagar, CRPF South/North Srinagar, BSF, SSSP of Kashmir Zone, PCR Kashmir, Traffic City, Railways, Traffic Rural, APCR, CID CIK, Security, DC SB Srinagar, SP PC Srinagar, SP CID SBK, SP Telecom and other officers.

The participating officers briefed the chair on the security arrangements planned for the smooth and peaceful conduct of Muharram processions, and other significant events.

The security measures related to the management of Muharram processions, crowd control, traffic regulation and maintenance of law & order during the period were also discussed.

The IGP Kashmir also reviewed the arrangements for the International Yoga Day and took stock of the security and logistical preparations for the event.

The meeting concluded with a strong commitment from all the officers to ensure smooth and peaceful conduct of the forthcoming events—(KNO)

NC

to resolve the Reservation issue through a subcommittee report.

"That deadline has passed, leaving thousands of students heartbroken and disillusioned, their trust in the system shattered and their futures put on hold," Parra said.

"This is a deliberate denial of justice. These students have already endured violence, lockdowns, and lost opportunities. Now, as they seek fair representation and rationalised reservation, the government is pushing them further to the margins," the PDP leader said.

Parra claimed that the ruling National Conference government has the power to strike down the BJP-"imposed policy" with a single administrative order.

"But the party that promised to reverse BJP's damage is now complicit in continuing it. If this is their response to a pressing youth

issue well within their control to solve, then what should we expect on Article 370, statehood, or the Wakf Amendment Bill which requires them to speak truth to power?," he asked.

Parra warned that erasing merit and denying hope to Kashmiri youth is not just an injustice but a national security concern, as disillusionment can push vulnerable youth towards radicalism.

"If the Kashmiri youth are not offered hope, it will only empower subversive elements, further destabilizing a generation and future. The government's inaction risks pushing these young people into a corner, forcing them to choose between studying and preparing to face the world or fighting against a system that has failed them," he said.

Parra urged that the government must act now, with the urgency this issue demands. "It cannot continue to hide behind excuses while the students' futures hang in the balance. Rationalisation of reservation and proportional representation represent the only fair path forward, and it must be implemented without further delay," he added.

Peoples Conference Chairman and MLA Sajad Lone said he has all along maintained that the government is clueless on reservations and has no intentions of doing anything.

"Now coming to this draft proposal. To the best of my knowledge anything sent to cabinet should be vetted by the law department. It is not the other way round. You can't send something to cabinet which is outside the domain of law. It looks like another round of time wasting tactics," Lone said on X.

Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari asked the government to set a clear timeline to resolve the reservation issue.

"With each passing day, merit continues to get undermined. Government must act swiftly and avoid any delaying tactics," Bukhari said.

Jailed Member Parliament Engineer Rashid's party Awami Itihaad Party (AIP) accused NC of betraying the aspirations of lakhs of meritorious youth from the General Category.

"This is not governance—it's an elaborate circus of deceit, delay and diversion. The Omar Abdullah government has once again proved that its words are hollow and its promises mere gimmicks. After over six months of public build-up, backdoor committee sittings and false assurances, the so-called CSC report has not even reached the Cabinet table in any serious form. What more proof do we need of their sheer indifference towards justice for open merit candidates?" Chief Spokesperson Inam Un Nabi said in a statement.

The AIP spokesperson warned that the continued marginalisation of Open Merit candidates will have far-reaching consequences.

The amended controversial Reservation policy that was introduced last year in March by J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha had met with protests by the Open Merit candidates, who claimed that despite being 70% of the UT's population they got less than 30% of the share in government jobs and scholarship.

The Lieutenant Governor amended the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004 which enhanced reservation from 43% to 70% in government jobs. The jump was because Special Tribe (ST) status was given to the Pahari community.

Later J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah formed the Cabinet Sub-Committee to examine the contentious policy. The committee formed in December last year was given six months time.

UNION TM

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VACATIONS

Speaking exclusively with the news agency, Itoo said, "In view of the severe heatwave, summer vacation for schools in Kashmir division will be from July-01 to July-10." The minister further said that the government will review the weather conditions after July-10 and will take the call of extending the vacation accordingly. "After July-10, we will review the weather conditions and take the call of extension of vacation accordingly," she said. About the change in school timing, the minister said, "From Saturday, the school timing in Srinagar municipality limits areas will be from 8Am to 1Pm and in case of schools outside the Srinagar municipality limits, the schools shall function from 8:30 Am to 1:30 Pm."

CS

actively participate in this scheme and submit detailed proposals to harness its benefits for modernization of ITIs in the region.

The Union Secretary highlighted the considerable scope for J&K to enhance its engagement in other crucial Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) such as the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Skill Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE) and Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP). He reiterated the Ministry's unwavering commitment towards providing full support to J&K in maximizing the uptake of these vital programs.

The Chief Secretary, on his part, underscored the critical need for a holistic vision for skill development in the UT to tide over the problem of unemployment. He emphasized the importance of seamlessly linking skill acquisition with sustainable livelihood opportunities and integrating education with entrepreneurship to foster a dynamic and self-reliant workforce. Efforts will also be made to strengthen the convergence between various Centrally Sponsored Schemes to ensure greater adoption and more impactful outcomes for J&K, he added.

Among the key components discussed in the meeting included prioritizing submission of detailed proposals for modernization of J&K ITIs under the new Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Moreover, it was decided that the J&K government and the MSDE will establish a

joint coordination mechanism to ensure efficient implementation and rigorous monitoring of all skill development initiatives in the UT. This collaborative effort between the J&K government and the Union Ministry for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship is expected to significantly boost skill development, create new employment avenues and foster an entrepreneurial spirit among the youth of J&K in the times to come.

RANA

have been designed to provide Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) and improve access to potable water in the respective panchayats household thereby benefiting more than 13000 rural residents.

WSS Kitchama, a gravity-based scheme, covers a population of 2,435 with 314 household tap connections, while WSS Kanispora, a lift-based scheme, will benefit 8,722 people through 1,246 FHTCs. WSS Khadniyar (Ret-rofitting) caters to 2,224 people with 303 FHTCs.

Speaking on the occasion, Javed Rana said that the Jal Jeevan Mission is a historic initiative by the Government of India to bring piped drinking water to every rural household.

He added that the schemes inaugurated today are a testimony to the government's unwavering commitment towards improving the basic amenities and living standards of people in far-flung and underserved areas.

The Minister emphasized that providing clean and safe drinking water is not just an infrastructure goal but a critical step towards ensuring health, dignity and empowerment of rural communities, especially women. He remarked that with completion of these schemes, thousands of families in Kitchama, Kanispora and Khadniyar will now have direct access to potable water at their doorstep.

He appreciated the engineers, field staff and officials of the Jal Shakti Department for working tirelessly on ground, even in challenging terrain, to make these schemes a reality. He also acknowledged the cooperation in of the local panchayats and community members in facilitating timely implementation.

The Minister said that these efforts are part of a broader strategy to uplift the rural life through better amenities and inclusive development. He expressed hope that with continued support and coordination at all levels, Baramulla district will achieve full coverage of drinking water.

SPEAKER

to holistic development, the Speaker assured that genuine public demands would be prioritized and addressed through robust developmental planning.

During the event, the local delegations from Bugroo, Kremshore, Dreygam, Lanur, Nambalhar, Arampora, Khasipora and adjoining areas highlighted issues related to infrastructure, public services and basic amenities.

The Speaker directed the concerned officers and departmental heads to ensure prompt service delivery and strengthen the existing grievance redressal mechanism. He emphasized the need for responsive and grassroots-focused governance.

"The government is endeavoring hard to take the administration at the doorsteps of the common masses. In this regard, continuous efforts are being made in collaboration with the respective district administrations," he added.

The Speaker asserted that decentralization will not only ensure active participation and coordination of the public but also seamless implementation of developmental projects and flagship programmes in all areas. He added that such initiatives where the government reaches the people at their doorsteps to address their genuine issues shall continue till no one is left uncovered.

Among others DDC members from Charari-Sharief and Khanshab, SDM Khanshab, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer and other district officers participated in the outreach programme.

STUDENT

cal Sciences, and Shahid Beheshti University. From Mashhad, they are expected to be taken to Turkmenistan, from where they will likely board flights to Delhi tomorrow," he said.

JKSA further said that the association is in constant communication with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Indian Embassy in Iran to ensure the safety and smooth evacuation of the students.

According to JKSA, at least 90 students of Kashmir studying in Iran reached India from Armenia on Thursday.

Besides Kashmiri students, nearly 20 other students from other states have also reached India from the same batch.

Pertinently, the Embassy of India in Tehran on Monday had said that it has made arrangements for evacuation of Indian students and may be permitted to leave the Universities.

The Embassy of India, Tehran in an official communique to different universities said, "We have made arrangements for their evacuation. They may be permitted to leave the

University, as being facilitated by the Embassy of India, Tehran. The Embassy of India, Tehran takes this responsibility for this planned movement and security of the Indian students."—(KNO)

CM JAMMU

of the various departments were also present.

Srinagar based officers attended the meeting through virtual mode.

During the meeting, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar briefed the Chief Minister and gave presentation on the functioning of different line departments and their action plan for summer preparedness.

It was informed that JPDC has maintained sufficient buffer stock of transformers and also devised time-slots for power curtailment to prevent overload on grid stations.

He emphasized adherence to the curtailment schedule of PDD with minimum power outages and preventing overheating of power lines and transformers.

The functioning of Jal Shakti and Jammu Municipal Corporation was also discussed with regard to adequate supply of water tankers, water sprinklers, anti-smog guns and proper maintenance of water coolers to provide relief to the citizens.

Taking cognizance of the water scarcity issues in some newly populated areas, the Chief Minister directed Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation and Jal Shakti Department to provide relief to the residents immediately with water tanker services.

He further directed for expediting the pace of work on Water Supply schemes nearing completion to alleviate the water supply issues in areas with water shortage.

The Chief Minister further reviewed the forest fire response mechanism of the Forest department and readiness of Fire & Emergency services to tackle any such situation.

It was informed that adequate quantity of medical supplies are maintained by the Health department across the region while advisories on heat related illnesses are also being issued with special focus on vulnerable population and other IEC activities being carried out.

The Chief Minister was also apprised of preparedness of Irrigation & Flood control with regard to desilting of irrigation canals and flood mitigation plan. 24x7 Control Rooms have also been established for the upcoming monsoon season.

The meeting was informed that department of Food & Civil Supplies has maintained sufficient stock available under various schemes.

The Chief Minister also took stock of the broad arrangements put in place for forthcoming Muharram and Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

The Divisional Commissioner apprised the Chief Minister about the routes decided for Muharram along with other elaborate arrangements pertaining to power, water supply, health and other essential services for the people participating in Muharram processions across the division.

He also apprised the Chief Minister on the ongoing preparations for Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2025 with detailed arrangements right from Lakhanpur- the gateway to Jammu Kashmir- to Lambar in Banihal, Ramban. He informed about the RFID, registration centres, lodgement centres, langar facilities, and other key preparations made by the administration for smooth conduct of Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2025.

The Chief Minister asked the concerned officials to provide wide publicity to the cut-off timings for traveling on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway which will be same for the pilgrims and tourists during the period of Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

DC reviews implementation of Mission YUVA in Budgam

BUDGAM, JUNE 19: To ensure implementation and monitoring of Mission YUVA in district Budgam, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, today chaired a review meeting at the DC Office, here. The meeting was attended by Yuva Doot deployed under Mission YUVA, their controlling officers including ADDC Budgam, ACR Budgam, all SDMs, CPO Budgam, CAO Budgam, District officer NABARD, officials from the District Employment and Counselling Centre (DE&CC) Budgam and representatives from different banks. A brief presentation was given by employees of DE&CC Budgam, who provided an overview of Mission YUVA, its objectives, and its importance in facilitating youth self-employment and entrepreneurship. The presentation showcased a live demonstration of Mission YUVA Portal.

The demonstration covered the process of registration, application submission, and the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) by Yuva Doot. During the meeting, DC reviewed the current progress under Mission YUVA. As per the latest data, a total of 166 applications have been received, among which 160 were received under Nano Enterprises, 05 under New MSMEs, and 01 under Existing MSMEs.



Union Secretary reviews progress on PM Vishwakarma, PMKVY, SANKALP, other MSDE initiatives across J&K

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 19: Union Secretary, Ministry for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Atul Kumar Tiwari, today chaired a high level meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review the progress on implementation of PM Vishwakarma, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), SANKALP, STRIVE and other MSDE initiatives currently underway across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Secretary J&K Skill Development Department Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, Director NCVT, Director SDD, Mission Director JJM, Mission Director SDD, Director Horticulture Jammu, Director Colleges J&K, representatives of SKUAST Jammu, SKUAST Kashmir, IUST, Jammu University and NIT Srinagar besides officers from Tourism, Handicrafts and Handloom, Industries and Commerce and Education departments.

Addressing the officers, the Secretary called for aligning the training



programs with local economic potential and emerging industry trends.

He directed the officers to conduct short term training programmes through NIT Srinagar for youth in order to make them skillful regarding the emerging market trends.

The Secretary impressed upon the representatives of the Higher Education Department to take advantage of various schemes of the Ministry institutionalized for skilling college going students to make them job worthy. He highlighted that skilling of youth is one of the pillars of National Education Policy-2020, adding that the educational institutions across

J&K should take maximum benefit of these courses available on Skill India portal and other platforms.

During in-depth deliberations on PM Vishwakarma, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), SANKALP, STRIVE and other schemes, the Secretary called for remodeling of all underperforming PM Vishwakarma centres across J&K. He underlined that Jammu and Kashmir is known for artisanal heritage and this landmark initiative will help in preserving and promoting the craft industry here.

DC Srinagar holds introductory meeting with sectoral/ district officers

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 19: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today chaired an introductory meeting with sectoral and district officers of Srinagar at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here.

While chairing the maiden meeting after assuming the charge, DC directed the Officers to work with utmost dedication and commitment for the welfare of people of the district. He emphasized the swift execution of works under set timelines for holistic development of the district besides, implementation of Government policies and



schemes on ground in an effective and timely manner.

DC called on the Officers to be responsive and accessible to people and foster quick decision

making abilities in resolving public grievances. He stressed on maintaining close coordination among departments for holistic and well planned devel-

opment of the district. He stressed them to ensure punctuality & discipline conduct as well.

Additional District Development Commissioner, Srinagar, Rifat Aftab Qureshi; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed; RTO Kashmir, Irfan Qazi; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; General Manager DIC, Hamida Akhtar, besides, Superintending Engineers of PDD, PHE, R&B, SMC, Chief Medical Officer, Sub Divisional Magistrate East/West, District Statics & Evaluation Officer, CMO, CEO, all Tehsildars, all Executive Engineers, and all district & sectoral officers were present on the occasion.

Chairman DLSA Shopian visits Spl. Jail Pulwama, reviews condition of prison

HT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, JUNE 19: Chairman DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge) Shopian, Mehmood Ahmad Chowdhary today visited Special Jail Pulwama to review the condition of prison besides enquiring about the facilities available for the inmates.

Jail visit was conducted in accordance with the directions of NALSA and J&K Legal Services Authority (JKLSA).

