



Rana reviews water supply schemes in Pir Panjal region  
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# Joint Efforts to Revive Tourism is Need of the Hour : CM Omar Abdullah

## Highlights Adventure Tourism, Stressed for Infrastructure Upgradation at New Destinations

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today held an interactive session with a visiting delegation of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) and acknowledged their continued interest and efforts in promoting Jammu and Kashmir as a premier tourist destination.

The interaction was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Commissioner Secretary Tourism Yasha Mudgal, Director Tourism Kashmir Raja Yaqoob Farooq, President IATO Ravi Gosain, senior



officials, key tourism stakeholders and IATO office bearers. "We are very grateful to IATO for coming here and organizing this visit, because trust works both ways."

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Chief Minister Omar Abdullah receives first batch of Hajj Pilgrims at Srinagar Airport

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, received the first batch of Hajj pilgrims this evening at the Srinagar International Airport, marking the beginning of the return phase for pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir who performed the sacred pilgrimage of Hajj-e-Baitullah this year.

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## Ensure Safe, Incident Free Amarnath Yatra: Union Home Secy to Security Top Brass

Chairs high level meet in Srinagar, finalizes security plan for annual pilgrimage

HT News Network

Srinagar, Jun 17: Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Tuesday directed the security top brass to ensure safe and incident free forthcoming Amarnath Yatra, slated to commence on July 3.

Chairing a high-level review meeting here to finalize the security plan for the upcoming 38-day annual pilgrimage, the Union Home Secretary, according to the news agency—, called on the officers to put foolproof security measures in place for the safety of the pilgrims.

Sources told that senior officials from J&K Police, Army, paramilitary forces, including CRPF, SSB, ITBP, BSF, and intelligence agencies attended the meeting.

The participants included J&K Chief Secretary, Atal Duloo, Director General of J&K Police, Nalin Prabhath, Director General of National Investigation Agency (NIA), Director General of Border Security Force (BSF), Sashstra Seema Bal (SSB) and Rail-



way Protection Force (RPF), Additional Director Generals of Central Reserve Police Force and BSF, Joint Director Intelligence Bureau, Principal Home Secretary Kashmir, Northern Command GOC 15 Corps, GOCs pf 16 and 9 Corps, Additional Director General (ADG) CID, Special Director Intelligence Bureau, Chairman Railway Board, IG BSF Jammu, Joint Secretary Jammu and Kashmir Ladakh, ADG ITBP, Special DG Coordination, GM Northern Railway, IG NIA, IG CRPF, CEO Shrine Board, IGP Kashmir, IGP Jammu, Div Com Kashmir and Div Com Jammu.

Sources told KNO that the Union Home Secretary reviewed the security preparedness and held deliberations about the prevailing security scenario in J&K. The

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## Iran-Israel Conflict: 'First batch of 90 Kashmiri Students to Board Flight Today

HT NEWS DESK/KNO

Srinagar, Jun 17: Amid escalating tensions between Iran and Israel, at least 90 students of Kashmir studying in Iran on Tuesday evening reached the capital city, Yerevan, in Armenia and are expected to board a flight to New Delhi on Wednesday.

National Convenor of Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA), Nasir Khuehami informed the news agency—

that at least 90 students of Kashmir studying in Iran have safely crossed the border into Armenia.

He said that besides Kashmiri students, nearly 20 students from other states have also reached Yerevan.

"All the Indian students who had crossed the Iran-Armenia border have now safely reached Yerevan in Armenia. This includes around 90 students

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## J&K Govt Enforces Aerial Restrictions Over Amarnath Yatra Routes

Amarnath Yatra routes declared 'no flying zone'

HT NEWS DESK/KNO

SRINAGAR, JUN 17 In a significant security measure, the J&K administration has declared the entire Amarnath Yatra route a 'no flying zone' for the period of pilgrimage this year.

As per the news agency—, ahead of the beginning of the



pilgrimage, the Union Territory's Home department,

which is under direct control of Lieutenant Governor, has declared all the routes of Amarnath Yatra as 'no flying zone' including both Pahalgam axis & Baltal axis.

The restriction applies to all types of aerial devices including UAVs, drones, and balloons.

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## Div Com-led Panel to Review Sgr Master Plan-2035

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Jammu and Kashmir Government on Tuesday constituted a seven-member panel led by Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir to undertake short term review of Srinagar Master Plan-2035.

According to an order issued by Commissioner Secretary to the Government, M Raju, a copy of which lies with the news agency—the committee has been constituted to examine the feasibility of TPS areas, and identify any TPS area, if needs

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## In a first, Consignment of Cherries From J&K Arrives in Saudi Arabia

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: In a first, a premium consignment of cherries from Jammu and Kashmir has successfully made its way to Saudi Arabia, marking a new milestone in agricultural exports from the Union Territory. As per the Embassy of India in Riyadh, the cherries are now available for consumers in the Kingdom to enjoy. According to the details

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## Govt embarks on Ambitious Plans to Establish J&K as emerging Industrial Destination: Dy CM

Addresses NCSS Implementation Conference, Strategy Workshop 2025 Directions for Immediate Improvements

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: The government, under the stewardship of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, is embarking on ambitious plans to establish Jammu and Kashmir as an emerging industrial destination with proper mounting of new vision for business growth in the current fiscal.



This was stated by Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, while addressing the "New Central Sector Scheme (NCSS); Implementation Conference and Strategy Workshop 2025" at Sanat Ghar, Bimina. The conference was organised by

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## Temp Rises in Kashmir, Settles Below Normal in Jammu

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: While the weatherman here has predicted rains and thunderstorms for the next one week, the maximum temperature has risen across Kashmir while it continued to settle below normal in Jammu on Tuesday.

Details obtained by the news agency—revealed that Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, along with other parts of the valley, once again witnessed above normal temperature with mercury

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

settling at 30.5 degrees Celsius in the city on Tuesday.

Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded a maximum temperature of 29.6 degrees Celsius while Pahalgam recorded 24.2 degrees Celsius. In Kokernag, the mercury settled at 28.4 degrees Celsius while Kupwara and Gulmarg, a famous ski resort, recorded 29.3 degrees Celsius and 19.6 degrees Celsius respectively.

Jammu division, however, continued to record below normal temperatures, with the winter capital of

## SDD Unveils HSDP for Mega Skilling of JK Populace

CS lays emphasis on achieving set targets

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: Jammu and Kashmir is all set to embark on a transformative journey in skill development with the unveiling of Holistic Skill Development Plan (HSDP), a comprehensive strategy aimed at creating a future-ready workforce and fostering sustainable economic growth.

The plan was presented to Chief Secretary, Atal Duloo, which outlines the ambitious goals and strategic interventions across various sectors.

Present on the occasion were ACS, Higher Education Department; Principal Secretary, School Education;



Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD); MD, Skill Development Mission besides Director, Skill Development along with other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary emphasized that the true impact of the plan lies

in its effective implementation at the grassroots level. He underscored the need for seamless coordination between the Education and Skill Development department, terming it essential for the plan's successful

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## Minister Satish Sharma Inaugurates Key Road Projects, Distributes Relief Kits, and Felicitates Meritorious Students in Akhnoor

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 17: In a significant step towards infrastructure development and community welfare, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science and Technology, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and ARI & Training, Satish Sharma today inaugurated key road macadamization works under the PMGSY and PWD schemes in the



Akhnoor region.

As part of the developmental initiatives, the

Minister inaugurated the PMGSY road from Chowki-Choura to Ghar Majoor

village, covering a length of 8.150 km, constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.40 crore. Additionally, he flagged off the macadamization of the PWD road from Panya to Bindigala, a project approved at an estimated cost of Rs. 4.67 crore, with an allotted cost of Rs. 3.30 crore, spanning 3.5 km.

In a compassionate outreach effort, free ration kits were distributed among residents of Pan

SEE FULL ON .....PAGE 02

## Speaker Legislative Assembly Visits Kargoom, Palpora in Charar-i-Sharief

Reviews development works, meets public delegations

HT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, JUNE 17: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today conducted an extensive tour of Charar-i-Sharief constituency in Budgam district.

The Speaker reviewed the progress on various ongoing developmental projects and had a first-hand appraisal of the pace and quality of work. He emphasized the importance of expe-



diting the execution of these projects to ensure their timely completion.

As part of his outreach efforts, the Speaker held public interaction pro-

grammes at Kargoom and Palpora, where he met with the local residents and listened to their concerns and demands.

The locals expressed appreciation for the visit and raised issues related to infrastructure, public services and basic amenities.

The Speaker directed the concerned officers and departmental heads to ensure prompt service delivery and effective grievance redressal

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## Modi Government Committed to Bringing Citizens Home Safely: Sunil Sharma

HT NEWS DESK/KNS

JAMMU, JUNE 17: Senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Tuesday reiterated the Modi government's firm commitment to safeguarding the lives and interests of Indian citizens living abroad.

According to Kashmir News Service (KNS), Sharma emphasized the

strength and responsiveness of the Ministry of External Affairs under the current administration.

"Our Ministry of External Affairs is strong and decisive. The Modi government has proven time and again that it stands by every Indian, no matter where they are in the world," Sharma said.

He was responding to a question

about students from Jammu & Kashmir reportedly stranded in war-torn Iran.

Sharma noted that the government has consistently acted to ensure that any Indian citizen in distress is brought home safely, including to Jammu & Kashmir or any part of the country.

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**CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....**

**CM**

Your presence assures us that we are on the right path," the Chief Minister remarked while addressing the gathering.

Referring to the tragic incident in earlier this year, the Chief Minister said, "To call it unfortunate would be an understatement. It impacted not just 26 families directly but affected the confidence of many more. Just when the season had begun to look promising, the downturn by mid-June was quite telling."

Highlighting the resilience of the tourism sector, Omar Abdullah expressed optimism about the revival. "Since the 2022 season, we've seen a surge in tourist vehicles. It was encouraging to see Srinagar bustling with activity, taxis with luggage on rooftops heading to Pahalgam, Gulmarg, and beyond."

He stressed that the goal is not to have tourists visit Kashmir just once. "We want them to return again and again. That's why your feedback is essential—for improving the experience, enhancing infrastructure and expanding the adventure tourism potential."

Touching on the progress of developing nine new destinations, the Chief Minister said the government is working closely with the Government of India to develop and operationalize them. "Destinations across both Jammu and Kashmir hold immense tourism potential, and both regions will be equally promoted."

On infrastructure and connectivity, the Chief Minister noted the popularity of the new train services to Kashmir and promised to take up the issue of capacity constraints with the Ministry of Railways. "The demand is growing, and we will explore increasing train length and frequency."

He also underscored the importance of reopening destinations that were temporarily shut post-tragedy. "We have begun this process. It's a matter of restoring confidence—for tourists and for ourselves."

Addressing the scope for adventure tourism, Omar Abdullah mentioned new ideas being explored in places like Betab Valley in Pahalgam and Gulmarg. "Zip-lining, mountain biking, and summer trekking could redefine these locations. We're in touch with national-level adventure infrastructure providers to bring these ideas to life."

He also welcomed IATO's proposal for a promotional tourism event later this year. "We look forward to sending a sizable delegation from J&K, both government and private stakeholders, to showcase the valley's offerings."

President IATO Ravi Gosain, in his address, assured full support from the Association in promoting Kashmir across domestic and international markets. "We are committed to showcasing Kashmir's beauty and culture to the world," he said.

The Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to the visiting delegation and reaffirmed the government's commitment to elevating Kashmir's tourism potential through partnership, innovation and sustained promotional efforts.

Earlier during the interaction, the visiting IATO delegation also shared their observations, feedback and valuable suggestions regarding their visit to the Valley and the way forward for tourism revival in the aftermath of the tragic April 22 terror attack at Baisaran that targeted tourists.

They appreciated the efforts of the government in restoring a sense of security and normalcy, while also emphasizing the need for sustained confidence-building measures, better infrastructure and targeted promotional campaigns to reassure both domestic and international travelers. The delegates reiterated their commitment to partner with the government in repositioning Jammu and Kashmir as a safe, premier and vibrant travel destination.

