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Amarnath Yatra Will Definitely Restore Confidence of the People : LG Sinha

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUN 26: Asserting that forthcoming Amarnath Yatra, slated to commence on July 3, will restore confidence of the people, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said that foolproof security arrangements have been put in place to ensure safe and secure pilgrimage.

Addressing a press conference here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that 85000 pilgrims have registered for the Yatra and many

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In view of the sensitive security situation, the administration has also decided to limit helicopter services for the Yatra. "Only around 8% of pilgrims used helicopters in the past. Given the prevailing circumstances, restricting helicopter services is a precautionary step," LG Sinha said.

Muharram processions will be allowed like last year: LG Sinha

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUN 26: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said that Muharram processions will be allowed along all the routes through which these were permitted in Srinagar last year.

Replying to a query of a reporter here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Muharram processions will be allowed like last year."

It may be recalled that in 2023 after a 34-year ban, LG Sinha led administration had allowed thousands of Shia mourners to take out the 8th Muharram procession through the

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LG Meets Leaders, Reviews Amarnath Yatra Prep

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUN 26: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today held a meeting with political leaders at Raj Bhawan Srinagar and discussed the preparations for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which is scheduled to begin from July 3.

The meeting was attended by Chief Minister Shri Omar Abdullah; Shri Sat Sharma, Dr. Nirmal Singh and Shri Kavinder Gupta (BJP); Shri Tara Chand and Shri Ghulam Ahmad Mir (Indian National Congress); Shri Showkat Ahmad Mir and Shri Jagdish Singh Azad (National Conference); Shri Mohamad Yousuf Tarigami (CPIM); Shri Sajad Gani Lone (J&K Peoples Conference); Shri Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari (J&K Apni Party); Ms Iltaja Mufti (PDP) and Shri Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen Shah (J&K People's Democratic Front).

The Lieutenant Governor shared the dedicated efforts made by the Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Administration, J&K Police, Security Forces and all the stakeholders for the safe and successful conduct of the holy yatra.

"With the blessings of Baba Amaranth, and

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180 CAPF Companies Deployed for Yatra: IGP Jammu

United News of India

JAMMU, JUN 26: A total of 180 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), which is 30 more than previous years, have been deployed for the security of annual Amarnath Yatra in Jammu division this year, a senior police officer said on Thursday.

Inspector General of Police, Jammu zone, Bhim Sen Tuti assured a safe pilgrimage to every 'yatri' but appealed them to undertake the journey in official convoys if they plan to travel from

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Want End To Statehood Discussions: CM Omar

Says 19 Key Road, Tunnel Projects Will Boost J&K's Infra Development

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUN 26: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday called upon National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets from across the country to serve as ambassadors of peace, unity, and harmony by sharing their positive experiences of Jammu and Kashmir with people in their home states.



Addressing the NCC Special Integration Camp-2025 during a vibrant cultural event at Badami Bagh Cantonment, the Chief Minister said the presence of young cadets from different parts of the country was a "morale booster" for the people of the Valley. The 12-day camp aims to promote national integration and cultural exchange among youth.

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Mission Yuva transforming lives in J&K: CS

Chairs session for SBDU, BHD members in Srinagar

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUN 26: Chief Secretary, Atul Dulloo, today said that Mission Yuva is a transformative movement aimed at changing mindsets and empowering the youth across Jammu and Kashmir economically.

He made these remarks while chairing a one-day session held for members of

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3 drown, 4 rescued as flash floods hit Jammu parts

United News of India

JAMMU, JUN 26: Three persons, including two children, died while four others were rescued as flash floods triggered by cloudbursts and heavy rains were reported from different areas of Rajouri, Poonch, Doda and Kathua districts in Jammu and Kashmir on



Thursday, officials said. Shaqafat Ali (14) and his cousin, Safeena Kousar (11), drowned due to flash floods in a riverlet at their Sialsui Mou village in Kalakote sub-division of Rajouri, they said.

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Hindi Unites, No Need to Oppose Foreign Languages: Amit Shah

United News of India

NEW DELHI, JUN 26: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said Hindi is not opposed to any Indian language, rather it is friends with all Indian languages and there should be no opposition to any foreign language in the country.

Addressing the golden jubilee celebra-

tions of the Central government's official language department, Shah also asked all the State Governments to take the initiative to impart medical and engineering education in the local language.

The Centre will help all the State Governments in using Indian languages to conduct administrative works, he said.

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'International Day Against Drug Abuse' 14 LAKH & COUNTING J&K's Drug Crisis Reaches 'Lose A Generation' Stage

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUN 26: As Jammu & Kashmir battles a growing substance abuse crisis, social activists and experts are calling for a time-bound, comprehensive drug de-addiction and youth rehabilitation policy, warning that without urgent intervention, the region risks losing an entire generation to addiction.

According to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, over 13.5 lakh people in J&K are drug abusers, including 1.68 lakh minors aged between 10

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Kashmir's New Drug Crisis: Pharma Abuse Rises

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUN 26: On the occasion of the International Day Against Drug Abuse, experts in Kashmir have expressed serious concerns over changing trends in substance use, notably the increasing abuse of pharmaceutical drugs.

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Amarnath Yatra.....

more are expected to participate through on the spot registration process.

He said that while last year witnessed a record-breaking turnout of over 5.12 lakh pilgrims, the registration figures this year witnessed decline post April 22 Pahalgam terror attack. "Till April 22, more than 2.36 lakh people had registered for the Yatra. However, after the Pahalgam incident, the numbers dropped," he said.

LG Sinha expressed optimism about the turnout improving this year. "More than 85,000 pilgrims have confirmed that they are coming. There are also several calls being received now for on-spot registration. I am hopeful that a large number of devotees will still participate," he said.

The LG said, "There is no doubt that the terror incident affected the environment across Jammu and Kashmir. However, I am hopeful that the successful conduct of the Yatra will help restore confidence and improve the situation."

On the security front, LG Sinha, as per KNO, reassured that comprehensive arrangements are in place. "Security has been reviewed thoroughly on both the Pahalgam and Baltal routes. All risk factors have been analyzed. We have made every effort to strengthen the security landscape," he said. "The security grid has been strengthened, multi-layer security is in place and Army, CAPFs, J&K Police have ensured all necessary measures for a safe pilgrimage."

In view of the sensitive security situation, the administration has also decided to limit helicopter services for the Yatra. "Only around 8% of pilgrims used helicopters in the past. Given the prevailing circumstances, restricting helicopter services is a precautionary step," LG Sinha said.

He also informed that detailed guidelines for pilgrims would be issued shortly, and weather forecasts are being closely monitored to ensure safe movement. "Healthcare facilities have been significantly enhanced along the route. Power and water supplies have also been improved by the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also urged the pilgrims to travel in the designated convoy from Jammu to Srinagar and vice-versa. "It will make the travel easy and comfortable," he added.

The Lieutenant Governor said that an atmosphere of spiritual fervour has filled the air at Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra base camps and Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board (SASB) has made preparations for all essential facilities including movement, lodging, electricity, water, sanitation, communication and health of the pilgrims.

LISTS SIGNIFICANT SASB ACHIEVEMENTS

Listing the significant achievements of the SASB in the last two years in creating pilgrims-centric facilities, LG Sinha said, "Previously narrow and steep Yatra tracks along both the routes have been widened to around 12 feet in most of the stretches. Kalimata stretch, which was previously very narrow and with steep gradient, has been widened to almost 12 feet, with much gentler slope. Safer Yatra tracks with stronger safety handrails all along whole of Baltal track and 20+ km on vulnerable stretches on Pahalgam track," he said.

Asked whether these are motorable tracks, LG Sinha said, "Yatra will be held as it was conducted earlier and pilgrims will reach the holy cave as they used to in earlier days. Ant vehicles will ply only in case of emergency."

The Lieutenant Governor said that grid power connectivity along whole of Baltal track till holy cave and from holy cave to Panjarni has been achieved. "The grid connectivity on remaining stretch of Pahalgam track is being started," he said, adding that enhanced accommodation for pilgrims has been created at SASB's Yatri Niwas complexes at Baltal (800), Nunwan (900) and Pantha chowk (1000)."

"Digital pre-paid system for hiring of various services like pony, pithu, palki would be available for pilgrims. At the holy cave, the wooden darshan platform has been replaced with stainless steel platform of appropriate alignment and height with wood flooring and additional row. Now, pilgrims would be able to have darshans simultaneously in four rows. This shall facilitate better and hassle free darshans," he added.

"Installation of Canopy over the stairs at the Holy Cave for the comfort and protection of yatri from rain/snowfall/scorching sun," LG said.

He said that the clinical bed capacity of health care facilities at Panjarni and upper camps has been expanded substantially this year. "Integrated Command and Control Centres have been established and deployment of J&K Police and CAPFs Personnel have been increased. Vulnerable spots were identified and dedicated measures have been taken to ensure the safety of the pilgrims," he said, adding, "100-bedded hospitals are functional at both the axis. Yatri Niwas at Baltal and Pahalgam axis are being developed for the convenience of the devotees. Special focus has been laid on cleanliness and making the yatra more sustainable. Prasad counters have been established at holy cave. Foot over bridge at Nunwan base camp, Cloak rooms, e-rickshaw and other such facilities have been extended for the pilgrims and service providers," LG Sinha said.

The Lieutenant Governor also lauded the role of media persons and the local residents of J&K in the smooth and successful conduct of the yatra.

Muharram processions.....

traditional Guru Bazaar-Dalgate route in Srinagar.

owners after assembling at Guru Bazaar area of Srinagar city had marched through Budshah Chowk to M A Road and then to Dalgate amidst tight security.

In the same year the 10th Muharram process-

sion was allowed across Kashmir after a gap of 34 years.

Shia mourners had taken out a massive procession from the traditional route of Botakadal to Zadibal area of Srinagar.

The procession had marked a significant event as for the first time in over 3 decades state head participated in the Zuljinah procession when Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha took part.

LG Sinha had taken part in the procession and also distributed refreshment among the Shia mourners.

LG Meets.....

the significant enhancements to essential facilities and services, this year's pilgrimage promises to be memorable and spiritually enriching for devotees. It will also mark the beginning of a new chapter for Jammu Kashmir," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor welcomed the suggestions and inputs received from the senior political leaders and sought their cooperation to make the yatra more convenient and hassle-free for the devotees of Shri Amarnath Ji.

"The leaders of all political parties are members of the J&K family and I believe pilgrimage to Shri Amarnath Ji is the socio-cultural responsibility of this family. We must walk shoulder to shoulder with a resolve to welcome all devotees and make Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra a huge success," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Chief Minister, Shri Omar Abdullah and all the senior leaders reiterated their commitment and assured every support to the holy pilgrimage.

Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra is woven into Jammu Kashmir's composite culture and is also crucial for the region's economy. The smooth and successful conduct of this sacred pilgrimage is our shared responsibility, they said.

The senior leaders also urged the people of Jammu & Kashmir to warmly welcome the devotees and play their vital role as key stakeholders in the Yatra.

Condemning the Pahalgam Terror Attack, the Political leaders said the way the people of Kashmir valley, irrespective of their political ideologies came out on streets against terrorism sent a strong message to the adversary that violence has no place in our society.

Want End.....

"I urge you to go back and be our ambassadors," said the Chief Minister, who was the chief guest on the occasion. "Tell your families, friends, and communities about the Jammu and Kashmir you saw—the warmth of its people, the beauty of its culture, and the reality beyond headlines."

While acknowledging the recent tragic terror attack in Baisaran that claimed 26 innocent lives, Omar Abdullah said, "This year has brought us pain we hoped never to experience again. But even in our darkest hours, there is hope. There is light at the end of every tunnel."

Emphasizing the importance of continued engagement with Kashmir, the Chief Minister urged NCC authorities to organize future camps that include travel by train. "Let cadets witness the incredible engineering marvels that connect the Valley to the rest of the country. It will be a journey of inspiration," he suggested.

Lauding the cadets for their impressive cultural performances, he remarked, "In less than an hour, you transported us from the snowy heights of Kashmir to the sunlit shores of Kerala. Your discipline, effort, and talent are truly commendable."

Reflecting on his own school days, Omar Abdullah spoke about the enduring value of bonds formed during such camps. "When you live, travel, perform, and share experiences together, you build relationships that last a lifetime. Cherish them—they are priceless."

The Chief Minister underscored the strength of India's unity in diversity, recalling the opening words of the Constitution—"We, the People of India." He said, "We are united not despite our differences, but because of them. Our real strength lies in our togetherness."

"These integration camps are not just about training or cultural showcases. They symbolize the living spirit of India—an unbreakable emotional and physical bond among its people. As long as we nurture this spirit, no adversary can weaken us," he said.

He concluded by thanking the cadets for their enthusiastic participation and for forging connections that transcend geography. "You have helped connect India physically. Now, I trust you will continue to connect it emotionally."

The event was attended by Ministers Sakeena Itoo and Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Major General Anupinder Bevl (Additional Director General, NCC Directorate J&K and Ladakh), Vice Chancellor of Cluster University Kashmir, senior army officials, NCC cadets from across various states and Union Territories and other dignitaries.

180 CAPF.....

Jammu rather than travelling independently. The 38-day-long yatra to 3,880-meter-high holy cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas is scheduled to start from the twin routes — the traditional 48-km Pahalgam route in the Anantnag district and the 14-km shorter but steeper Baltal route in the Ganderbal district — on July 3.

The first batch of pilgrims will leave for Kashmir from Jammu's Bhagwati Nagar base camp a day before the start of the annual yatra.

"Police are alert to ensure the security of every (Amarnath) pilgrim. Five districts (Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur and Ramban) form a

circuit through which the yatra passes (in Jammu region). The CAPF personnel have reached here and their total deployment is 180 companies which is 30 more than the last year," the IGP said.

Talking to reporters after flagging off an anti-drug awareness tableau from district police lines on the occasion of International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking here, he said they have increased the deployment from Lakhanpur in Kathua — the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir border Punjab to Jammu.

"We have also introduced Road Opening Patrols and also covered the area which used to have skeleton deployment in the past," Tuti said.

The Jammu police chief said Jammu and Kashmir is a sensitive region and the deployment has been made keeping the requirement in mind.

"My appeal to Amarnath pilgrims intending to plan their yatra from Jammu to join the official convoy rather than travelling independently to the valley," the IGP said.

Two convoys traditionally leave Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for Pahalgam and Baltal under tight security arrangements on a daily basis during the yatra period. Jammu travel guide

On the efforts to curb drug menace in the region, he said Jammu and Kashmir is a border state and "our fight is not only against terrorism but also narcotic business which is used to fund terror activities."

Mission Yuva.....

the Small Business Development Unit (SBDU) and Business Help Desk (BHD) under Mission Yuva at Srinagar.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Secretary emphasized that Mission Yuva seeks to shift the youth's mindset away from viewing government jobs as the only career path. "It is an effort to bring about psychological and mental transformation among our youth. Once this happens, institutional support will enable them to realize their dreams and aspirations," he said.

Atul Dulloo underscored the programme's focus on sustainable economic opportunities, entrepreneurship and self-employment, stressing that vast employment potential lies across industries, agriculture, allied activities and the MSME sector in J&K. He called for creation of a strong economic ecosystem to facilitate the business development and community upliftment. "This is not merely a policy initiative; it is a people's movement towards empowerment, social upliftment and economic self-reliance," he added.

Highlighting the need for wider outreach, the Chief Secretary directed the officials to launch door-to-door awareness campaigns on employment opportunities under Mission Yuva besides proper handholding of aspiring entrepreneurs.