Chairman DLSA was accompanied by SSP Shopian, Anayat Ali Choudhary; Additional Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Secretary DLSA Shopian, Mudasar Farooq, Principal



Magistrate JJB Shopian, Bazila Bashir; Chief LADC Shopian, Rafie Ahmad Ganie; Deputy LADC, and Assistant LADC.

During the visit, Chairman DLSA inspected the jail premises and the facilities available for inmates lodged therein and interacted with the inmates placed in different barracks and inquired about their health, provision of food.

The visiting team also inspected the facilities like medical clinic, cooking area and washrooms in the jail where they enquired about the condition of jail inmates whose trials are pending outside the district Shopian. He directed the LADCs to record the grievances of jail inmates on spot so that the same can be timely redressed.

Chairperson praised the efforts of the prison administration in providing inmates with vocational and educational training, which is crucial for their reintegration into society. He also commended the staff for maintaining cleanliness and hygiene within the jail premises and ensuring the welfare of the inmates.

Set a timeline to address the reservation issue: Altaf Bukhari tells the government

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, June 19 (KNS) : Apni Party President Altaf Bukhari on Thursday urged the government to set a timeline for addressing the reservation issue. In his statement, Altaf Bukhari said, "As per reports, the government has sent the Cabinet Sub-Committee (CSC) report on reservations to the Law Department for review. Some media reports also suggest that the government wants the CSC to revise the report. Whether the focus is on revising the report or obtaining legal vetting, it is essential that a clear and fixed timeline be established."

He further said, "The government may argue that by sending the CSC reservation report to the Law Department for review, it has followed the proper procedure to proceed on this issue. This is technically true. But by not setting a timeline for the return of the report from the Law Department, the government has effectively put this matter on the back burner. The legal vetting could take months." Emphasizing the need for a judicious reservation policy, Apni Party president said "One thing is clear beyond doubt: our current reservation policy is highly flawed and injudicious. There is broad consensus that we require a more judicious reservation policy to protect merit. With each passing day, does merit continue to get undermined. Therefore, the government must act swiftly on this matter and avoid any delaying tactics." (KNS)

ADCs Named Nodal Officers For Kashmiri Migrant Property Complaints

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, June 19 (KNS): The Jammu and Kashmir administration has designated Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs) posted at district headquarters across the Kashmir Division as nodal officers for handling complaints related to Kashmiri migrants. According to an official order issued by the General Administration Department, the designated officers will be responsible for monitoring and facilitating the resolution of complaints regarding immovable properties, revenue matters, and community assets of the migrants. The order, signed by a senior official of the administration, outlines that these officers will serve as key contact points for grievance redressal linked to land and related issues faced by Kashmiri migrants.

ADDC Kulgam conducts review meeting with Business Help Desk and YUVA Doots at DH Pora

HT NEWS DESK

KULGAM, JUNE 19: Continuing the district administration's efforts to boost youth empowerment and self-employment under Mission YUVA, Additional District Development Commissioner Kulgam, Altaf Ahmad Khan today chaired a detailed review meeting with Business Help Desk (BHD) members and YUVA Doots from Block Manzgam, Pombay, DH Pora & DK Marg (Cluster-I) at SDM Office, Damhal Hanjipora.

The review meeting focused on evaluating progress and performance of grassroots level functionaries engaged in implementation of Mission YUVA.

In a notable step towards accountability, ADDC conducted a one-on-one appraisal of each YUVA Doot and



Business Help Desk member, seeking detailed feedback on their field activities, youth engagement efforts and challenges encountered, if any.

During the meeting, he assessed impact and effectiveness of outreach camps being conducted under Udyam Jagriti 3.0, number of youth mobilized, applications fetched etc. Each field worker presented their individual progress and practices adopted to reach the target group.

ADDC emphasized upon the importance of on ground visibility and urged all YUVA Doots and BHDs to expand their outreach, especially in

uncovered and far-flung areas. He stressed the need for continuous follow-up and personalized guidance to aspiring youth entrepreneurs.

Speaking on the occasion, ADDC said that one-on-one feedback approach today has given us valuable insights into field realities. He reiterated the district administration's commitment of facilitating seamless service delivery and inter-departmental coordination.

The meeting was attended by Tehsildar DH Pora, Career Counselling Officer, District Employment and Counseling Centre Kulgam, all BHD members, YUVA Doots & other key stakeholders.

The review concluded with a collective commitment to intensify efforts, enhance youth outreach and ensure effective on-ground implementation of Mission YUVA initiatives.

DIPR Shopian organises IEC camp on drug abuse at GHSS Keller

HT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, JUNE 19: Department of Information and Public Relations Shopian, in collaboration with the Education department today organised an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign at Government Higher Secondary School Keller, Shopian under the banner of UT-wide Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan.

The mega awareness programme through the medium of skit/ dramatic performances by students and artists, ladishah, nukkad natak, speech awareness talks and interactive sessions educated students and the community about the perils of drug abuse and promoting a drug-free lifestyle.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from students, school staff and officials from the education and other departments.

On the occasion, artists conveyed powerful messages about the devastating effects of substance abuse,

resonating with the audience in a culturally relatable manner. Expert sessions led by resource persons from education and health delved into the root causes of addiction, including depression, curiosity, peer pressure, etc.

The programme was presided over by ADDC Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone and attended by District Information Officer, Showkat Hussain Ganie, and Principal, GHSS Keller, Tanseema Jan.

Students participated with great enthusiasm, vowing to raise awareness among their classmates. "The performances were impactful, presenting a clear picture of how devastating drugs can be and why it is important to avoid them," shared one of the students.

IEC campaign also included distribution of pamphlets and presentation of engaging relatable drama to supplement efforts towards curbing drug addiction, a growing concern in the region. By leveraging cultural mediums and alongside expert-led discussions.

Directorate of Extension, SKUAST-K Begins Training Program to Empower FPCs Under SFAC Initiative

DR. AB QAYOOM

Srinagar, Jun, 19: In a significant stride towards empowering grassroots farming institutions, the Directorate of Extension, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), inaugurated a specialised training program today titled "Strengthening of Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) under SFAC". The program, focused on capacity building and professionalisation of FPCs in the Kupwara district, aims to enhance the operational efficiency and business acumen of these vital farmer-led entities. The Directorate has played a pivotal role in fostering collective farming and entrepreneurial ventures in the region, successfully facilitating the formation of four Farmer Producer Companies across the blocks of Langate, Qaziabad, Mawar, and Nutnoosa. These initiatives have positively impacted over 400 farming families, promoting sustainable agri-business models and market-oriented farming. The program was inaugurated under the visionary leadership of Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, and the dynamic guidance of Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-K. Speaking



at the occasion, Prof. Raihana Kanth emphasised the importance of FPCs as farmer-centric, professionally managed business entities, registered under the Companies Act, designed to collectively enhance production, marketing, and income-generation opportunities for small and marginal farmers. Addressing the participants — including CEOs and accountants of the FPCs — Prof. Kanth highlighted the need for strong leadership, strategic planning, and sustained collective action to ensure the long-term viability of these agri-business ventures. She urged the farmer leaders to become grassroots extension agents, actively contributing to the socio-

economic upliftment of rural communities. The training program featured comprehensive technical sessions conducted by domain experts, including Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Dr. Raies Ahmad Bhat (Assistant Professor, Agronomy), Dr. Ghansham Das, and Mr. Priyansh (Chartered Accountant). The sessions covered a range of critical topics, including legal and institutional frameworks governing FPCs, operational management strategies, financial planning, preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), and development of market linkages and business plans. An interactive feedback session provided a platform for participants to share their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for strengthening FPC operations. The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks to the dignitaries, experts, and participants for their valuable contributions. Reaffirming its commitment to rural transformation, the Directorate of Extension pledged sustained handholding and support to the Farmer Producer Companies, with a broader objective of transforming traditional farmers into empowered agri-entrepreneurs and not only fortifying the rural economy of district Kupwara but fortifying the rural economy of all Jammu & Kashmir.

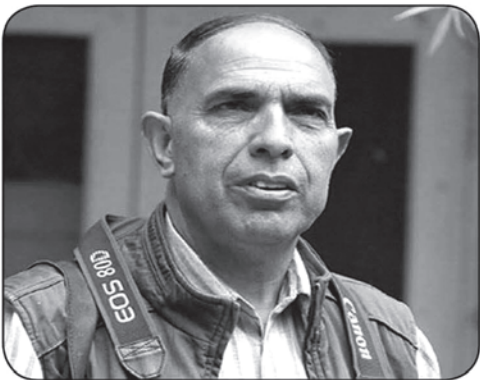
سابق امام وخطیب حاجی مسجد پیرزادہ بشیر احمد انتقال کر گئے



یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ اور افسوس کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ ہمارے والد بزرگوار علامہ **پیرزادہ بشیر احمد** (سابق امام وخطیب حاجی مسجد ہڈشاہ چوک سرینگر و سابق سیکشن آفیسر اے جی آفس سرینگر) فرزند حافظہ چیر زادہ محمد صدیق بروز اتوار بمطابق ۱۸ ذی الحجہ ۱۴۴۶ھ 15 ماہ جون ۲۰۲۵ء کو اس دار فانی سے رحلت کر گئے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جنت الفردوس عطا فرمائے۔ مرحوم شریف النفس، بلند ارغوش مزاج انسان تھے۔ مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی ۲۳ ماہ ذی الحجہ ۱۴۴۶ھ 20 جون ۲۰۲۵ء بروز جمعہ المبارک دن کے پونے تین بجے (2:45) آن کے آبائی مقبرہ محکم پاک آستان عالیہ حضرت بہاوالدین خجندیہ سرینگر میں انجام دی جائے گی۔ انشاء اللہ

بعد ازاں تعزیتی مجلس دردازل عرشق چند پورہ ہارن میں منعقد کی جانے گی
بھی دہائیوں سے مائی مسجد میں شہسخت اہمیت کے فرائض انجام دے رہے تھے۔
سوگواران: شبیر احمد پیرزادہ، پیرزادہ اعجاز احمد
پیرزادہ شائق احمد (فرزند ان)
فیاض احمد بزاز، عاشق حسین قادری، جاوید امجد چشتی (فرزند ان بستی

First Death Anniversary Of



Nissar Ahmad Bhat

A year has passed since you left us, but your love, wisdom, and presence continue to live in our hearts. Not a single day goes by without thinking of you. Your memories remain our guiding light and your absence is deeply felt every moment.

We pray to Almighty Allah to grant you the highest place in Jannah and peace in the afterlife. (Aameen)

Fondly remembered by:
Family

ازد فتر نایب تحصیلدار پہلگام

درخواست منجانب
محمد سلمان بٹ ولد غلام نبی بٹ ساکن لاری پورہ پہلگام
بغرض حصول بیک واڈ سرٹفکٹ

اشتہار بمراد اگاہی ہر خاص عام

سائل نے ایک بغرض حصول بیک واڈ سرٹفکٹ دفتر ہزا مین میسنگی ہے رپوٹ کے مطابق یہاں لاری پورہ پہلگام کارہائس پزیر ہے اور افراد کلمبہ مند زریں افراد پر مشتمل ہے

غلام نبی ولد سلام بٹ عمر 41 سال بزنس آمدنی 120000

سٹیکلہ بانو زوجہ غلام نبی 40 گھر کام

لوسیہ جان دختر 19 زیر تعلیم

=== محمد سلمان پسر 17

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی افراد کلمبہ مین موجود نہیں ہے اور کل زرعی آمدنی 5000 تک ہے زیر کاروائی سرٹفکٹ اجراء کرنے میں کسی کو کوئی عزر ہو تو وہ سات یوم اندر اندر دفتر ہزا مین پیش کرے

نایب تحصیلدار پہلگام

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Nazia Jan D/o Mohammad Safiq Khatana R/o 89 Kathohalan Tehsil Kellar District Shopian want to make it public that my date of birth has been wrongly recorded in the records as 19-12-2002.

Now I want to correct it on my Aadhar card as 24-04-2005 .

Anybody having any objection in this regard may approach the concerned within seven days of publication of this notice.

No objection shall be entertained after the said time .

Nazia Jan

اطلاع عام

ہر خاص و عام کو اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ میری نوین جماعت پاس سرٹفکٹ کہن گم ہو گئی ہے اب اس کی ڈبلٹیکٹ کاپی نکالنی مطلوب ہے کسی کو کوئی عزر ہو تو وہ سات یوم کے اندر اندر ہڈماسٹر گورنمنٹ ہائی سکول سنکرس پور کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بجاوہ عزر قبول نہیں ہو گا

سوقی بھگت سنگھ دختر محمد اسماعیل گنہلی ساکن حسن پور باغ بھبھاؤہ انت ناگ

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that I m going to apply for Date of Birth Certificate of my son Ahsan Khursheed, S/O Khursheed Ahmad Rather, R/O Batkote Pahalgam, .under Block Development officer Pahalgam

As per the school records of Government Girls Middle School, Batkote, his date of birth is 27-05-2017 (Twenty Seventh May Two Thousand Seventeen).

If anyone has any objection regarding this they may kindly inform the undersigned or the concerned authorities.

Name: Khursheed Ahmad
Address: Batkote

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is being informed that that my name in my driving lesson with listen number JK-03 2012 0021891 is wrongly mentioned as Adil Ahmad Wani but the correct name as per my aadhar card is Aadil Ahmad Wani C/O Ab Hamid Wani R/O Lidroo Pahalg Anantnag. Now i m going to apply for its correction if anyone has quires they may visit RTO ANANTNAG thank you

خواجہ محمد یوسف ڈار صاحب آف بارہمولہ کو صدمہ

کشمیر ویلی فروٹ گروورس کم ڈیلریس یونین کا ظہارلے خجندم

یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ اور افسوس کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے بارہمولہ فروٹ ایسوسی ایشن کے صدر اور وادی کے سرکردہ اور نامور تاجر و فروٹ گروور اور کشمیر ویلی فسر وٹ گروورس کم ڈیلریس یونین کے جنرل سیکرٹری خواجہ محمد یوسف ڈار صاحب کی والدہ نستی اس دنیا فانی سے انتقال کر کے اپنے خالق حقیقی سے جا ملے ہے۔ کشمیر ویلی فروٹ گروورس کم ڈیلریس یونین کی تمام اکائیاں سہری سنگر، بوپور، ہندوارہ، بارہمولہ، شوپیان، پلوامہ، انت ناگ، بکولگام، بٹلی پورہ، گاندربل، بچھارہ، چڑاشریف وغیرہ جناب محمد یوسف ڈار صاحب کے اس غم میں براہ کے شریک ہیں اور دعا کرتے ہیں کہ اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو مغفرت فرمائے اور جنت الفردوس میں اعلیٰ مقام عطا فرمائے اور مرحومہ کے تمام لواحقین کو یہ صدمہ برداشت کرنے کی ہمت دے اور صبر جمیل عطا فرمائے۔

بشیر احمد بشیر

چیرمین

کشمیر ویلی فروٹ گروورس کم ڈیلریس یونین سرینگر

ASQ/K-01

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION SRINAGAR NEAR J&K BANK,(Zaldagar)

Telefax No. 0194-2952696 e.mail id: xenmidsrinagar@gmail.com

Gist of Short-Term e-NIT No. 11 OF 2025-26, Dated:- 19-06-2025

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer, Mechanical

Irrigation Division, Srinagar, invites e- tenders on item rate basis by e-tendering mode for:-

S No	Particulars of the work	Tender fee (In Rs.)	Estimated Cost "Rs" in Lacs	EMD Amount	50 % Exemption Allowed for SSI/MSE	Completion Period	Class/ Registration Type (Qualification criteria)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1	Mechanical repair works to 02 cusec Horizontal Pump (Unit 1st) at LIS Begh Mohalla Wafar of MIDO Ganderbal.	100.00	1.22	2% of Estimated cost	Yes	10 days	Mechanical Contractors/ SSI Unit Holders/ Workshop holders/ other firms having relevant experience.