**MASTERPLAN**

sary for the removal of the precondition with respect to issuing of building permissions in such areas.

The committee comprises Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir as Chairman, Vice Chairman, Srinagar development Authority as Member Secretary. The members include Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Vice-Chairman J&K Lake Conservation and Management Authority, Chief Town Planner Town Planning Organization, Kashmir and representatives of Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).

The panel has been tasked to examine the orders and directions issued by the High Court of J&K and Ladakh from time to time, and on the basis of court orders, in case of buffer zones of Dal and Nigeen lakes, and to accordingly propose amendments to the Master Plan-2035 to incorporate the court directions—(KNO)

**SEC HOME**

meeting discussed detailed security and logistical assessment for the pilgrimage, which attracts lakhs of devotees from across the country.

The meeting, sources said, dwelt upon every aspect – from route security, commu-

nication systems, to medical and disaster preparedness. "Emphasis was laid on ensuring that all necessary arrangements should be put in place in close coordination with the J&K administration and security forces. The officials discussed multi-tier security, enhanced intelligence coordination, and uninterrupted logistical support, they added.

Sources said that the Union Home Secretary was informed that a close monitoring mechanism has been activated to respond swiftly to any emerging situation and the intelligence grid is functioning proactively, and the joint security drills, surveillance along the yatra routes have already begun. "The vulnerable points have been identified. Drone surveillance, night patrolling, and road-opening parties have increased the vigil," the Home Secretary was told.

He was informed that the arrangements for RFID tracking of yatrins, real-time weather alerts, emergency evacuation protocols, and dedicated health camps have been put in place to ensure the smooth conduct of the yatra. A multi-layer security grid, including both ground forces and aerial surveillance, would be activated ahead of the yatra.

This year's Amarnath Yatra is taking place in the aftermath of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 persons, mostly tourists dead. The authorities are taking no chances with the security arrangements being put in place for the Yatra.

A multi-layered security manned by the Army, CAPFs and the J&K Police is already in place at the cave shrine, base camps and transit camps in addition to the route right from Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu (starting point) for escorted convoys carrying the pilgrims to Baltal and Pahalgam.

Authorities have made arrangements for real-time weather alerts, emergency evacuation protocols, and dedicated health camps to ensure the smooth conduct of the yatra—(KNO)

**YATRA**

After Home department's directive, the authorities, in a separate notice, said that helicopter services wouldn't be available for Yatrins this year.

Citing the 'no flying zone' directive, the authorities said that pilgrims can reach the Shrine through foot or avail services of Ponies and Palkis.

These restrictions would be applicable from July 01 to August 10. The move comes after the Ministry of Home Affairs, advised the J & K government to do so.

According to the Home Department's order, these restrictions, however, shall not apply to cases of medical evacuation, disaster management, or surveillance operations conducted by security forces.

A detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP for such exceptions will be issued subsequently, the order states.

The annual Amarnath Yatra will commence from July 03 and culminate on August 09.

In view of the Pahalgam attack, additional security measures have been undertaken this year for peaceful conduct of the Yatra. As many as 580 companies of Central Armed Paramilitary Forces (CAPF) are being deployed for the safety of the pilgrims—(KNO)

**STUDENTS**

from Kashmir Valley, along with others from various Indian states, making a total of approximately 110 students from Urmia Medical University," he said.

Khuehami said the students have been received and accommodated at their designated location in hotels. "Their flight from Armenia to Delhi is scheduled for tomorrow, with all necessary arrangements being facilitated in coordination with the Indian authorities," he said.

Meanwhile, JKSA has appealed to the External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar for the immediate evacuation of Kashmiri students stranded in Iran as the conflict between Iran and Israel intensifies, pushing the region to the brink of a full-scale war.

The association raised alarm over the deteriorating security conditions, warning that hundreds of Indian students, mostly from Jammu and Kashmir, are stranded amid ongoing airstrikes, missile barrages, and widespread fear.

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

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

At least 600 students of India, mainly from Kashmir, were relocated to safer places on Monday—(KNO)

**DYCM**

the Directorate of Industries & Commerce, Kashmir, with an aim to bring together the key stakeholders from across J&K to celebrate

the achievements under the NCSS-2021 and chart the course for the coming financial year.

Commissioner Secretary I&C, Vikramjit Singh, was the Guest of Honour while Director I&C Kashmir, Khalid Majeed, senior officials and General Manager besides other concerned officials from District Industries Centres (DICs) were present in the Conference.

The Deputy Chief Minister was informed that the scheme NCSS-2021, which will be operational till 31st March 2037, offers robust incentives for new units, existing units and those undergoing substantial expansion across manufacturing and service sectors.

The Deputy Chief Minister emphasized the transformative role of NCSS-2021 with a total financial outlay of 28,400 crore. He asserted that the momentum should be maintained throughout the scheme implementation period and advised all the General Managers of DICs to ensure resolution of any grievance of the Unit holders and be proactive in disposal of cases.

Emphasizing on rapid industrial growth, the DyCM exhorted on building a transparent, accountable and growth-oriented industrial ecosystem in the region. He underscored the importance of continuous institutional support, real-time monitoring through the JKNS Portal and proactive coordination with DPIIT to ensure efficient delivery of scheme incentives.

The workshop also included a felicitation ceremony in honour of the top-performing DICs and Functional Managers/ IPOs and PIU Team from Ernst and Young under NCSS and IDS.

Earlier, a comprehensive presentation was displayed by the Director, Industries & Commerce, Kashmir, on implementation status of NCSS and the Industrial Development Scheme (IDS), showcasing key milestones achieved and outlining targets for FY 2025-26.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks, followed by a networking session and focused discussions on operational challenges.

**CS**

execution. Highlighting the significance of skill development, Dulloo stated that it is a cornerstone for securing sustainable livelihoods for the people. He further noted that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 offers a clear roadmap to guide this transformative mission.

Reviewing the Department's progress under schemes like PM Vishwakarma and PMKVY, the Chief Secretary asked the officials to go beyond basic training. He stressed the importance of complementing skill-building efforts with distribution of toolkits and access to credit linkages to truly empower the beneficiaries and enhance their livelihood opportunities.

ACS, Higher Education Department, Shantmanu, in his remarks, made out that a lot of transformative work had been done to link the education sector with the vocational courses to enhance employability of the students. He acknowledged that the department has a greater role to play in view of the objectives set under NEP-2020 and this skilling plan as well.

Principal Secretary, SED, Ram Niwas Sharma, also gave his inputs about the time bound implementation of the skilling plan besides ensuring about the seamless coordination with SDD in making the strategy to achieve these goals without facing any hindrance.

Secretary, SDD, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, while highlighting the plan informed that J&K has strengthened its skilling infrastructure to a larger extent in the past few years. He revealed that there are currently 54 Government ITIs offering 71 trades with enrolment of 12,600 admissions taken against a capacity of 12,832 students. Similarly, the region has 22 Government Polytechnics offering 18 trades with an intake capacity of 3,275 students and corresponding enrolment of 3,200 admissions in 2024, he added.

The main focal point of this meeting was the discussion on the Holistic Skill Development Plan (HSDP) created by the department, envisioning empowerment of every individual with relevant skills, entrepreneurial mindset and livelihood opportunities, leading to sustainable employment and enterprise creation.

The plan delineates four tracks of skilling program—Skilling for School Explorer (Age 14-18) which focuses on early vocational exposure and foundational skills. This is followed by Skilling for Career Launch-Pad (Age 18-22) which envisages equipping the students with job-ready certifications and entrepreneurial orientation.

The 3rd path comprises of 'Skilling for Job & Entrepreneurship Accelerator' (Age 22-35) enabling youth to choose between employment, entrepreneurship or competitive exams. The fourth one is 'Skilling for Livelihood Enabler' (Age 35-59) which would support re-skilling for sustainable livelihoods and promote home-based/self-employment.

The key challenges identified in HSDP implementation were set in the shape of the skilling ecosystem in J&K facing weak placement linkages, lack of upskilling pathways, limited access to skilling, poor delivery, outdated curriculum and lack of industry feedback.

The plan simultaneously proposed interventions propelled by the force of 4E's engine constituting the Establish, Enrich, Execute and Empower strategy. The first engine aims at establishing institutional support by strengthening the J&K Skill Development Mission, industry engagements, district skill planning and establishing a J&K Skills University as a central hub with model ITIs/ Polytechnics as nodes.

The Enrich part focuses on curriculum upgradation, aligning the training content with market demand. It also encompasses adopting model curricula, introducing priority sector tracks for new-age skills (AI, ML, Green Economy) and building 21st-century life skills and digital competencies. The Execute part focuses on efficient delivery by improving trainee mobilization, manpower management (trainer identification and capacity building), enhancing experiential learning through apprenticeships and dual system of training and providing structured offline placement support.

The whole strategy is envisaged to empower by building the enabling ecosystem throughout J&K. This pillar of the strategy also features developing the Mission YUVA App as a one-stop platform, implementing a Skills Passport system and facilitating the financing for skilling through loan schemes and vouchers.

Other focused initiatives constitute engaging Village-Level Skill Mitras/YUVA Saathis, who are trained volunteers at the Panchayat level to mobilize youth and link them with the schemes. For artisans and weavers, it envisions 'Mission Artisan 2047', a dedicated vertical to preserve and modernize traditional crafts.

About the implementation, it was set out that the strategy will involve a multi-tier approach at Block, District and Divisional levels, ensuring convergence of UT and Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

The plan also emphasizes diverse training modes, including satellite campuses, online skilling, classroom training and mandatory on-the-job training.

**SATISH SHARMA**

chayat Gigrial, Block Khour, who were recently affected by border firing and disturbances. The initiative was executed in collaboration with the Impact Guru Foundation (IGF), a reputed NGO actively working in conflict-affected areas.

On the occasion, a special felicitation ceremony was organized at Kohinoor Restaurant, Akhnoor, to honour meritorious students of the Chamb Constituency who scored above 90% in recent board examinations.

The Minister presented appreciation certificates and mementoes to the achievers, acknowledging their hard work and motivating them to continue excelling in academics.

During his visit, the Minister also interacted with various local deputations, who brought forth issues related to damaged roads, drinking water shortages, and other civic concerns.

Minister Sharma patiently listened to the grievances and assured timely redressal through active coordination with the concerned departments, emphasizing that public welfare remains a top priority.

The Minister was accompanied by Sub-Divisional level Officers, and prominent citizens.

**SUNIL SHARMA**

"We want to assure the people that the Indian government, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, takes swift action through our foreign ministry to prevent any harm to Indian nationals abroad," he added.

Calling for calm and cooperation, he urged the public and media to trust the efforts of the government and the Ministry of External Affairs. "There is full hope and faith in the system. Our foreign policy is driven by national interest and the safety of every Indian," he concluded.(KNS)

**TEMP**

the region recording a maximum temperature of 35.5 degrees Celsius.

Banihal recorded 28.2 degrees Celsius, Batote 27.1 degrees Celsius, Katra 31.8 degrees Celsius and Baderwah 27.2 degrees Celsius.

Pertinently, Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad had told KNO that there is a possibility of a brief spell of rain, thundershower with gusty winds at isolated to scattered places till June 20.

However, he said that generally cloudy weather with intermittent spells of rain and thundershower is expected at many places between June 21 and June 23. Amidst the forecast, the farmers have been advised to continue the farm operations—(KNO)

**CHERRY**

collected by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the embassy's commercial team, visited Lulu Supermarket in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to receive and officially launch the consignment.

The Embassy also shared the development

through its official handle, stating that this unique product highlights the growing export potential of Indian produce in global markets, especially high-quality fruits from Jammu and Kashmir.

Moreover, the Embassy also shared on Twitter (formerly), X wrote, the first ever consignment of premium cherries from Kashmir has arrived in the Kingdom Saudi Arabia.