He urged all stakeholders including government agencies, private institutions and banks to work in close coordination to make J&K a model of successful youth entrepreneurship.

The Chief Secretary also instructed the banks to ensure hassle-free loan disbursement. "Treat every loan seeker as a business opportunity. Support them until their units are successful. Let J&K become a model for youth-led enterprise," he said.

Atul Dulloo spoke on various self employment schemes and cited the success of the NRLM, where nearly two lakh "Lakshpati Didis" have become symbols of economic empowerment in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, MD & CEO of J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, said that Mission Yuva presents a significant business opportunity for the banks to expand their loan portfolios while contributing to J&K's socio-economic development. He highlighted the bank's active role in shaping the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and reiterated its commitment towards empowering the youth and boosting entrepreneurship in the region.

Earlier, Administrative Secretary, Labour & Employment Department, Kr. Rajeev Ranjan, presented an overview of the progress under Mission Yuva, focusing on awareness, documentation and timely loan disbursement.

The event was attended by Shahzad Alam, Director Employment/Mission Director, Mission Yuva; Aushtosh, General Manager Corporate Banking (Agriculture & MSME); Rakesh Magotra, Deputy General Manager, J&K Bank besides officers from NABARD, JKEDI, SIDBI and members of SBDU and BHD.

14 lakh &.....

and 17, and among them, around 95,000 are Opioid users.

As per the report, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), among 1,68,700 children drug abusers, 8,000 are using cannabis, 95,000 opioids, 19,000 sedatives, 100 cocaine, 400 Amphetamine Stimulants, 46,000 inhalants and 200 hallucinogens.

It further reveals that 11,80,000 adults of the 18-75 age group are drug abusers and among them, 3,54,000 are using alcohol, 1,36,000 cannabis, 4,47,000 opioids, 1,51,000 sedatives, 89,000 inhalants and 1000 each of cocaine, stimulant and hallucinogens.

Firdous Ahmad, a Srinagar-based social activist working with youth affected by addiction, told KNO: "In some areas, addiction has reached to extreme level as every home is either directly or indirectly affected. We are seeing children as young as 12 being brought to counselling."

He believes that while awareness has grown, services have not. "We now have enough rehabilitation centres, but most of them are understaffed, and facilities need to be upgraded so that patients can be admitted there," he said.

A de-addiction counsellor in south Kashmir said stigma is a huge barrier. "Families hide their children's addiction out of shame. By the time help is sought, the child is already dependent. We need more school-level interventions and counsellors in every educational institution," he said.

The National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR), launched in 2018, aims to support awareness, treatment, and rehabilitation nationwide. But social workers in J&K argue that the scheme's implementation on the ground remains patchy.

The NAPDDR also includes skill development, awareness programs, and livelihood support for ex-addicts — measures activists say could be game-changers if properly executed in J&K.

Beyond the numbers, the human cost of drug abuse is staggering. Rising suicide rates linked to substance use, increased crime, and breakdowns in families are clear indicators of the damage being done. The use of cocaine, amphetamines, and hallucinogens is rising, while tobacco usage stands at 20.8%, the sixth highest in India.

The activists, professionals, and political leaders unanimously urge the J&K administration to formulate a dedicated Drug Policy, focusing on: expansion of rehabilitation and mental health infrastructure, School and college-based intervention programmes, community-level awareness drives, livelihood support and skill-building for recovering addicts and strict control on pharmaceutical drug misuse

Experts said that with around 14 lakh drug abusers, de-addiction and counselling are major challenges, and the government needs to think about it seriously.

"The problem is the social stigma attached to drug abuse, which often discourages families from seeking help, they said, adding that the stigma not only isolates the addicts but also delays intervention.

They called for a comprehensive, community-based approach that includes awareness, early intervention, rehabilitation, and long-term support—(KNO)

Kashmir's New.....

Health officials and de-addiction specialists warn that drug abuse in the region is no longer confined to heroin and other narcotics; instead, there is a rising trend in the misuse of prescription medications, complicating detection and intervention efforts.

"Drug abuse is not just a health issue but a social emergency that profoundly impacts mental health, families, and community stability," they said.

Authorities and civil society organisations are advocating for enhanced preventive measures, greater community awareness, and expanded rehabilitation programs to address this escalating crisis.

Dr Yasir Hassan Rather, Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at IMHANS, GMC Srinagar, speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that at the drug de-addiction centre at IMHANS, GMC Srinagar, there remains a significant burden of substance use disorders. Although there have been minor fluctuations in heroin use over the past year, the overall pattern shows a shift.

"While some reports indicate a slight decline in heroin abusers, possibly due to increased awareness, early intervention under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, and stricter government measures, we are observing a concerning rise in pharmaceutical drug abuse, particularly tapentadol and pregabalin," he said.

Dr Yasir added that the de-addiction outpatient department (OPD) sees between 5 to 10 new cases daily, alongside many follow-up patients. "The pattern of addiction is dynamic—though heroin use may be marginally decreasing, many individuals are switching to cheaper, more accessible alternatives or engaging in polysubstance use," he added.

This year's theme, "The evidence is clear: invest in prevention", strongly aligns with IMHANS's ongoing efforts. "We need to strengthen school- and community-based prevention programs, involve religious and local leaders actively, and empower families to recognise early signs of substance use," Dr Rather added.

In line with this theme, IMHANS recently conducted a workshop with 30 Imams and religious scholars from the Waqf Board to equip them with strategies to prevent drug abuse within their communities.

Dr Mohd Abrar Guroo, Senior Consultant at Tele-MANAS, IMHANS Kashmir, highlighted the importance of reaffirming commitment today to protect Kashmir's youth from rising substance abuse.

"At IMHANS Kashmir (SMHS Hospital), we continue to see a steady influx of young people seeking help for addiction. While heroin use may have slightly declined, the crisis continues, with increasing use of synthetic opioids, tramadol, pregabalin, cannabis, and polydrug abuse," he said.

"This is not just a health issue but a social emergency impacting families and mental health. Through Tele-MANAS and de-addiction centres, we aim to expand access to

care. But prevention must start at home, in schools, mosques, and community spaces," Dr Guroo urged.

He called on religious leaders, teachers, media, and civil society to raise awareness, break the cycle of addiction, and work together to secure Kashmir's future. "Let today be a turning point for united action," he added.

Dr Aadil, Medical Officer at ATF Shopian, told KNO that patients continue to seek treatment regularly, with new registrations at their facility. "Most patients are heroin users, often combining it with other psychotropic drugs. We are also seeing abuse of animals' medications like Avilin and pregabalin," he said.

The doctor said that police crackdowns on drug dealers have helped reduce the overall number of users. "People now find it more difficult to purchase heroin, so some are turning to treatment instead," he said.

Dr Aadil has a message for the youth: "Under this year's theme, 'Breaking the Chains: Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery for All,' I urge young people not to fall prey to addiction. If someone is suffering, recovery is possible—come to our facility, seek help, and you will recover soon."—(KNO)

Hindi Unites.....

"I sincerely believe that Hindi can't be opposed ('virodhi') to any Indian language. Hindi is a friend ('sakhi') of all Indian languages," the home minister said.

Hindi and other Indian languages together can take the self-esteem of the country's culture to its final destination, Shah said.

The Home Minister also said that everyone should get rid of the slavery mentality and until a person takes pride in his own language, or does not express himself in his language, that person cannot be free from the mentality of slavery.

"There is no opposition to any language. There should not be any opposition to any foreign language. But there should be an urge to glorify one's own language, there should be an urge to speak one's own language, there should be an urge to think in one's own language," he said.

Shah also said that as far as the country is concerned, language is not just a medium of communication, it is the soul of a nation.

"It is important to keep Indian languages alive and enrich them. We should make all efforts in the coming days for all Indian languages, especially for the official language," Shah said.

Extending greetings to all the well wishes of the official language Hindi, the home minister congratulated the admirers of Indian languages across the country on the golden jubilee year of the department.

Shah said this was the 50-year journey from 1975 to 2025 of the official language department and when India will celebrate the centenary of its independence, the name of the official language will be inscribed in golden letters in the history of all the efforts made for the reawakening of India's pride. (Agencies)

3 drown.....

Saima (10), who was also trapped in the flash floods, was rescued by local volunteers and shifted to a hospital, the officials added.

The children were grazing their cattle when they were swept away by the flash floods due to a cloudburst, the officials said, adding that the bodies were retrieved and handed over to the relatives of the children for the last rites.

The body of Basharat Hussain (32), a resident of Dunadi village, was fished out by a rescue team of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) from the Lopa stream in Doda, the officials said, adding that he drowned while bathing in the stream on June 23.

Baldev Raj (35) and Sushil Kumar (25) were rescued by the SDRF from a swollen Ujh river, near Jarmal village in Nagri block of Kathua, the officials said.

They said the men had gone fishing and got trapped due to a sudden rise in the water level following heavy rains in its catchment areas.

The officials said the SDRF also rescued a person from a stream in Poonch.

Flash floods due to cloudbursts were also reported from Qazi Mora in Poonch and different high-altitude areas of Doda, Udhampur and Ramban districts, but there was no report of any casualty.

Meanwhile, the administration in various districts, including Rajouri and Doda, have imposed a complete ban on swimming, bathing, fishing and roaming near rivers, nallahs, waterfalls, and also prohibited school picnics.

Advisories have been issued asking citizens to stay alert and follow precautionary measures amid likely flood situations this rainy season, the officials said.

Police personnel were also seen using a public address system fitted in their vehicles asking people to stay away from swollen water bodies due to incessant rains.

The weatherman has forecast intermittent spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places, with the possibility of heavy rain at a few places of Jammu division till Friday. (Agencies)



DC Srinagar reviews implementation of Water Supply projects under AMRUT 2.0

Emphasis laid on swift & timely completion of projects to benefit Srinagar residents

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 26:- To review the implementation of water supply projects under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 in the District, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today chaired a meeting with Engineers of Jal Shakti Department here at meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner held comprehensive discussions on the progress of various approved schemes under AMRUT 2.0. He also conducted a project wise review of all the schemes.

On the occasion, the DC emphasized on swift pace of works to ensure expeditious

completion of water supply projects being executed under AMRUT 2.0 in Srinagar District. He underscored that any issue hampering the progress of AMRUT 2.0 shall be resolved through inter-departmental coordination forthwith for smooth implementation of the projects on ground. He directed the Officers to expedite the formulation of the pending DPRs besides promptly initiating & completing the tendering process for the approved projects.

While highlighting the significance of AMRUT 2.0., the DC said that the scheme is aimed to prioritize ensuring quality water availability and timely augmentation of existing water supply capacities for urban areas and stressed upon the officers to intensify the



efforts to ensure timely completion of all projects so that people

are benefited from the scheme.

Earlier, the DC was apprised by Superintending Engineer

Hydraulic Circle Srinagar through a detailed powerpoint presentation the progress of different projects under the scheme.

The DC was informed that a total number of 20 projects have been approved for Srinagar City, out of which 18 projects have been tendered out and allotted.

The DC was further informed that with the execution of AMRUT 2.0 scheme, Srinagar City shall be self-sufficient to address water demand for a long time ahead. Besides Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar and Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Srinagar, Er. Anbreena Anjum, the meeting was attended by Executive Engineers of Water Works Division, Water Supply Master Plan Division, Rural Water Works, PHE Mechanical & I&FC and

other concerned Officers. While highlighting the significance of AMRUT 2.0., the DC said that the scheme is aimed to prioritize ensuring quality water availability and timely augmentation of existing water supply capacities for urban areas and stressed upon the officers to intensify the efforts to ensure timely completion of all projects so that people are benefited from the scheme.

Earlier, the DC was apprised by Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Srinagar through a detailed powerpoint presentation the progress of different projects under the scheme. The DC was informed that a total number of 20 projects have been approved for Srinagar City, out of which 18 projects have been tendered out and allotted.

IUST Signs MoU with Fatima Foundation

HT NEWS DESK

Awantipora, June 25: The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Fatima Foundation to provide financial support and educational assistance to students from underprivileged sections of society. The MoU was formally signed by the representative of the Fatima Foundation and Prof. A. H. Moon, Dean Academic Affairs in a brief ceremony held at the university campus that was attended by key university officials, including Abdul Wahid Makdoo, Registrar IUST, Mr. Sameer Wazir Finance Officer, Dean of Students, Dean School of Sciences, and Dean Outreach. Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo, expressed gratitude to the Fatima Foundation for partnering with IUST in its efforts to promote inclusive education. He emphasized the importance of philanthropic organizations playing an active role in supporting students from marginalized backgrounds, enabling them to pursue higher education without financial constraints. "IUST has in place a robust and transparent mechanism for identifying and supporting deserving students. Collaborations such as this strengthen our commitment to social equity and educational empowerment," Prof. Romshoo added.

KVK Budgam convenes 12th Scientific Advisory Committee meeting

HT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, JUNE 26: Under the aegis of SKUAST-K, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Budgam, convened its 12th Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting today at KVK Budgam campus.

SAC meeting serves as a vital platform for reviewing the progress of KVK activities and aligning the upcoming action plan with the real-time needs of the farming community in the district.

The 12th SAC meeting was presided over by Prof. (Dr.) Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-K. In her address, she lauded the efforts of KVK Budgam in building the capacity of farmers and empowering rural youth. She emphasized the importance of close coordination of KVK with line departments, promoting FPOs and cooperative models for sustainable agricultural development.

She said, KVK Budgam is playing a transformational role in farmer empowerment, innovation transfer, and rural development. Initiatives like FPOs need to be scaled up as sustainable models for self-reliant agriculture and stressed the need to enhance market linkages, adopt climate-resilient practices, and ensure that scientific advisories reach the grassroots level in real time.

Assistant Commissioner Revenue Budgam, Afroza Bano representing district administration praised the efforts of KVK Budgam in reaching farmer communities in far flung areas of district.

Prof. Lyaqat Ali I/C KVK Coordination Cell Directorate of Extension SKUAST-K interacted with officials of line department and progressive farmers for feedback. Dr. Bilal A. Lone, Prof. & Head, KVK Budgam, presented the Action Taken Report of the previous SAC meeting, the Annual Progress Report for 2024-25, and the proposed Action Plan for 2025-26.

DC Srinagar reviews progress in implementation of HADP & other schemes of Agriculture Production Department in the District

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 26:- In order to review the progress of various sectors under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in the District, a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here today.

Besides, Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab and Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, the meeting was attended by Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Chief Horti-

culture Officer, District Sheep Husbandry Officer, District Sericulture Officer, AD Director Fisheries, Srinagar and other concerned

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner was given a brief appraisal on the progress under HADP by the respective Departments in the District aimed to increase productivity, strengthening value addition chains, development of allied sectors like fisheries, floriculture and sericulture and improving farmer outreach.

On the occasion, the DC instructed all the stakeholder Departments to compile a comprehensive data of all registered



farm operating families in the district as per the laid down guidelines under the scheme. He stressed on adapting structured framework for tracking and managing the progress of various

projects within the HADP.

The DC asked Officers to implement the scheme with focus on HADP performance metrics to track and evaluate the progress and effectiveness of the programme to achieve saturation under HADP to achieve holistic & sustainable agricultural development.

The DC directed the concerned Officers to intensify efforts to bridge the existing gaps and ensure maximum coverage of eligible farmers under the HADP in Srinagar District. He asked the Departments to lay emphasis on streamlining the application and verification processes to avoid

delays in benefit disbursement.