The bidding process shall be completed online in two covers viz. Cover '1st' consisting of Tender Document fee, EMD in the form of CDR/FDR, Pre-qualification. Cover '2nd' shall consist of Financial Bid in the prescribed BOQ. The critical dates are as tabulated below:-

i	Publish Date	19-06-2025 at 1600 hrs
ii	Document Download/sale start Date	19-06-2025 from 1600 hrs
iii	Clarification start date	N. A
iv	Bid submission start date	19-06-2025 from 1600 hrs
v	Clarification end date	N. A
vi	Bid submission/ Document Download/sale end date	26-06-2025 upto 1400 hrs
vii	Date and time of Bid opening	27-06-2025 at 1230 hrs

The bid uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on scheduled date /time or any other date convenient to the tender opening authority in the office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division, Zaldagar Srinagar. All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in PWD Form No. 25 & 33.

Position of #	Budgetary Provis
Position of fu	Accorded under order-MCO OF 2C-26 Dated:- 08-05-2021
Position of Technical sa	Sanctioned vide1 of 205-26

S d/-

Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Irrigation Division,
Srinagar

DIPK-2714/25

NOTICE

I am applying for 9th Pass Discharge Certificate (Year 2011), which I have not obtained till date. In this regard if anybody is having objection may convey to Principal S.P. Higher Secondary School, M. A. Road, Srinagar within seven days. No objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

Haider Ayoub S/o: Mohd Ayoub Dar
R/o: Khala Pora, Buchwara, Dalgate 23325

NOTICE

I want to correct the mother's name of my son Mohammad Ibrahim Moharkan Barerarah Mudasir Moharkan in his school records at Tyndale Biscoe School, Sheikh bagh, Srinagar in class 1st Section Blue, from Sadaf Ferroz to Sadaf Afroz. If any body having any objection may contact the Principal of said school within a period of seven days, after that no objection will be entertained.

Rizwan Farooq Moharkan
F/o: Mohammad Ibrahim Moharkan
R/o: Stadium Colony, Budshah Nagar, Nalipora, sgr. 23333/2

NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Shabnam Qureshi to (New Name) Shabnam Amin. In future I will be known as (New Name) Shabnam Amin. If any body is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted. 23330

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 8th pass discharge certificate issued by Govt Girls Middle School Radbough Zone Narbal. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same. if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the above mentioned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Irfan Ahmad Parrey
S/O Khizir Mohd Parray
R/O Bun Makhama Budgam

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my adhar card as Syed Asadullah while my correct name as per Driving License is Syed Assad Ullah. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Syed Assad Ullah
S/O Syed Mustafa
R/O Qasba Malmoh
P.O: Magam Baramulla

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI

Subject: Application for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of FIRDOUS AHMAD BHAT S/O HABIBULLAH BHAT R/O BURZAWACHAN Tehsil KREERI for the issuance of RBA in his favor.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of RBA in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of BURZAWACHAN of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the BHAT community having annual income Rs-480 000/- the details of family of the applicant are as under:-

- 1...HABIBULLAH BHAT father Age- 60 years (Farmer)
- 2...FATIMA BEGAM Mother Age-57 years (Housewife)
- 3... GH AHMAD BHAT Grandfather Age-95 years (old aged)
- 4...SAJA BEGUM Grandmother Age-86 years (old aged)
- 5...NASEER AHMAD BHAT brother Age-38 years (Farmer)
- 6...JAHANGER AHMAD BHAT brother Age-31 years (Farmer)
- 7...FIRDOUS AHMAD BHAT self Age -29 years (Student)
- 8...WAJIDA BEGUM sister in law Age -34 years (House Wife)
- 9...MYMOONA BEGUM sister in law Age-32 years (House Wife)

Anybody having any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate shall present his/her claim to this office within 07 days of publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be entertained

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI



Jal Shakti, Agricultural Production Ministers review development projects at Baramulla; push for faster implementation

HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JUNE 19: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment, and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana and Minister for Agricultural Production, Rural Development, and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar, co-chaired a comprehensive review meeting in Baramulla. The meeting focused on assessing the progress on various developmental projects under the District Capex Budget 2024-25, State Plan and the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs). The review aimed to enhance the mechanisms for closer monitoring of public services, ensuring transparency, accountability and expedited project execution at the district level. The meeting was attended by the MLA Baramulla, Javid Hassan Beigh; MLA Wagoora-Kreeri, Irfan Hafiz Lone; MLA



Sopore, Irshad Rasool Kar; MLA Pattan, Riyaz Bedar; MLA Uri, Dr. Sajad Shafi; Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa besides HODs and district officers from all the concerned departments. During the meeting, the Ministers conducted a comprehensive review of sector-

wise schemes and sought detailed status reports on individual projects from the Heads of Departments (HoDs) of the concerned departments. The Jal Shakti Minister, issued strict directions to all Heads of Departments (HoDs) for ensuring regular site visits to monitor

the progress on the ongoing works being done under various developmental schemes.

Javed Ahmad Rana further instructed the concerned department heads to ensure timely execution and completion of all developmental projects while maintaining both quality and accountability throughout the implementation process. Regarding the pressing issue of drug abuse in the society, Javid Ahmad Dar urged the healthcare services and law enforcement agencies to engage the drug-affected individuals with care and compassion and help them reintegrate into society through counseling, treatment and sustained support.

During the meeting, MLAs from various constituencies of the district put forth key public grievances and developmental demands. These included macadamization of roads in their constituencies, access to potable water and street lighting.

Rana releases booklet on Eco-parks in Baramulla

HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JUNE 19: Minister for Forest, Ecology & Environment, Javed Ahmed Rana, today released a comprehensive booklet showcasing the eco-parks developed across Baramulla district by the Jhelum Valley Forest Division. The event was held in Baramulla in presence of local MLAs and senior officers. The booklet provides an insightful overview of the district's eco-parks, highlighting their significance in promoting environmental conservation and sustainable development. These eco-parks serve as exemplary models for eco-tourism, conservation and community engagement, fostering ecological awareness and responsible land use. By showcasing the district's eco-parks, the booklet aims to promote eco-tourism, highlighting their natural beauty and biodiversity. Besides, it envisages awareness generation about the importance of environmental conservation and the role of eco-parks in preserving the region's natural heritage. Rana emphasized the need for community involvement, calling for enhancing community participation in eco-park development and recognizing the crucial role local communities play in conservation efforts.

Urs Mubarak of Hazrat Khawaja Habibullah Nowshehri (R.A) celebrated with religious fervour

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 19: Urs e Mubarak of Hazrat Khawaja Habibullah Nowshehri (R.A) was celebrated with religious fervour and gaiety at his shrine located in Nowshehra area of Srinagar city. Today on the occasion of Mehfil-e-Sama, a cultural troupe of Cultural Unit Kashmir of Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) presented his Kalam (writing) and mesmerized the audience by its rendition. Enthralled the audience, the cultural troupe received a great applause from the audience. Mehfil-e-Sama, which was a special attraction in the Urs, witnessed participation from a large number of people who had come from different parts of Kashmir. Hazrat Khawaja Habibullah Nowshehri (R.A) is one of the great saints of Kashmir, who wrote his Kalam in Arabic, Persian and Kashmiri languages.

BJP Minority Morcha J&K Organizes Chopal Programme at Nigeen Hazratbal Srinagar to Connect with Grassroots.

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, 19 June 2025 – The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K held a successful Chopal programme at Nigeen Hazratbal, Srinagar as part of its ongoing public outreach initiative aimed at strengthening the party's connect with the grassroots and spreading awareness about the party's ideology and vision. The programme was held under the leadership of BJP National President Minority Morcha Jamwal Siddique, who was accompanied by Dr Aslam Khan National Executive Member, Navjot Singh Nalwa J&K UT Minority Morcha President, J&K Incharge Minority Sheikh Bashir, General Secretary Minority Morcha Bhat Imtiyaz, Spokesperson Hilal Jan, Harbinder Singh and others. A large number of people from nearby areas, party workers, and senior functionaries participated in the event, making it a grand success. The Chopal, which focused on the theme "To visit villages and discuss party ideology with the people," served as a platform to directly interact with citizens, understand their issues, and convey the BJP's vision of inclusive development, good governance, and national unity. In his address, Jamwal Siddique highlighted the importance of grassroots engagement and said that such programmes reflect BJP's commitment to hearing the voice of the last person in the queue. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's model of governance has given Jammu & Kashmir top priority in developmental initiatives.

Javid Dar reviews Muharram arrangements in Sumbal Bandipora Inaugurates development project, inspects Water Supply Schemes

HT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, JUNE 19: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar today conducted a comprehensive review of the arrangements being put in place for Muharram at Sumbal, Bandipora.

The meeting was attended by MLA Sonawari, Hilal Akbar Lone; Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri and HoDs, senior officials from line departments besides



representatives from various Shia associations and delegations. While addressing the meeting, the Minister emphasized the need for timely execution of all essential

services. He stressed the inter-departmental coordination to ensure peaceful, safe and successful conduct of religious events during Muharram. He directed all the concerned departments

to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply, adequate health facilities, proper sanitation and traffic management across all major congregation points. He exhorted upon the Fire & Emergency Services to remain on alert and fully equipped throughout the Muharram period. The Minister reiterated the government's commitment towards extending all necessary support to ensure smooth arrangements at the grassroots level. During the interaction, various religious leaders and community members put forth their concerns regarding essential services.

PDF Chief Hakeem Yaseen Slams J&K Govt for Ignoring Iran-Return Students at Delhi Airport Demands Special Flights for Evacuated Students

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, June 19: President of the Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) and former minister, Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen, has expressed deep shock and disappointment over the Jammu and Kashmir government's failure to receive students who arrived at Delhi Airport early this morning after being evacuated from Iran.

Terming it "highly unfortunate," Hakeem Yaseen said that while state governments from across India warmly welcomed their respective students at the airport, there was no official representative from the Jammu and Kashmir administration to receive the students from the Union Territory. "It is painful to note that not a single officer or representative from J&K was present at Delhi Airport to receive our children. The students were left unattended, with no guidance or support. Other states made proper arrangements, but our students were com-



pletely ignored," Yaseen said. Highlighting the inconvenience faced by the students, Yaseen strongly opposed the idea of transporting them back to the Valley in deluxe RTC buses. "How can these students—exhausted and stressed after days of uncertainty—be expected to travel over 600 kilometers by road? It is inhumane," he said, demanding that special flights be immediately arranged to fly them back to Srinagar. He added that the parents of the students were deeply anxious back home and expected the government to show a more compassionate

and responsive approach. "There appears to be a complete communication breakdown within the J&K administration. Even if there was a protocol issue regarding the Lieutenant Governor, someone from the administration could have gone to receive them. This is not acceptable," he said.

Hakeem further lamented the lack of basic facilities for the students at the airport. "There were no sleeping arrangements, no proper statements from officials, and no organized support. It was chaos, and it did not reflect well on the functioning of the UT government," he added. Reiterating his demand, the PDF Chief urged the government to act swiftly and responsibly by arranging immediate air transport for the safe return of these students to Kashmir and called for accountability from those in charge of the evacuation plan. Hakeem further lamented the lack of basic facilities for the students at the airport.

Ministers participate in plantation drive at Baramulla

HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JUNE 19: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment, Javed Ahmed Rana and Minister for Agricultural Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar today participated in an extensive plantation drive held at Baramulla. Local MLAs and senior officers were also present on the occasion. The plantation drive aims to promote the green initiatives and environmental sustainability in the district. Javed Rana emphasized the importance of individuals' contribution in protecting the environment. He said that this initiative aligns with the global efforts to combat climate change and promote eco-friendly practices. "Environmental sustainability is crucial for maintaining ecologi-



cal balance and ensuring a healthy environment for future generations," he added.

He stated that similar initiatives have been undertaken in other parts of the country, such as the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign, which symbolizes respect for the ecosystem and commitment towards environmental sustainability. Javid Dar, while speaking on the occasion, highlighted that the government's participation in the plantation drives demonstrates its commitment towards envi-

ronmental conservation and sustainability.

"By engaging in such initiatives, the government aims to foster a sense of responsibility among the citizens and promote eco-friendly practices," he maintained.

This effort is part of a broader strategy to ensure sustainable development and protect the region's natural beauty. "By engaging in such initiatives, the government aims to foster a sense of responsibility among the citizens and promote eco-friendly practices," he maintained.

Two faculty members from NIT Srinagar co-edit Intl. book on 'Waste Utilization in Geotechnical Practice'

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, June 19: Two faculty members from the Civil Engineering Department at NIT Srinagar, Dr. Vivek and Dr. Sandeep Samantaryay, have co-edited a reputed research book titled "Waste Utilization in Geotechnical Practice". Wiley, a leading international academic publisher, has published the book. It focuses on using different types of waste materials in geotechnical engineering work, such as improving soil, building embankments, and supporting foundations. The book highlights how waste can be safely and effectively used in construction, offering

both environmental and economic benefits. Dr. Vivek said the book was completed after several years of hard work and multiple revisions. "It is a proud moment for us. This book is the result of long efforts, and it reflects our goal of promoting sustainable and practical solutions in civil engineering," he said. "We hope this book will serve as a useful reference for engineers and researchers who are working to reduce environmental damage while building strong and durable infrastructure. It's a small step toward greener engineering practices," Dr. Vivek added. Dr. Sandeep Samantaryay said the motivation behind the book was to address two major challeng-



es: waste disposal and the need for sustainable construction. "Across the world, engineers are looking for safe

ways to use waste instead of sending it to landfills. In this book, we have shown how materials like fly ash,

slag, construction debris, and other types of waste can be reused in geotechnical projects without compromising safety or strength," he said. Dr. Sandeep said their focus was not just on the science, but also on practicality. This book talks about real-world applications, how to test waste materials, understand their behavior, and use them responsibly in different construction settings," he said.

"Jammu and Kashmir is a region with challenging terrain and environmental concerns. We believe the knowledge shared in this book will help in designing infrastructure that is both strong and environmentally friendly," Dr. Sandeep added.

Both faculty members expressed

their gratitude to the NIT Srinagar administration, including the Director and the Registrar, for their continuous encouragement, institutional support, and research-friendly environment, which made this publication possible. The book explains the properties of various waste materials, how to test and use them in construction, and what environmental impacts they may have. It also looks at the cost benefits and rules related to using waste in building projects. The authors believe this book can help address the growing problem of waste disposal while supporting safer and more eco-friendly development.



EDITORIAL

Kunzer-Tangmarg incident sends shivers down the spine

Couple of days back an alarming incident came to the fore at Kunzer in the Tangmarg area in North Kashmir after an eight year old boy was found in an injured condition. The boy had gone missing from his home following which he was spotted in an injured condition away from his home. The boy could not be saved and he succumbed to his injuries in the hospital.