"Cherries from Jammu & Kashmir arrive in Saudi Arabia! The first ever consignment of premium cherries from Jammu & Kashmir has arrived in the Kingdom & are available to be savored by all. Embassy Commercial team led by Counsellor (Commerce) Ms Manumriti visited the Lulu Supermarket and received the consignment and launched this unique product," reads the tweet—(KNO)

**SPEAKER**

mechanism. He stressed the need for responsive governance that reaches the people at grassroots level.

Speaking on the occasion, the Speaker stated, "The government is committed to reach the people at their doorsteps. Along with the district administration, we aim to understand the needs of the community directly and work together to address them."

He reaffirmed the government's commitment towards inclusive development and citizen-centric governance, highlighting the importance of on-ground engagement for effective administration.

**HAJJ**

The Chief Minister personally welcomed and congratulated the pilgrims on their safe return and smooth performance of the Arkan-e-Hajj.

He interacted with the Hajj pilgrims and inquired about their experiences and the facilities provided during the pilgrimage.

The Hujaaj expressed their gratitude to the Chief Minister and appreciated the arrangements made for their comfort and convenience throughout the journey.

The Chief Minister expressed his appreciation for the devotion and discipline exhibited by the pilgrims during the course of their spiritual journey.

The first returning batch comprised 178 pilgrims, out of the total 3,606 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir who undertook the pilgrimage this year.

The return of this group heralds the start of the arrival phase, which will continue over the coming days.

The government has made elaborate arrangements to ensure a hassle-free arrival experience for the pilgrims. Necessary logistical and transport facilities have been put in place to facilitate their smooth journey from the airport to their respective destinations across Jammu and Kashmir.

Minister Javed Ahmad Dar, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA from Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Executive Officer J&K Haj Committee Dr. Shujhat Qureshi and other concerned officials were also present during the reception of the Hujaaj.

**MP AGA SYED RUHULLAH MEHDI CHAIRS DISHA MEETING AT GANDERBAL**

GANDERBAL, JUNE 17: Member Parliament from Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, today chaired the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meeting in Ganderbal to review the implementation status and progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) across the district.

The meeting witnessed a comprehensive review of development works and government schemes being implemented in various sectors.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, gave a detailed presentation highlighting achievements under different sectors including Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, NRLM, Urban Livelihoods Mission, Rural Development, R&B, Handicrafts & Handlooms, Social Welfare, Education, Health, Jal Shakti, Power, and Labour & Employment.

The meeting was apprised of the physical and financial progress achieved under flagship schemes like MGNREGA, PMAY-G/U, SBM-G/U, RGS, PMGSY, JJM, and CSS funding, among others. Progress under MPLADS and awareness initiatives under the Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan were also discussed.

Commending the efforts of the District Administration, MP Aga Ruhullah lauded the performance across multiple sectors and emphasized the untapped potential of the Agriculture and Allied sectors in Ganderbal.

He directed the District Officers of Agriculture and allied sectors to adopt modern agricultural practices and technologies to maximize productivity and benefit the local population.



## Rana reviews water supply schemes in Pir Panjal region

### HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 16: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana, today conducted a comprehensive review of functioning of Water Supply Schemes in Pir Panjal Region at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting, which was attended by Director Finance, Director Planning, Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti, aimed to assess the current status of water supply infrastructure and identify the areas for improvement.

During the review, the Minister emphasized the importance of meticulous planning for the ensuing year to ensure uninterrupted water supply to the residents of the region. He directed the concerned departments to prepare detailed plans, taking into account the region's specific needs and challenges.

The Minister also stressed the need for regular water quality tests to ensure the provision of safe drinking water to the public. He directed the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) officials to prioritize water quality monitoring and take corrective measures wherever necessary.



The meeting also reviewed the progress on the ongoing projects of Water Supply Schemes in the region.

Rana expressed concern over delays and directed the con-

cerned officers to fast-track the completion of these projects, ensuring high-quality workmanship. The Minister also reviewed the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission in the Pir Panjal Region. He emphasized the importance of community participation and involvement in ensuring the sustainability of water supply schemes. The Minister reaffirmed the commitment of J&K Government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah towards providing safe and reliable drinking water to the residents of J&K including the Pir Panjal Region. He assured that his

department would work tirelessly to address the region's water supply challenges and ensure the well-being of its residents. The Minister also reviewed the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission in the Pir Panjal Region. He emphasized the importance of community participation and involvement in ensuring the sustainability of water supply schemes. The Minister reaffirmed the commitment of J&K Government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah towards providing safe and reliable drinking water to the residents of J&K including the Pir Panjal.

## Committee on Public Undertakings holds introductory-cum-review meeting

### HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: The Committee on Public Undertakings of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today convened an introductory-cum-review meeting at the Assembly Complex, Srinagar.

The meeting was presided over by Committee Chairman, Ali Mohammad Sagar and attended by the members including Ali Mohammad Dar, Baldev Raj Sharma, Mir Mohammad Fayaz, Ranbir Singh Pathania, Showkat Hussain Ganai, Said U Din Bhat and Tanvir Sadiq.

The Chairman emphasised



the importance of proactive participation from all members and officials in strengthening the operations and efficiency of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

He highlighted the urgent need to take concrete steps for revival of loss-making Corpora-

tions. He stressed the importance of robust audits and evaluations to ensure added transparency and accountability. He instructed the concerned departments to submit the status of public undertakings along with audit reports to enable informed decision-making and

reforms. "The aim of the Committee is to ensure that our public undertakings are functional, contributing to economic development and creating business and employment opportunities for the people," said the Chairman.

During the session, the Principal Accountant General informed on the audit procedures and offered recommendations to further enhance the performance of public sector corporations in Jammu and Kashmir. Emphasis was given on holding Corporation wise review meetings, while members of the Committee committed to work collectively for improvement in the sector.

## MLA Bandipora Nizamuddin Bhat Secures ₹11.05 Crore Under Samagra Plan to Kickstart Ground-Level Educational Reforms

### HT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, JUNE 2025: In a bold and transformative step towards revamping the education system in Bandipora, MLA Nizamuddin Bhat has secured a total of 11.05 crore under the centrally sponsored Samagra Shiksha plan. This major allocation aims to breathe new life into the constituency's academic institutions by addressing long-pending infrastructural gaps and pushing for overall educational upliftment.

Of the total amount, 5.97 crore has been sanctioned for 79 new works in the upcom-



ing financial year 2025-26, while 5.08 crore is already being utilized for 44 works currently underway as part of the 2024-25 plan. Together, this combined investment of over eleven crore rupees is set to improve the educational landscape across the Bandipora constituency.

The funds will be directed

towards critical areas such as the construction of additional classrooms, the establishment of separate toilet blocks for boys and girls, the building of protective boundary walls, and the repair and maintenance of existing school infrastructure. These interventions are intended not just to improve physical spaces but to create an environment where learning can thrive.

MLA Nizamuddin Bhat, along with other dignitaries, has been visiting schools and colleges across Bandipora to closely inspect facilities, interact with students and faculty and understand the specific needs of each institution.

## GDC Ganderbal organises Legal Literacy Program

### HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar: Government Degree College, Ganderbal in collaboration with the School of Law, University of Kashmir organised "Legal Literacy Program in the college conference hall.

In the welcome address Lt Dr Salma Khan, head of the department insisted that such type of awareness programs are essential for creating informed and active citizens who can play an important role in creating a just society and where justice will be accessible to all.

Prof Fouzia Fatima, principal of the college, impressed upon the need of empowering young adults with knowledge of their legal and constitutional rights and duties. 16 participants from the school of Law delivered there presentations on various laws like domestic violence, consumer rights, mental health and well-being, sexual harassment, right to education, right to legal aid.

Dr Iftikar Hussain Bhat, and Dr Junaid Aalam from the Department of Law, University of Kashmir shared their views on how these programs enable important stakeholders of society in understanding laws, their entitlements, and how to access justice services particularly Free Legal Aid meant for the marginalised sections of society. The program was attended by faculty members, students and cadets of 9 J&K Girls Bn.

## NIT Srinagar hosts first Alumni Association meeting post registration; launches 'SANGAM' platform

### HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, June 17: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Tuesday hosted the inaugural meeting of its newly registered Alumni Association of NIT Srinagar (AANITS), marking a significant step in strengthening alumni engagement and global outreach. The meeting served as a platform for detailed deliberations on building a robust alumni network, launching global chapters, and institutionalizing mentorship opportunities for students. It was presided over by Er. Aamir Ali Mir, Vice President of AANITS and Director of Disaster Management, J&K. Prof. Mohammad Shafi Mir, President AANITS, Prof MA Shah, Dean Alumni & International Affairs, welcomed the members and led the proceedings, which also focused on planning the 2025

Alumni Meet and enhancing global alumni outreach.

Key office bearers in attendance included Er. Ali Mohammad Rather, General Secretary and Former Executive Engineer, JKPDD; Er. Syed Javed Bukhari, Secretary and Vice President & MD of FIL Industries Pvt. Ltd.; and Dr. Mursaleen Hussain Mohammad, Additional Secretary. Prof. Manzoor Ahmad Ahangar, Joint Secretary-I, Dr. Shahid Saleem, Treasurer and Prof. MA Shah, Member-Secretary and Dean AIA, also participated in key discussions. Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran, Coordinator, and Dr. H.S. Pali, Associate Dean, were also present. Meanwhile Abhiraj Das, Muhammad Hussain and Malkeet Singh also attended the meeting.

A major highlight of the meeting was the formal launch of SANGAM - Student-Alumni Network for Growth,

Aspirations & Mentorship, a visionary initiative aimed at creating a vibrant and structured platform for alumni-student interaction. The SANGAM platform is designed to build enduring relationships between current students and the vast alumni base of the institute, fostering a culture of mentorship, professional development, and collaborative growth. Prof. M.A. Shah, who is spearheading the initiative, explained that SANGAM will enable structured support for research, innovation, and career development by drawing on the expertise of alumni across disciplines.

He emphasized that the initiative is aligned with the Five-Year Vision Document of NIT Srinagar and aims to develop strategic partnerships through both regional and international alumni chapters.

## IGNOU Opens Admissions for July 2025 Session Across 30 Study Centres in Kashmir & Ladakh

### HT NEWS DESK/PIB

Srinagar: The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has announced the commencement of admissions for the July 2025 session, offering a wide array of academic programmes including Master's, Four-Year Undergraduate, Diploma, and Certificate courses through its 30 Study Centres located across Kashmir and Ladakh. Prospective students can submit their applications online via the University's official portal: <https://ignouadmission.samarth.edu.in> or access the admissions link directly from the homepage of [www.ignou.ac.in](http://www.ignou.ac.in). The deadline for submission of applications is 15 July 2025. The July 2025 cycle includes admissions to over 60 new programmes, notably Four-Year Undergraduate Programmes (FYUP) in disciplines such as Commerce, Economics, History, Political Science, Public Admin-

istration, Sociology, Anthropology, Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu, Social Work, Philosophy, Biochemistry, and Facilities & Service Management. In the postgraduate domain, new offerings include M.Sc. programmes in Geography, Geo-Informatics, Applied Statistics, and Renewable Energy. To apply, candidates must first register on the SAMARTH portal by creating a User ID and Password and ensure they have access to an active mobile number, email ID, scanned academic documents, a photograph, and online payment options. Additionally, it is mandatory to create a DEB ID prior to starting the application. The guide for DEB ID creation is available here.

Dr. A.H. Rizvi, Regional Director, IGNOU Regional Centre Srinagar, urged aspiring learners to make the most of this opportunity to join India's premier open learning institution. "IGNOU continues to expand access to quality education across remote and underserved regions.

## "No More Arbitrary Pricing"; Horticulture Department To Import High-Density Plants Directly, Says Director Vikas Anand

### HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar: Director Horticulture, Vikas Anand, said that in order to end the arbitrariness of approved private companies, the department will now import high-density fruit plants directly from this year. This includes not just apple saplings but also walnut, almond, hazelnut, and cherry varieties. He said the government made this decision in view of the growing trend of high-density orchards and the increasing supply-demand gap in plant availability. He said the private companies

approved by the department are unable to supply high-density Italian apple plants to orchardists on time due to growing demand. As a result, many farmers converting traditional orchards into high-density ones are left waiting for years. Ironically, he said, even when plants arrive, they are often found to be substandard and diseased.