The DC also underscored the inter-departmental coordination, field level monitoring and farmer engagement to achieve holistic and sustainable agricultural development. He urged all departments to work collaboratively to ensure effective implementation of the program across the district. The DC directed the concerned Officers to intensify efforts to bridge the existing gaps and ensure maximum coverage of eligible farmers under the HADP in Srinagar District. He asked the Departments to lay emphasis on streamlining the application.

Intl Day Against Drug Abuse CUKashmir organizes walkathon

HT NEWS DESK

Ganderbal, June 26: To raise awareness about the ill-effects of drug abuse and promote healthy living among youth, Central University of Kashmir (CUK), Ganderbal observed the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking with a walkathon at its Tulumulla Campus.

The event, themed "Mission Drug-Free Campus," was organised by the Dean Students Welfare, Health Centre & NSS in collaboration with the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), Kashmir.

The walkathon drew participation from faculty members, administrative staff, students, NSS volunteers, and representatives

from IMHANS. The marchers carried placards bearing messages against substance abuse, pledging solidarity for a cleaner, healthier, and addiction-free academic environment.

Dean School of Legal Studies, Prof. Farooq Ahmad Mir, praised the initiative, emphasizing the university's commitment to the physical and mental well-being of its students. "Drug abuse is not just a personal problem; it's a societal crisis. Our collective vigilance, education, and empathy are the tools to fight it," he remarked.

Dean DSW, Prof. Irfan Aalam, underlined the psychological and physiological consequences of drug abuse, and encouraged students to take ownership of their choices while supporting peers in distress.

LMD penalizes e-Commerce entities, manufacturers for non-disclosure of statutory information

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 25: Legal Metrology department (LMD), under the supervision of Controller Legal Metrology J&K, Rajinder Singh Tara, has taken stringent action against violations of packaging regulations to safeguard consumer rights.

In a series of actions against the erring manufacturers and sellers, a penalty was imposed on the manufacturers of the pre-packaged items after they were found distributing their items without the mandatory declarations as prescribed under the Legal Metrology Packaged Commodities Rules 2011.

In one such case, a well-known detergent manufacturer was booked by Legal Metrology Officer Baramulla, which was found indulging in gross violation of the law. In yet another violation, a case was registered against an e-commerce entity by Legal Metrology Officer Kulgam, which was found selling its products without displaying the mandatory declarations, as required under rules.

International Day against Drug Abuse observed at Budgam DC administers pledge against drug abuse; warns strict action against peddlers in Budgam

HT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, JUNE 26: In context with the International Day against Drug Abuse, a one day seminar was organised by district administration Budgam in collaboration with the Social Welfare department, here today. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat presided over the function as chief guest.

Besides ADC Budgam, CMO, DSWO, DIO, representatives from education department, other officers and officials of the department were present on the occasion.

The event witnessed active participation from students, officials, and civil society members, reflecting a collective commitment towards combating the menace of drug abuse in the district.

On the occasion, DC administered a pledge to the participants against drug abuse. He emphasised generating massive awareness on drug abuse, followed by enforcement and treatment to curb the menace in the society. He said, though the civil and police administrations are doing their part efficiently, however, as a society we all have to play the



role and save our youth.

Dr Bilal warned of strict action by the district administration against peddlers, assuring that every single peddler will be put behind bars.

DC said small camps need to be organised at village level so that awareness against the menace of drugs percolates to the person living in the last corner of the district.

He emphasized the crucial role that parents, teachers, and educational institutions play in addressing this pressing social issue. He highlighted that timely guidance and emotional support from families and mentors can

act as the first line of defense against substance abuse among youth.

DC said, "we should treat drug victims as a patient not as a criminal, so that together we could take him out from this drug-net which is spreading in our community at large."

The programme featured thought-provoking skits performed by students and artists from the Cultural Academy, conveying powerful messages on the consequences of drug addiction and the importance of community involvement in prevention efforts.

DC Baramulla reviews saturation of Govt. welfare schemes and financial inclusion initiatives

Directs holding Financial Literacy Camps across all panchayats and ULB wards

HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JUNE 26: To ensure the saturation of government welfare and financial inclusion schemes at the grassroots level, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the DC Office here.

During the review, DC was apprised about implementation status and saturation levels of various welfare schemes, with a particular emphasis on financial inclusion schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana



(PMJDY).

DC instructed all bank heads to work in close coordination with the Rural Development department (RDD) and the Social Welfare department to organise comprehensive Financial Literacy Camps (FLCs) across all 402 Panchayats and 93 Municipality Wards of the district.

These camps will serve as vital platforms to inform and enroll left-out benefi-

ciaries under key government schemes, particularly those aimed at financial empowerment. Special attention is to be given to enhancing enrollment in schemes like PMJJBY, PMSBY, and other insurance and pension-based initiatives under the Jan Dhan umbrella.

Further, DC issued directions for the re-verification of dormant or inoperative PM-JDY accounts, and con-

ducting KYC verification for these accounts during the proposed FLCs through the set up of Mobile Khidmat Ghar enabling real-time service delivery and account activation.

DC emphasized that the success of these schemes lies not just in numerical enrollment but in their actual impact at the community level, urging all stakeholders to work with renewed commitment and ensure no eligible beneficiary is left out.

The meeting was attended by the District Social Welfare Officer, District Programme Manager NRLM, Lead Bank Manager Baramulla, and heads of all leading banks operating in the district.

SKIMS MCH Bemina observes International Day Against Drug Abuse, Illicit Trafficking

Javid Dar urges society to offer compassionate care, reintegration to affected individuals

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 26: To mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, a significant awareness and interactive event was held today at SKIMS MCH Bemina, Srinagar.

The mega event was held under the aegis of the newly established Advanced Centre for Mental Health and Addiction Medicine with support from Addiction Treatment Facility, under the Union Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, in collaboration with Narcotics Control Bureau and Group on Concerned Citizens (GCC).

The programme was organised in collaboration with key stakeholders, including experts from the Department of psychiatry, JK Police, Narcotics Control Bureau, Education Department, Drug Control Department and other departments.

The event started with deliberation

on the theme of today's program "Breaking the Chains: Prevention, Treatment and Recovery for All" which was graced by eminent speakers and delegates from all walks of life.

Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar, was the chief guest on the occasion. He addressed the persistent stigma surrounding substance use. He strongly advocated for recognizing addiction as a medical disorder and urged society to offer compassionate care, dignity and reintegration to the affected individuals instead of discrimination.

Javid Dar emphasized the importance of maintaining mental health and building willpower to strengthen individuals against the challenges of drug abuse. This focus can help the individuals develop resilience and overcome adversity.

Khursheed Ahmad Ganai, guest of honour, shed light on the alarming rise in substance use in the region.

Keeping in view the current data and trends, he emphasized the need for multisectoral collaboration and urgent policy-level interventions to combat the issue.

Dr. Mohd Ashraf Ganaie, Director SKIMS, called attention to the genetic and biological underpinnings of substance use disorders. He emphasized the need for a deeper scientific understanding of addiction and supported a shift in perception from behavioral blame to neurobiological insight.

DIG Civil Defence Srinagar, Imtiyaz Hussain Mir, spoke about the importance of demand reduction alongside the police's vital role in supply control. He advocated for addressing the root causes of substance use, particularly among youth and building resilience against failure and rejection.

Dr. Fazl Qadir Parry, Principal SKIMS Medical College and Hospital, stressed the need for evidence-based treatment approaches in alignment with this year's international theme.

DC Bandipora inspects work on Kashmir Valley's first Goat Farm

HT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, JUNE 26: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, on Thursday inspected the ongoing construction work of Kashmir Valley's maiden goat farm, a first-of-its-kind project aimed at promoting dairy goat farming in the district.

The ambitious project is being developed with financial support from NABARD, with an allocated cost of Rs. 8.36 crore, and an allocation of Rs. 3.5 crore under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP). The farm is being established

exclusively for the promotion of dairy goat farming, and is expected to play a key role in introducing and expanding this sector in Kashmir.

On the occasion, it was informed that the farm will house 450 Swiss Alpine goats, known for their high milk yield and adaptability. The facility is designed to serve as a breeding centre besides to supply quality breeds to private sector entrepreneurs, enabling them to launch goat farming ventures with significant returns and government-backed support.

During the visit, DC expressed satisfaction over the progress of the work and appreciated the efforts of the concerned departments in bringing

this pioneering project to life. He urged the executing agencies to expedite the remaining work to ensure timely completion.

On the occasion, DC said that the establishment of the goat farm is expected to boost local employment, support entrepreneurship in the dairy sector, and contribute to the larger vision of sustainable and diversified rural livelihood in the district.

DC was accompanied by DDC Member for Arin, Ghulam Mohiddin Rather; District Sheep Husbandry Officer Bandipora; Ex-En R&B Bandipora; AEE R&B Bandipora; SDO Bandipora and other senior officials of the district administration during the inspection.

Balwant Thakur felicitated at historic Dev Bhoomi National Theatre Festival, Shimla

HT NEWS DESK

Shimla 26th June, 2025: 138 year old historic heritage Gaiety Theatre Shimla buzzed with applause this evening when the eminent playwright and theatre director from Jammu, Padmashri Balwant Thakur was felicitated at the culmination of Dev Bhoomi National Theatre Festival. The felicitations were done jointly by the representatives of Rangmanch Theatre Group and Sankalp Rangmandal in presence of the living legend of Himachal's theatre, art and culture Shrinivas Joshi. Balwant Thakur is currently in Shimla who has had a huge cultural contribution to his credit and is known and acknowledged by the entire intelligentsia and the cultural connoisseurs for creating the first ever musical theatre production entitled 'Himachal' showcasing the evolution of Himachal from Vedic times to the creation of Himachal Pradesh State in 1971. This mega theatre production featuring over 75 brilliant local performers, musicians and singers on



stage was staged for over 100 times within and outside the state of Himachal Pradesh. The musical opera 'Himachal' won appreciation and accolades for highly innovative design, direction, music and visual spectacles. Speaking on the occasion Balwant Thakur appreciated the efforts of Vishal Pahari Director of Rangmanch Theatre Group, Rajouri and which is a Kaidar Nath Director Sankalp Rangmandal, Shimla for mustering praiseworthy courage in mounting a National Theatre Festival

at the historic heritage Gaiety Theatre Shimla which is a dream performing space for any artist to perform. Terming Shimla as his first theatre crush, he dwelt in detail about the immense possibilities this place and talent possesses. Great Indian actors K.L. Sehgal, Prithivi Raj Kapoor, Balraj Sahini, Shahshi Kapoor, Jennifer Kendall, Manohar Singh, Anumap Kher, Naseerudin Shah, Raj Babbar, and Prem Chopra have repeatedly performed on the stage from where he addressed the august gathering. On the occasion Balwant Thakur desired local theatre practitioners to capitalize the legacy and popularity of 138 year old Gaiety theatre which also featured in the popular song 'Main Nikla Gaddi Le Ke' of movie Gadar-Ek Prem katha and "O Asmanwale by Jubin Mehta. Had such a place in Jammu he would have transformed the same into a world destination of theatre. While in Shimla, Balwant Thakur is scheduled to address, interact and meet a series of artists groups, renowned intellectuals and top officials.

DC Jammu, JMC Commissioner lead Tree Plantation Drive under 'Clean Jammu, Green Jammu' Campaign

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 26: In a significant stride towards environmental protection and sustainable urban development, Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya and Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. Devansh Yadav today spearheaded a tree plantation drive at Jambu Lochan Rotary near Civil Secretariat.

The initiative is part of the larger 'Clean Jammu, Green Jammu' campaign, an ongoing effort aimed at increasing green spaces,

mitigating the impact of climate change, and promoting eco-consciousness among citizens. This campaign has become a flagship environmental movement in the city, inspiring people across wards and localities to contribute towards a greener future. During the drive, the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner planted saplings alongside several senior officials, setting a powerful example of leadership in climate action. They urged citizens to take individual responsibility for preserving nature and enhancing the city's environment through tree

plantation and sustainable living practices.

A large number of officials from the Jammu Municipal Corporation and Urban Forestry Division Jammu actively participated in the drive. Their presence not only ensured the operational success of the event but also demonstrated institutional support and commitment toward building an ecologically sound Jammu.

Deputy Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya, while addressing the gathering, emphasized that increasing green cover is crucial for improving air quality, reducing urban

heat, and ensuring a healthier life for future generations. He called for consistent, community-led efforts and inter-departmental cooperation to address environmental challenges effectively.

Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav reinforced the vision of making Jammu an environmentally vibrant city. He stressed that the Clean Jammu, Green Jammu campaign is not just about planting trees, but also about nurturing them, spreading awareness, and developing a culture that respects and protects nature.

Forest deptt conducts hands-on training on use of Government e-Marketplace (GeM)

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 26: A one-day hands-on training programme on the effective utilization of the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) platform was conducted today at the Sheikhbagh Forest Complex, Lal Chowk Srinagar.

The training programme was attended by officers and officials of various forest sector departments including the Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA), Wildlife Protection Department, Forest Terrestrial department, Social Forestry Department, and the Forest Protection Force.

The primary aim of the programme was to build institutional capacity for seamless, transparent, and accountable procurement processes through the GeM platform, which is now the mandated mode for all government procurement of goods and services.

The training was formally inaugurated by Irfan Rasool Wani, Chief Conservator of Forests, Kashmir, who emphasized the importance of capacity building in GeM procedures.

In his inaugural remarks, he highlighted that proper operationalization of the GeM platform is essential for ensuring compliance with procurement norms, reducing audit irregularities, and streamlining government transactions. He appreciated the diverse participation from various forest wings and noted that such initiatives will go a long way in improving administrative efficiency.

The resource team from the GeM, led by Assistant Director, delivered a comprehensive and practical presentation on the functioning of the GeM portal. The session covered key modules, best practices, Do's and Don'ts, and common errors in procurement that often lead to audit objections. Interactive demonstrations and real-time case studies enriched the understanding of the participants.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer WAGOORA) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of ZAYAN PARVAIZ S/O PARVAIZ AHMAD CHACK R/O BONIYAR Tehsil BONIYAR Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 27/04/2021 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order. In this connection.

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer WAGOORA) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of GURMEHAR KOUR D/O RAMANDEEP SINGH R/O MIRGUND NOWPORA JAGIR Tehsil BARAMULLA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 29/04/2022 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order. In this connection.

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is being notified that my name in my Aadhar Card having Aadhar card number this 208376023658 has been wrongly mentioned as Mohd Reyaz Sheikh but my actual name as per School record is Reyaz Mohd C/o Mohd Sadiq Sheikh R/o Hargam Hara Pora Nar Sanget Anantnag I am going to change my aadhar details of anyone have queries they may contact us within 7 days

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mohd Asif Shah, S/o Gull Mohd Shah, R/o kanghal anantnag, have lost the Registration Certificate (RC) of my vehicle Alto 800 bearing registration number JK03L-6167. I am applying for a duplicate RC. If anyone has any objection, they may inform the concerned RTO office within 7 days of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is being informed that the name in my electricity bill having consumer number 0207010011166 is only mentioned as Mohd Lateef Wagay but actual name as per my aadhar card is Mohd Laterf Sheergojri s/o Abdul Wahab Sheergojri R/O Ruhoo Anantnag Now I want to update its name if anybody has queries they may contact pdd department we didn't 7 days

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sabir Ahmad Mir S/O Ghulam Hassan Mir, R/O Batakote, Pahalgam, hereby inform that I have lost my vollet with Aadhaar Card, PAN Card, ATM Card, and Department ID Card. On 25/06/2025 in way from home to anantnag If anyone finds these documents, kindly contact me at the address given above This notice is bei published as a record of the loss.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Application for issuance of OBC certificate applicant GH QADIR SOFI S/O MOHD RAMZAN SOFI R/O SHEIKHPORA Tehsil KREERI in favour of FOZIA QADIR D/O GH QADIR SOFI R/O SHEIKHPORA for the issuance of OBC (Other Backward class in his /her / their favor

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of OBC. In this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of SHEIKHPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the SOFI community having annual income 793844// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..GH QADIR SOFI Father 61 years Pensioner
- 2..HAJIRA BEGAM Mother 50 years Homemaker
- 3... MANSOOR AHMAD Brother 30 years Govt employee
- 4..FOZIA QADIR self 24 years student

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that the name appearing on my Aadhaar Card has been recorded incorrectly as NAJIMA AKTHER D/O MOHAMMAD AKBAR MIR. The correct name, as per official school records, is NAZIMA AKTHER D/O MOHAMMAD AKBAR MIR, resident of Mugalpora, Tehsil Kupwara, District Kupwara. I have accordingly applied for the necessary correction in the records. If any person has any objection to this correction, he/she may submit the same in writing to the concerned authority/UIDAI office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections will be entertained thereafter.