The incident sent shock waves among the people and they could be seen grieving over the unfortunate death of the boy. The police immediately swung into action and launched investigations into the case. There was more shock in store for the people after a 14 year old boy was found to be involved in the attack on the eight year old boy. The preliminary investigations in the case have pointed out that the 14 year old boy carried out the attack on the eight year old boy.

The attack was so severe that the eight year old boy could not recuperate and as such passed away. This unfortunate incident has pointed towards some glaring shortcomings in the Kashmir society and they need to be overcome before it is too late. It has come to the fore that in most of the cases across Kashmir there is lack of supervision from the parents and as such the children go astray. Due to the lack of supervision these children easily get involved in anti-social activities.

In the past the children getting education both in the public and private sectors used to be taught moral values. They were also asked to give all the respect to their elders, teachers and other influencers in the society. With the passage of time the moral education has been dumped in the backyard and as on date the emphasis is on getting more marks in the academics so as to get admission in medical, engineering and other professional courses.

There is no harm in imparting world class education to the children so that they become professionals in different fields but at the same time the children need to be given a moral education. It is important that a child becomes a real human being rather than a machine programmed to carry out different tasks of the world. At the same time it is also important to reduce the influence of mobile phones on the daily life of the people, especially children.

International Yoga Day 2025: A Call for Health, Harmony, and Holistic Well-Being



By Sahil Manzoor

This year marks the 11th anniversary of International Yoga Day (IDY)—a global celebration of health, peace, and spiritual connection. Every individual aspires to stay healthy and fit to lead a long, meaningful life. Around the world, doctors and public health professionals continuously advocate for physical activities such as football, cricket, volleyball, badminton, gym workouts, and regular morning walks. These practices are not just about building strength—they are powerful tools to prevent and combat life-threatening diseases. In recent years, gym culture has particularly resonated with younger generations. While some pursue physical activity for inner peace and wellness, many are drawn by aesthetics—building muscle, enhancing appearance, or keeping up with trends. Regardless of motivation, the core truth remains: physical activity is essential for the development of both body and mind. In today's fast-paced world, non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular illnesses, diabetes, and obesity are increasing alarmingly across all age groups. This growing health crisis demands lifestyle changes—starting with regular physical exercise, a diet rich in seasonal fruits and vegetables, and active participation in wellness practices like yoga.

Yoga for One Earth, One Health
The theme for International Yoga Day 2025 is “Yoga for One Earth, One Health.” This theme emphasizes yoga's role in not only individual well-being but also environmental harmony. Over the past decade, Yoga Day has grown into a global movement. This year, the celebration



is set to take place across more than 100,000 locations worldwide, reinforcing yoga's universal appeal and its deep-rooted power to connect, heal, and harmonize. Yoga is one of India's most treasured gifts to the world. Derived from the Sanskrit word “Yuj”, meaning to unite, yoga signifies the union of body, mind, and spirit. Practiced since ancient times, it transcends mere physical fitness. It is a holistic discipline that nurtures mental clarity, spiritual growth, and emotional resilience. In 2014, recognizing yoga's global relevance, the United Nations declared June 21 as International Yoga Day. Since then, the world has embraced yoga as a universal path to health and peace.

A Glimpse of the Past: Kashmir's Historic Celebration
Last year, in 2024, the 10th anniversary of International Yoga Day was celebrated under the theme “Yoga for Self and Society.” The landmark event was led by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India in the breathtaking Kashmir Valley, specifically at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) near the scenic Zabarwan Mountains

in Srinagar. Over 7,000 participants joined in the event, spreading yoga's message of health, harmony, and national unity.

Confronting Today's Challenges: Health and Drug Abuse
While the world has made great strides in health awareness, we are also facing growing threats—obesity, poor lifestyle choices, and the devastating grip of drug addiction, especially among the youth. Obesity has become a gateway to numerous chronic diseases, and drug abuse is silently destroying lives, families, and communities. It's time we ask ourselves tough questions:

How can we guide our youth away from drug abuse?
How can we ensure a healthy and purposeful life for the next generation?

The answer lies in education, vigilance, and accountability. Parents, teachers, and society at large must remain watchful and proactive. Governments must implement strict laws against drug trafficking and consumption, ensuring harsh punishments for both peddlers and repeat offenders. Equally important is health education—teaching children from an early age to value their bodies and make informed choices.

A Message on Yoga Day 2025
As we mark this special day, I urge everyone to take this message to heart:

“Say NO to drugs. Say NO to junk food. Say YES to a healthy, purposeful life.”
Choose wellness. Choose yoga. Choose to be someone special—for your family, for your society, and for your nation.

Let us come together, on this International Yoga Day, to celebrate the timeless gift of yoga and embrace a future of health, harmony, and holistic well-being.

Happy International Yoga Day 2025!
Yoga for One Earth, One Health

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Start Where You Are, Use What You Have, Do What You Can: Embracing Progress and Resilience



By Jaswinder Pal

In a world often obsessed with perfection, success, and grand achievements, the simple yet powerful mantra—“Start Where You Are, Use What You Have, Do What You Can”—serves as a reminder that progress begins with small steps, resourcefulness, and perseverance. This philosophy encourages individuals to overcome hesitation, leverage their current resources, and take meaningful action regardless of circumstances. Starting Where You Are: Embracing Your Present Moment
The first step in any journey is acknowledging your current situation. Whether you're pursuing a personal goal, career change, or overcoming challenges, waiting for ideal conditions can lead to stagnation. Starting where you are means accepting your present circumstances and recognizing

that every major achievement begins with a single step. For example, a person wanting to improve their health doesn't need a fully equipped gym or perfect routine. They can begin with simple activities like walking around the block, practicing mindfulness, or adjusting their diet gradually. The key is to begin, however modest the start may seem. Using What You Have: Making the Most of Available Resources
Resourcefulness is a vital component of this philosophy. Often, we focus on what we lack—money, time, skills, or tools—rather than on what we possess. By identifying and utilizing your current resources, you can make meaningful progress without waiting for ideal conditions or external help. For instance, if someone aspires to learn a new language but can't afford formal classes, they can use free online resources, language exchange apps, or community groups. If a writer has only a notebook and pen, they can still begin drafting ideas and stories without expensive equipment.

Doing What You Can: Taking Consistent, Realistic Actions
Progress is built on consistent effort, not perfection. Doing what you can involves setting achievable goals and acknowledging that even small actions contribute to your overall progress. It's about removing the fear of failure and understanding that effort, no matter how minor, adds up over time. An aspiring entrepreneur might start by researching their market or creating a basic business plan instead of launching a full-scale enterprise immediately. An artist may begin with sketches or small projects rather than waiting for perfect inspiration or resources. The Power of this Philosophy
This approach fosters resilience, patience, and a growth mindset. It emphasizes that perfection is not a prerequisite for progress, and that every step forward is valuable. It helps individuals overcome feelings of inadequacy or overwhelm, encouraging them to focus on what they can do today. Moreover, this mindset often leads to unexpected opportunities and breakthroughs. Small, consistent actions can accumulate into significant achievements over time, building confidence and momentum.

Practical Applications
- Personal Development: Start with small habits like reading, exercising, or journaling.
- Career Growth: Leverage existing skills to explore new opportunities or skills.
- Overcoming Challenges: Address issues incrementally rather than waiting for perfect solutions.
- **Creative Projects:** Use available materials and ideas to create and refine over time.
Start Where You Are, Use What You Have, Do What You Can is more than just a motivational phrase; it's a practical roadmap for living a proactive, resilient life. It reminds us that progress doesn't require perfection or all the resources in the world—just a willingness to begin, adapt, and persist. Embracing this philosophy empowers individuals to move forward despite obstacles, turning small beginnings into meaningful accomplishments.

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Vande Bharat Express: A Game Changer for Kashmir's Tourism



By Vinod Chandrashekhhar Dixit

Kudos to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for flagging off the first-ever direct train to Kashmir—marking what many hope will be a turning point for the region's travel and economy. The Vande Bharat Express is seen as a triumph of India's 'Make in India' initiative. Travel to Kashmir has always been on the dream list of so many as Kashmir is known for its breath-taking landscapes, snow-covered mountains, and peaceful valleys, that is one of the most popular destinations in India. Now Vande Bharat Express has come into play by promises a comfortable, fast, and affordable journey to the valley, making travel easier than ever. Over the past 11 years, the

government has taken consistent and focused steps to strengthen railway infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir. There is something magical about the Kashmir Valley that captures the imagination of every traveller. Kashmir's tourism industry has long been a vital part of its economy. With its snow-capped mountains and rich culture, it has always felt like a world apart. The region, known for its stunning landscapes, peaceful lakes and snow-capped mountains, once attracted visitors from all over the world. People of Kashmir has waited years for this train as Road travel was inconvenient because of the unpredictability and discomfort and this train is really a game-changer for the people of Kashmir. Vande Bharat Express between Srinagar and Katra has drawn praise from passengers, many of whom described the new service as offering “unmatched convenience,” making travel “much easier,” “possible and comfortable,” while hailing it as a “great move by the government” to connect Kashmir with the rest of India. Vande Bharat trains are built for speed,

comfort and efficiency, the Kashmir version adds a fourth defining feature: resilience. It's not just a sym-



bol of progress, but also a proof of Indian engineering rising to meet the nation's most demanding challenges. Best vacation packages
It will reduce travel time significantly, what makes them feel it is set to revitalize Kashmir's tourism

industry is the fact that it provides improved connectivity and affordable travel options for visitors across

India. The government has reshaped the railway landscape of Jammu and Kashmir with vision and resolve. In a historic moment earlier in the day, PM Modi has dedicated to the nation the engineering marvel that

is the Chenab Bridge — the highest railway bridge in the world, connecting the remote villages of Bakal and Kauri in Reasi district. Now Kashmir is fully integrated. You can see this beauty. The train service will now boost both tourism and economic activities in Kashmir by offering a quicker and more comfortable means of travel to both locals and tourists who were eagerly awaiting for a smoother, faster journey between these two iconic cities.

The new service not only connects Jammu to Kashmir via a rail link but also Kashmir to the rest of India for the first time and it will help to revive the tourism industry which has been hit badly by the Pahalgam terror attack, remains the equally significant factor in time to come and it will boost tourism and make Kashmir more accessible. Best vacation packages
Designed specifically for the harsh climate and unique terrain of the Valley, this winter-hardened variant is packed with custom innovations that make it unlike any other Vande Bharat train in the nation. Compared to the other 136 Vande Bharat

Express trains currently running in different parts of the country, this train has several additional features to meet operational challenges and passengers' needs in the extreme weather conditions of Jammu & Kashmir. More than just a transport service, the Vande Bharat Express is seen as a major step in revitalizing tourism in Kashmir, symbolizing a return to normalcy after years of challenges. Augmenting the Kashmir valley's connectivity to the national railway network, this train symbolises India's commitment to bridging geographical and economic gaps. There is no doubt that this initiative will certainly help to revive the tourism industry which has been hit badly by the Pahalgam terror attack, remains the equally significant factor in time to come. Complete electrification, upgraded stations, and focused budget support have further strengthened this momentum.

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Urbanization May Feed Profits But it Would Not Feed People



Mohd Amin Mir

In the lush and fertile Valley of Kashmir, where snow-fed streams once irrigated emerald-green fields, the cultivation of paddy was more than a profession—it was a way of life. The rhythmic planting of rice seedlings, the echo of folk songs in fields, and the shared labor of families harvesting together, formed the cultural and economic backbone of rural Kashmir. For centuries, this land was rightly celebrated as the “Rice Bowl of the North”. But today, a quiet transformation is underway. Fields once brimming with golden grain are being replaced by concrete foundations, apple orchards, and commercial ventures. Paddy cultivation is in steep decline, and with it, the Valley’s self-sufficiency, cultural heritage, and rural livelihoods are being pushed to the margins. The situation is not merely one of agricultural change—it is a deeper crisis of identity, policy, and survival.

The Shrinking Footprint of Rice Cultivation

Two decades ago, approximately 80% of Kashmir’s arable land was under paddy cultivation. In districts such as Budgam, Pulwama, Baramulla, and Anantnag, rice farming dominated the agricultural landscape. Fast forward to 2025, and the picture is starkly different. Surveys and anecdotal reports suggest that in some districts, the area under paddy has dropped to less than 40%. The reasons are many—ranging from economic to environmental—but the result is the same: Kashmir, once a net exporter of rice, now imports a significant

portion of its rice needs from Punjab and Haryana. This increasing dependency is not only an economic liability but a strategic vulnerability.

Why the Decline?

Urbanization and Land Conversion: The post-2010 period witnessed rapid urban expansion in towns like Baramulla, Sopore, and Anantnag. As land prices soared, farmlands became prime targets for real estate development. Lacking strong land-use regulation, many agricultural plots were converted into residential colonies, shopping complexes, or government infrastructure. In many cases, landowners were lured by the prospect of quick profits. Unfortunately, what appeared lucrative in the short term has begun to expose long-term consequences—loss of productive land, displacement of farming communities, and rising food insecurity.

The Rise of Orchards: The government’s encouragement of horticulture, particularly apple cultivation, has made orchardization a favored alternative. While an apple orchard may yield higher profits per kanal than a paddy field, the shift has led to monocropping and vulnerability to climate risks. Additionally, traditional rice varieties like Mushkbudji and Zagg are being lost in this transition.

Water Scarcity and Environmental Change: Traditional irrigation systems like koul, kul, and sarband have been neglected. Streams have dried up, rainfall has become erratic, and glacial retreat is affecting perennial water sources. Paddy, a water-intensive crop, has become increasingly difficult to sustain without modern irrigation, which most small farmers cannot afford.

Labour Shortage and Social Change: Farming in Kashmir was once a collective family activity. Today, rural-to-urban migration, declining interest among youth in agriculture, and rising aspirations have left fields without hands to till them. The growing reliance



on migrant labor from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh also signals a disconnection between the people and their land.

Policy Gaps and Bureaucratic Apathy: Despite the rhetoric of agricultural reform, policy support for paddy farmers remains inadequate. Minimum Support Price (MSP) mechanisms are either weakly enforced or absent. Crop insurance schemes are poorly implemented, and compensation for flood or drought damage often arrives too late—or not at all. Extension services have failed to modernize paddy farming or educate farmers on sustainable practices.

Land Fragmentation: With each generation, land parcels are divided further among heirs, making large-scale or even medium-scale paddy cultivation unviable. The absence of land consolidation mechanisms results in scattered, inefficient, and often abandoned plots.

The Consequences We Can’t Ignore

Food Insecurity: Kashmir is now increasingly dependent on rice imports. Any disruption—whether logistical, climatic, or political—could lead to supply crises and price shocks. Self-sufficiency in staple grains, once a strength, is now a question mark.

Loss of Heritage: The decline of paddy is erasing intangible cultural traditions—harvest festivals, folk dances, traditional irrigation wisdom, and com-

munity bonds. The once-celebrated rousung during planting and harvest seasons now belongs to memory.

Rural Unemployment: Small farmers, tenant cultivators, and agricultural workers are losing livelihoods. As paddy fields disappear, so do seasonal employment opportunities. With few skills for alternate jobs, many rural youth remain unemployed, deepening the socio-economic crisis in villages.