"As a result, farmers are not only wasting money but also losing valuable time," he added. The Director said that moving forward, the department will ensure the import of high-quality and disease-free plants—including apples, wal-



nuts, almonds, hazelnuts, and cherries—so that orchardists converting to modern horticulture can benefit fully. To support this shift, nurseries are also being set up with assistance from a Central Government scheme.

"With this initiative, the arbitrariness of registered private companies will end, and farmers will be able to access better quality saplings on time," he said.

Responding to a question, Anand acknowledged an earlier news report from Pulwama district highlighting the supply of diseased saplings from Lariyatr village. He confirmed that a departmental team had verified that a private firm named FruitWall had supplied canker-affected apple saplings to a local orchardist. Following this, the department issued a show-cause notice to the company and initiated action.

"The company has been directed to replace the entire consignment with healthy saplings and bear the cost of medicines as per the agreement, which makes the company responsible for three years," he said. When asked about the quality control process for imported plants, Anand said that while a central team comprising a Plant Protection Officer from the Government of India and an expert from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) inspects consignments abroad, no Horticulture Department expert is currently included in that team.

## Training prog. on Pension Suvidha Portal held at Pulwama

### HT NEWS DESK

PULWAMA, JUNE 17: District Treasury Office Pulwama today successfully conducted a training programme for Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) of the district, focusing on the operationalization of the Pension Suvidha Portal.

The initiative was held in accordance with the directions of the Director General Accounts & Treasuries, Jammu and Kashmir.

The training session, held at the Auditorium Hall of Government Degree College (Boys), Pulwama, witnessed participation from DDOs and dealing assistants of various Govt. Offices operating under the District Treasury Pulwama.

Programme aimed to enhance the understanding and capacity of the officers with respect to the newly launched Pension Suvidha Portal, designed to streamline pension-related processes and promote transparency and efficiency.

District Treasury Officer Pulwama highlighted the significance of digital transformation in public financial management. Participants were given a detailed orientation on various features and functionalities of the portal, followed by a practical demonstration.



# DAJGUA Day-3: Distt admin Pulwama organizes mega awareness & benefit saturation camp at Nargistan Tral

Multi-sectoral engagement under DAJGUA brought service delivery at the doorstep of tribal population

HT NEWS DESK

PULWAMA, JUNE 17: In line with the national vision of tribal welfare and inclusive development, district administration Pulwama today organized a mega Awareness and Benefit Saturation Camp at Nargistan Panchayat of Aripal Block under the banner of the ongoing Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA). The camp marked the third day of the fifteen-day-long campaign aimed at ensuring 100 per cent saturation of all eligible tribal beneficiaries under various Central and UT Government schemes. The initiative envisions holistic upliftment of tribal communities through focused interventions in infrastructure, healthcare, education, livelihoods, and digital inclusion. Departments including Health, Education, Social Welfare, Rural Development, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Industries,



Forest and others participated in the camp and set up dedicated stalls to deliver on-spot services and scheme benefits. Each departmental stall facilitated real-time support through on-the-spot registrations, beneficiary enrolments, scheme consultations, and awareness dissemination. Brochures, booklets and pamphlets were also provided to enhance informed participation. To promote digital inclusion, a Common Service Centre (CSC) was established at the venue. The CSC enabled beneficiaries to enroll, correct, or update

various important documents such as Aadhar Card, PAN Card, Kisan Credit Card, Driving License, Ayushman Bharat Card, Domicile Certificate and register for various digital services and Government initiatives. On the occasion, Rural Development department had set up a dedicated desk that facilitated on-the-spot registration of Job Cards under MGNREGA, assistance with claims under the Forest Rights Act (FRA), and saturation of eligible households under PMAY (G). Officials also sensitised the public about rural infrastruc-

ture development initiatives and livelihood convergence schemes tailored for tribal communities. The stall attracted a significant number of tribal beneficiaries seeking assistance and clarity on entitlements and application procedures. A significant highlight of the event was the health camp organized by the Health department where residents availed free consultation and medical services provided by a team of doctors and paramedics. Special focus was laid on awareness regarding sickle cell disease and waterborne illnesses, with health experts educating the community about preventive healthcare, safe drinking practices and early detection protocols. On-spot screenings and basic diagnostics further strengthened the preventive healthcare outreach. The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from tribal residents of all age groups who expressed deep appreciation for the government's proactive outreach.

## Awareness prog. on Environmental Conservation held at Kulgam

FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, JUNE 17: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kulgam, organised an awareness programme on environmental conservation today at Al Hilal Residential Institution, Chawalgam. The event, held under the chairmanship of Aijaz Ahmad Khan, Chairman, DLSA Kulgam, witnessed the participation of Fozia Paul, Secretary, DLSA Kulgam; officials from DLSA, LADCs, and PLVs; staff members of the host institution; and a large number of students. Umar Nazir, Deputy LADC and the resource person for the session, addressed the gathering and highlighted the importance of environmental protection. He urged everyone, especially the youth, to actively contribute towards maintaining a clean and safe environment for the well-being of society. In her address, Secretary DLSA encouraged students to engage in plantation drives and raise awareness among the public about the significance of planting trees and preserving nature. The programme concluded with a Plantation drive held within the premises of Al Hilal Residential Institution, which was actively participated by the Secretary DLSA, Chairman of the Institution, LADCs, and other dignitaries present.

## IUST Bridges Students to Future Opportunities through its Outreach initiatives

HT NEWS DESK



Awantipora, June 17: The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), through its School of Engineering and Technology, recently concluded a wide-ranging career counselling and outreach drive across the Kashmir Valley. The initiative is one of the most ambitious community engagement efforts by the university aimed at empowering students with information about undergraduate and postgraduate opportunities. The outreach spanned South, North, and Central Kashmir, including Pulwama, Shopian, and Budgam districts. Five dedicated teams comprising 20 faculty members from various departments of engineering and technology visited around 25 educational institutions. The drive focused on motivating and guiding students on academic, research, and innovation pathways available at IUST and helping them make informed career decisions.

This extensive initiative was led by senior academic members including Dr. Feroz Ahmad Mir (Head, ECE), Dr. Khalid Muzafar (Associate Professor, ECE), Dr. Tariq Ahmad Ganaie and Dr. Farhana Mehraj Allai (Dept. of Food Technology), and Dr. Mohd Junaid Mir (Dept. of Mechanical Engineering). They were joined by other faculty members from Computer Science, Civil, Mechanical, and Electrical Engineering departments, including Dr. Assif Assad, Dr. Basharat Nabi Dar, Dr. Zahid Gulzar Khaki, Dr. Rayees Ahmad Lone, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Ganie, Mr. Syed Mujtiba Hussain, Dr. Syed Zubair Ahmad Shah, Dr. Ahsan Hussain, Mr. Shakeel Ahmad Malik, Dr. Zubair Jeelani, Dr. Ovais, Dr. Jasia Nisar, Dr. Mehnaz Rasool, and Dr. Faheem Sadiq. During their visits, the teams directly interacted with students, offering career insights, showcasing IUST's cutting-edge infrastructure, and highlighting the university's emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship, and holistic student development. The initiative was warmly received by students and school administrators alike, who appreciated IUST's proactive efforts in bridging the information and opportunity gap.

# SDRF Kashmir Together with All JK Shia Association Organises Training Camp for Molvis and Volunteers

Ubaid Mehdi

Srinagar, 17th June 2025: In a significant step towards strengthening on-ground preparedness ahead of Muharram, the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) Kashmir, in collaboration with the All Jammu & Kashmir Shia Association (AJKSA), today conducted a specialised training camp at Imam Bargah Zadibal. The session saw active participation from Molvis associated with All JK Shia Association from across the Valley, alongside dedicated community volunteers. The training covered essential areas such as first aid response, basic

fire safety including the handling of fire extinguishers, and techniques for effective crowd management. The aim of this initiative is to ensure that each madrasa has at least one SDRF-trained person who can also educate students on basic disaster preparedness and emergency response, thereby spreading awareness at the grassroots level. This camp is part of a broader, ongoing initiative spearheaded by AJKSA President Molvi Imran Reza Ansari, who began Muharram preparations nearly three weeks ago. As part of this early groundwork, meetings have already been held with



NGOs, sabelgal owners, and volunteers from different districts. The feedback

received during these interactions is now being incorporated into planning and safety measures for the upcoming days. The collaboration between SDRF Kashmir and AJKSA reflects a growing emphasis on safety, community empowerment, and proactive disaster readiness during large religious gatherings, especially during the sensitive and high-traffic Muharram period. At the conclusion of the camp, AJKSA President Molvi Imran Reza Ansari expressed his gratitude to the Director of SDRF Kashmir Imtiyaz Mir for providing the necessary staff and expertise to facilitate the training.

## Cultural Bonds Strengthened as North Kashmir Welcomes India's Artistic Heritage

DR. AB QAYOOM

Barmullah, Jun, 17: In a remarkable display of India's rich cultural tapestry, 'Shaam-e-Shafqat', a vibrant cultural festival, was held at Zorawar Hall, Pattan, bringing together the diverse hues of the country's folk traditions. Jointly organised by the North Zone Cultural Centre, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and the Indian Army, the festival served as both a tribute to national unity and a celebration of the enduring artistic traditions of India. The one-day festival witnessed the participation of renowned artists from Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Assam, Rajasthan, and Kashmir, whose captivating performances mesmerized the audience. Each presentation beautifully showcased the depth, vibrancy, and regional uniqueness of India's cultural heritage, creating a memorable experience for all in attendance. From the energetic folk dances of Punjab and Assam to the soulful musical renditions from Raj-



asthan and Kashmir, the event transformed the venue into a living canvas of India's diverse cultural expressions. Traditional melodies, vibrant costumes, and age-old folk tales found new life on the stage, fostering a sense of collective identity and pride among the audience. Beyond its entertainment value, the festival carried a deeper cultural significance. It aimed to preserve, promote, and popularize India's rich cultural legacy, while also strengthening the bond between the youth of North Kashmir and the diverse cultural landscapes of the country. The initiative stood as a powerful testament to India's ethos of 'Unity in Diversity', celebrat-

ing the common thread of heritage and tradition that binds the nation together. The event drew an enthusiastic response from students, artists, and members of civil society from across North Kashmir. The constant applause and cheerful participation of the audience reflected their appreciation and reaffirmed the festival's importance in fostering cultural integration and national unity. Shaam-e-Shafqat was not just an event but a living celebration of India's pluralistic spirit, leaving a lasting impression of joy, pride, and togetherness in the hearts of all those who witnessed it.

## QWF Continues Anti-Drug Campaign, Engages Students at Wangam School of Qaziabad

DR. AB QAYOOM

Langate, Jun, 17: In a determined effort to combat the escalating challenge of drug addiction, the Qaziabad Welfare Forum (QWF) organized a comprehensive awareness programme on drug de-addiction at Government Upper Primary School, Wangam in Qaziabad, Kupwara. The day-long event aimed to sensitize young students about the perils of substance abuse and encourage collective action against this growing social menace. The programme witnessed the enthusiastic participation of 60 students, alongside school faculty, senior citizens, members of civil society, volunteers, and the core body of QWF. The event was graced by Mohd Yousaf Bhat, Chairman of Qaziabad Welfare Forum, and the Headmaster of UPS Wangam, who jointly emphasized the critical need for awareness initiatives at the grassroots level. In his address, Mohd Yousaf Bhat highlighted the increasing vulnerability of youth to addictive substances such as alcohol, brown sugar, chitta, charas, and other harmful drugs. He urged the school management and teaching staff to remain vigilant and actively guide students away from the perils of drug abuse. Stressing the importance of early intervention, he called upon parents, teachers, and civil society members to join hands in safeguarding the



future generation. Other speakers at the event echoed these concerns, emphasizing the role of sustained awareness campaigns and community-driven efforts in curbing the drug menace. They advocated for a united societal response to this issue, underscoring the importance of education, parental care, and community monitoring in creating a drug-free environment. The Qaziabad Welfare Forum, a non-political organization registered under the Government Society Act of 1860 (Registration No. 7830, dated November 22, 2023), has consistently worked for over a decade to address social issues, with a particular focus on drug de-addiction, youth empowerment, and community welfare in the Qaziabad region. This latest initiative at UPS Wangam stands as a testament to QWF's unwavering commitment to promoting health, awareness, and social harmony. The forum's continuous efforts reaffirm the power of grassroots movements in addressing critical community concerns and fostering a healthier, addiction-free society.