Name: NAZIMA AKTHER D/O: MOHAMMAD AKBAR MIR R/O: MUGALPORA, TEHSIL KUPWARA, DISTRICT KUPWARA

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that the name appearing on my Aadhaar Card has been recorded incorrectly as NAJIMA AKTHER D/O MOHAMMAD AKBAR MIR. The correct name, as per official school records, is NAZIMA AKTHER D/O MOHAMMAD AKBAR MIR, resident of Mugalpora, Tehsil Kupwara, District Kupwara. I have accordingly applied for the necessary correction in the records. If any person has any objection to this correction, he/she may submit the same in writing to the concerned authority/UIDAI office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections will be entertained thereafter.

Name: NAZIMA AKTHER D/O: MOHAMMAD AKBAR MIR R/O: MUGALPORA, TEHSIL KUPWARA, DISTRICT KUPWARA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat, resident of Badoora, Tehsil Kokernag, District Anantnag, hereby declare that the birth of my son, Mohammad Hidayatullah, born on 28-05-2017 at L.D. Hospital, Srinagar, was not registered at the time of birth. I am now applying for issuance of a birth certificate from the concerned municipal authorities. If anyone has any objection regarding this claim, they may contact the Office of the Registrar, Births and Deaths, within seven days from the date of this publication.

Baramulla observes 'International Day against Drug Abuse' with awareness event at KU-North Campus Delina

DC urges youth to spearhead anti-drug efforts through awareness and responsible action

HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JUNE 26: District administration Baramulla today organised a vibrant awareness programme at Kashmir University North Campus Delina to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The event was held under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and aligned with this year's global theme "Break the Cycle". #StopOrganizedCrime. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, was the chief guest, while Senior Superintendent of Police Baramulla, Gurinderpal Singh, attended as the guest of honour. The event witnessed participation from students, officers of various departments, and civil society members.



Addressing the gathering, DC called on youth to take the lead in raising awareness against substance abuse. He stressed that collective efforts from families, educational institutions, and communities are vital to building a drug-free society. He

also appreciated the contributions of volunteers and organisations working in the field of de-addiction and prevention. SSP highlighted ongoing enforcement efforts to dismantle drug networks and urged citizens, particularly the youth, to

stay vigilant and cooperate with authorities. He reiterated the importance of community involvement in both prevention and intervention. Programme featured a signature wall, plantation drive, selfie points, and the screening of an awareness video developed by the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR). Students and Police Band Baramulla presented cultural performances and skits highlighting the social impact of drug abuse. On the occasion, individuals and organisations who have contributed meaningfully to anti-drug initiatives in the district were felicitated. The event concluded with a collective commitment to continue united efforts against drug abuse through awareness, enforcement, and sustained community action.

MLA Karnah calls on CM, thanks him for efforts in sanctioning of Sadhna tunnel

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 26: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Karnah, Javid Ahmad Mirchal, today called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and expressed gratitude for his untiring efforts regarding the sanctioning of the Sadhna Tunnel, a long-pending demand of the people of Karnah. The 7-km long Sadhna tunnel, to be commissioned at a cost of Rs 3,330 Cr on NH 701, will provide all-weather connectivity between Karnah and Kupwara district headquarters improving access to essential services and significantly easing the hardships faced by residents during winter months. Terming it a transformative step, MLA Mirchal thanked the Chief Minister for his continued commitment to the development of remote and frontier regions of Jammu and Kashmir. During the meeting, MLA Lolab Qaysar Jamsaid Lone also raised the demand for a similar tunnel project for the Machil area, another far-flung region in Kupwara district. He sought Chief Minister's intervention to take up the proposal with the Government of India and ensure year-round road connectivity for the Machil Sector. The Chief Minister assured the legislators that the Government remains committed to addressing the connectivity challenges of border and remote areas and will take up the matter for Machil tunnel with the concerned authorities.

IUST's Media Students Visit Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar for Industry Exposure

Awantipora, June 26: The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) on Thursday organised a field visit to Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar for its Television Journalism students. The visit, conducted under the Industry Connect initiative, aimed to provide students with first-hand experience of the operations at the national broadcasting station, particularly the Regional News Unit (RNU) at Doordarshan Kendra (DDK). During the visit, students gained first-hand exposure to the operations of a major public broadcasting station, exploring various departments including the Production Control Room, News Unit, Earth Station, ENG (Electronic News Gathering) Room, and the main studios. This immersive experience offered a rare behind-the-scenes look at the processes that power daily television broadcasts. Throughout the visit, students had the opportunity to interact with several senior media professionals.

PhonePe and HDFC Bank partner to launch co-branded credit card

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar: PhonePe and HDFC Bank today announced the launch of the 'PhonePe HDFC Bank Co-branded Credit Card', marking PhonePe's foray into the co-branded card segment. In partnership with HDFC Bank, this new line of co-branded RuPay Credit Cards is designed to meet the evolving financial needs of Indian consumers by offering benefits on UPI transactions, especially on the PhonePe Platform. This strategic partnership between HDFC Bank and PhonePe leverages their respective banking and fintech strengths to make credit cards accessible and user-friendly. Available in 'Ultimo' and 'UNO' variants, these cards offer rewards on popular spending categories like recharge, bill payments, travel, online shopping, groceries, and cabs. Additionally, the cards integrate seamlessly with UPI, allowing users to pay for their everyday spends via credit card while enjoying the rewards offered on the cards via the extensive merchant network enabled on UPI QRs. Speaking on the launch, Sonika Chandra, Chief Business Officer, Consumer Payments at PhonePe said, "We are excited about our first co-branded credit card launch in partnership with HDFC Bank. This launch underscores our commitment to providing innovative financial solutions to our wide set of user base. This card is positioned to offer PhonePe customers value on their regular spends, by giving them 10% reward points across select categories like bill payments, recharges, and travel bookings. Additionally, consumers can use this card seamlessly across millions of UPI merchants. We are confident that our strategic partnership with HDFC Bank, coupled with the benefits that this card offers will redefine the credit card experience for millions of Indians."

Power Shutdown in Srinagar & Ganderbal areas

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 26: According to the Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDC, in order to carry out the relocation of old/ wooden frames of 33 KV Exhibition line inside PCR Batmaloo, shutdown of 33 KV Bemina Exhibition line shall be observed due to which 33/11KV Receiving Stations at Batmaloo & Exhibition shall remain off while power supply to Silk Factory, Batmaloo, Baranpather Batmaloo, PCR, HSHS, Exhibition and adjoining areas will be affected from 06:00 AM to 02:00 PM on 29 June, 2025. In a separate shutdown schedule issued here, it has been informed that in order to carry out replacement of CT / PT unit of M/s Khyber Industries at Khonmoh, Srinagar, shutdown of 33 KV Khunmoh-SIDCO-III line shall be observed due to which 33/11KV Receiving Stations at Cement Plants (Khyber, SAIFCO, TCI MAX) shall remain off while power supply to Cement Plants Viz Saifco, Khyber.

International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking observed at Kulgam

DC presides over mega district-level event; launches Signature campaign, Plantation drive, flags-off IEC Van

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, JUNE 26: A mega district-level event held at conference hall mini-secretariat besides seminars, awareness programmes, rallies, plantation drives and other events marked the commemoration of International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking across Kulgam district. The programme was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan. Speaking on the occasion,

DC stated that the district is adopting a multi-pronged strategy to combat the growing menace of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. He emphasized the need for a collective fight involving all stakeholders, highlighting that a comprehensive and united approach is vital to effectively address this societal challenge. DC said that there is commitment to zero tolerance against drugs, adding that strict action is being taken against those involved in drug trafficking, while

adequate rehabilitation support is being extended to victims through institutional mechanisms. One of the key highlights shared by the DC was the district's significant progress in eliminating illicit crop cultivation. In 2023, poppy was cultivated over 750 kanals, which was entirely destroyed. In 2024, the figure drastically dropped to just 40 kanals, and as of now, Kulgam has achieved zero poppy cultivation. Similarly, bung cultivation has

also been reduced to zero in the district. This remarkable achievement was made possible through vigorous enforcement efforts and the promotion of alternative crops among farmers, he added. DC also added that the district has been conducting intensive awareness campaigns under Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir initiative. These efforts include widespread public outreach involving youth, students, religious leaders and the community at large through cultural.

Kupwara Police Organizes Drug Awareness Rally on International Day Against Drug Abuse

DR. AB QAYOOM

Kupwara, June 26: In observance of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Kupwara Police on Wednesday organized a large-scale Drug Awareness Rally aimed at spreading awareness about the harmful effects of drug addiction and reinforcing collective responsibility to combat this growing menace. The event was formally flagged off by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kupwara, Shri Gulam Jeelani Wani (JKPS), who, in his address, emphasized the urgent need for public cooperation in uprooting the drug threat from society. The occasion was also attended by Additional SP Kupwara, DySP Headquarters, DySP DAR, SHO Kupwara, and officers from various police posts, reflecting the department's firm resolve against narcotics-related crime. The rally, which started from Dak Bungalow Kupwara and concluded at the Martyrs' Memorial, Regipora Chowk, saw enthusiastic participation from students, local youth, civil society members, ASHA workers, ICDS functionaries, and other stakeholders. Participants carried placards and raised slogans highlighting the dangers of drug abuse and the importance of community vigilance. Speaking on the sidelines of the event, SSP Kupwara reiterated the district police's zero-tolerance policy towards drug peddling and trafficking. He informed that multiple FIRs have been registered in recent months and strict legal action taken against offenders. Simultaneously, Kupwara



Police continues to prioritize community outreach, preventive education, and rehabilitation initiatives. A special pledge ceremony was also held, with all participants vowing to stand against drug abuse and work towards building a safer, healthier, and drug-free society. The rally concluded with interactive sessions where students and community members shared their concerns and suggestions, underlining the necessity for consistent awareness drives and strict enforcement to effectively curb the drug menace. Kupwara Police reaffirmed its commitment to safeguard the public and maintain a drug-free environment through continuous proactive measures and public engagement.

DAJGUA Day 12: Distt admin Pulwama organises mega tribal outreach camp at Achgooze

HT NEWS DESK

PULWAMA, JUNE 26: As part of the ongoing Dharthi Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), district administration Pulwama today conducted a comprehensive outreach and benefit saturation camp at Achgooze, with the objective of ensuring equitable access to government services and welfare entitlements for the tribal population. The camp witnessed overwhelming participation from members of the tribal community, including women, children, elderly citizens, tribal leaders, activists and youth. The initiative is aligned with the vision of the DAJGUA campaign to ensure holistic development and empowerment of tribal residents through targeted saturation of welfare schemes. A wide array of departments, including Health, Social Welfare, ICDS, Rural Development, Agri-



culture, Horticulture, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, and Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Fisheries established dedicated stalls at the venue to deliver on-the-spot services. These departments facilitated registrations under key schemes such as Jal Jeevan Mission (Functional Household Tap Connections), MGNREGA Job Cards, PMAY-G, PM Ujjwala Yojana, Mudra Yojana, PM Vishwakarma among others. Eligible citizens were guided and assisted on-site to ensure timely and complete coverage under these schemes. A Common Services Cen-

tre (CSC) was also set up to assist residents with digital access, including document uploads, enrolments, Aadhar and domicile registrations and corrections, and scholarship registrations. A special medical camp was organised by the Health department on the occasion, wherein doctors and paramedical staff conducted general health check-ups, sickle cell screening, and provided consultations. The health team also carried out awareness sessions on personal hygiene, water-borne diseases, and preventive healthcare measures.

International Affairs, Central University of Kashmir conducts One-Day International Workshop on "Dialogic Consciousness in Western Philosophy"

HT NEWS DESK

Ganderbal, June 26: To nurture critical thinking and promote intellectual exchange, Office of the Dean International Affairs, Central University of Kashmir (CUK) Thursday took a major step by hosting its maiden offline event, a one-day international workshop on "Dialogic Consciousness in Western Philosophy." The workshop served as a rich academic confluence centered around the seminal ideas of Russian phi-

losopher and literary theorist, Mikhail Bakhtin. The workshop began with a welcome address by the convener, Prof Sandhya Tiwari, who welcomed the audience and also presented the concept note. Addressing the participants comprising students, research scholars, and faculty, she highlighted the significance of Russian Formalism in general to the development of western philosophy that has its roots even in ancient Indian ethos. She reflected on how the seeds of dialogic consciousness are already sown in the



classroom, particularly when discussing literary texts that echo mul-

multiple voices and layered perspectives. Drawing from Bakhtinian concepts like the carnivalesque and polyphony, she stressed the importance of developing research depth, dialogic aptitude, and critical engagement in literary studies. "The workshop," she added, "was conceived with the intention of giving focused academic nourishment to students, especially those preparing for national level exams where Bakhtin's contributions figure prominently." The welcome address and concept note was followed by the address of

the chief guest of the inaugural session, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, who in his inspiring message, set the tone for the event by highlighting the urgent need for dialogic thinking in a world grappling with fragmentation and conflict. He noted that imagination—often sparked by humanistic disciplines—is the seed from which all scientific and technological innovations grow. "Dialogic thinking," he observed, "is essential for cultivating global citizenship, peace, and understanding in today's divided times."

HT EDITORIAL

All Kashmiris come forward for smooth conduct of Amarnath Yatra

Preparations are in full swing for the smooth conduct of the annual Amarnath Yatra that is starting from Thursday July 3. Review meetings are being carried out by the different departments in this regard and it is being ensured that the yatra is conducted in a smooth manner so that there is no trouble for the pilgrims and they leave the Kashmir valley on a happy note. The successful conduct of the yatra is important for Kashmir and Kashmiris.

Both the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and chief minister Omar Abdullah are taking review meetings for the successful conduct of the yatra. Both the LG and CM are issuing directions to the officers and officials of the government departments so that nothing untoward happens and the yatra is conducted in a professional manner. On their part the officers are also taking steps aimed to bolster the confidence of the pilgrims that in turn would lead to better management of the yatra.

The top brass of Jammu & Kashmir and the other security agencies are also very busy in finalizing the security arrangements for the yatra and no chance is being taken in this regard. Mock drills were carried out in the different areas of the Kashmir valley so as to check preparedness of the officers and officials on ground. There seems to be a perfect synergy between the different government departments and one can hope that the Amarnath Yatra 2025 is a success like the previous years.