Ecological Impact: Paddy fields act as water sinks, supporting local biodiversity and recharging aquifers. Their conversion to non-agricultural use has contributed to falling groundwater levels, reduced bird migration, and ecological imbalance.

Social Disruption: As agriculture declines, families migrate toward cities in search of work. This urban influx burdens civic infrastructure, while rural areas experience depopulation, land abandonment, and the collapse of traditional family structures.

The Path to Revival

While the situation is dire, it is not irreversible. There is still time—and scope—to arrest the decline and chart a revival. But it will require coordinated action, bold policymaking, and grassroots participation.

Protecting Agricultural Land: The government must enforce strict land-use regulations to prevent indiscriminate

conversion of paddy fields. Unauthorized constructions on prime agricultural land should be penalized. An Agricultural Land Protection Authority should be established to oversee zoning and ecological assessments.

Introducing Guaranteed Income Support: Beyond MSP, a Minimum Guaranteed Income (MGI) for paddy cultivators would incentivize continued cultivation. Farmers need to be assured that their efforts will yield financial security, not just fluctuating market prices.

Strengthening Crop Insurance and Compensation: Insurance coverage must be universal, affordable, and prompt. Digital mapping, satellite imagery, and spot Girdawari can help in speedy claims processing. Compensation for crop loss must be time-bound and monitored by independent agencies.

Reviving Traditional Irrigation Systems: Programs for the restoration of koul, kul, and small dams should be rolled out in collaboration with village panchayats and NGOs. Community-based water harvesting, check dams, and watershed management must be prioritized.

Investing in Research and Branding: Agricultural universities like SKUAST-K and institutes like CRRRI must focus on developing high-yield, low-water rice varieties suited for Kashmir’s ecology. Branding and marketing of aromatic indigenous varieties such as Mushkbudji and Kamad through GI tags can open premium markets.

Encouraging Cooperative Farming: Fragmented land can be pooled under Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Self Help Groups (SHGs). These collectives can enable better access to credit, shared use of machinery, collective bargaining, and crop marketing.

Mechanizing Paddy Farming: Affordable small-scale mechanization—such as seeders, transplanters, and harvesters—must be made accessible at the village level. Machinery banks operated by cooperative societies can be an

effective model.

Engaging the Youth: Youth migration can be reversed by turning agriculture into a profession of choice, not of compulsion. Startup funding, agricultural innovation labs, and training in agribusiness can bring young minds back to the soil.

Linking Paddy to Tourism and Culture: Paddy fields can be developed as ecotourism zones. Harvest festivals, folk events, and rice-based cuisines can attract tourists while reviving cultural pride and creating alternate income streams for farmers.

Strengthening Agricultural Education and Extension: Agriculture must be made aspirational. From school curricula to university programs, a renewed respect for farming must be cultivated. Extension services should be digitalized and responsive, providing real-time guidance through mobile apps, helplines, and field officers.

Conclusion: A Time for Bold Choices

The story of paddy cultivation in Kashmir is more than just an agricultural trend—it is a mirror reflecting the Valley’s changing priorities, values, and vulnerabilities. The transformation from grain to gravel is not just physical; it is symbolic of a society moving away from its roots.

If timely action is not taken, we may lose not just a crop but a culture, not just land but legacy. But if we choose wisely—protecting land, supporting farmers, innovating with technology, and celebrating our traditions—we can script a revival. Let Kashmir once again resonate with the rustle of paddy fields, not the silence of cemented land. Let the Valley not forget the song of its soil.

Cholhama Roshe Roshe or Malal Trevith Tche Saal Yikna.

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The Real-life Consequences of Social Media Use



By Mohammad Faizan Nadaf

Social media, while offering numerous benefits, presents several disadvantages that can significantly impact real life. One major concern is the potential for addiction. The design of social media platforms, with their endless scrolling and notifications, is inherently addictive, leading users to spend excessive amounts of time online. This can result in neglecting real-life responsibilities, such as work, studies, and personal relationships.

Social media’s impact on daily exercise habits presents several disadvantages. One major concern is the potential for decreased physical activity due to increased screen time. The time spent scrolling through social media platforms often replaces time that could be dedicated to exercise, leading to a more sedentary lifestyle. This can contribute to weight gain, a decline in cardiovascular health, and an increased risk of chronic diseases.

Social media significantly impacts youngsters, particularly regarding time consumption. The constant connectivity and accessibility of platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat lead to excessive screen time, often at the expense of other essential activities. This can result in a decrease in time spent on studies, hobbies, and face-to-face interactions, hindering their overall development.

Moreover, the addictive nature of social media can lead to a breakdown in communication and a lack of attention during family interactions. Youngsters may be physically present but mentally elsewhere, constantly checking their phones and

missing out on opportunities to connect with their parents. This can lead to feelings of frustration and neglect for both parents and children.

One of the primary concerns is the reduction in physical activity. The sedentary lifestyle promoted by excessive social media use can lead to weight gain, obesity, and related health problems. Youngsters may spend hours scrolling through feeds, watching videos, or engaging in online interactions, neglecting the need for regular exercise and movement. This lack of physical activity can also weaken muscles and bones, increasing the risk of injuries.

Moreover, excessive screen time can negatively impact sleep patterns. The blue light emitted by smartphones and other devices can interfere with the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. This can lead to sleep deprivation, which is linked to various health problems, including fatigue, weakened immune systems, and increased risk of chronic diseases.

One of the most common problems is digital eye strain, also known as computer vision syndrome. This condition is characterized by symptoms such as dry eyes, blurred vision, headaches, and eye fatigue. When youngsters focus on screens for extended periods, they tend to blink less frequently, leading to dryness and irritation. Additionally, the constant adjustment of focus between near and far distances can strain the eye muscles, contributing to discomfort.

To mitigate these negative impacts, parents can play a crucial role by establishing clear boundaries, promoting open communication, and modeling healthy social media habits themselves. Encouraging offline activities, such as family outings and shared hobbies, can help foster stronger bonds and reduce the negative impact of excessive screen time.

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Empowering Women In India: Breaking Barriers And Building Futures



Sumaya Jan

From historic NDA milestones to transformative policies, India’s journey towards gender equality is reshaping society and inspiring a new generation of women leaders. Women’s empowerment in India is more than a policy objective; it is a transformative journey reshaping the fabric of Indian society. For decades, Indian women have strived to overcome cultural, economic, and social barriers to assert their rightful place in every domain, from politics and education to science, entrepreneurship, and defence. In recent years, India has witnessed several landmark moments that symbolise this journey, but few have been as powerful as the inclusion of women in the National Defence Academy (NDA). The graduation of the first batch of women NDA cadets in 2025 marked a pivotal chapter in India’s history. These young women, many from rural and non-military backgrounds, have shattered stereotypes and blazed a trail for future generations. This event is not only a military milestone but also a strong emblem of women empowerment, echoing a broader narrative supported by progressive legal reforms, visionary government initiatives, and a growing societal commitment to gender equality.

The Supreme Court Verdict: Laying the Foundation

Until 2021, the NDA remained a male-exclusive bastion in India’s defence architecture. However, in a landmark judgment in August 2021, the Supreme Court of India ruled that women must be allowed to appear for the NDA entrance exam. The court declared the exclusion of women unconstitutional and emphasised that opportunity and merit must not be gendered.

Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, one of the presiding judges, noted that “gender equality must be a lived reality.” The ruling sparked immediate policy changes and prompted the armed forces to restructure their recruitment, training, and infrastructure to welcome women cadets. It wasn’t just a legal decision; it was a societal leap forward.

The First Women NDA Batch: A Historic Breakthrough

In May 2025, India proudly witnessed the commissioning of the first-ever women NDA graduates. Seventeen women cadets, selected through the same rigorous entrance examination and

subjected to identical training protocols as their male counterparts, marched with pride at the passing-out parade.

Why This Moment Matters

Redefining Aspirations Across Rural India: Many of these cadets came from remote villages and tier-2 towns, where traditional gender roles often limit female ambition. Their presence in uniform sends an unmistakable message: courage, discipline, and leadership know no gender or geography.

From Civilian Homes to Military Ranks: Unlike the sons of army officers who often follow in their fathers’ footsteps, these girls came from non-military households. Their success reflects changing mindsets within Indian families, where daughters are now encouraged to dream big and challenge norms.

Institutional Evolution: The NDA revamped its physical infrastructure, including separate dormitories, washrooms, and safety mechanisms, to accommodate women. Training modules were redesigned to maintain standards while ensuring inclusivity.

Inspiring the Nation: These 17 cadets have become symbols of resilience and progress. Their journey is inspiring thousands of schoolgirls to consider careers in the armed forces, thus opening avenues once deemed impossible.

Training and Challenges

The NDA training is famously gruelling, combining academic studies with physical endurance, survival skills, weapon handling, and leadership development. These young women did not receive special privileges. From dawn-to-dusk drills to fieldcraft lessons and tactical warfare classes, they were held to the same standards as male cadets.

Their successful completion of the program highlights the importance of equal opportunity. When given a level playing field, women not only participate but excel.

Historical Context: Women In The Indian Armed Forces

Though women have served in the Indian Armed Forces since the 1990s in various support roles, they were often restricted from combat and leadership positions. Key milestones include:

- 1992: Women officers were inducted into the Indian Army on a short-service commission.
- 2015: Indian Air Force opens fighter pilot roles to women.
- 2020: Supreme Court orders a permanent commission for women in the Indian Army.
- 2021: Supreme Court opens NDA to women.

The NDA milestone stands out as it enables women to begin their defence careers at the same foundational level as men, setting them up for long-term leadership roles.

Government Initiatives For Women Empowerment

India’s commitment to gender equality is underscored by a range of schemes and reforms aimed at empowering women across social, economic, and political dimensions.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Launched in 2015, this campaign addresses the declining child sex ratio and promotes girl child education. With slogans like “Educate the Daughter, Save the Daughter,” it has led to increased awareness and improved school enrollments.

Mission Shakti: This umbrella programme focuses on the safety and empowerment of women through its two components:

- Sambal:** Ensures protection with women helplines and One Stop Centres.
- Samarthya:** Promotes economic independence through skill training, digital literacy, and access to entrepreneurship.

Stand-Up India: Encourages women from marginalised communities to start businesses by providing loans between Rs. 10 lakh to Rs. 1 crore. Over 80% of beneficiaries are women.

Mahila E-Haat: A government e-commerce platform that allows women entrepreneurs to market and sell their products directly, fostering digital inclusion.

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana: A high-interest savings scheme that supports the financial needs of a girl child, especially for education and marriage.

PM Ujjwala Yojana: Though primarily a health program, it has helped rural women by reducing their exposure to smoke and improving family well-being, which in turn enhances their status in households.

Women’s Reservation Bill (2023) The 106th Constitutional Amendment reserved one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. This bold move ensures stronger representation in political decision-making.

Gender Equality In A Broader Perspective

Education: India has made significant progress in bridging the gender gap. According to UDISE+ (2023), the Gross Enrollment Ratio of girls in secondary education has surpassed that of boys in several states.

Employment: The government is promoting women’s participation in non-traditional sectors like STEM, manufacturing, and defence. The MUDRA loan scheme and self-help groups (SHGs) have facilitated financial inclusion.

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DDC Poonch reviews performance of Banks Pitches for increasing priority sector lending

HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JUNE 19: District Development Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) meeting to review the performance of Banks regarding implementation of Annual Credit Plan (ACP) and dispensation of loan cases under government sponsored schemes for the Quarter ending March 2025 of FY 2024-25.

At the outset Lead District Manager Lead Bank Ravi Kumar informed the house that different Banks in district Poonch have achieved Total business of Rs.6419.76 crore. The deposits have risen from Rs.3816.86 crore as on 31st March 2024 to Rs.4218.75 crore as on 31st March 2025 showing a YoY growth of 10.53. Similarly the advances have gone up from Rs.2072.81 crore



as on 31st March 2024 to Rs.2201.01 crore as on 31st March 2025 showing YOY growth of 6.18%, while CD ratio of the district stands at 52.17% as on 31.03.2025.

Total Credit Disbursement made by the banks

up to March 31 2025 of the FY-2024-25 stand at Rs.1158.70 crore against annual target of Rs. 725.03 crore thereby achieving 160% of the target.

The Priority Sector credit disbursement stands at Rs.495.52 crore against the target of Rs.571.10 crore thereby achieving 87% of the target. Achievement under Non-Priority Sector is Rs.663.18 crore against target of Rs.153.91 crore thereby achieving 431% of the target.

The Chairman DLRC directed the stakeholders to improve priority sector lending to aid self-employment through various schemes of Central and UT Govt.

The implementation of PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna was also discussed and the chairman directed banks to finance solar energy scheme to achieve the objective of free power to all.

DC inspects ongoing works in Poonch Township

HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JUNE 19: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today conducted an on-site inspection of the ongoing foot-path construction work from Nakha Wali Chowk to the Post Office and Hathi Gate in the heart of Poonch city.

The Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) apprised the Deputy Commissioner of the project's current status and key details. It was informed that the project is being executed at an estimated cost of 66.64 lakh. The DC reviewed the quality and pace of the construction, ensuring that the work adheres to the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and complies with prescribed engineering stan-



dards. Emphasizing the significance of improved civic infrastructure for public convenience, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to expedite the work and ensure its timely completion, while maintaining the highest standards of quality.

Arrangements for historic mela at Devsthan Jadsarkote discussed at Udhampur

HT NEWS DESK

UDHAMPUR, JUNE 19: To discuss the arrangements for the smooth conduct of Historic Jadsarkote mela which is commencing from June 25 2025, the Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai today convened a meeting of officers of various departments, here in the Mini Conference Hall DC Office Complex.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh, Chief Medical Officer, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Executive Engineer JPDCL and other senior officers besides representatives of the mela committee attended the meeting.

Detailed discussions were held on the arrangements for security, sanitation,



health care, transport, traffic management, drinking water and power supply, Installation of departmental stalls, maintenance of road, checking of rates etc. The DC directed all the departments to work in coordination to finalize the necessary arrangements well before the commencement of the mela. She urged the local mela committee members to extend full support to make the mela a grand success as public participation is of great importance in promoting tourism and economy of the area.

Executive Engineer PHE was asked to make adequate arrangements regarding drinking water supply at the mela site while Xen PDD was directed to provide uninterrupted power supply during the mela days. The Chief Medical Officer was directed to deploy a team of doctors at the venue. Similarly, the meeting discussed the deployment of security personnel by the Police Department for the mela days.

Kishtwar: Gram Sabha meeting convened on Day 5 of DAJGUA campaign

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 19: The "Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan" (DAJGUA) campaign entered fifth day of the 15 day impactful outreach initiative, reinforcing the government's commitment to inclusive development and grassroots empowerment of tribal communities. The day's camp, organized at Government High School Pathernaki, Panchayat Piyas, Block Nagseni, began with the recitation of the National Anthem, setting a tone of unity and purpose.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from locals and was graced by DDC Member Nagseni Faisal Hussain and BDO



Abhilash Sharma, who actively engaged with the community. A brief overview of the DAJGUA initiative was presented, highlighting its focus on saturation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), doorstep delivery of government services, and real-time grievance redressal.

The camp featured informative stalls from departments including Agriculture, Health, ICDS, Social Welfare, Revenue, Sheep Husbandry, Horticulture, Fisheries, Ayush, Rural Development, Forest, and Jal Jeevan Mission, where representatives explained their flagship schemes and provided on-the-spot benefits.