# CUKashmir and ICSSR collaborative workshop on research methodology begins

HT NEWS DESK

Ganderbal, June 17: Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) in association with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, kick-started 10-days Research Methodology Workshop for the research scholars and post-doc fellows at varsity's Green Campus here Tuesday. In his Presidential address, CUKashmir Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, asked the participants to remain abreast and updated with the digital technological advancements to conduct successful research. "A digitally savvy researcher in the field of Social Sciences is a catalyst for progress who can navigate ethical challenges, uphold research integrity, and contribute to the society," Prof.

A Ravinder Nath said. He said Social Science research plays a huge role in sustaining and improving the quality of life by exploring the complexities of human behaviour, society, and institutions. "It helps policymakers design informed and inclusive strategies in the areas of critical importance," Prof. A Ravinder Nath further said. The CUKashmir Vice-Chancellor underlined the critical role of research methodology in shaping high-quality research output. "Without a sound methodological framework, even the most insightful research can lose its value," he remarked. He emphasized the growing need for methodological innovation in an era marked by interdisciplinary convergence, big data, and global challenges. In his keynote address, Padma Shri, Prof.



Amitabh Mattoo deliberated on the topic "Between Curiosity and Craft: On Theory, Method, and Responsibility in a Disrupted World" and said, "Methodology is also about intellectual honesty. It requires you to interrogate the boundaries between the observer and the observed, the subject and the

scholar." Prof. Mattoo said, "Deliberating upon the 'Method: The Tool,' Prof. Mattoo said, "Even the most sophisticated tool is useless without a good question. Methods must not be chosen for their novelty or popularity, but for their fit. A semi-structured interview may yield rich qualitative data on lived experiences, but it cannot tell you how many people feel that way. Conversely, a survey may map patterns but miss underlying meanings." Talking about the "Research in an Age of Simulation," he said "Today, we confront a new challenge: the simulation of scholarship. AI-generated essays, paper mills, automated citations—these tempt many into shortcuts. But let me say this clearly: there is no substitute for the disciplined, reflective labour of scholarship.

In the long run, tools cannot replace thinking. Models cannot replace methods. Technology cannot replace judgment. Research remains a human act—full of uncertainty, emotion, revision, and discovery. Do not allow a machine to flatten your voice. Let your questions emerge from lived experience, careful reading, and ethical ambition." Course Director and Dean School of Business Studies, Prof. Fayaz Ahmad Nikka in his address, traced the history of several medical researchers in Kashmir who played a pivotal role in treating the diseases of people. "Kashmir has always been an abode of knowledge and research since ages and there have been instances wherein the researchers have been successful in resolving the problems confronted by the masses," he said.

EDITORIAL

Take more confidence building measures for revival of tourism in J&K

Few days back the Jammu & Kashmir government took a significant step towards normalization of tourist season by ordering the reopening of 16 tourist places across the union territory. The step is being viewed as one of the important confidence building measures in attracting the people living in different parts of the country to come and visit Jammu & Kashmir. These tourist places had been shut down following the April 22 massacre at Baisaran-Pahalgam that left 25 tourists and a local guide dead.

Among the 16 tourist places ordered to be reopened eight places fall in the Kashmir valley. Some of these places importantly fall in the Pahalgam area and their reopening sends a positive signal among the people especially those who want to visit the Kashmir valley. Demand is brewing among the people across the valley that more and more tourist destinations closed after the Baisaran episode are also thrown open. The government had ordered for the closure of 48 tourist places and as on date 16 among such places have been reopened.

As the situation is normal in Jammu & Kashmir the government should take a call and order for the reopening of the remaining tourist places. This would ensure that the people intending to visit the union territory are more than welcome to come and enjoy the hospitality. This would defeat the nefarious designs of the people who are hell bent to create trouble in the union territory and push the masses to economic deprivation and suffering.

As a large chunk of the population in the union territory is dependent on tourism it is the responsibility of the government to support these people in this time of distress and discomfort. Providing a favourable environment to the people intending to visit the tourist places should be the primary focus of the union territory government and there should not be any going back on this matter. The tourist players are at the receiving end and they need hand holding at the moment.

Road shows need to be carried out in different parts of the country so as to inculcate confidence among the people living there that Jammu & Kashmir is safe and they can come and enjoy the beauty. In this regard both the tourism players and the tourism department have a role to play. It is important that all the stakeholders chip in and do their bit in revival of tourism in Jammu & Kashmir.

Chenab Bridge-The Arch of Modi's New India



By Tushi Deb

In the kaleidoscope of national progress, there are moments when infrastructure ceases to be merely functional and acquires the character of a developmental metaphor. The Chenab Bridge—poised as the world's highest railway arch, towering above the windswept river in Jammu and Kashmir—is one such creation. It is not just a marvel of civil engineering but a monument to the Narendra Modi government's reimagining of nationalism and development.

For decades, national integration was spoken of in sentimental abstractions. From Jawaharlal Nehru's cautious constitutionalism to Indira Gandhi's populist stances, the promise of integrating Kashmir into the Indian mainstream remained just a promise, often deferred, frequently diluted. Projects were conceived and shelved. Political will waxed and waned. The mountain passes of Kashmir were treated more like buffers than bridges.

Then came a paradigm shift—bold, decisive, and deeply ideological. The abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 was not merely a constitutional manoeuvre. It was a political signal—a declaration that the time for half-measures had passed. But an act alone cannot sustain national unity. What was needed was physical integration, one that reshaped lived experience.

In the fog-laced valleys of Jammu and Kashmir, where once the echoes of uncertainty reverberated through the Pir Panjal, now rises a steel arc—the Chenab Bridge. Soaring 359 metres above the riverbed, it is not merely

an engineering marvel; it is a resounding metaphor for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a united, connected, and assertive Bharat.

Let us be clear: the Chenab Bridge is not just another infrastructural feat. It is the crown jewel of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link Project—a dream



languishing in bureaucratic inertia and strategic indecision for decades. It took Narendra Modi's decisive leadership to breathe life into this project. His tenure has seen the bridge transform from blueprint to reality, rising defiantly above the ravines that once symbolised isolation and abandonment.

But Modi's political significance does not lie in the mere laying of steel and stone. It lies in the symbolism of inclusion.

In the classical Nehruvian tradition, India's first Prime Minister often spoke of "temples of modern India." Yet, the difference is stark. Nehru's dams and steel plants, while visionary, were driven more by ideological idealism than political realism. Nehru gave India the scaffolding of modernity. Indira Gandhi wove populism into it. But Narendra Modi has transformed development into a tool of national consolidation. Whether it's a toilet in a tribal village, a highway in Ladakh, or a bridge over the Chenab, each project under Modi carries a dual message: "vikas" and "rashtravaad." This is not merely governance—it is the forging of a New India where the map and the mind are both being redrawn. Modi's approach is pragmatic nationalism infused with strategic foresight.

Let us also not forget the security implications of the Chenab Bridge. The bridge lies in a region where the Line of Control is not too distant and where instability has been weaponised for decades. In strengthening logistical mobility, Modi has addressed an unspoken but vital requirement—the rapid movement of defence personnel and equipment. The bridge, thus, is both a civilian and a strategic asset—a dual-purpose lifeline in a geopolitically sensitive zone.

Critics may scoff and call it optics. But if optics are accompanied by outcomes, if symbolism is backed by steel, and if politics translates into bridges that span centuries of alienation, then Modi has succeeded where many only promised.

Under Modi, 11 years of governance is not a whispered slogan confined to New Delhi. Union Jai Shakti Minister CR Patil has highlighted this in a recent press conference. He stated, "Before 2014, indulging in appeasement and creating rifts among people to be in power had become India's political culture. However, Modi has changed this culture in 11 years. He has established a more transparent and accountable government that people have full faith in."

Modi's developmental policies have decisively altered polity, with nationalism becoming a primary factor. In contrast to the Nehruvian consensus, which viewed nationalism as an elite abstraction, and Indira Gandhi's politics, which used development as electoral appeasement, Modi has treated both nationalism and development as intertwined forces. His infrastructure is ideological; his development is civilizational. The Chenab Bridge is not merely a logistical link. It is a metaphor for a new India—unapologetically nationalist, logistically integrated, and emotionally inclusive. The Chenab Bridge today stands as a national statement of the transformation of dreams to deeds. Hence, as trains begin to cross this magnificent arch, they will carry more than just passengers. They will carry an idea of Bharat—connected, complete, and committed.

Tushi Deb is a writer and she can be reached back on this mail id.: salariyaseen@gmail.com

Set Goals, Chase Dreams Your Future Is in Your Hands



Jaswinder Pal Sharma

In a world filled with endless possibilities, the key to transforming aspirations into reality lies in one simple yet powerful principle: setting goals. When you define clear objectives and pursue your dreams with determination, you take control of your future and turn it into a canvas of your own making.

**The Power of Setting Goals**  
Goals serve as a roadmap, guiding you through the journey of life. They provide

focus, motivation, and a sense of purpose. Without goals, you might find yourself drifting aimlessly, unsure of what you want to achieve or how to get there. Conversely, well-defined goals help you prioritize your efforts, measure progress, and celebrate milestones along the way.

**Dream Big, Start Small**  
Chasing dreams begins with envisioning what truly matters to you. Whether it's starting a business, pursuing a career in a passion-filled field, or improving personal health, dreaming big ignites your passion. However, turning dreams into reality requires breaking them down into manageable steps. Small, consistent actions build momentum and make even the most ambitious aspirations attainable.

**Overcoming Obstacles**  
The path to achieving your dreams is

seldom smooth. Challenges and setbacks are part of the journey. Setting clear goals helps you navigate these obstacles by reminding you of your purpose and maintaining your focus. Resilience and adaptability are essential—adjust your strategies when needed, but never lose sight of your ultimate vision.

**Taking Responsibility for Your Future**  
Your future is not predetermined; it is shaped by your choices today. The power to create the life you desire resides within you. By setting goals and actively working toward them, you exercise that power. Remember, every step forward, no matter how small, brings you closer to your dreams.

**Inspiration to Act**  
- Visualize your ideal future—what does it look like? What steps do you need to take?  
- Write down your goals—making them

specific and measurable increases your commitment.

- Stay persistent—success often requires patience and perseverance.

- Seek support and inspiration—surround yourself with positive influences that motivate you to keep going.

**Conclusion**  
Your future is in your hands. By setting meaningful goals and chasing your dreams with passion and perseverance, you can create a life full of purpose and fulfillment. Remember, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Take that step today, and watch as your dreams become your reality.

Jaswinder Pal Sharma SS Master GSSS Hakuwala Sri Muktsar Sahib Punjab 79860-27454

When the Meaning of Life Becomes Just Property



Dr. Satyawan Saurabh

"Narrow vision of life and broken moral backbone"  
"When the meaning of life becomes just property"  
"The Labyrinth of the Good Life: What's Lost, What's Gained?"