Barring a few incidents the Amarnath yatra has always been peaceful and successful with the pilgrims experiencing very few problems. The pilgrims who come for the annual Amarnath yatra turn out to be perfect ambassadors of Kashmir and Kashmir's hospitality. These people carry out a message of peace, love and compassion from Kashmir to their native areas. It is due to this reason that people in large numbers turn up to take part in the yatra and some of them visit Kashmir as tourists.

Since this year's yatra is being held in the aftermath of Baisaran killings the people of Kashmir are more than curious that the yatra passes off peacefully. The traders of the valley have been issuing press statements and even addressing pressers in this regard and they have extended welcome to the pilgrims with open arms. Kashmir is known for its hospitality and this year too the same will be experienced by the Amarnath yatrins.

Dignity of Work and the Path to True Professionalism



Sahil Manzoor

All living beings on Earth need food to survive. However, it's important to remember that food is not the ultimate purpose of life—it's merely a requirement to fuel the body's biological processes such as growth, development, and maintaining good health. In essence, life is a constant journey of fulfilling this basic need. Different species adopt different means to obtain food—some are herbivorous, some carnivorous, others omnivorous. Some creatures feed on decaying matter, some consume waste, and some seek out fresh, healthy sources. This natural system forms a food chain where every being, directly or indirectly, depends on others—a cycle that began with the origin of life itself.

This dependence isn't limited to food alone. We also rely on one another for support, love, protection, guidance, and cooperation. Since the dawn of life, this mutual depen-



density has shaped our existence. Looking ahead, we must ensure that future generations inherit a world grounded in strong morals, ethics, and behaviors. True development lies not just in technological progress, but in the advancement of our character and humanity.

One must remember: we are not defined by the degrees we hold, but by the way we behave. Society remembers your kindness, humility, and how you treat others—not the certificates you display. No one is born with a degree in their hand; it is our behavior, respectfulness, and compassion that earn us a lasting place in people's hearts.

Today, I want to focus on the con-

cept of becoming a true professional. The dictionary defines a profession as "an occupation, trade, craft, or activity in which one has professed expertise; a job, especially one requiring a high level of skill or training."

Every day begins with rituals and routines—Muslims go to mosques for prayer, Hindus to temples, Sikhs to gurdwaras, and Christians to churches. From morning to evening, people engage in their work—some are doctors, teachers, engineers, shopkeepers, drivers, or farmers. Society classifies professions into different ranks, but what we often forget is that every role has its importance.

Think of the many objects and conveniences around us—kitchen

utensils, garden flowers, vehicles, and buildings. Behind each of these creations is human effort and skill. We often admire famous professionals like doctors, professors, or engineers. Why? Because they are loyal to their work, honest in their efforts, and committed to excellence.

Yet, certain jobs—like that of a conductor, cleaner, or cobbler—are often looked down upon. This is unfair and uninformed. Imagine life without them. Who would fulfill the needs they meet every day? Every profession deserves respect when performed with dedication and sincerity. No work is small if done with honesty and a sense of service.

If someone dreams of becoming a doctor, they should stay focused on learning and serving, not chasing fame. Let us take our work as a form of worship. Be it teaching, healing, repairing shoes, or driving a bus—perform your duties with heart and integrity. Success, recognition, and satisfaction will surely follow.

Sacrifice your distractions, stay true to your calling, and let your actions speak louder than your titles. The world remembers not just the educated, but the kind-hearted professionals who make a difference through their actions.

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Matchless Beauty Of Village Trown



Mool Raj

Trown is a beautiful and peaceful village located approximately 30 kilometers from District Doda in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Known as the "Green Heart of Doda," this hidden gem remains largely unexplored by tourists and travelers, yet it holds immense natural and cultural value.

Surrounded by nature in its purest form, Trown is blessed with thick forests of chinar, deodar, and cheet trees that stay green all year round. The village offers a scenic view in every season — from the fresh greenery of spring to the golden hues of autumn. One of the most remarkable features of Trown is its lush paddy fields, which stretch across the land like a green carpet during the farming season. The peaceful environment, clean air, and untouched landscapes make it an ideal escape from the noise and stress of urban life.

What truly makes Trown special is not just its landscape but its people. The locals are known for their hospitality and warmth. Visitors to the village often experience a sense of belonging, as the residents greet everyone with open arms and kind hearts. Simple living, traditional customs, and a deep respect



for guests define the culture of this village. Sharing meals, telling stories of the land, and helping strangers are not just acts of kindness in Trown — they are a way of life. Despite being so close to Doda town, Trown has remained untouched by commercialization. It offers a unique opportunity for those who seek to experience rural Kashmir in its original form. The peaceful surroundings, scenic beauty, and traditional lifestyle make it a perfect location for eco-tourism and cultural exploration. Photographers, nature lovers, and writers would find endless inspiration in this little-known paradise.

In today's fast-changing world, where tourist destinations are often overcrowded and overdevel-

oped, Trown stands as a rare example of a place where nature and humanity still live in harmony. It is a village that deserves attention, not just for its beauty but also for its potential to grow as a sustainable travel destination, helping support the local community while preserving its environment.

Trown is more than just a village — it is an experience waiting to be discovered. Just a short drive from Doda, this untouched and peaceful place invites every traveler to pause, breathe, and connect with the true essence of life in the mountains.

The author is a regular columnist and freelance writer

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Rethinking Language in Indian Education



Vijay Garg

As global examples from Germany to Japan reaffirm the value of native-language education, it is time India embraced its own plurality — not as a barrier, but as the very foundation of holistic learning and national identity.

The linguistic and cultural diversity of any country must be celebrated with great attention and in its true spirit. India's multilingual phenomenon has always been an integral part of society, but the nature of plurality of languages differs greatly. India, as one of the richest linguistic nations in the world, represents the plurality and diversity in its society, which has been seen

as its biggest strength.

The dominance of English as a global language of education has derecognised the linguistic, cultural and epistemic identities of multilingual people. During the colonial days, English was taught for vested interests. It was believed to have the quality of broadening the horizons of knowledge, and because of the variety of texts, it was thought to promote critical thinking and analytical skills, which was ably supported by the learning of rhetoric.

Even after independence, we fail to appreciate the mother tongue as a cognitive and pedagogical resource and find absolutism in the dogma of monolingualism as a language-teaching resource. English has been, for most people, a skill to master, not just a language to learn to express. English is, for the most part, a foreign language, but treated as a second language in India.

The immense damage done by communicative English language courses — by shifting the onus of communication to the receiver of the communication rather than

the creator — has led to a peculiar situation of incomplete cognitive processing, or at best, partial understanding. If we look at the globe, we can see that some leading countries like Germany, China, and Japan, with the highest technological expertise, are offering primary education in their mother tongue.

The push for teaching in a universal language such as English has been shown to hinder children's educational progress in such countries. The key to human resources development is education, and the English-only policy fails to appreciate the mother tongue as a cognitive and pedagogic resource.

As a hapless victim of linguistic robbery, the schoolchild is terminally disabled from utilising the immense linguistic arsenal offered by his mother tongue. This reveals the fact that primary education in the mother tongue is as effective and functioning as it could be in any other dominant language. The use of home language, local language, and mother tongue-based primary and secondary education also entails

that each language can provide cognitive and educational resources to its learners. The historic and transformative National Education Policy (NEP 2020), in its section dedicated to language education called "Multilingualism and the

Power of Language", endeavours to foster and accept linguistic diversity within the realm of education. The policy recognises the significance of language as a potent instrument for fostering effective communication, advancing students' cognitive abilities, and cultivating cultural awareness. It further states that, wherever possible, the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue or the local or regional language. Thereafter, the home or local language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible.

It further emphasises that all efforts should be made to ensure that any gaps that exist between the language spoken by the child and the medium of teaching are bridged. NEP 2020 also provides fluidity to the three-language formula, as there is no specific language that shall be imposed

on any State. The States, regions, and the students as well, are free to choose the three languages which the students want to learn, whereas at least two of them are to be native to India — one of which is most likely to be the home, local, or regional language. The objective of the NEP 2020 is to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge, and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in academia, science, technology, and industry. In recent years, education in mother tongue, regional, local, or home languages has attracted serious attention worldwide. Mother tongue plays a critical role in the cognitive and intellectual development of a learner. Studies have shown that individuals fluent in their mother tongue tend to have higher educational success rates than those who are not.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal
Educational columnist Eminent
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Impact of Excessive Screen Time on Speech Development in Children



By Zahoor Ahmad Qureshi

In the digital age, screens have become an integral part of daily life, offering entertainment, education, and communication. However, excessive screen time, especially among young children, has raised concerns about its impact on speech and language development. Pediatricians and speech therapists are increasingly warning that prolonged exposure to screens can contribute to speech delays, reduced vocabulary, and impaired social interactions.

The Growing Concern

Children in Kashmir, like in other parts of the world, are spending more time on digital devices, including smartphones, tablets, and televisions. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased screen usage as children relied on digital platforms for education and recreation. Studies have shown that excessive screen time can reduce real-world interactions, which are crucial for developing verbal communication skills.

How Screen Time Affects Speech Development

- **Reduced Verbal Interactions:** Young children acquire language skills through social interactions with caregivers and peers. When screen time replaces these interactions, children may miss crucial opportunities to develop their speech and language abilities.
- **Delayed Response and Engagement:** Unlike human interactions,



screens do not provide immediate feedback or meaningful conversations. This passive engagement can hinder a child's ability to express thoughts and respond appropriately in conversations.

- **Diminished Vocabulary Growth:** Research suggests that children who spend excessive time on screens have a lower vocabulary than those who engage in regular conversations and storytelling activities. Listening to real-life conversations exposes children to a richer and more diverse language experience than screen-based content.
- **Reduced Attention Span:** The fast-paced nature of digital content can shorten a child's attention span, making it harder for them to focus on conversations,

listen actively, and process spoken words effectively.

- **Decreased Social Skills:** Language development is closely linked to social interactions. Children who spend more time on screens may struggle with face-to-face communication, making it difficult to express emotions, maintain eye contact, and understand social cues.

Case Study: The Situation in Kashmir

Health professionals in Kashmir have reported a rising number of cases where children exhibit speech delays and social withdrawal due to excessive screen time. Many parents approach pediatricians with concerns that their children are not speaking at the expected age or have difficulty forming sentences. Experts suggest that increased dependence on digital entertainment, often used as a tool to keep children

occupied, contributes to these developmental delays.

Parental Concerns and Expert Opinions

Dr. Ayesha Khan, a pediatric speech therapist in Srinagar, highlights that many children who come to her clinic show signs of speech delay due to limited verbal interaction at home. "Parents often use smartphones and televisions as babysitters, unaware of the long-term impact on their child's communication skills," she explains.

Parents like Sameer Ahmad, a resident of Baramulla, share their experiences of struggling to wean their children off screens. "My son started speaking later than expected, and even now, he prefers watching videos over talking to us. We didn't realize the harm until it was too late," he says.

Recommendations for Parents

To mitigate the negative effects of screen time on speech development, parents and caregivers can adopt the following strategies:

- **Set Screen Time Limits:** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting screen time to no more than one hour per day for children aged 2 to 5 years, with a focus on high-quality content.
- **Encourage Real Conversations:** Engage children in conversations, ask open-ended questions, and encourage them to express their thoughts and feelings.
- **Read Books Together:** Reading aloud to children not only improves vocabulary but also enhances comprehension and storytelling abilities.
- **Promote Interactive Play:** Activities such as role-playing, outdoor games, and social interactions with peers can significantly boost speech and communication skills.
- **Use Screens Together:** If screen time is necessary, watch and discuss content together to ensure interactive learning rather than passive consumption.

While technology is an inevitable part of modern life, excessive screen time can negatively impact children's speech and language development. Parents and caregivers must create a balanced approach by prioritizing verbal interactions, storytelling, and play-based learning. By implementing mindful screen usage, families can ensure that children develop strong communication skills, essential for their overall cognitive and social growth.

The author is a Assistant Professor, MLT Department, UIAHS, Chandigarh University

India's slide on gender equality: A worrying sign



India has a lot to learn from its neighbours.

Countries like Bangladesh have made positive improvements through measures such as microfinance, promotion of women's education, and sustained political participation. In Nepal, the constitution ensures compulsory participation of women in local bodies. Surprisingly, many low-income countries have made faster progress in gender equality than wealthy countries, showing that change requires determination, not money



Priyanka Saurabh

India has been ranked 131st out of 148 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2024. This is not only a drop of two places, but also exposes the inequality hidden in India's development journey that we often ignore. When the whole world is making slow but steady progress in reducing gender inequality, India's lag is not just a statistic but a reflection of the failure of policy, thinking and institutional system.

The Global Gender Gap Index, launched in 2006, measures equality between men and women in four key areas—economic participation, education, health and political empowerment. India's overall score is 64.1%, which is much lower than the global average of 68.5%. Not only this, in South Asia too, India lags behind neighboring countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

India has made modest improvements in economic participation, but women's labour participation rate is still stuck at 45.9%. Women are concentrated in low-paid sectors such as care, health and education. Domestic and unpaid labour, which forms the backbone of the country's unorganised economy, has not yet been included in any national accounting. Women receive 20-30% less pay than men for the same work. This economic inequality is not just a problem of statistics, but of thinking.

While some progress has been made in education, female literacy rates are still around 70%, well below the global average of 87%. Women's participation in higher education, especially in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, is very low. Social barriers that deprive girls from rural areas, tribal areas and lower-class families of education—such as child marriage, conservative thinking and distance to schools—still exist.

India also lags behind in terms of health and life expectancy. The sex ratio at birth is still around 929 girls per 1000 boys. Maternal problems, malnutrition, anemia, and lack of perinatal health services seriously affect rural women. The lack of priority given to women's health within the four walls of the home is a weakness of our family system.

India's situation in the field of political empower-



ment is extremely worrying. The representation of women in Parliament has come down to 13.8% and only 5.6% of the Union Cabinet consists of women. This becomes even more ironic when we know that the Women's Reservation Bill 2023 has been passed, but its implementation is stuck due to the delay in the process of census and constituency re-demarcation. This makes it clear that just passing laws is not enough, the will to implement them is also necessary.

India has a lot to learn from its neighbours. Countries like Bangladesh have made positive improvements through measures such as microfinance, promotion of women's education, and sustained political participation. In Nepal, the constitution ensures compulsory participation of women in local bodies. Surprisingly, many low-income countries have made faster progress in gender equality than wealthy countries, showing that change requires determination, not money.

Gender equality is not just a social objective, it is also essential to India's economic progress. The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that India could increase its gross domestic product (GDP) by \$700 billion by 2025 if it increased women's participation in the workforce. Women's participation in education, health and governance also leads to more equitable and inclusive social outcomes. India's demographic potential will be realized only if women's full and equal participation is ensured.

But the challenges are deeper. Patriarchal social values, lack of safety for women in workplaces and public spaces, limited access to digital devices and lax policy implementation—all combine to make gender inequality persistent.

Now the time has come that India should not limit itself to making plans but should also implement them

on the ground. Census and constituency delimitation process should be given priority to implement the Women's Reservation Bill. Domestic and unpaid labour should be included in the national economic accounts and given respect and social security. Flexible and safe workplaces should be arranged for women, especially in rural and semi-urban areas.

To promote women's leadership in the private sector, it should be mandatory for companies to have women directors. Mentorship programs should be run for women in science, politics and entrepreneurship. To bridge the digital divide, cheap mobile and internet services should be made available to women, and digital literacy programs should be taken to the panchayat level.