DDC Member Faisal Hussain inspected the stalls, interacted with the officials and beneficiaries to ensure effective services delivery.

Additional highlights included the distribution of pamphlets by the Ayush and Rural Development Departments, plantation of tree saplings by the Forest Department, and distribution of seeds under the Poshan Vatika initiative to promote nutritional security. The Jal Shakti Department conducted on-the-spot water quality testing, while the Social Welfare Department distributed notebooks to students. The event also featured cultural performances by local students, celebrating tribal heritage and community spirit.

Clearance work underway to facilitate road widening at Bafliaz

HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JUNE 19: The District Administration Poonch, under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal, has started the removal of structures along the Rajouri-Thanamandi-Surankote (RTS) road near Bafliaz. The drive is being carried out under the supervision of the Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Tehsildar Surankote, in coordination with the Officer Commanding (OC) of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO). Structures falling within the proposed alignment of the road are being removed to facilitate seamless progress of the widening of this vital project. The upgraded road is expected to significantly reduce travel time, enhance transport safety and open up new avenues for economic growth. It will also improve access to the historic Mughal Road.

Ramban: BLOs imparted Training ahead of Special Summary Revision-2025

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JUNE 19: The District Election Office Ramban today organized comprehensive training sessions for Booth Level Officers (BLOs) across the district in connection with the Pre-Revision activities of the Special Summary Revision (SSR) 2025 of the Photo Electoral Roll. The training sessions were held at the Assembly Constituency level at identified locations in Ramban, Banihal, and Gool, witnessing the participation of all 365 BLOs along with the supervisory staff.

The training session at Ramban was conducted under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), while Sub

Divisional Magistrate (SDM) presided over the session at Banihal. At Gool, the training was led by the Tehsildar.

During the sessions, Master Trainers imparted detailed guidance to the BLOs on key activities, including app updation for accurate data management, submission of the Advance Monthly Format (AMF) and the distribution of BLA Form-2 to recognized National and State political parties to ensure smooth coordination during the revision process.

The training aimed at equipping BLOs with the necessary knowledge and tools to carry out the SSR 2025 duties effectively and in accordance with the guidelines of the Election Commission of India.

HP&M Deptt organises awareness workshop on PMFME Scheme at GPC Chanderkote

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JUNE 19: The Department of Horticulture Planning and Marketing, under the guidance of District Administration, on Thursday organized a one-day awareness workshop on the PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme for young technocrats and members of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) at Government Polytechnic College Chanderkote. The event was attended by Area Marketing Officer (AMO) Tehsin Chib; Principal of the Polytechnic College, Vivek Mahajan; AGMO Batote; GMI Raju Zutshi; and District Resource Person (DRP-PMFME) Mudassar Rashid. A large number of individuals including students, FPO members from Bungus Valley, women, and unemployed youth participated in the workshop. The officials and experts briefed the participants on various aspects of the PMFME scheme. They emphasized that the scheme is proving a game changer in rural entrepreneurship by providing financial and technical support to individuals and groups interested in food processing.

The AMO urged the participants to take full advantage of the scheme and become part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative launched by the Prime Minister of India. The District Resource Person provided detailed information on the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPR), required documentation for bank loans, and necessary certifications including FSSAI license and Udyam registration. The District Nodal Officer PMFME highlighted that the scheme is especially benefiting women and unemployed youth, enabling them to become self-reliant and even job creators.

Embracing Wellness in the Lap of Nature Ramban Admin organises Mass Yoga session at Sanasar ahead of Int'l Yoga Day

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JUNE 19: To promote physical and mental well-being through Yoga, the District Administration Ramban today organized a Mass Yoga Session at the breathtakingly beautiful Sanasar meadow.

The event was held as a prelude to the International Yoga Day 2025 and served to emphasize the importance of incorporating Yoga into daily life.

The session, conducted at the panoramic location to promote the tourist destination Sanasar—known for its serene surroundings and pristine environment—witnessed enthusiastic participation from Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Varunjeet Singh Charak; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Shokat Hayat Mattoo; and other senior officers of the district administration. The department of AYUSH, Youth Ser-

vices and Sports, Information, Health, Education and other departments coordinated the event.

The initiative aimed at disseminating the message of "Yoga for Wellness", encouraging citizens to adopt a healthier lifestyle rooted in traditional practices. By choosing the scenic high-altitude meadow of Sanasar, the district administration not only highlighted the district's natural heritage but also created an atmosphere of positivity and spiritual upliftment for the participants.

Speaking to media persons, the ADC emphasized the holistic benefits of Yoga, stating that it's routine practice not only improves physical health but also contributes to mental clarity and emotional stability. He called upon the people of Ramban to make Yoga a daily routine and actively participate in the celebrations of the International Day of Yoga on June 21, which will be observed at District, Sub-Divisional and Tehsil headquarters across the district.

Dharti Aaba camps organised in Rajouri to benefit tribal population

HT NEWS DESK

RAJOURI, JUNE 19: To empower the tribal communities, awareness camps under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJ-GUA) were organised today at multiple locations across the Rajouri district. The initiative was held on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma.

The camps were held at Panchayat Alal in Thanamandi Sub-division, Dhara Sanwala in Block Doongi, and Panchayat Dangote in Block Kalakote. A large number of tribal community mem-



bers participated enthusiastically in these camps, demonstrating deep interest in learning about various welfare schemes and development pro-

grammes being implemented by the government. The participants were sensitized about a wide array of Government schemes, with special

emphasis on tribal-specific initiatives in the areas of education, livelihood, healthcare, skill development, and social security. Resource persons from the government departments briefed the public and facilitated on-the-spot assistance in registration and documentation processes.

The camps were closely supervised by senior officers including SDMs, ADCs and ACD, under the overall guidance of the Deputy Commissioner. Their active involvement ensured the smooth conduct of the programme and meaningful interaction with the tribal population.

GDC Ramnagar organises symposium on Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

HT NEWS DESK

RAMNAGAR, JUNE 19: The NCORD Cell of Government Degree College Ramnagar organised a thought-provoking Symposium on Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan today under the esteemed patronage of Principal Prof. (Dr.) Bhavnaish Chand Anthal.

The event aimed to raise awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse among the youth and to promote a drug-free society. The programme began with a welcome address by Dr. Sham Singh, Convenor NCORD Cell. He highlighted the objectives of the symposium and emphasised the collective responsibility of educational institutions, society, and individuals in combating the menace of drug abuse.

A total of 10 students participated in the symposium, delivering insightful speeches on the causes, consequences, and preventive

strategies related to drug addiction.

The Principal of the College commended the efforts of the NCORD Cell and appreciated the students for their meaningful contributions. He said "Awareness and education are the most powerful tools in the fight against drug abuse. Institutions must serve as strongholds of discipline, awareness, and social responsibility to build a drug-free India."

The programme concluded with a formal vote of thanks presented by Prof. Tanmeet Kour, a member of the NCORD Cell.

The event was organised and coordinated by the NCORD Cell of the college, comprising Dr. Sham Singh (Convenor), Dr. Sunil Kumar, Dr. Jeevan Kumar, Prof. Anice Ahmed, Prof. Sanjay Malhotra and Prof. Tanmeet Kour. The event was graced by the presence of several faculty members, including Dr. Kewal Kumar, Prof. Parminder Kumar, Prof. Sonia Raj and Dr. Ujval Gupta.





DAJGUA Day 5: Pulwama admin organises mega outreach camp at Gulshanpora, Tral

MLA attends event, distributes Ayushman Bharat Cards, Birth Certificates and other certificates among the beneficiaries

HT NEWS DESK

PULWAMA, JUNE 19: Continuing its efforts to ensure last-mile delivery of services and welfare measures, district administration Pulwama today organised a mega outreach camp at Gulshanpora, Tral under the nationwide flagship initiative Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA).

The initiative aimed at empowering tribal communities through awareness and saturation of government schemes, saw enthusiastic participation from locals and multi-departmental engagement on the ground.

A wide range of government departments including Health, Education, Social Welfare, Rural Development, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal & Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Mission POSHAN, Forest, and others set up dedicated stalls at the venue to deliver on-the-spot services.



The event was also attended by Member of Legislative Assembly Tral, Rafiq Ahmad Naik and DDC Member, Manzoor Ahmad Ganie, who actively interacted with the public and listened to their concerns and assured them of continued support and coordination for effective implementation of government programmes at the grass-roots level.

On the occasion, MLA also distributed Ayushman Bharat Cards, Birth Certificates

and other certificates among the beneficiaries, highlighting the government's focus on inclusive welfare delivery and outreach.

Officers including Tehsildar Tral, BDO Aripal and other field functionaries were also present to facilitate real-time registration, enrolment, and awareness dissemination.

The camp recorded a significant turnout and witnessed a surge in enrolments under

various government schemes. Special health camps were organised by the Health department to provide basic diagnostic services, free consultations, and focused awareness sessions.

An extensive sickle cell screening drive was also carried out besides educating the community about Sickle cell disease and water-borne illnesses, preventive healthcare, safe drinking practices, and early detection protocols.

Participating departments facilitated registrations under key schemes such as Jal Jeevan Mission (Functional Household Tap Connections), MGNREGA Job Cards, PMAY-G, and PM Ujjwala Yojana among others. Eligible citizens were guided and assisted on-spot to ensure timely and complete coverage under these schemes.

The camp witnessed an overwhelming response from tribal residents, who commended the administration's initiative for delivering critical services directly at the grassroots level.

DM Samba lifts temporary ban on holding Dangal competitions

HT NEWS DESK

SAMBA, JUNE 19: District Magistrate, Samba, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 ordered the immediate lifting of the temporary ban on the organization and conduct of all Dangal/Kushti events in District Samba, with effect from today, the 19th day of June, 2025.

Organizers of such events are directed to ensure compliance with all applicable safety guidelines, including provisions for adequate hydration, medical facilities, and crowd management, to safeguard participants and attendees.

This order shall come into force with immediate effect and supersedes the previous order dated 13/06/2025.

MVD Reasi seizes 12 vehicles, E-Challanes 21 for violation of rules

HT NEWS DESK



REASI, JUNE 19: Acting on the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik and Higher authorities from the transport department, the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) Reasi today carried out a comprehensive enforcement drive at Katra and Balani.

The drive was a direct follow-up to the complaints of citizens during the recent Public Grievances Redressal Camp about unauthorized auto operations and traffic violations.

During the operation, the MVD team checked 130 vehicles and e-challaned 21 for various violations. Special focus was placed on unauthorized and document-deficient auto-rickshaws and e-rickshaws. As a result, 12 such vehicles were seized for non-compliance. Additionally, 7 driving licenses were recommended for suspension, and a fine of 1.55 lakh was imposed on violators. The drive was conducted under the supervision of ARTO Neeraj Sharma, along with MVI Tushar Anthal, AMVI Surinder Rana and MVTA Sikander.

Dharti Aaba camp held at Kariya- Ramban

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JUNE 19: To empower tribal communities through information and access to welfare schemes, the District Administration Ramban organized an Dharti Aaba Janbhagidari Abhiyan awareness and schemes Saturation camp here at village Kariya, Panchayat Ballawat, Block Ramban.

More than 300 tribal community members attended the programme held under the overall supervision of Block Development Officer (BDO) Tanzeel Rounyal along with officers and officials representing various government departments.

The departments showcased respective initiatives and schemes, providing a platform for direct interaction between the tribal beneficiaries and government officials. These interactions helped clarify doubts and offered guidance on how to avail themselves of the benefits under various flagship programmes.

The programme played a crucial role in promoting the saturation of government schemes, ensuring that no eligible beneficiary is left out. It also facilitated on-the-spot redressal of grievances and dissemination of vital information related to health, education, social welfare, skill development, agriculture, and tribal welfare schemes.

Speaking on the occasion, BDO Ramban emphasized the importance of bringing governance to the doorsteps of marginalized communities and underlined the District Administration's commitment to inclusive development.

GDC Majalta hosts symposium on 'Role of Education in creating a Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan

Amir Iqbal Khan

UDHAMPUR, JUNE 19: Government Degree College Majalta organized a symposium competition under Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan to raise awareness about the menace of drug abuse and promote a drug-free society. The theme of the symposium was Role of Education in Creating a Nasha Mukta Bharat.

The event commenced with a welcome address by the Principal of the College, Prof. Dr. Shalini Sharma, who highlighted the importance of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and emphasized the pivotal role that educational institutions play in shaping a healthy and drug-free nation.

The symposium was coordinated by Prof. Naresh Kumar, HoD Dogri and NCORD Coordinator.

DC Reasi chairs District Mineral Foundation Trust meeting Stress laid on Community-Oriented Projects

HT NEWS DESK

REASI, JUNE 19: Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik today chaired a meeting of the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) Trust to review the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) and to ensure the effective and transparent utilization of the District Mineral Fund for the development of mining-affected areas.

Detailed discussions were held on proposed interventions and planned expenditures under the scheme. A major focus of the meeting was on addressing the pressing need of water supply augmentation amid rising temperatures. The DC approved a crucial plan to repair 138



defunct handpumps across the district, recognizing this as a priority to ensure community members have reliable water access during the hot summer months.

Emphasizing the need to maximize public benefit, DC Nidhi Malik directed to exclude the proposals for the installation of personal handpumps from the plan. She stressed that DMF funds should be allocated for community-oriented projects that serve the

larger population, rather than installations that benefit only a few individuals.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed the Executive Engineers (XENs) to carry out all works with a strong focus on quality and financial prudence. To enhance transparency and accountability, it was decided that the installation of each handpump be physically verified by the respective Block Development Officer.

Int'l Yoga Day -2025: DC Kishtwar leads call for health, harmony & drug-free society

HT NEWS DESK/KNS

KISHTWAR, JUNE 19: Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma shared detailed insights into the preparations for the upcoming 11th International Yoga Day, set to be celebrated on June 21, 2025 at the iconic Chogan Grounds in Kishtwar Town.

Addressing a press conference here today, the DC informed that all government departments have joined hands to organize a meaningful and large-scale event to highlight the true essence of Yoga. "Yoga is not just a practice for physical wellness; it is a holistic sadhana where



the mind, body, and intellect come into alignment," said the DC.

He emphasized that the benefits of Yoga extend beyond fitness and play a vital role in mental and emotional well-being. Through the press, he extended a warm invita-

tion to all residents of Kishtwar to participate in the celebration, which will begin at 6:00 AM sharp on Chogan Grounds.

In addition, he touched upon the district's proactive efforts under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan. He stated that coordinated efforts are being made with police and all administrative departments to curb substance abuse. "The institutional mechanisms are fully activated to ensure complete eradication of drug addiction in the region," he stated. He emphasized that the benefits of Yoga extend beyond fitness and play a vital role in mental and emotional well-being.

Andrabi participates in Annual Urs of Peer Baba Budhan Ali Shah at Jammu

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU | J&K | Annual Urs of Peer Baba Budhan Ali Shah was held today at his shrine near Airport at Jammu. Chairperson of J&K Waqf Board & Minister of State Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi participated in the celebrations. Waqf Board had for the first time created canopy areas in the complex to facilitate people amid the scorching heat. Large number of people attended the Urs this year. Andrabi joined special prayers held at the shrine for peace and prosperity of the humanity. She supervised the Bhandara and other facilities for the devotees visiting the Ziyarat. The people praised the efforts of Dr Andrabi and the Waqf Board for the shrine development and for the facilities put up during the Urs. Many public delegations interacted with the Waqf Board Chairperson and thanked her for the infrastructural development at the Sufi shrines.