The concept of "good life" prevalent in modern society is becoming more narrow, self-centred and materialistic day by day. The purpose of life has now been limited to economic success, social prestige and personal happiness. There is no place left in this thinking for elements like human compassion, morality, collective good and inner purpose. This is a change that is not only hollowing out the soul of the individual from within, but is also breaking down the moral structure of society and institutions day by day. In the present lifestyle, the measure of success lies only in property, luxurious houses, branded clothes and cars. If a person is financially capable, he is automatically considered "successful" in his society, even if that success is due to dishonesty, deceit, exploitation or moral degradation. The notion that "the end is everything, the means are not important" is now becoming common. This ideology has left moral values like honesty, integrity, compassion and duty far behind. Today's society is a victim of individualism where "I" is primary, "we" has no special importance. This egocentrism is visible in every field - from urban planning to family structure.

The number of common places, playgrounds, libraries and public chaupals is decreasing in big cities. People are getting disconnected from each other, communication is becoming limited and social bonding is limited to digital networks only. Even festivals and family events have now become "photo-ops", whose main purpose is to show on social media, not to share any kind of real intimacy. In this blind race of materialism, immediate pleasure is being given priority over long-term well-being. The sense of restraint, discipline and austerity is getting weakened. Through social media, consumer goods and market propaganda, it has been established that maximum consumption is synonymous with happiness. People have become so engrossed in instant satisfaction that tendencies like self-restraint, introspection and long-term perspective seem ridiculous. Ethics has no place in consumption decisions. The story behind what we wear, eat or consume—whether it is environmental damage or worker exploitation—does not affect us. For example, the fast fashion industry is still flourishing even though we all know how it involves cheap labour and exploitation of environmental resources. Ethical consumerism is still confined to a limited section of society. The result of this thinking is that moral values in society are rapidly eroding. People now consider results to be everything—no matter how opaque or unethical the process of achieving that result may be. This trend is not limited to individual life, but is seen in every institution like the corporate world, politics, education, medicine, and media. When the hunger for profit crosses ethical boundaries, corporate scandals are born, the integrity of leaders comes under suspicion, and business dominates the sanctity of

education. The decline of moral values is not just institutional—empathy and compassion are diminishing at the individual level as well. Today's man is so immersed in the fulfillment of his goals that he has no concern for the suffering of his neighbor, neglect of the elderly, or mental health problems. This insensitivity is gradually turning society into a group of individuals who are lonely even when they live together, and between whom there is no intimacy, but only a relationship of utility. At the same time, moral relativism has also increased. Things that were previously considered clearly right or wrong are now considered appropriate or inappropriate depending on the circumstances. Cheating in exams, lying at work, paying bribes to get work done—these are now considered "part of the system." The idea that "If everyone is doing it, why can't I?" is a sign of a collective moral decline. All this is dangerous not only from a social point of view but also from an environmental point of view. When the aim of life becomes only more and more consumption, exploitation of resources becomes inevitable. Climate change, water crisis, loss of biodiversity—all these are the ill-effects of this misleading definition of a "good life".

It is ironic that we are trying to live a life that is making the future of the earth dark.

The situation today is that morality has now become a mere tool for branding. Big companies and organizations try to white-wash their image by organizing some events in the



name of "corporate social responsibility", but no change takes place at the ground level. This "superficial morality" not only deceives the society but also gives rise to self-deception.

If we are to reverse this decline and move towards a balanced, compassionate and ethical society, we must redefine the concept of the "good life". Success in life must be linked not just to wealth and prestige, but to purpose, virtue, empathy and the common good. Some traditional philosophies—such

as Buddhism, Gandhism and the Jain approach—offer important clues in this direction. These traditions consider inner balance, non-possession, and ethical discipline as the basis for success in life.

A good life is one that is lived not just for oneself, but also for others. It involves community cooperation, environmental sensitivity and self-restraint. Where we consume responsibly—thinking about how our decisions will affect others, nature and future generations. Campaigns like "LIFE" (Lifestyle for Environment) launched by the government are a positive effort in this direction, but they will have an impact only when they reach every section of society with a moral consciousness. Education also has a central role in this process. The New Education Policy 2020 has talked about prioritizing moral and life skills education, which is a welcome step.

If we introduce children to values like empathy, duty, truth and justice at the elementary level, a generation can be prepared that can internalize a broad and inclusive definition of a "good life".

Ultimately, the meaning of life is not just in living, but in living rightly. And living rightly is not just in material success, but in a balance where the soul is at peace, society is healthy and the earth is protected. If we learn to live like this, perhaps we can create a better future not just for ourselves, but

for all of humanity.

**The concept of "good life" prevalent in modern society is becoming more narrow, self-centred and materialistic day by day. The purpose of life has now been limited to economic success, social prestige and personal happiness. There is no place left in this thinking for elements like human compassion, morality, collective good and inner purpose. This is a change that is not only hollowing out the soul of the individual from within, but is also breaking down the moral structure of society and institutions day by day.**

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# Transcending War: A Soul's Quest for Peace

"When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace." — Jimi Hendrix



Jasmine Fatima

Every age has known war—in fields and in streets, across borders, and also within the human heart. Yet beneath the outward battles waged in the name of power, survival, or belief, lies a deeper, more personal war: the war within. In a world torn by noise, conflict, and endless violence, the true battle lies not outside—but within the unseen chambers of the soul where the soul longs to rise above division and return to its eternal state of peace. Each of us, knowingly or not, carries within a battlefield where fear confronts faith, and the ego wrestles with the quiet voice of the spirit. In our emotions, we cling. In our choices, we often react from old patterns rather than respond from conscious awareness. The wars we witness in the outer world—between nations, communities, or even loved ones—are often reflections of the unresolved struggles we carry within. When we see others as threats, when we compete rather than connect, when we judge, exclude, or control—it is not peace we seek, but protection from the parts of ourselves we fear to face. Anger, judgment, pride, and fear become the foot soldiers of the ego, defending illusions of control, superiority, and separation. Yet there is another path. At the deepest level of our being, untouched by time or trauma, dwells a vast stillness—a sacred center that remains serene regardless of the storms. This is the soul's true home. To reach this space is not to escape the world, but to awaken within it. The soul's journey is not about defeating the world but dissolving the illusion of separation that creates conflict in the first place. To transcend war is to awaken to love, to compassion, to that divine harmony which asks

nothing but a return to the awareness of our divine origin. Here, peace is not passive. It is powerful. It does not deny the existence of suffering but meets it with clarity, compassion, and awareness. True peace is not the absence of conflict, but the pres-



ence of a deeper awareness. It is the realization that beneath the noise of our thoughts and the chaos of our emotions, there exists a space untouched by the world—a divine stillness that simply is. This inner sanctuary, often overshadowed by our habitual identification with the mind and its dramas, is the soul's natural state. It does not need to be created, only remembered. To transcend war is not to deny its existence or pretend that the world is perfect. It is to understand that real change begins not in politics or policies, but in human consciousness. When we look through the eyes of spirit instead of the lens of fear, we begin to recognize that others are not enemies, but mirrors—showing us what within us still needs healing. Every conflict, whether external or internal, is an invitation to return to the self, to wholeness. This path is not easy. It requires deep inner work—what the mystics have long called "self-inquiry" or "soul remembrance". This journey inward requires cour-

age—not the kind that fights, but the kind that surrenders. It asks us to lay down the weapons of judgment, comparison, and resistance, and instead cultivate silence, awareness, compassion, and forgiveness. The tools for this inner transformation are not complicated. Meditation, breath work, silence, and conscious living become the soul's tools for disarmament, slowly dissolving the walls that the ego has built. Peace, then, is not something we achieve, but something we allow. It is the natural result of aligning with the truth of who we are. As each soul awakens to this truth, a quiet revolution begins—not in the streets, but in the hearts. And as more hearts remember, the world, too, begins to reflect this inner harmony. As we cultivate inner peace, we become vessels of healing for the world. Our outer life shifts. Relationships soften. The need to dominate, prove, or defend dissolves. We no longer see others as enemies, but as fellow travelers, each carrying burdens unseen. The soul's quest for peace is not a solitary journey nor an escape from the world—it is a return to it. This is the quiet revolution our world is yearning for. One awakened heart has the power to ripple across generations. One centered being can anchor light in the midst of darkness and guide the world with such wisdom that war loses its power, and peace becomes not just a hope, but a lived reality. Take a moment today to pause and turn inward. Breathe deeply. Listen—not to the world's noise, but to your own breath, to the quiet whisper of your own soul. Begin with just a few minutes of stillness each day. Even five minutes of conscious silence can open a doorway to the sacred. Begin where you are—with your breath, your present moment. Observe your thoughts, release judgment. Instead of reacting, reflect. Instead of striving, surrender. Practice compassion in your thoughts, forgiveness in your words, and awareness in your actions. Let your inner peace become your protest, your practice, and your gift to the world and to yourself.

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## The Impact of Digital Addiction on Society



Wani Arfat

In today's fast-paced world, digital technology has revolutionized every aspect of human life. While it has undeniably brought numerous advantages, such as global connectivity and access to vast knowledge, it has also introduced significant challenges. Among these, digital addiction stands out as one of the most pressing issues, particularly in terms of its profound effects on human relationships, mental well-being, and social structures. This article will explore the various social aspects of digital addiction, shedding light on its impact on communication, relationships, and broader societal health.

**1. Social Isolation: The Shift Away from Physical Connections**  
The allure of digital devices has led to an alarming rise in social isolation. While online platforms promise constant connectivity, they often fail to foster meaningful personal interactions. As individuals immerse themselves in their virtual worlds, they neglect physical relationships, leading to emotional and social alienation. This isolation is not just physical but emotional as well, as the depth and authenticity of real-life connections are lost to the ever-present screen.

**2. Strain in Relationships: The Impact of Digital Engagement**  
One of the most significant consequences of digital addiction is the strain it places on personal relationships. With the overwhelming presence of social media and constant digital communication, individuals often prefer online engagement over face-to-face interaction. This neglect leads to tension and feelings of loneliness in relationships, where partners and family members feel disregarded and emotionally distant.

**3. Decline in Communication Skills: The Erosion of Personal Interaction**  
As digital communication becomes the norm, traditional face-to-face interactions are on the decline. Texting, social media messaging, and emails replace in-person conversations, eroding the quality of communication. This shift results in individuals losing the ability to interpret emotional cues, engage in meaningful dialogues, and maintain deep connections. The decline in communication skills has far-reaching consequences on the quality of personal relationships and emotional well-being.

**4. Lack of Empathy: The Absence of Emotional Connection**  
Digital communication, while convenient, often lacks the emotional depth found in face-to-face interactions. The absence of physical gestures and the inability to

convey emotional context online leads to a lack of empathy. As a result, individuals become less sensitive to the feelings of others, fostering a culture of indifference. This decline in empathy contributes to broader social issues such as cyberbullying and online harassment.

**5. FOMO (Fear of Missing Out): The Anxiety of Digital Comparison**  
Social media has created an environment where individuals constantly compare their lives to those of others, leading to FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). This phenomenon results in anxiety, dissatisfaction, and mental distress as individuals struggle to measure up to unrealistic standards set by others. The pressure to keep up with the latest trends, vacations, and social activities exacerbates feelings of inadequacy and stress.

**6. Increased Loneliness: The Paradox of Online Connectivity**  
Despite the promise of digital connectivity, many individuals experience increased loneliness due to digital addiction. The vast number of virtual friends and followers does not replace the emotional connection found in real-life relationships. The lack of genuine support and the inability to form deep connections in the virtual world contributes to a sense of isolation, even in the presence of thousands of online interactions.

**7. Addiction to Validation: Seeking External Approval**  
The digital world, with its likes, comments, and shares, fosters an unhealthy dependence on external validation. Individuals begin to base their self-worth on online approval, leading to feelings of insecurity and self-doubt. This constant need for validation diminishes the significance of personal achievements, as people focus more on others' opinions than on self-improvement.

**8. Cyberbullying: The Dark Side of Digital Engagement**  
Cyberbullying is a troubling consequence of digital addiction, particularly as anonymity online emboldens individuals to engage in harmful behavior. The psychological toll of cyberbullying can lead to depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. The absence of face-to-face accountability in the digital world fosters a toxic environment where harassment can flourish unchecked.