It should be mandatory to collect gender disaggregated data in every scheme and survey so that progress can be monitored at the state and district level and policy making can be more targeted.

This decline in India's gender equality is not just a statistic but a reminder—that we have left half the population behind in the race for development. This mistake comes at a cost not just to social justice but also to national prosperity.

The road to equality is long, but not impossible. The policy has been formulated, the direction is clear, now what is needed is political resolve, social consensus and institutional implementation. Until India gives equal status to half of its population, the dream of a "developed nation" will remain incomplete.

Priyanka Saurabh is a freelance columnist, poet and outspoken writer on social issues. She particularly focuses on women's rights, education and the voice of rural India in her writing.

DC reviews progress of Tourism Development initiatives in Poonch

HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JUNE 26: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a comprehensive meeting to review the progress of promotional activities and infrastructure development in the tourism sector in the district. At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal of the physical and financial

progress of ongoing works being executed by the Tourism Department, Poonch Development Authority (PDA) and the Public Works Department (R&B) in the three subdivisions of Poonch, Surankote and Mendhar. The meeting focused on key developmental initiatives including the establishment of new Tourist Reception Centres (TRCs), Eco Parks, Tourism Parks, Children



Parks, and the beautification of prominent tourist destinations. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for a strong and sustainable tourism infrastructure to boost footfall, generate livelihood opportunities, and contribute to the local economy. He directed the concerned officers to expedite the pace of ongoing works and prioritize projects that

would have a significant impact on tourism promotion in the district. The meeting was attended by ACD Poonch, Executive Engineers of PWD (R&B) from Poonch, Surankote and Mendhar along with officers from the PDA and Tourism Department. The meeting was attended by ACD Poonch, Executive Engineers of PWD (R&B) from Poonch.

DDC reviews implementation of Credit-Linked Schemes in Kishtwar district

HT NEWS DESK

avail Government schemes. He also instructed the depart-



KISHTWAR, JUNE 26: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Pankaj Kumar Sharma convened a comprehensive review meeting today to assess the progress of Agriculture and allied sector credit-linked schemes in the district. The meeting focused on case sanctioning and disbursement status of key schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (PM-FME), PM-KISAN, Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), among others. The Lead District Manager (LDM) apprised the DC of the current status and progress.

The DC Kishtwar directed the LDM to organize camps under the Convergence Plan for door-to-door awareness and services delivery. These camps will be organized in coordination with banks and relevant departments to bring services closer to the people. The DC directed the line departments and banks to spread mass awareness and encourage the youth to set up agro-based enterprises by

ments to inform beneficiaries about the formalities, benefits, and other relevant aspects of the schemes. The meeting was attended by CAO Kushal Chandel; CHO Sajid Mustafa; LDM Harsh Rawal; representatives from financial institutions and stakeholder departments. District Development Commissioner (DDC) Pankaj Kumar Sharma convened a comprehensive review meeting today to assess the progress of Agriculture and allied sector credit-linked schemes in the district. The meeting focused on case sanctioning and disbursement status of key schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (PM-FME), PM-KISAN, Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), among others. The Lead District Manager (LDM) apprised the DC of the current status and progress. The DC Kishtwar directed the LDM to organize camps under the Convergence Plan for door-to-door awareness and services delivery.

Int'l Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking-2025

ETI Nagrota organises Marathon to raise awareness

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 26: To mark the International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking 2025, a marathon was organised by ETI Nagrota to generate awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and to promote a healthy and drug-free style among the public. The marathon was flagged off jointly by the Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive) Sanjay Bhat and Deputy Excise Commissioner (Accounts & Audit) Tinnu Mahajan with additional charge of Principal ETI Nagrota in presence of Excise & Taxation officers, trainees of the institute and staff of the Excise Department. The event witnessed

enthusiastic participation from the stakeholders including students of Pushpak Public School, Jagti, Nagrota, representatives of NGOs and locals. The rally commenced from the Training Institute premises and marched through key areas of the town carrying placards with messages of staying away from drugs and leading a healthy lifestyle. The event concluded back on ETI campus where the officials exchanged ideas with the staff and students of Pushpak Public school about the strategies required to tackle this social evil. The participants appreciated the Excise Department for organising such events and felicitating the best participants.

DAJGUA benefit saturation camp held at Panchayat Chounwry Gandoh

HT NEWS DESK

DODA, JUNE 26: As part of the ongoing Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, a comprehensive awareness and outreach camp was organized today at Panchayat Chounwry-Gandoh.

The campaign was carried out in close supervision of District AYUSH Officer Dr. Ajay Kumar Tikoo, with the active participation of field-level health institutions. The staff of Ayush Health & Wellness Centre (AHWC) Kota coordinated the camp attended by a good number of tribal residents from the adjoining area, reflecting community participation in the government's welfare activities.

During the camp, Ayush medicines were given free of cost to beneficiaries for different ailments including seasonal infections, musculoskeletal pain, and general wellness. A total of 65 beneficiaries availed medical consultations and medicines during the camp. The team from AHWC Kota also spread awareness about the preventive and holistic benefits of AYUSH therapies. The event concluded with a vote of thanks and a commitment to continue such outreach services in other far-flung areas of the district. A total of 65 beneficiaries availed medical consultations and medicines during the camp. The team from AHWC Kota also spread awareness.

Street Play on Malaria Awareness organised at Govt Hospital Sarwal

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 26: The Directorate of Health Services Jammu, in collaboration with the Department of Information and Public Relations, Jammu, today organized a malaria awareness programme at Government Hospital, Sarwal, as part of its ongoing public health awareness campaign.

To disseminate awareness about prevention and control of malaria, a street play (Nukkad Natak) was presented by the artists of the Cultural Unit, Department of Information and Public Relations, Jammu. The play used powerful dialogue, drama, and relatable characters to educate the public about vector-borne diseases,



especially malaria, and how simple precautions can prevent its spread. The event was attended by the State Malariaologist Dr. D.J. Raina, who addressed the audience and emphasized the importance of cleanliness, use of mosquito nets, and timely medical attention in controlling malaria. He also urged

people to eliminate stagnant water sources around their homes and surroundings which serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes. The programme was attended by the Medical Superintendent Dr. Sunil Kailoo, Doctors, Medical staff, ASHA workers, and patients, all of whom appreciated the creative and effective method of awareness employed by the Department. The street play spread the key messages in an effective and engaging manner, especially among the visiting patients and local community members present at the hospital. The programme was conducted under the directions of Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey and under the supervision of Cultural Officer Jammu Mukesh Kumar Sharma.

DAJGUA Awareness camp empowers tribal communities in Marwah, Bounjwah

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 26: Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gramin Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA) awareness and benefit saturation camps were organized at Marwah and Wachak Mohalla - Bounjwah on the day 12 of the 15 day campaign.

Multiple departments including Health, Agriculture, Education, ICDS, Employment, Rural Development and FCS&CA set up stalls offering registration for their respective schemes and on the spot services. The citizens received assistance for scheme registration, application processing etc. Officials also addressed public grievances and provided informative material in local languages. The camp provided an effective platform for direct interaction between government officials and tribal residents.



The open discussions helped bridge information gaps and build trust between the community and service providers. Tribal Community and residents expressed gratitude for the initiative, appreciating the district administration's efforts to reach to the most remote areas with essential services. The camp not only enhanced awareness but also reinforced a strong sense of inclusion and support. DDC Member Bounjwah Aemna Banoo, BDO Bounjwah and other officers were present at the camps.

District Administration Kishtwar observes Int'l Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 26: To commemorate the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the District Administration Kishtwar organized a grand programme marking the culmination of a 26-day-long IEC campaign aimed at educating and mobilizing the community especially the youth against the menace of drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The event, held under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma featured a series of impactful activities including thought-provoking speeches by students, a street play, and painting competition, focusing on the theme of substance abuse prevention. Over 200 School Students from across the district delivered moving performances, demonstrating the growing involvement of the younger generation in social causes and their commitment to fostering a drug-free society. Chief Guest Assistant



Commissioner Revenue Idrees Lone underscored the importance of sustained awareness campaigns and highlighted the critical role of community collaboration in eradicating drug-related issues from society. District Social Welfare Officer Zubair Ahmed, delivered the welcome address. The event concluded with a solemn pledge, wherein all participants vowed to contribute positively to build a healthier and addiction-free future. To commemorate the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the District Administration Kishtwar organized a grand programme marking the culmination

of a 26-day-long IEC campaign aimed at educating and mobilizing the community especially the youth against the menace of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The event, held under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma featured a series of impactful activities including thought-provoking speeches by students, a street play, and painting competition, focusing on the theme of substance abuse prevention. Over 200 School Students from across the district delivered moving performances, demonstrating the growing involvement of the younger generation in social causes.

District Admin Rajouri scales up preparedness for monsoon season

DC issues directives for public safety

HT NEWS DESK

RAJOURI, JUNE 26: In view of the ongoing monsoon season and the advisory of inclement weather, Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma today chaired a meeting in his office chamber to review the preparedness of the district administration for any eventualities arising due to heavy rains, flash floods, and landslides.

To ensure public safety, the Deputy Commissioner directed that no movement shall be allowed towards picnic spots such as waterfalls, rivers, nallahs, and other water bodies during this period. He further instructed that necessary steps be taken to

shift people residing near vulnerable water bodies to safer locations to prevent any loss of life or property. Highlighting the need for prompt response in case of road blockages, DC Rajouri instructed to keep the requisite machinery in a state of readiness on the National Highway and other key roads for immediate road clearance. He directed the BRO, PWD, and PMGSY to augment preparedness for the maintenance and swift restoration of the roads, besides identifying alternate routes. In view of possible medical emergencies, the DC directed the Health Department to ensure adequate availability of essential medicines in all hospitals, including anti-snake venom, to tackle any health contin-



gencies that may arise due to floods or snake bites. To strengthen coordination and ensure round-the-clock monitoring, the Deputy Commissioner instructed all ADCs, ACR, and SDMs to establish control rooms at tehsil and subdivision levels and maintain close coordination with the district-level control room already set up in the DC Office. He also directed them to liaise with local police and security agencies in their jurisdictions for timely response and rescue operations. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of effective communication and instructed that alerts and advisories be disseminated through public representatives, Numberdars, Chowkidars,

and other grassroots-level functionaries to keep the public informed and vigilant. The meeting was attended by SSP Gaurav Sikarwar; ADC Chander Prakash; SE PWD; SE Irrigation and other district and sectoral officers who participated in the meeting through virtual mode. The District Administration Rajouri has urged the public to strictly adhere to safety advisories and avoid unnecessary movement in flood-prone areas during the ongoing monsoon season. The District Administration Rajouri has urged the public to strictly adhere to safety advisories and avoid unnecessary movement in flood-prone areas during the ongoing monsoon season.

Srinagar District admin organizes awareness programme on International day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

DC Srinagar emphasizes need to address drug abuse through coordinated awareness, strict enforcement & effective treatment/ rehabilitation at the grassroots level

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR JUNE 26:- To mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the District Administration Srinagar today organized an awareness programme at Government College of Education here today.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo was the Chief Guest of the programme aimed to raise awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and deterrent measures undertaken against drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner laid emphasis on effective awareness generation against drug abuse to sensitize people particularly the youth about its detrimental impact on individuals, families and society. He called for a compassionate and coordinated approach involving deterrence, rehabilitation, and sustained awareness campaign.

The DC emphasized the need to address



dealing with those affected from addiction. During the seminar, elaborate discussion on the NDPS Act and its enforcement in curbing illicit trafficking, importance of early identification and timely recovery interventions in combating substance abuse was emphasised. Later, the DC felicitated the meritorious students for their outstanding contributions in anti drugs awareness campaign. The initiative was the part of ongoing Drugs Free Jammu and Kashmir campaign reaffirming the collective commitment to "Say No to Drugs" and to work together towards a healthier, happier and drug-free society. Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, District Social Welfare Officer, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Professor at IMHANS, Dr. Ashraf Suhas, Government College of Education, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Syed Sleet Shah, Dr. Nazir Ahmad Bhat, Head, Department of Psychology, Amar Singh College, Altif Paul, Staff and Students of the College attended the event.

DCD Srinagar Organised Awareness Program on Drug Abuse in Srinagar

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar : Today, June 26th, marks World Drug Day, officially known as the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. This United Nations observance, held annually since 1989, aims to raise awareness and strengthen action and cooperation to achieve a world free of drug abuse.

The global drug problem is a multifaceted challenge impacting millions of lives, from individuals struggling with substance use disorders to communities grappling with drug trafficking and organized crime. Today on this eve, the Drug Control Department Srinagar organized a comprehensive awareness program and rally to combat drug abuse in the district. The Rally started from the



office of Deputy Drugs Controller Bemina at 11 am and covered various nearby markets and residential areas.

The initiative saw active participation from the Drug Control Officers of Srinagar, along with enthusiastic chemists and distributors from the city under supervision of Assistant Drugs Controller Srinagar Ms. Reema Gizala Khateeb, who spoke about the role of the Department in combating ill effects of

drug misuse and emphasised on proper use of medicines. She requested general public to collectively play their role in making a drug free society.

She is thankful to Government for "Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan", which has helped the Department further to have a close check on misuse of any kind of drug. The program aimed to raise public awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and promote a drug-free society.

Tribal Farmers of Karnah Benefit from ICAR Project, KVK Kupwara Organises Awareness, Input Distribution

DR. AB QAYOOM

Kupwara, Jun, 26: In a significant outreach initiative, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kupwara SKUAST-K today organised a comprehensive training programme and distributed agricultural inputs among war-affected tribal farmers of Tangdaar and Chamkoot areas of Karnah Valley under the Tribal Sub Plan project of ICAR. The programme was presided over by Prof. Kaiser Mohiuddin, Head, KVK Kupwara, alongside the scientific staff of the Kendra and officers from the Agriculture Department of Sub Division Tangdaar. Addressing the gathering, Prof. Kaiser lauded the dedicated efforts of Prof. Javeed Ahmad Mugloo, Principal Investigator of the project, for proactively addressing the agricultural challenges faced by tribal farmers in this remote and sensitive region. Prof. Kaiser also extended heartfelt gratitude to Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Director Extension Prof. Rehana Habib Kant, and the District Development Commissioner Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan, as well as SDM Karnah for their continuous support and coop-



eration in facilitating such farmer-centric programmes in border areas. During the programme, scientists interacted with the local farmers, disseminating valuable information about various government schemes, modern agricultural practices, and solutions for their existing farming-related issues. The farmers, in turn, raised their concerns and appreciated the university authorities for their committed efforts towards the welfare of the tribal farming community. The programme concluded meaningfully at the Zero Line in Teetwal, symbolising a message of development, resilience, and solidarity for the border community.

DAJGUA Awareness cum Benefit Saturation Camp held at Nachlana- Ramban

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JUNE 26: As part of the ongoing Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gramin Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), the District Administration Ramban on Thursday organised a comprehensive Awareness and Benefit Saturation Camp at Nachlana, Khari Lower-A Panchayat, a remote tribal area in Block Khari.

The camp witnessed active participation from

Tehsildar Harvir Singh, Block Development Officer Urfan Khan, and ABF (NITI Aayog) Ishfaq Bashir, along with officials from other departments. The primary objective of the camp was to ensure last-mile delivery of government welfare schemes, enhance public awareness, and facilitate the tribal population's access to various social security, health, and livelihood schemes.

A wide range of depart-

ments provided services during the camp. The Health and AYUSH Departments offered free health check-ups, consultations, and shared information on preventive healthcare and traditional medicine. The Animal Husbandry Department delivered veterinary services and raised awareness about livestock health, vaccinations, and government-supported subsidy programs.