Prelude to Int'l Yoga Day: Doda gears up with enthusiastic Yoga Events

HT NEWS DESK

DODA, JUNE 19: In the run up to International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2025, the District Administration Doda, under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and Director Ayush J&K organised a series of yoga programmes across the region. These events were conducted under the close supervision of District Ayush Officer Dr. Ajay Kumar Tikoo, with the aim to promote holistic well-being, fitness,

and awareness about the physical and mental benefits of yoga among all age groups. A major highlight of the day was the Yoga Mahakumbh, a grand yoga session held at the Bhaderwah Campus of the University of Jammu. Around 200 students and faculty members actively participated in the energising event. The session featured key asanas, pranayama (breathing techniques), and meditation, encouraging youth to integrate yoga into their daily routine for a balanced and healthy

lifestyle. In addition to this, several community-level yoga events titled Yoga Samavesh were held at AAM Udyanpur, Gurekhra, Kota, Hambal, and GAD Kandote. The sessions brought together people from rural and remote areas to practice yoga collectively, thereby fostering a sense of unity, wellness, and cultural pride. To ensure inclusivity and reach, GAD Kandote also hosted an online yoga session, allowing wider participation from those unable to attend physically.

Distt Admin Kulgam dedicates Library to students to enrich their knowledge, support academic pursuits

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, JUNE 19: A library developed by the district administration Kulgam was today dedicated to students here at Kulgam to support their academic pursuits, broaden their knowledge, and foster personal growth.

The facility was dedicated to students in presence of Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC) Kulgam; Mohammad Afzal Parrey; MLA Kulgam, M.Y. Tarigami and Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan.

Addressing the gathering, DDC Chairperson described the facility as more than just a building, referring to it as a temple of knowledge. He highlighted the transformative power of books in shaping individuals and cultivating enlightened communities.

MLA Kulgam in his address emphasized



the crucial role of books in shaping thoughts and character, particularly among the youth.

"Books are our closest companions and empower us with knowledge, insight, and the ability to question constructively," he

added.

Deputy Commissioner Kulgam appreciated the efforts of the R&B department and the Planning Wing in establishing the facility well in time.

Reflecting on his own educational journey, he highlighted the immense value that libraries offer to students. A library is not just a place to read, it is a space to grow, reflect and transform, he said.

He also assured that additional facilities and resources would be incorporated in the library.

The inauguration ceremony witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of students.

Present on the occasion were Joint Director Planning (JDP), Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Executive Engineer R&B, Tehsildar Kulgam, and other senior officers and officials.





PM Modi holds productive talks with Croatian PM Plenkovic in Zagreb; also meets President Milanovic

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Zagreb (Croatia), June 19

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held productive talks with his Croatian counterpart Andrej Plenkovic in Zagreb today, with the two sides agreeing to work closely in the fields of defence and security, pharma, renewable energy, and IT. Later, PM Modi called on President Zoran Milanovic. He also took a walk, accompanied by the Croatian PM, of the city square. PM Modi is the first ever Indian PM to visit Croatia.

PM Modi said in posts on X: "Held productive talks with my friend, Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic in Zagreb. Our talks covered many sectors, aimed at making the India-Croatia bond even stronger. We will be working closely in the fields of defence and security, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, IT, renewable energy, technology and more. Synergies in areas like semi-conductors, shipbuilding, connectivity and more will also be greatly beneficial." The MEA spokesperson said: "A new chapter in the India-Croatia rela-



tionship. "PM @narendramodi held productive discussions with PM @AndrejPlenkovic in Zagreb, Croatia. "The two leaders reviewed the full spectrum of India-Croatia bilateral relations & explored avenues to deepen collaboration

in sectors like digital technologies, space, renewable energy, defence, maritime infrastructure, tourism and hospitality, amongst others. "PM thanked Croatia for its steadfast support to India in fighting cross-border terrorism. The leaders also called for further

deepening India-EU strategic ties."

A readout said, it is the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Croatia and therefore, a historic milestone in India-Croatia ties.

On arrival at the historic Banski Dvori palace, Prime Minister was received by Prime Minister Plenkovic and accorded a ceremonial welcome. Earlier in the day, in a special and warm gesture, Prime Minister was welcomed by Prime Minister Plenkovic when he arrived at the airport in Zagreb.

The two leaders held delegation level talks. They engaged in wide-ranging discussions on various aspects of the bilateral partnership, including trade and investment, science and technology, defense and security, space, cultural cooperation, and people-to-people ties. The two leaders agreed that there were significant opportunities for increased cooperation in sectors such as infrastructure, ports and shipping, digitalization, AI, renewable energy, Pharma and tourism and hospitality.

Russia ready to hand over 3,000 more bodies of Ukrainian soldiers: Putin

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
St. Petersburg, June 19



Russia is prepared to hand over the bodies of an additional 3,000 fallen Ukrainian soldiers, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday. "We have returned the bodies of 6,000 fallen Ukrainian soldiers. We are ready to hand over approximately 3,000 more," he said during a meeting with the heads of leading international news agencies in St. Petersburg. "These are, I repeat, sad and tragic figures," Putin said.

NATO rearmament not threat to Russia: Putin

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
St. Petersburg, June 19

Russia does not consider any rearmament efforts by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a threat to its national security, President Vladimir Putin said Thursday during a meeting with the heads of major global news agencies. "We do not see any NATO rearmament as a threat to the Russian Federation, because we are self-sufficient in terms of ensuring our own security," Putin said.

Putin emphasized that Russia continuously enhances its military and defense capabilities. "Whatever NATO does, of course, creates certain risks, but we are fully capable of neutralizing all emerging threats. There is no doubt about that," he said. Putin also questioned the rationale behind NATO member states increasing their defense budgets, suggesting such actions are unnecessary. "Any rearmament or raising budgets to five percent of GDP by NATO countries makes no sense," he added.

Modi govt returning Keezhadi excavation report affront on Tamil culture, civilisation : Stalin

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Chennai, June 19

Continuing his tirade against the Centre for returning the Keezhadi excavation findings that established the antiquity of Tamils, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin termed it was an affront on Tamil culture and civilisation.

Hitting out at the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi Government for returning the report seeking further scientific validation and justification, he said it was a blatant attack on Tamil culture and showed the Centre's hatred for Tamils, which was ingrained in it. Upping his ante, Mr Stalin said



Tamil tastes bitter for the BJP-led Government at the Centre. The hatred for Tamil was ingrained, and that was why it is persistently trying to conceal and bury the pre-eminent antiquity and uniqueness of Tamil civilisation," he said in an epistle to the party cadres,

lauding yesterday's protest demonstration organised by the DMK's Students Wing at Madurai that has reflected the sentiments of Tamils and sent a strong and clear message to the Centre. It was a brazen and blatant attack on Tamil culture and civilisation, the Chief Minister said on Centre's refusal to publish the Keezhadi report which was scientifically validated. Mr Stalin accused the BJP of being hellbent on destroying the Dravidian cultural identity of the Indus Valley Civilisation while holding aloft the imaginary Saraswati civilisation without an iota of any evidence.

Congress to launch agitation against MP govt if tribal's demands not met

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Bhopal, June 19

The Congress party has warned of launching an agitation in support of tribals in Madhya Pradesh if the state government fails to meet their demands regarding land pattas within 15 days. Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly, Umang Singh, along with former Union Minister Arun Yadav and Congress Working Committee member Kamleshwar Patel, levelled serious allegations against the BJP government, accusing it of injustice, displacement, and suppression of tribals through false charges. The Congress leaders criticised the government's policies as anti-tribal, claiming that the BJP has deviated from development issues and is now

solely focused on religious politics. Singh alleged that the government is depriving tribals of their traditional rights, citing the cancellation of thousands of tribal families' land pattas without prior notice. Singh claimed that only five pattas have been issued in the entire state, specifically in Jhabua district, "indicating the government's intention to oust tribals from their homes and forests rather than granting them their rightful entitlements". He warned that if the government fails to meet the tribals' demands within 15 days, the Congress party will launch an agitation. Arun Yadav accused the government of attempting to displace tribals from forests to serve corporate interests, while the same tribals are working tirelessly.

New Zealand: Wellington imposes new sanctions against Russia, N Korea, Iran, Belarus

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Wellington, June 19

New Zealand has imposed another package of sanctions against Russian individuals and organisations allegedly "involved in the production of drones and other weaponry," as well as against individuals from North Korea, Iran and Belarus who are "supporting Russia's war efforts," the New Zealand Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

"Foreign Minister Winston Peters has announced new sanctions on crucial enablers of Russia's illegal war against Ukraine. This latest round of sanctions targets actors involved in Russia's military-industrial complex, supporters from North Korea, Iran, and Belarus, as well as vessels that are part of Russia's 'shadow fleet' ... These new sanctions target a further 18 individuals and entities who have been assisting Russia's war efforts. In addition, 27 'shadow fleet' vessels have also been designated," the ministry said in a statement obtained by Sputnik. This is the first time that New Zealand has specifically imposed sanc-



tions against vessels, the ministry added. Russia has consistently stated that it can withstand the pressure of sanctions imposed by the West, which began several years ago and has escalated since then. Moscow has also pointed out that the West lacks the courage to acknowledge the ineffectiveness of sanctions against Russia. Russia has consistently stated that it can withstand the pressure of sanctions imposed by the West, which began several years ago and has escalated since then. Moscow has also pointed out that the West lacks the courage to acknowledge the ineffectiveness of sanctions against Russia.

Iraq calls for emergency meeting of Arab FM's over regional tensions

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Baghdad, June 19

Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein on Wednesday called for an emergency meeting of Arab foreign ministers on the sidelines of the upcoming Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) conference in Istanbul to address regional challenges. Hussein put forward the proposal during a phone conversation with his Egyptian counterpart Badr Abdelatty, according to a statement by the Iraqi Foreign Ministry. "The aim of the proposed meeting is to coordinate Arab positions in light of the rapid developments and to address the current challenges with a spirit of common responsibility," the statement said. The two sides discussed the latest developments in the region, particularly the ongoing Israel-Iran conflict and its implications on regional security and stability, it said. Also on Wednesday, Hussein received a phone call from his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan, during which they underscored the importance of the OIC meeting.

5 mln Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan in last 4 yrs: FM

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Kabul, June 19

More than 5 million Afghan refugees have relinquished their refugee status and returned to Afghanistan since the current Afghan administration took power nearly four years ago, according to Abdul Mutalib Haqqani, spokesman for the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation. "Since taking over power by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, 310,000 families numbering 2,848,000 individuals have returned from Pakistan, Iran and Türkiye to their homeland Afghanistan," the



state-run Radio and Television of Afghanistan (RTA) quoted Haqqani as saying Wednesday night. Citing the official, the state-owned

media outlet reported that in addition to the return of families to Afghanistan, a total of 2,433,000 individuals from the said countries have been either deported or returned voluntarily over the period, and in general, "5,281,000 refugees" have been resettled in their home country. The Afghan interim government took over power in August 2021 following the withdrawal of the U.S.-led foreign troops from Afghanistan. All the returnees have received necessary assistance at the crossing points and have been transported to their home provinces, the official added.

Hungary rejects European Commission's plans to phase out import of Russian gas

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
St Petersburg/Budapest, June 19

Hungary has unanimously rejected the European Commission's plan to abandon Russian gas, stating that it

would be a step back in diversifying energy sources, explained Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto on Thursday, on sidelines of the St Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) 2025. Earlier this week, European Energy Commissioner Dan Jorgensen said that the European Commission had proposed to completely abandon Russian fuel by the end of 2027. However, Hungary which has long been opposed to the EU's calls to restrict imports of Russian energy

to Europe has staunchly rejected the proposal of the European Commission, calling it a violation of EU rules, which state that composition of the national energy mix is a purely national competence. Szijarto told reporters on the sidelines of the 2025 St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), adding that this would be a clear step back from diversification, reports Sputnik. Hungary will continue fighting the commission's plan to phase out Russian gas, the minister added.

Amazon India to invest over Rs 2,000 cr to enhance its pan-India network

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Hyderabad, June 19

As part of its commitment to building and operating India's safest, fastest, and most reliable operations network, Amazon will invest over Rs 2,000 crore in 2025. The investment will be used to expand and upgrade operations infrastructure, improve associate safety and well-being programs, and develop new tools and technology for its fulfillment network, the e-commerce giant said in a release on Thursday. This new investment builds on top of Amazon's invest-

ments in creating an ops network that helps the company deliver to all serviceable pin-codes across India. "For over a decade now in India, we have been focused on building the best-in-class logistics infrastructure designed to deliver with safety, speed, scale, and reliability for our customers across the country," said Abhinav Singh, VP-Operations, Amazon India and Australia. "These latest investments reflect our commitment to continually expand and upgrade our operations across our fulfilment, sortation and delivery network. By strengthening our infrastructure capabilities, enhancing



processing capacity, and implementing state-of-the-art technology, we're positioning Amazon to better

serve customers throughout India while supporting our employees, associates and partners who are the

heart of it all," said Abhinav Singh. Amazon plans to leverage these investments to launch new sites and upgrade existing facilities across its fulfilment, sortation and delivery network. This investment will enhance processing capacity, improve fulfilment speed, and increase efficiency across the company's operations network that will help Amazon serve customers across India faster and more reliably. Buildings in Amazon's operations network, both existing and new, are designed with state-of-the-art technology and efficient building systems to minimize energy usage. Amazon fulfil-

ment centres are designed to make them safe and more accessible to people with disabilities. Recently, Amazon launched a nationwide initiative to offer free health check-ups to over 80,000 delivery associates and partners through medical camps by the end of 2025. Amazon continues to enhance on-road safety by using the latest technologies to alert delivery associates and partners about unsafe speeds and encourage rest breaks. Amazon is investing in tools that measure route complexity and ensure equitable distribution of delivery routes, while allowing adequate time for each delivery.





Over 12,000 dog, cat bite cases reported at ARC SMHS in last one year; 70,000 since 2015

Officials warn of rabies risks, call for urgent measures, pet care awareness



HT NEWS DESK/KNO

Srinagar: A whopping 12,833 bite victims, mostly from dog and cat bites, sought treatment at the Anti-Rabies Clinic at Srinagar's Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) Hospital in the past year, officials said.

They said the prevalence of dogs across the valley has contributed to human-dog conflicts, leading to a rise in cases of dog bites in the region. They added that rearing cats at home has also led to bite cases.

Officials informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that in the last one year, from June 2024 to May 2025, ARCSMHS Hospital received 12,833 cases, including 6,258 dog bites, 6,095 cat exposures, and 480 other bite cases. They said the cat exposure is increasing exponentially over the last few years, as many people are keeping them as pets, while almost all dog bites are reported from stray dogs.

"We receive over one thousand animal bite scratch exposures every month in Anti-Rabies, and in the last one year, around 13,000 cases have been reported," they added. This figure of 12,833 cases marks the highest recorded in the past decade, underscoring the urgent need to address the issue immediately, officials said.