**9. Decreased Social Engagement: Moving Away from Offline Activities**  
As digital engagement grows, offline social activities decline. Family gatherings, community events, and outdoor activities are often overshadowed by screen time. This shift reduces social cohesion and weakens interpersonal relationships, as individuals spend more time in isolation rather than engaging with their communities in person.

**10. Impact on Family Relationships: The Erosion of Family Bonds**  
Digital addiction has also taken a toll on family relationships. Parents, absorbed in

their digital devices, neglect the emotional needs of their children, while couples grow emotionally distant due to excessive screen time. This erosion of family bonds leads to misunderstandings, emotional detachment, and a lack of closeness within the family unit.

**11. Digital Dependency in Youth: Effects on Social Development**  
The younger generation is particularly susceptible to digital addiction. Children and adolescents spend excessive time on social media and digital entertainment, missing out on vital face-to-face interactions that are crucial for developing emotional intelligence and social skills. This digital dependency can stunt their social development, potentially leading to long-term mental health issues.

**12. Altered Perception of Reality: The Distortion of Social Expectations**  
Social media has created a distorted view of reality, with idealized images of beauty, success, and happiness. This skewed perception fosters unrealistic expectations about life and relationships, leading to frustration, self-doubt, and dissatisfaction. Constant exposure to these false ideals detracts from an individual's ability to appreciate their own unique journey.

**13. Loss of Social Etiquette: The Decline of Respectful Interaction**  
The rise of digital communication has led to a decline in traditional social etiquette. Face-to-face interactions, which require active listening, eye contact, and respect for others' time, are often replaced by more casual and impersonal digital exchanges. This loss of social manners weakens communication and disrupts social harmony, both online and offline.

**14. Echo Chambers: The Reinforcement of Biases**  
Social media platforms can create echo chambers, where individuals are exposed only to information that aligns with their existing beliefs. This reinforcement of biases limits the ability to engage in constructive dialogue and impedes social progress. It also fosters divisions in society, making it difficult to bridge differences and promote mutual understanding.

**15. Over-reliance on Virtual Communities: Substituting Real-Life Connections**  
Many individuals, especially those struggling with social anxiety or loneliness, turn to virtual communities for a sense of belonging. While online groups can provide a form of connection, they lack the emotional depth of real-life interactions. Over-reliance on these virtual spaces can leave individuals feeling emotionally unfulfilled and disconnected from the physical world.

**16. Mental Health Impacts: The Psychological Effects of Digital Addiction**  
The constant exposure to digital platforms has been linked to a range of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and stress. The pressure to remain constantly connected, coupled with the emotional strain of online interactions, takes

a significant toll on one's mental well-being. The pervasive nature of digital devices means that individuals are always susceptible to these psychological challenges.

**17. Social Media Influencers and Unrealistic Standards: The Impact on Self-Confidence**  
The rise of social media influencers has introduced unrealistic standards of beauty, success, and lifestyle, which can have a detrimental effect on self-confidence. People, especially young individuals, often compare themselves to these influencers, leading to feelings of inadequacy and body image issues. The pressure to live up to these unattainable ideals contributes to low self-worth and a distorted sense of identity.

**18. Work-Life Balance: The Intrusion of the Digital Workspace**  
Digital habits are not confined to personal life but have also invaded the professional realm. Constant notifications and emails blur the boundaries between work and personal time, leading to fatigue and emotional burnout. The inability to disconnect from work due to digital devices negatively impacts relationships and overall well-being.

**19. Decline in Community Engagement: The Shift from Real to Virtual Communities**  
As digital platforms take precedence, offline community engagement is on the decline. Volunteer groups, local organizations, and civic activities are often overshadowed by online interests. This shift leads to a reduction in social cohesion and a weakened sense of collective responsibility within communities.

**20. Impact on Parenting: The Challenges of Digital Habits in Child-Rearing**  
Digital addiction also affects parenting, as parents become engrossed in their devices and neglect their children's emotional needs. The failure to provide adequate guidance and attention during formative years can have long-term consequences on a child's social and emotional development.

**Conclusion**  
The pervasive nature of digital technology has reshaped society in ways both beneficial and detrimental. While it offers convenience and connectivity, the overuse of digital devices has disrupted human relationships, diminished communication skills, and increased mental health challenges. Addressing the social implications of digital addiction requires a collective effort to raise awareness, promote healthy digital habits, and nurture real-world connections. By doing so, we can rebuild the social fabric that is essential for maintaining strong, meaningful relationships in an increasingly digital world.

(Note: Mohammad Arfat Wani, a passionate writer, social activist, and medical student, hails from Kuchmulla Tral. His email address is wania6817@gmail.com)

## Poems

### BURHAN DAR: A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS, A HAND FOR THE HELPLESS.



POET AND AUTHOR MUZAMIL ARIF

From Kishtwar's hills to hamlet's bend,  
He learned to serve before pretend.  
He walked not roads of glittered ease,  
But those where barefoot elders freeze.  
He gave his coat to trembling youth,  
And fed the orphans bread and truth.  
He bought the pills that no one could,  
And stood where not even angels would.  
In Chatroo's heights, the truth he spoke,  
Exposing lies the system cloaked.  
Though summoned fast by wary law,  
He stood unshaken, firm and raw.  
He saved from fire, gave light for free,  
Spoke for the sick with no one to see.  
He filmed lost schools, fed orphans poor,  
And knocked on every helpless door.  
A voice for those the world won't hear,  
A bridge where systems disappear.  
He stands where silence used to be  
And dares the blind to finally see.  
For hospitals where hope ran dry,  
He raised his voice, he asked them: "Why?"  
Why should the sick in pain endure,  
When help is near yet not so sure?  
In fire's fury, when homes were lost,  
He rushed ahead despite the cost.  
A rescuer not trained by creed,  
But by the burning call of need.  
When floods would come, or landslides fall,  
Burhan would rise to heed the call.  
A phone in hand, a heart so wide,  
To lift the broken, stand beside.  
He walked the lanes with youth and old,  
For "Mission Biji Free" he told.  
That rivers flow and turbines run,  
Yet homes stay dark when day is done.  
He asked the men of power and seat,  
Where is the warmth, where is the heat?  
When wealth is made from mountain streams,  
Why must the poor dream only dreams?  
He's spoken too for roads unaid,  
For orphans' meals and fees unpaid,  
For women's health, for old men's care,  
He speaks where others do not dare.  
Not rich in coin, but rich in grace,  
He wears the pain upon his face.  
With humble phone and open page,  
He fights injustice, voice of age.  
He walks among the poor and frail,  
He listens to the widow's tale.  
He lifts the sick, the lost, the least,  
He stands where tyrants fear to feast.  
No suit, no tie, no office tall,  
Yet crowds would gather at his call.  
A youth with heart the size of land,  
He spoke for those without a stand.  
He asked for light where darkness lay,  
For roads where floods had washed away.  
He challenged those who sit in power,  
With just his voice, a phone, a flower.  
He filmed the pain we learned to miss,  
The hunger masked in silent bliss.  
He fought not with a sword or pen  
But by restoring faith in men.  
When roofs collapsed and embers fell,  
Burhan was there the people tell.  
Not with a badge, not sent by force,  
But led by heart, his only source.  
He pulled the injured from the flame,  
And never once demanded fame.  
He held a child through coldest snow,  
So mothers slept in peace below.  
He filmed the wrongs they hoped to hide,  
Like schools where teachers don't reside.  
He showed the empty hospital beds,  
Where promises had lost their threads.  
And though the power tried to scare,  
To question why he even "dared,"  
He stood his ground, both calm and plain  
With only truth in his domain.  
He gives the mic to those unheard,  
Transforms a tear into a word.  
He teaches youth: "Don't beg, don't wait,  
Build justice now, and challenge fate."  
Where others scroll, he takes a stand,  
And lifts the weak with outstretched hand.  
Not just a critic but a guide,  
A storm with hope beneath the tide.  
O readers, know this name with pride,  
Whose footsteps rise with every stride.  
A youth whose pen and phone became  
The tools to build a kinder flame.  
In Kishtwar's heart he stands alone,  
Yet carries not just flesh and bone.  
He bears a people's silent cry  
Their sun beneath a cloudy sky.  
Let not the world in silence stay,  
But mark his path, and learn the way.  
For heroes rise not just in war,  
But in the peace that Burhan bore

Written by POET AND AUTHOR MUZAMIL ARIF BHALESSI  
A WELL KNOWN WRITER whose work delves into the complexities of human nature and society. With a keen eye for detail and an inquisitive mind, he tackle(s) the issues that matter most in today's world..

## Samba administration ensures comprehensive preparedness for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025

HT NEWS DESK

SAMBA, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Samba Rajesh Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police Virender Singh Manhas today convened a meeting to finalize the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025 arrangements to ensure a seamless and secure pilgrimage experience for the visiting devotees. The Deputy Commissioner said that the District Administration has prioritized pilgrim comfort through extensive infrastructure upgrades and putting in advanced communication systems. "Public address systems and speakers have been installed across lodgement cen-

tres to enable real-time announcements and emergency advisories, while print, electronic and social media platforms are being utilized to ensure pilgrims receive timely updates on cut-off timings and safety protocols" he added. Speaking at the meeting, SSP Virender Singh Manhas outlined a robust multi-tier security deployment strategy featuring enhanced surveillance mechanism with special focus on sensitive zones and strategic security positioning around langar locations. "This comprehensive monitoring system will ensure pilgrim safety throughout their sacred journey," he added.



The meeting was informed that the Medical and emergency preparedness has been given

paramount importance with deployment of qualified health personnel and positioning of ambulances equipped with essential medical equipment at all strategic locations. The Fire & Emergency Services Department has been directed to conduct mandatory mock drills with strategic placement of fire extinguishers and CCTV surveillance at all langar and lodging facilities, ensuring rapid response capabilities in any emergency situation. To guarantee uninterrupted essential services, the administration has deployed adequate generators and water tankers ensuring 24x7 electricity and water supply and implemented

comprehensive waste management and sanitation and hygiene protocols. The coordination meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Champa Devi Thakur, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Jagdish Singh, military personnel and senior officials from critical departments including PWD, Jal Shakti, Power Development, Health, Fire & Emergency Services and Information Department. This multi-departmental approach reflects the administration's holistic strategy to address every aspect of pilgrim welfare and safety.

## Arrangements for International Day of Yoga-2025 finalized at Bhadarwah

HT NEWS DESK

BHADARWAH, JUNE 17: A meeting to finalize the arrangements for 11th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2025 was convened today in the Office Chamber of the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bhadarwah. Speaking at the meeting, the ADC Bhadarwah, Sunil Bhutyal emphasized the importance of coordination among all departments to ensure the smooth, inclusive and impactful observance of the event. It was decided that the main celebration will take place at Gatha Park, Bhadarwah, while concurrent yoga sessions will be organized at Government Degree Colleges, identified tourist destinations, Vibrant Villages and Amrit Sarovars. The ADC urged all departments to mobilize

maximum public participation, especially involving school children, college students, youth clubs, PRIs, Self Help Groups (SHGs) and civil society members. Detailed discussions were held regarding logistics, including sanitation, security arrangements, medical facilities, sound system setup and media coverage to ensure the program's success. The meeting was attended by the District Ayush Officer Doda, Divisional Forest Officer, Tehsildar Bhadarwah, Block Development Officer, Block Medical Officer, Executive Officer Municipality, Zonal Education Officer, Dr. Akhtar Hussain (Professor, GDC Bhadarwah), Dr. Ifthakar Ahmed (Ayush Department, Bhadarwah) and other officers and representatives from various departments.