The Revenue and Tehsil

Social Welfare Departments facilitated services related to land records, income certificates, caste certificates, and pension schemes, helping resolve several pending issues on the spot. The Women and Child Development (ICDS) department provided valuable guidance on maternal and child health, nutrition, and highlighted key government initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.

The Block Development Officer (BDO) informed participants about various self-employment schemes, MGNREGA opportunities, and rural development initiatives, encouraging locals to take advantage of the available schemes. Meanwhile, the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments educated farmers on modern farming practices, organic farming techniques, soil health management, and government assistance for seeds, tools,

and orchard development. The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from local residents, who engaged directly with officers from different departments. Many issues related to documentation, access to health services, and enrollment in welfare schemes were addressed on the spot, reflecting the administration's commitment to responsive and people-centric governance.

Toyota Kirloskar, Ohmium Partner to Co-Develop Green Hydrogen Power Solutions in India

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has signed an MoU with Ohmium International, a leading PEM hydrogen technology firm, to jointly develop integrated Green Hydrogen-based power solutions in India. The collaboration marks a strategic move to expand hydrogen applications beyond mobility and into decentralized power generation.

Under the partnership, TKM will provide technical expertise, system integration, and fuel cell modules, while Ohmium will design and evaluate microgrid prototypes using its scalable electrolyzers. These systems will be aimed at data centers and remote locations, supporting India's energy transition goals.

The move aligns with India's National Green Hydrogen Mission and broader vision of energy independence by 2047 and net-zero emissions by 2070. TKM has



previously led hydrogen efforts with its Toyota Mirai FCEV pilot and a recent fuel cell module supply agreement with Ashok Leyland.

Senior Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari and Shripad Naik lauded the initiative, calling it a boost to India's clean energy innovation and self-reliance under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. Delhi minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said the partnership would aid industrial decarbonization and cleaner ecosystems.

Ohmium Chairman Ahmad Chatila highlighted the integration of local electrolyzer technology with Toyota's global fuel cell expertise. TKM Vice Chairperson Manasi Tata reiterated Toyota's broader hydrogen vision beyond mobility, while Deputy MD Swapnesh R. Maru called hydrogen a catalyst for sustainability across energy, industry, and transport sectors.

This collaboration represents a key step in localizing hydrogen technologies and building a scalable, resilient green energy ecosystem in India.

DC flags off water tanker for Gandoh to strengthen supply service

HT NEWS DESK

DODA, JUNE 26: To augment drinking water access in rural areas, Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh today flagged off a newly procured water tanker to Sub Division Gandoh. The flag-off ceremony was held at the DC Office Complex.

The initiative is part of the district administration's ongoing efforts to address water shortage in remote and hilly areas, especially during the summer months. The water tanker will be operated by the Jal Shakti Department and is expected to serve multiple villages within the Sub Division Gandoh, improving access to potable water.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Anil Kumar Thakur, SE Jal Shakti, and Executive Engineer PHE Gandoh were also present during the ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, the DC emphasized the administration's commitment to equitable development and assured that more such initiatives will be taken in the future to strengthen essential services in far-flung areas. He also directed the Jal Shakti Department to ensure proper monitoring of water tanker deployment for maximum benefit to the public.

Market checking drive conducted at Baba Chamliyal Mela

HT NEWS DESK

SAMBA, JUNE 26: A market inspection was conducted at the annual Baba Chamliyal Mela in Tehsil Ramgarh by a team of the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department.

The inspection was carried out to enforce food safety standards, fair pricing and legal metrology regulations by vendors operating at the mela. The drive was conducted under the supervision of Assistant Director FCS&CA Rahul Gupta and under the overall directions of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma with TSO Ravi Kumar, leading the on-ground implementation.

The inspection was carried out to prevent unauthorized use of LPG cylinders and unsafe cooking, overpricing, unhygienic practices and use of non-standard weighing equipment. The checking team verified the display of rate list to ensure that the interests of consumers were fully safeguarded.

Speaking on the initiative, the Assistant Director FCS&CA said, "The department's primary aim is to ensure public safety and safeguard consumer rights, especially during events of such magnitude. Market checking not only deters malpractice but also builds public confidence in the system and promotes a culture of compliance among vendors."

The department reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining transparency, safety, and service quality through continuous monitoring and timely enforcement during all major public events across the district.

DHSJ reviews progress of ABHIM works in remote blocks of District Kishtwar

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 26: Director Health Services Jammu Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar conducted a 2 day tour of District Kishtwar to ascertain status of Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (ABHIM) Scheme that aims to strengthen the health care infrastructure with newest medical facilities.

The DHS visited Sub District Hospital Atholi Padder, where he took a detailed tour of all sections of the hospital and interacted with doctors and paramedical staff. He also reviewed the preparedness for the upcoming Machail Yatra. Several public delegations led by the local DDC Councilor met him and projected local demands. The DHS also visited AAM Gulabgarh Paddar and took stock of health facilities available.

Later, the DHS inspected the patient care services at NTPHC Sohal Padder, PHC Keeru and interacted with doctors, paramedical staff and the public of the area. Afterward the DHS visited NTPHC Suzana Palmar to review the progress of work on the upcoming Block Public Health Unit (BPHU).

Earlier, on way to District Kishtwar, the DHS inspected the progress of work on BPHU at CHC Batote.

The ABHIM Scheme aims to fill critical gaps in health infrastructure, surveillance and research.

DHSJ reviews progress of ABHIM works in remote blocks of District Kishtwar

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Language not just means of communication, but soul of a nation: H M Amit Shah

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, Jun 26

Union Home Minister Amit Shah today emphasised the importance of language in preserving a nation's identity and cultural heritage, stating that it is not merely a means of communication, but the very soul of a nation. "Our roots, traditions, history, and culture cannot progress without language. Just as it is important to keep languages alive, it is equally important to enrich them," Shah said while speaking at the Golden Jubilee celebration of the Rajbhasha Department at Bharat Mandapam here. Speaking on the government's ongoing efforts to promote linguistic diversity, Shah highlighted the 'Bhasha Sangam' initiative under which students across all schools in the country are being taught 100 commonly used phrases in the 22 languages recognised by the Constitution. He stressed that until a person takes pride in their own language, expresses themselves



in it, and develops the ability to think, analyse, and make decisions in their own language, they cannot free themselves from a colonial mindset. Reflecting on the achievements of the Department of Official Language, Shah said

its 50-year journey has been shaped by struggle, dedication and determination. He underscored the importance of conducting administrative work in Indian languages, aligning with the spirit of the nation and upholding the self-respect of these

languages. "If a country wants to function according to its own consciousness, progress based on its culture and preserves its self-respect, it is essential that its administration operates in its own languages. It was with this noble objective that the Department of Official Language was established," he said. Shah said over the past 11 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched several initiatives under the 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' programme. Events such as Kashi-Tamil Sangamam, Kashi-Telugu Sangamam, Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam, Shashwat Mithila Mahotsav, and Bhasha Sangam have provided platforms to strengthen national unity and celebrate India's linguistic and cultural diversity. Present on the occasion were Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Lok Sabha MP Bhartruhari Mahtab, Rajya Sabha MP Sudhanshu Trivedi, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Rajya Sabha MP Sudha Murthy and others.

We are reshaping Indian tourism landscape: Shekhawat

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Rajahmundry, Jun 26



Union Minister for Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said on Thursday that the Indian tourism landscape is being reshaped and the country will offer a complete tourism experience across all segments. Shekhawat, flanked by Deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan, MP D Purandeswari and Minister K Durgesh and N Ramanaidu, laid the foundation stone for the 'Akhand Godavari' project here today. The 'Akhand Godavari' tourism project is being constructed at a cost of Rs 99.44 crore. Speaking on the occasion, the tourism minister noted that India moved up to the 39th position from 54 in world travel and tourism index in three years. "India has become the most sought tourist destination in the world. India is now offering Medical tourism and adventure tourism and also offers a complete tourism eco system. The vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is holistic, inclusive and futuristic," he asserted. The Union Minister highlighted that the 'Akhand Godavari' tourism project was taken up at a cost of about Rs 95 crore. This initiative is to create a comprehensive and riverfront experience anchored around Havelock Bridge, across the river Godavari and Pushkar ghat. "The nearly 125 year old Havelock Bridge, across the river Godavari here, is being developed as a multi-functional tourist hub by setting up theme parks. The tourists can walk on the bridge across the river Godavari. The Akhand Godavari tourist project will become an icon in Indian tourism," he stated, adding that the Akhand Godavari project, after its completion, will attract 15 lakh to 20 lakh tourists annually and it will also generate direct employment for about a 1000 people. Buddhist circuits and coastal eco-tourism is also coming up in AP under the PPP model, he affirmed.

Khamenei claims victory over Israel & US in first televised address since ceasefire

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Tehran, June 26



In his first televised message since a ceasefire ended the 12-day long Israel-Iran war, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei claimed victory over Israel, stating that Tehran "delivered a hand slap to America's face," reports The Times of Israel. Khamenei, who has been in hiding since the war started, delivered his address in a video broadcast on Iranian state television, his first appearance since June 19, looking very fatigued. As in the previously reported tweets, he alleged that the US had only intervened in the war because "it felt that if it did not intervene, the Zionist regime would be utterly destroyed." He also claimed that Iran's armed forces managed to break through Israel's multilayered defence systems, and target urban and military sites. While Israel had confirmed that some enemy missiles did manage to enter the country, there has been minimal damage to personnel and infrastructure, which greatly contrasts Iran's own position, with several key leaders eliminated, and massive damage dealt to Iranian military infrastructure. Adding that Washington "achieved no gains from this war," he stated that US President Donald Trump had greatly "exaggerated" the impact of US strikes on the country's three premier nuclear sites. "They attacked our nuclear facilities, which of course would merit criminal prosecution in international

courts, but they did nothing significant," he said. Khamenei further alleged that Trump "exaggerated events in unusual ways, and it turned out that he needed this exaggeration — anyone who has heard these words has understood that there is another truth behind these words." "Trump, in one of his speeches, said Iran needs to surrender. This is too big for him to ask. Trump has unveiled the truth that the US will only be satisfied with Iran's surrender," he added. The supreme leader further said that Tehran's enemies "use excuses like missiles or the nuclear program, but are actually looking for our surrender. Surrender will never happen. Our nation is powerful." Referencing the Iranian missile strike on a US base in Qatar, he said that Iran's ability to potentially reach major US military bases is a considerable achievement and added that such actions could be repeated if aggression is renewed, even though the Iranian strike caused no damage to the base as it was quickly intercepted. "The Islamic Republic was victorious and, in retaliation, delivered a hand slap to America's face," claimed Khamenei.

More than 620 people killed in Iran in Israeli attacks since June 13: Health Ministry

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Tehran, June 26

At least 627 people have been killed and 4,870 others injured in Israeli airstrikes across Iran since June 13, a senior official of Iran's Health Ministry said today. Hossein Kermanpour, head of public relations at Iran's Health Ministry, said on X that capital Tehran and Kermanshah in Western Iran suffered the highest number of fatalities and injuries. Other heavily affected provinces include Khuzestan, Lorestan, Isfahan, Markazi, East Azarbaijan, Hamedan, Zanjan, and Gilan, which rank third to tenth in terms of casu-

alties. Iran's MEHR news agency quoted him as saying that 86.1 per cent of those killed lost their lives at the scene of the strikes while 13.9 per cent died on the way to or upon arrival at hospitals. Top military commanders and nuclear scientists were killed in targeted Israeli air strikes. These include Iranian nuclear scientist Sedighi Saber who was killed alongside 11 members of his family in an Israeli attack shortly before the Iran-Israel ceasefire took effect late on Monday, Al Jazeera reports. The attack took place in Astanah Ashrafieh, a northern Iranian city near the Caspian Sea.

Cloudbursts hit five places in Himachal: two dead, nine missing, 2,000 tourists stranded

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Shimla, June

Himachal Pradesh witnessed nature's fury yesterday as cloudbursts at five locations—four in Kullu and one in Kangra—triggered flash floods, resulting in loss of life and widespread destruction. Two deaths have been confirmed, and nine people remain missing as

rescue operations continue across the affected areas. In Kullu district, cloudbursts occurred at Jiva Nala (Sainji), Shilagarh (Gadsa), Snow Gallery (Manali), and Horangarh (Banjar), while Kangra's Khaniyara locality near Dharamshala also faced devastation due to a sudden cloudburst in Manuni Khad. Over 15–20 labourers staying in a shed were swept away by the torrent.

India refuses to sign joint statement on terrorism at SCO

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, June 26



India has refused to sign the joint statement of member countries on terrorism, foiling the intentions of China and Pakistan in the meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Sources said China and Pakistan did not want to mention the Pahalgam terrorist attack in the joint statement and instead were adamant on including the case of the Jaffar train hijack in Baluchistan in the statement. The two-day meeting of the defence ministers from the member countries of the SCO is

currently taking place in Qingdao, China. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is representing India in the meeting, which is being chaired by China. Sources said that India strongly objected to the proposal and refused to sign the statement. As a result, a joint statement will

not be issued following the conclusion of the SCO meeting. Earlier in the meeting, Singh had clarified India's stand on terrorism before the member countries and said in clear words that every act of terrorism is criminal and unjustifiable and that the organisation should unite to root out this threat to collective security. Singh said, "Peace and prosperity cannot co-exist with terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of non-state actors. The perpetrators, supporters, financiers and sponsors of terrorism need to be brought to justice."

Anti-Russian blocs destabilize Asia-Pacific region – Russian Defense Minister

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Tehran, June 25



The anti-Russian and anti-Chinese blocs that the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries are creating in the Asia-Pacific region have a destructive impact on regional stability, Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov said on Thursday. "In the Asia-Pacific region, the activities of certain states to create closed, anti-Chinese and anti-Russian bloc structures have a destructive impact on stability," Belousov said at a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) defense ministers held in China's Qingdao. Among such structures, Belousov specifically named the trilateral defense alliance AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States) and the Trilateral Pact (the United States, South Korea and Japan). The AUKUS partnership between Australia, the US and the UK, launched in 2021, focuses on deepening security cooperation and building Aus-

tralia's nuclear-powered submarine fleet by the late 2030s, which has drawn an attention among some Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) members, particularly China, about potential proliferation risks and regional stability, as the submarines use highly enriched uranium in sealed reactors. On July 27, 2024, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that Russia was trying to ensure that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had full control over the activities of AUKUS in the issue of the deployment of nuclear weapons components in the Asia-Pacific region. Among such structures, Belousov specifically named the trilateral defense alliance AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States) and the Trilateral Pact (the United States, South Korea and Japan). The AUKUS partnership between Australia, the US and the UK, launched in 2021, focuses on deepening security cooperation and building Aus-

NHRC issues notices to UP govt over death of 3 prisoners in Varanasi

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Lucknow, June 26

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued notice to the Uttar Pradesh government over the reported death of three prisoners in two days in the jails of Varanasi. The commission has taken suo moto cognizance of the incident and has issued notices to the state Director General, Prisons and the Varanasi Police Commissioner calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks, an official press release of the Commission said on Thursday. The report is expected to include the inquest and post-mortem examination reports, along with initial health screening reports of all three prisoners, as well as the magisterial enquiry reports. Three prisoners reportedly died in custody in Varanasi, one after the other, on June 15 and 16. Reportedly, a male doctor and a female prisoner lodged in the district jail died due to illness.