Providing a breakdown, an official said that 530 dog bites were reported in June 2024, 598 in July, 521 in August, 515 in September, 540 in October, 423 in November, 439 in December, 480 in January 2025, 463 in February, 524 in March, 625 in April, and 601 in May.

Details reveal that 440 cat bite cases were reported at the clinic in June 2024, followed by 440 in July, 432 in August, 414 in September, 486 in October, 399 in November, 514 in December, 692 in January 2025, 658 in February, 542 in March, 491 in April, and 537 in May till date, bringing the total number of cat bite cases from June 2024 to date to 6,095.

Speaking to KNO, an official at ARC SMHS said that cats do transmit rabies, similar to dogs, and

that cat bite cases are on the rise. People need to take precautions in this regard. "The trend of keeping cats as pets has gone up, especially post-COVID times, but in many instances, owners are not following norms like vaccination, deworming, timely treatment, and hygiene practices," he said. "We have seen many fold increases in the number of cases visiting the Anti-Rabies Clinic at SMHS over the last three years. Almost half of the cases are victims of cat exposures."

Reviewing the yearly data on bite cases, the official said that from April 2015 to March 2016, 7,061 bite cases were reported to ARCSMHS, followed by 5,832 from April 2016 to March 2017, 6,802 from April 2017 to March 2018, 6,397 from April 2018 to March 2019, 6,139 from April 2019 to March 2020, 4,808 from April 2020 to March 2021, 5,469 from April 2021 to March 2022, 6,875 from April 2022 to March 2023, and around 8,800 from April 2023 to March 2024, making the total cases since April 2015 around 70,000.

According to officials, Kashmir witnessed a surge in pet ownership over the last decade. In contrast to farm animals, which provide milk, meat, and eggs, pets are kept purely for companionship. They stressed that adherence to personal hygiene while handling pets is crucial for preventing zoonosis.

"A person who intends to keep a pet must be mentally prepared to take proper care of their pet, respecting its behavioural requirements, providing adequate feeding, shelter, and healthcare facilities. There is no fun in bringing home an animal without taking proper care of it," they said.

They added that regular hygiene practices, such as routine grooming and dental care, help prevent skin infections and dental diseases in pets.

In Kashmir, dog bites pose a serious public health concern, with thousands of people becoming victims of animal bites, particularly from stray dogs, and some developing rabies. Rabies is a universally fatal viral disease, resulting in approximately 59,000 human deaths annually worldwide, with 95 per cent of cases occurring in Africa and Asia—(KNO)

India's Covid cases below 6k; three deaths in past 24 hrs

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, June 19



(UNI) India's active Covid-19 caseload fell to 5,976 on Thursday, marking the fourth straight day of decline, down from 6,483 the previous day, according to data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

In the last 24 hours, three Covid-related deaths were reported—two from Delhi and one from Kerala. All three individuals were elderly and had pre-existing chronic health conditions like kidney disease and acute rheumatoid arthritis.

While the overall national trend remains encouraging, health authorities continue to monitor localised outbreaks, driven in part by emerging sub-variants such as LF.7, XFG, JN.1, and the newly detected NB.1.8.1.

The authorities have also advised people to adopt Covid norms like wearing masks in crowded areas and maintaining hygiene and focusing on immunity.

Awareness programme, health camp organised at NRLM Office Kishtwar

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 19: A Training-cum-Awareness Programme and a Health Camp was organized today at the Training Hall NRLM Office.

The event was a collaborative effort under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) – Umeeed, aimed at promoting health awareness and empowering Self Help Group (SHG) members with essential healthcare knowledge and services.

The programme was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma as the Chief Guest.

The Deputy Commissioner lauded the initiative and emphasized the importance of generating health and hygiene awareness among rural women to ensure the holistic development of communities. He encouraged SHG members to actively adopt healthy practices and make use of available healthcare services.

The BPM NRLM (Umeeed) highlighted the role of such initiatives in strengthening grassroots awareness and building healthier, self-reliant communities. Expert medical support was provided by Dr. Nazir Hussain, Medical Officer, and Dr. Soniya Sharma, Community Health Officer (CHO), who conducted comprehensive health check-ups and interactive sessions.



They discussed preventive healthcare measures, nutrition, and addressed health-related queries raised by participants.

The programme witnessed active participation from SHG members of CD Blocks Thakrie and Trigam, who expressed appreciation for the initiative and took part in the sessions with great enthusiasm.

As part of the camp, nutritional supplements including protein products were distributed among the participants to support their well-being.

The event was attended by BMO Dr. Anil Kumar Sharma; MO Dr. Nazir Hussain; MO Dr. Soniya Sharma; Block Programme Manager NRLM (Umeeed) Ab Hamid Lone; besides other staff of the concerned departments.

DAJDUA programme held at Malathi - Medical, Awareness Camp benefits Tribal Communities

HT NEWS DESK

DODA, JUNE 19: As part of the ongoing Dharti Aabha Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJDUA), a comprehensive Medical and Awareness Camp was organized at Government High School Malathi to benefit the tribal community of Chilly Paine and Mukhsias areas of Tehsil Bhalessa-Doda.

The event was held under the overall guidance of the District Development Commissioner Harvinder Singh, while the medical camp was conducted under the supervision of District AYUSH Officer Dr. Ajay Kumar Tikoo. The chief guest was the local DDC Member and the event was graced by the presence of the BDO, adding significance to the outreach initiative aimed at tribal welfare.



During the camp, the officials from the government departments interacted with local tribal residents to address their demands related to healthcare, access to government schemes, and awareness about traditional medicine and nutrition. Special emphasis was placed on sensitizing the community about the upcoming International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2025. They were encouraged to adopt yoga and Ayurveda-based lifestyle practices for improved

well-being. Active community participation in the IDY celebrations was also promoted.

Multiple departments set up stalls and service points to ensure holistic support to the tribal community. The ICDS Department distributed nutrition kits and provided counseling to pregnant and lactating women, while the Health Department conducted health check-ups and immunizations. The Education Department spread awareness about school

enrollment drives and scholarship schemes for tribal students. Revenue officials assisted with essential documentation, and the Rural Development Department disseminated information on MGNREGA job cards, PMAY housing benefits, and sanitation programs.

The AYUSH Department played a significant role by distributing free Ayurvedic medicines to over 120 beneficiaries and providing consultations for common ailments. The department also promoted preventive healthcare and holistic wellness, aligning with the Abhiyan's core goal of "Reaching the Unreached." The camp proved to be a successful step toward empowering tribal communities through integrated government services and awareness-driven outreach.

Kerala CM to launch 'My Family, Drug-Free Family' campaign

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Thiruvananthapuram, June 19

My Family, Drug-Free Family' campaign with the involvement of residential associations will be launched by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan as part of the fifth phase of Kerala's anti-drug state-wide campaign to be held on June 26. In connection with the 'International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking', the campaign will run until January 30, 2026.

Stating that Kerala is moving forward strongly in the fight against drugs, the Chief Minister said, "As part of the Operation D-Hunt, conducted between June 10 and 16, 13,700 people were screened, 730 cases registered, and 769 people arrested." "Authorities seized 378.375 grams of MDMA and 24.833 kg of cannabis. During this period, 274 source reports related to drug activity were for-



warded to respective district police chiefs, and follow-up action is ongoing, he said.

"Between June 8 and 14, the Excise Department seized 19.937 kg of cannabis, 20.71 grams of MDMA, and 0.6 grams of methamphetamine. About 238 cases were registered and 221 individuals arrested in this regard," he said.

Drug awareness rallies will be organised in schools and colleges under the leadership of NSS, SPC, and anti-drug

clubs. School parliaments will be conducted in high schools and higher secondary schools under the local self-government and the education departments, focusing on the theme "Drug-Free, Safe Campus: A Child's Right".

All government offices across the state will take an anti-drug pledge at 11 am on June 26. The Public Education Department has launched robust school-centred strategies to counter drug abuse. Various programmes have been implemented to prevent drug misuse and addiction among students, including awareness campaigns, community empowerment, and support systems for promoting healthy lifestyles.

Training programmes have begun for teachers to identify drug abuse and aggressive behaviour among students. The training also aims to enable teachers to provide preliminary counselling.

District Administration Budgam Organises Workshop for Recovered Drug Users under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

HT NEWS DESK

Budgam, 19th June 2025: As part of its sustained efforts towards the rehabilitation and mainstreaming of individuals affected by substance abuse, the District Social Welfare Officer Budgam, under the aegis of District Administration Budgam, today organised a one-day workshop for recovered drug users under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA).

The workshop was organised in collaboration with the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Budgam,

with expert support from resource persons from NIELIT (National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology), Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, and the District Industries Centre (DIC) Budgam. The programme aimed to provide psycho-social support, skill development awareness, and livelihood opportunities for individuals who have successfully recovered from drug addiction. During the session, resource persons from NIELIT highlighted various digital literacy and computer training courses available for youth, while representatives from the



Handicrafts Department showcased oppor-

tunities in traditional crafts, design training, and artisan schemes. Officials from the DIC informed participants about entrepreneurship support schemes and avenues for self-employment under different government programmes.

Medical experts from the Health Department provided valuable guidance on health management, relapse prevention, and the importance of family and community support in ensuring sustained recovery. Speaking on the occasion, the District Social Welfare Officer Budgam emphasized the

administration's commitment to creating a drug-free society and extending comprehensive rehabilitation and livelihood support to those affected. The officer appreciated the collaborative efforts of all departments and encouraged the participants to avail themselves of the various services and skill-building initiatives being offered. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the recovered individuals who shared their experiences and expressed their interest in pursuing skill-oriented training programmes for a better, productive future.



First-ever Cricket match for visually impaired held at Kulgam



Farooq Rather

KULGAM, JUNE 19: In a step towards inclusivity in sports, Youth Services and Sports (DYSSO) Kulgam, in collaboration with Humanity Welfare Organisation Helpline and District Administration Kulgam, organised the first-ever cricket match for visually impaired persons in the district. The event brought together specially-abled cricket players from across the Kashmir Valley, marking a significant milestone in promoting accessibility and

participation in sports.

The match was formally inaugurated by Padma Shri awardee and renowned disability rights activist, Javid Ahmad Tak, who termed the event an awareness match aimed at showcasing the talents and potential of visually impaired individuals, while promoting their inclusion in mainstream sporting events. Manzoor Ahmad Wani, Principal of Higher Secondary School Bugam, along with officials from the district administration and Youth Services & Sports Department were present at the event. They lauded the courage, skill, and enthusiasm of the participating players.

Kishtwar gets its first Indoor Shooting Range MLA Shagun Parihar inaugurates New Sports Facility YS&S launches District-Level Inter-Zonal Tournament

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 19: In a landmark development, an Indoor Shooting Range was officially inaugurated today at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Boys Kishtwar by the Member Legislative Assembly Shagun Parihar.

The MLA was the chief guest on the occasion. The state-of-the-art shooting facility has been established through a collaborative effort of the Mechanical & Hospital Sub-Division and the Department of Youth Services & Sports (YS&S).

This initiative aims to provide world-class training infrastructure to young aspirants and promote precision sports like rifle shooting in the region.

In celebration of this milestone, the Department of Youth Services & Sports Kishtwar inaugurated a District-Level Inter-Zonal Tournament for U/14 and U/17 boys and girls in Wrestling, Table Tennis, Handball and Rifle Shooting. The competitions are being hosted across designated venues, encouraging extensive participation from talented students.

Adding to the celebration, demonstration matches in Table Tennis and Wrestling were held, offering a glimpse into the immense talent and passion of the district's young



athletes.

The event was attended by DYSSO Jaffer Haider Sheikh; the host school Principal Ashok Kumar; AEE Mechanical Umar Ahangar and various officials from the Sports Department.

Rahim 163, Shanto 148 lift Bangladesh to 484/9

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

Galle, June 19

Mushfiquur Rahim's masterful 163 headlined a dominant batting display by Bangladesh on Day 2 of the first Test against Sri Lanka here, as the visitors posted a commanding 484 for 9 at stumps, despite a late fightback from the hosts and a rain-curtailed day. Rahim, registering his seventh 150-plus Test score, stitched a 149-run partnership with Litton Das (90), while Najmul Hossain Shanto laid the foundation earlier with a classy 148. The day's play was limited to just 61 overs due to rain, yet Bangladesh made the most of the available time, capitalising early before Sri Lanka pegged them back with five wickets for just 26 runs in the final session. Shanto, who had received Rahim's backing for a maiden double ton after the first day's play, resumed with



confidence, flicking stylishly over mid-wicket to push Bangladesh past 300. He eventually fell for 148, chipping Asitha Fernando to Angelo Mathews after surviving a close LBW appeal on 142. Rahim continued unfazed, driving fluently and bringing up his 150 shortly after lunch with consecutive boundaries. Litton Das began positively, opening his account with a four

off Prabath Jayasuriya, and survived a series of chances including a major run-out mishap and a dropped catch. He made the hosts pay, racing to a 64-ball fifty and helping raise the run rate alongside Rahim as the 400-mark was breached. Rain halted play for two and a half hours in the second session. Upon resumption, Litton targeted Jayasuriya with a flurry of boundaries and reached the 90s before falling to Tharindu Rathnayake. Rahim, after surviving another LBW shout on umpire's call, was eventually trapped in front to end his outstanding innings. From there, Milan Rathnayake led a spirited response from Sri Lanka, rattling the stumps of Jaker Ali and Tajjul Islam in quick succession, and finishing the day with three wickets. Nayeem Hasan's edge behind left Bangladesh nine down, narrowly short of the 500-run mark.

U-17 boxing nationals set to start in Haryana's Rohtak

HT NEWS DESK/UNI

New Delhi, June 19 (UNI) The 6th Junior (U-17) Boys and Girls National Boxing Championships will commence in Haryana's Rohtak from Thursday onwards at the city's National Boxing Academy. The tournament, which will be played from June 19-26, 2025 will

see the participation of about 640 up-and-coming pugilists from across the country, including 350 boys and 290 girls. Both the Junior Boys and Junior Girls competitions will feature 13 weight categories each, ranging from 44-46 kg to 80+ kg. The Services Sports Control Board will look to defend their title from the 5th Boys' Nationals, while Haryana enter

as the defending champions in the Girls' category. The Junior National Championship is a crucial platform for young boxers to showcase their skills in front of national selectors and coaches. It plays a key role in helping BFI identify and nurture future talent. I am happy to see strong participation from all teams as we look to discover.

YSS Anantnag organizes U-19 Boys Football tournament at Anantnag

HT NEWS DESK



ANANTNAG, JUNE 19: As part of the ongoing efforts under the Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Anantnag today organized an Under-19 Boys Football Tournament at the Mini Sports Stadium, Dialgam. The tournament witnessed enthusiastic participation from multiple school teams across the district, reflecting the growing interest among youth in sports and healthy recreational activities. The event aimed to promote a drug-free lifestyle among students and to channelize their energy into constructive pursuits. The inaugural match was kicked-off in the presence of the Zonal Physical Education Officer and other officials from the Youth Services and Sports Department. Speaking on the occasion, the officers highlighted the vital role of sports in keeping youth away from drug abuse and in building a physically and mentally strong society. Participants also took an anti-drug pledge, reaffirming their commitment to stand against substance abuse and to serve as ambassadors of positive change in their communities. The event was part of a broader campaign initiated by the Government to raise awareness and promote sensitization through sports.

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