Yogi's directive on Kanwar Yatra & religious events: 'No provocative slogans'

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Lucknow, June 26



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has warned that the festive spirit should be maintained and no mischief should be allowed during the upcoming Kanwar yatra, Jagnath Rath Yatra and Muharram. The CM made it clear that the display of weapons and political use of religious symbols during such events disturb harmony and must be strictly prohibited. Entry of restricted animals on the procession routes should be prevented. Social media must be closely monitored, and drones can be used for surveillance if needed. Quick fact-checking and timely dissemination of accurate information are essential to counter fake news and rumors, he has told officials.

CM Yogi directed that no open sale of meat or similar items should take place along the Kanwar Yatra routes. He also directed that DJs and drums used in Kanwar yatra and Muharram should be permitted as per the norms.

The CM held a high-level review meeting with senior government officials on Wednesday late evening to ensure strong law and order, a peaceful atmosphere, and proper public facilities during the upcoming festivals. He gave clear instructions that all upcoming festivals should be celebrated with devotion, safety, and harmony. He emphasized that the entire administrative machinery must work with full sensitivity and alertness. The holy month of Shrawan will begin from July 11 and last until August 9, during which festivals like the traditional Kanwar Yatra, Shrawani Shivratni, Nag Panchami, and Raksha Bandhan will take place. Alongside this, the Jagannath Rath Yatra is expected from June 27 to July 8, and Muharram may also be observed between June 27 and July 6/7.

Ramban Observes International Day Against Drug Abuse

DC Calls for Mission-Mode Action against perpetrators

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JUNE 26: The District Administration Ramban, in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department and other line departments organized a comprehensive awareness programme in the Conference Hall, Maitra to mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The programme aimed to raise awareness about the ill effects of substance abuse and promote a drug-free society. Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan was the Chief Guest at the event. The programme was also graced by Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak, ACR Shokat Hayat Matoo, ACP Mohd Ashfaq, CMO Dr. Kamal Je Zadu, along with Tehsildars, BDOs, TSWO, doctors, officials from the Social Welfare Department and students from various schools and ITI Ramban. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized that drug abuse is a grave threat to individuals, families, and society, with the potential to cripple the future of generations. He called for mission-mode efforts involving all sections of society to combat this



menace. The DC further highlighted that the District Administration has already launched intensified anti-drug campaigns at district and panchayat levels, aimed at fostering community participation in eliminating drugs abuse from the grassroots. The ADC, in his remarks, stressed the role of awareness, counseling, and public participation in building a drug-free society. He urged citizens to utilize the National De-addiction Helpline 14446 for assistance. Earlier, the programme began with an anti-drug pledge. The participants resolved to fight against drug abuse and build a healthier,

addiction-free community. Resource persons from different departments delivered talks on the psychological, physical, and social consequences of drug abuse, as well as prevention strategies and rehabilitation options. Medical experts elaborated on the stages of addiction and the importance of early intervention. Adding a youth-driven dimension to the campaign, students from ITI Ramban delivered lectures and organized a mini-seminar to engage fellow participants. Their active participation reflected the crucial role of youth in leading the fight against substance abuse.

Reasi Admin observes Int'l Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

HT NEWS DESK

REASI, JUNE 26: The District Administration Reasi, in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare and Police organized a series of awareness events to observe the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The event was graced by Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik as the Chief Guest. SSP Paramvir Singh; ADC Rakesh Kumar; ASP Iftkhar, and other district officers were also present. At the outset, a vibrant cultural programme was organised featuring Nukkad Natak, singing performances, and poem recitations by students. The performances powerfully depicted the grave consequences of substance abuse. A special yoga session was conducted by KV Jyotipuram, encouraging participants to adopt a



healthy and disciplined lifestyle. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner lauded the impactful cultural performances and stressed the importance of spreading mass awareness on this critical issue. "Drug abuse is a pressing social challenge with far-reaching psychological and social consequences. It is our collective responsibility to ensure

the youth are guided towards the right path," she stated.

She further highlighted the district administration's commitment towards eradicating drug abuse, mentioning that awareness camps are being regularly organised across various blocks, schools, colleges, and localities under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

Earlier in the day, a rally was organised by the District Administration and Police Department to mobilize public participation in the fight against drug abuse. The rally, which witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and local residents, was flagged off by SSP Paramvir Singh. The event concluded with a renewed pledge from all present to work collectively for a drug-free society and continue spreading the message of health, awareness, and positive engagement for youth.

GCOE Jammu observes Int'l Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 2025

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 26: Government College of Education Jammu today joined the global community in observing the International Day Against Drug

Abuse and Illicit Trafficking with a powerful series of events aimed at raising awareness among students and staff about the dangers of Drug Abuse. The College's NCORD Committee coordinated the activities under the guidance of the College Principal Dr. Jyoti Parihar and convener Prof. Sunanda Rani along with the committee members.

The event began with the screening of documentary on "Operation Sanjivani" followed by Slogan writing

competition and Nukaad Natak performance that highlighted the disastrous consequences of Drug abuse. An awareness rally was also organized where students carried placards, banners and posters advocating for a drug free lifestyle.

Earlier, the College Principal, in her inaugural address, emphasised the role of educational institutions in shaping youth as a responsible citizen with a positive mindset and healthy lifestyle.

Contaminated Lam Nallah Water Sparks Health Concerns in Tral; Ban Imposed on Bathing

HT NEWS DESK

TRAL, June 25, KNT: Authorities in Tral sub-division of South Kashmir's Pulwama district have imposed an immediate ban on bathing in Lam Nallah, a vital source of drinking water for residents of Aripal tehsil, following alarming reports of contamination and recent jaundice cases, particularly among children. In an official communication issued by the Office of the Additional Deputy Commissioner Tral, the ban comes in response to a letter from the Assistant Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Sub-Division Tral and a representation from local residents, highlighting the deteriorating water quality of the stream. The letter as per the news agency Kashmir News Trust, notes that the Lam Nallah, wide-

ly used for drinking and domestic purposes, has been significantly contaminated due to frequent bathing and other activities at the site. "Recent cases of jaundice among children have been attributed to this contamination. It is worth recalling that a similar outbreak occurred last year due to the consumption of polluted water from the same source," the communication reads. To prevent the further spread of waterborne diseases, the ADC's office has instructed the Tehsildar Aripal to immediately install a hoarding at the site, clearly warning the public about the contamination and the ban on bathing. Additionally, the SDPO Tral has been asked to maintain strict vigil over the area to ensure public compliance and prevent any further contamination.

District Hospital Bandipora Observes International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

HT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, June 26: To mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, District Hospital Bandipora organized a significant awareness programme today aimed at highlighting the dangers of drug abuse and the illicit drug trade. The event was inaugurated by Chief Medical Officer Bandipora, Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad, along with Dr. Masrat Iqbal Wani, Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Bandipora.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad stressed the need for a united and sustained fight against drug addiction. He called for active participation from all sections of society to address the rising threat of substance abuse, especially among youth. Medical Superintendent District Hospital Bandipora, Dr. Masrat Iqbal Wani, while addressing the audience, said, "Drug abuse is not just a health issue—



it's a social crisis that tears families apart and cripples communities. Through consistent awareness and accessible treatment, we can help victims recover and reclaim their lives."

Key speakers at the event included Dr. Umair Qayoom, Medical Officer at the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF), Mr. Saleem Yousuf, District Programme Manager (NHM), Bandipora

and Junaid Gayas Zargar, Counselor ATF. They spoke about the long-term effects of drug dependency and the resources available through government-run health initiatives to support affected individuals.

The programme also included interactive sessions. The initiative was well-received by participants and is part of the district's broader efforts to curb drug menace and promote commu-

nity well-being. Ahmad stressed the need for a united and sustained fight against drug addiction. He called for active participation from all sections of society to address the rising threat of substance abuse, especially among youth.

Medical Superintendent District Hospital Bandipora, Dr. Masrat Iqbal Wani, while addressing the audience, said, "Drug abuse is not just a health issue—it's a social crisis that tears families apart and cripples communities. Through consistent awareness and accessible treatment, we can help victims recover and reclaim their lives." Key speakers at the event included Dr. Umair Qayoom, Medical Officer at the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF), Mr. Saleem Yousuf, District Programme Manager (NHM), Bandipora and Junaid Gayas Zargar, Counselor ATF. They spoke about the long-term effects of drug dependency and the resources available through government-run health initiatives.

International Day Against Drug Abuse with Awareness Program: SP Peer Zahoor Ahmad Urges Proactive Role in Combating Drug Menace

HT NEWS DESK/KNT

SRINAGAR, June 26, KNT: In observance of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the Youth Development and Rehabilitation Centre (YDRC), Eidgah Srinagar, held an awareness program on Wednesday that brought together law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, and individuals in recovery to discuss the growing challenge of substance abuse and the path toward healing. The event began with a welcome address by Dr. Muhammad Muzafer Khan, Director of YDRC, who greeted the dignitaries and participants and reaffirmed the center's mission to fight drug addiction through prevention, treatment, and education. The program was graced by the Chief Guest, Peer Zahoor Ahmad, Superintendent of Police and Staff Officer to DIG Central Kashmir Range (CKR). Other dignitaries present included Shri Showkat Ahmad (SP North), Junaid Wali (SDPO Khanyar), Mohammad Shafi (Administrative Officer), and Shri Showkat Ahmad (Private Secretary to DIG CKR). Mental Health Counselor Ishfaq Qureshi delivered a powerful presentation on YDRC's journey since its establishment in 2008, showcasing the center's contributions to mental health, rehabilitation, and com-



munity awareness. This year's international theme, "Breaking the Chains: Prevention, Treatment and Recovery for All," was explored in depth by Ms. Rumaisa, also a mental health counselor at YDRC. She emphasized the importance of inclusive and accessible de-addiction services and community support in breaking the cycle of substance abuse. Addressing the gathering, SP North Showkat Ahmad highlighted the devastating impact of drugs on youth and society. He commended YDRC for its consistent service over the past 16 years, particularly its affordable and accessible rehabilitation care. Chief Guest Peer Zahoor Ahmad urged

society to adopt a proactive stance in combating drug addiction. "It is our collective responsibility to save lives from the clutches of drugs," he said, encouraging collaboration between law enforcement, civil society, and rehabilitation institutions. Participants, including recovering addicts and inpatients, spoke emotionally about their personal journeys and expressed gratitude to YDRC for offering them a second chance at life. Their testimonies served as a powerful reminder of the possibilities of recovery and resilience. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Muzafer Khan, who expressed appreciation to all guests, staff, and participants for making the program impactful. [KNT]

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Jofra Archer Added To England Squad For Second Test

Fast Bowler Joins 15-Man Group, Could Make First Test Appearance Since 2021

United News of India

LONDON: Jofra Archer could play his first Test in more than four years after being added to the England squad to take on India at Edgbaston next week. The inclusion of Archer is the only change made by the selectors after England took a 1-0 lead in the series with a five-wicket victory Headingley. The second of five Tests will start on Wednesday. Archer, who made his first appearance in red-ball cricket since May 2021 when picked for Sussex's match at Durham in the last round of the County Championship, joins a group of six seamers vying to play in the second Test, with Jamie Overton and Sam Cook both retained alongside the trio of Chris Woakes, Brydon Carse and Josh Tongue. Archer has not been involved with the Test set-up since the 2021 tour of India, with the last of his 13 caps coming in Ahmedabad. He was subsequently sidelined by the recurrence of an elbow problem and then a back stress fracture, and played just seven limited-overs internationals between March 2021 and May 2024.

He has since returned to regular white-ball action, and made a long-awaited first-class return at Chester-le-Street at the weekend, bowling 18 overs and taking 1 for 32 as Sussex drew with Durham. Speaking after the second day's play, Archer admitted that the mental challenge of playing multi-day cricket would be the toughest to adapt to. "It felt all right today," he said. "I've been playing for a year, and bowling for two years, including the build-up, so everything is fine.

"Now it's a different challenge, because I know my body can hold up to it. The mental part of the game [will be tough]. Over the next couple of days, I'm going to have to battle a bit with it, but it's all good. It's a new challenge, and I'll keep trucking along." The second and third Tests, at Edgbaston and Lord's, will be played back-to-back and England may well look to rotate their attack. Tongue was England's most-successful bowler at Headingley, with match figures of 7 for 158, while Ben Stokes took five and Carse four. Woakes, playing his first Test since December, had figures of 1 for 148 but might be expected to find greater rhythm after missing the start of the season with an ankle injury.

Rana Returns to Delhi for Domestic Season

United News of India

NEW DELHI: Nitish Rana has decided to return to his original home state Delhi after spending two domestic seasons with Uttar Pradesh (UP). He has received a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association (UPCA) and is likely to make the switch before the upcoming domestic season.

"The experienced batter asked for an NOC and we have given it to him," UPCA's chief executive officer Ankit Chatterjee told ESPNcricinfo. "He mentioned family reasons for his decision."

Ashok Sharma, secretary of the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA), also confirmed that Rana had spoken to them about his decision and has already received the NOC



from UP. "However, DDCA has not yet received a copy of his NOC. Only after receiving the NOC, we can say anything about the chances of him playing for Delhi," Sharma said.

Rana had played age-group and domestic cricket for Delhi until 2022.

In 2023, he made the switch to UP and even went on to lead the side. However, his stint with UP was largely disappointing, and due to poor performances last season, he was dropped from the one-dayers and first-class cricket.

In the 2024-25 domestic season, he played four Ranji Trophy matches, scoring only 150 runs in six innings, including just one half-century. In the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20s, he scored only 111 runs in nine matches, with an average of 13.87 and a strike rate of 114.43. In the 50-over Vijay Hazare Trophy, he got to play only two matches and due to his continued poor form, he was dropped from the team.

After that, he was also left out of the Ranji Trophy side when the second phase of the tournament started in January this year.

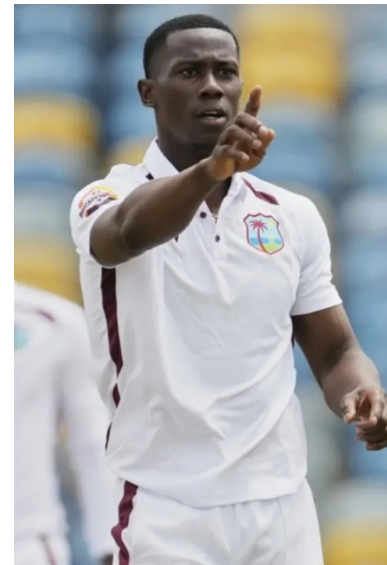
SHAMAR KEEPS THE SPOTLIGHT ON AUSTRALIA'S STRUGGLING TOP ORDER

United News of India

BARBADOS: Things may yet turn out alright on the night for Australia in Barbados in terms of the result - although that remains far from certain - but the opening day of the series shone a further light on the task of reshaping the top order with an eye to the future.

Firstly, a qualifier: these were not comfortable batting conditions. Travis Head, who produced the most dominant innings, said that Australia had been taken by surprise with how tough they were, but Jayden Seales suggested West Indies had an inkling of what to expect after the pre-series training camp here.

Still, Australia's 22 for 3 - and



a later collapse of 7 for 69 - followed on from the difficulties they had in the World Test Championship final against South Africa when they couldn't find a way through tricky periods. West Indies had struggles of their own, but it was a reminder that the next generation of Australia batting could be a longer-term project riddled with uncertainties.

You only need to show Shamar Joseph an Australia batting line-up for him to put on a display. He had not quite hit the heights of the Gabba since that heady day (although, after his struggles in England last year, the numbers had been far from dire) but this brought back memories of Brisbane.

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