## Commissioner JMC visits Rajendra Bazar to address civic issues

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JUNE 17: Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Dr. Devansh Yadav visited Rajendra Bazar (Ward No. 5) today on an invitation from the Market Association. The purpose of the visit was to assess the civic issues being faced by traders and the general public in the area and to discuss developmental needs. During the interaction, members of the Market Association apprised the Commissioner about various issues being faced by them. They emphasized the need for improved sanitation, requesting for regular cleaning of drains and thorough maintenance of the market lanes. Additionally, the members highlighted the necessity of accessible drinking water facilities amid rising temperature. While water coolers have been installed by



JMC, the association requested that water purifiers also be added to ensure the availability of clean drinking water. They also demanded the repair and main-

tenance of street lights in the area to ensure public safety and convenience. Dr. Yadav reiterated JMC's commitment to improving civic amenities and working in collaboration with local stakeholders for the betterment of the city. He issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned for taking prompt action to resolve the issues. Dr. Yadav assured the members of the association that their grievances would be addressed at the earliest. Health Officer, JMC, Dr. Vinod Sharma, Executive Engineer Division- 1 Rajesh Kumar and Executive Engineer, Electricity, Simarpal Singh besides, President of market association Krishna Lal Gupta, Chairman Arun Gupta and a large number of locals were also present.

## Reasi all set to roll out SMILE Scheme for rehabilitation of vulnerable children

HT NEWS DESK

REASI, JUNE 17: In a significant step towards ensuring a life of dignity for marginalized individuals, Reasi is poised to become the second district in Jammu and Kashmir after Srinagar to implement the SMILE (Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise) scheme. Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik has emphasised on swift implementation of SMILE Scheme for tackling begging with compassion and opportunity. Launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on February 12, 2022, the SMILE scheme focuses on the rehabilitation, reintegration and empowerment of beggars, helping them transition into mainstream society through structured support. The Ministry has identified 50 districts, towns, cities and locations. Holy Katra town of the District Reasi, the base camp of Shri Mata Vaishno



Devi yatra is one of them. A key Project Approval Committee meeting, chaired by Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik was held recently to scrutinize applications from NGOs interested in implementing the scheme. Out of the three applications received, Prayas Juvenile Aid Centre Society secured the highest score based on the selection criteria established by the Ministry. Its project proposal was approved following a detailed review and presentation, which outlined a comprehensive plan including a baseline survey and subsequent rehabilitation efforts. During the meeting, District

Social Welfare Officer Sachin Sharma provided an in-depth briefing on the scheme's objectives and implementation strategy. Prayas NGO shared their vision for the Reasi district, detailing a phased approach to bring vulnerable individuals back into the social fold through education, skill-building and livelihood opportunities. Speaking at the meeting, DC Nidhi Malik stated, "We are committed to launching the SMILE scheme in Reasi in the coming weeks. Addressing the issue of begging is an urgent need and it is equally important to provide genuine support to those in need."

## DC Reasi finalises arrangements for International Yoga Day-2025 celebrations

HT NEWS DESK

REASI, JUNE 17: In preparation for International Yoga Day scheduled on June 21, a meeting of stakeholder departments was convened today to finalise the necessary arrangements. Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik chaired the meeting. As per the plan, a Mega Yoga Session will be organised at General Zorwar Singh Sports Stadium in wee hours to mark the global celebration of Yoga and promote its numerous health benefits among the general public. Similar events will be held at the subdivision level, in colleges, schools and at potential tourist spots. Speaking at the meeting, DC Nidhi Malik directed the Department of AYUSH to make all arrangements well in time like arranging yoga mats, T-shirts, deputing qualified yoga instruc-



tors to lead the sessions. The Health Department was instructed to ensure the presence of medical staff and ambulances at all venues for emergency support. She also directed XEN PHE to keep available an adequate drinking water facility for participants, while the EO MC will oversee sanitation arrangements. All SDMs were instructed to make the necessary arrangements to celebrate the day in their jurisdictions to ensure wide reach and participation. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to

begin the execution of their respective responsibilities well in advance. She emphasised the importance of inter-departmental coordination and mass participation to make the event a grand success. The meeting was attended by ADDC Sukhdev Singh Samyal, ADC Rakesh Kumar, CPO Narinder Kumar, ACD, District AYUSH Officer, officers from the Police, DIO (Information), President of Patanjali Yog Sansthan and representatives from Degree Colleges and other institutions were present at the meeting.

## Doda: Dharti Aaba Janbhagidari campaign held at Village Bhakhna Dhal Khankir- Gundana block

HT NEWS DESK

DODA, JUNE 17: As part of the ongoing Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh and under the banner of Dharti Aaba Janbhagidari Abhiyan—India's largest tribal outreach and empowerment campaign—a special awareness and benefit saturation camp was today organized at Village Bhakhna Dhal Khankir, Block Gundana today. The programme was presided over by the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Din Mohammad Affaqi. In his address, the ADDC encouraged the tribal community to avail maximum benefit from the services provided under the campaign. The departmental stalls set up at the venue offered vital information and on-the-spot services related to flagship schemes such as PMAY (G), MGNREGA, NRLM, Ayushman Bharat (PMJAY), Post-Matric Scholarships, Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and the Forest Rights Act. The camp also featured awareness sessions, health check-ups, on-the-spot registration for job cards and health cards and assistance for various beneficiary-oriented schemes. Local residents interacted directly with departmental representatives to resolve their queries and concerns. The event concluded with a cultural tribute to Bhagwan Birsa Munda, celebrating tribal traditions through music and folk performances.

## Work on PMGSY project resumed by resolving dispute

HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JUNE 17: The construction work of Sailan to Marha Bridge PMGSY road has been resumed after the resolution of a dispute that caused significant delays in its completion. Some residents had obstructed the project due to land-related issues, halting road work despite the bridge's successful completion in March 2025. In response to the situation, the Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal took decisive action by directing the revenue department to extend necessary support to the PMGSY engineering team. The intervention effectively addressed the dispute, allowing road construction to recommence. The local community has expressed gratitude to the district administration for resolving the long-standing issue. The resumption of work is anticipated to greatly enhance connectivity and improve infrastructure in the region, benefiting all residents. Vikas Kundal took decisive action by directing the revenue department to extend necessary support to the PMGSY engineering team. The intervention effectively addressed the dispute, allowing road construction to recommence. The local community has expressed gratitude to the district administration for resolving the long-standing issue. The resumption of work is anticipated to greatly enhance connectivity and improve infrastructure in the region, benefiting all residents.

## DC Kishtwar calls for mission-mode implementation of HADP & credit linked schemes Pitches for organic farming, promotion of millets cultivation

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pan-kaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and the Credit Link Schemes. At the outset, Nodal Officer HADP & Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Kushal Chandail presented a detailed report outlining the achievements and current implementation status of HADP initiatives across the district. The DC emphasized the need for accelerated execution and wider public outreach, directing field officers to redouble their efforts. Underlining the importance of organic farming and its potential as a revenue-generating model, the DC instructed officials to organise mass awareness campaigns and



engage with the community including religious heads of all communities to promote HADP schemes with a cluster-based approach. The review also covered the physical and financial progress in key allied sectors such as Horticulture, Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry and Animal

Husbandry. The DC set new targets and urged line departments to work in coordination to ensure Kishtwar district ranks among the top-performing districts in the UT under HADP. He also set targets for enhanced registrations on Daksh Kisan Portal and Kisan Sathi Portal and directed focused awareness on millets promotion as part of the CAPEX 2025-26 action plan. Further, a detailed review of Credit Link Schemes was undertaken including Agricultural Infrastructure Fund (AIF), Animal Husbandry Development Fund (AHDF), Agriculture Loan Fund (ALF), PMFME and National Livestock Mission (NLM). The DC emphasized a holistic and mission-mode approach to increase uptake and impact. The meeting was attended by Rishi Kumar Sharma GM DIC Kishtwar, Idrees Lone ACR Kishtwar, Shahnawaz Bali CPO Kishtwar, Kushal Chandail CAO Kishtwar, Sajid Mustafa CHO Kishtwar, DSHO Kishtwar, LDM Kishtwar, DAO Kishtwar and other allied Sectoral officers.

# DC Kishtwar reviews arrangements for Urs of Shah Farid-Ud-Din (RA)

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma today convened a meeting of the line departments to review the arrangements for the Urs of Shah Farid-Ud-Din Sahib (RA), scheduled on June 21, 2025.

The DC inquired about the measures initiated for logistic and civic amenities including the provision of accommodation for visiting devotees, power and water supply, firewood, ration, LPG, sanitation, security, medical care, transportation, fire tender services and overall traffic management. He issued a slew of directions to the concerned departments.

SSP Kishtwar assured that comprehensive security arrangements will be put in place during the Urs celebrations.

The DC directed the XEN, Jal Shakti, to ensure the availability of sufficient drinking water for devotees/Ziareens at all shrines and at Biat-Ul-Ziareen, with a backup provision of water tankers.

The DC also directed the EO Municipal Council to carry out repair and replace-



ment of non-functional streetlights in the town and adjoining areas of the shrines, and in the Chowgan ground to facilitate hassle-free movement of devotees. He also emphasized cleanliness around both shrines and stressed the lime lining of roads leading to them.

Additionally, the ARTO, DTI and police

administration were instructed to devise a proper transport plan, arrange additional buses for the smooth to-and-fro movement of pilgrims, and manage traffic and vehicle parking effectively.

The JPDCL was directed to ensure uninterrupted power supply at both shrines and the accommodation areas for Ziareens,

with provisions for generator sets as backup.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed for setting up of a Joint Information Dissemination Booth by the Civil Administration and Police to spread awareness, provide information and facilitate public announcements.

Representatives from the Auqaf Kishtwar and Sajada-e-Nasheen (from both shrines) apprised the DC of various issues. The DC listened attentively and issued necessary directions on the spot, assuring them of full support from the administration.

Necessary directions were also given to the FCS&CA, Health Department, Fire and Emergency Services for making efficient and adequate arrangements.

The meeting was attended by Naresh Singh, SSP Kishtwar; Pawan Kotwal, ADC Kishtwar; Idrees Lone, ACR Kishtwar; Rishi Kumar Sharma, PO ICDS Kishtwar; Kaiser Bhawani, CEO Kishtwar Development Authority besides other District and Sectoral Officers and representatives of socio-religious organizations.

## DC inspects, reviews working of offices in District Headquarter Complex Kishtwar

HT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma today conducted an extensive inspection of the Mini Secretariat, New DC Office Complex, reviewing ongoing departmental operations and engaging directly with staff to understand their work and challenges.

The DC visited all three blocks of the Mini Secretariat and assessed the functioning of the departments, interacted with officers and employees and took stock of the issues being faced by them. He emphasized the importance of prompt public service delivery, professional conduct and a people-centric approach.

A significant part of the inspection focused on cleanliness and the upkeep of the Secretariat premises. The DC issued on-the-spot directions to ensure hygienic working conditions and stressed that a clean environment enhances both productivity and public trust.

He assured the staff that genuine administrative and infrastructural concerns would be addressed in a timely manner. He also encouraged them to maintain efficiency, discipline and accountability in their daily operations.

The DC was accompanied by ADC Pawan Kotwal, ACR Idrees Lone, PO ICDS Rishi Kumar Sharma, Dr. besides other officers.

## Deputy Commissioner chairs meeting to finalize Muharram arrangements in Poonch

HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to review and finalize the arrangements for the Muharram.

The meeting was convened to ensure that all necessary facilities and services are in place for the Muharram processions and congregations. Representatives from religious organizations present in the meeting highlighted required measures with regard to procession routes, special congregations, uninterrupted power and water supply, road repairs, deployment of security personnel, medical and ambulance availability, public address systems, ration and LPG distribution, traffic management, sanitation, functioning of street lights and provision of water tankers.

Responding to the demands, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Poonch Municipality and Municipal Committee Surankote to ensure thorough cleanliness in towns and congregation venues. He instructed the Chief Medical Officer to make arrangements for adequate medical and emergency services during Muharram processions and at Imambargahs.

The Public Health Engineering Department and Power Development Departments were directed to ensure continuous water and electricity supply to religious sites and procession venues. They were also asked to deploy water tankers as needed.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of maintaining close coordination with community leaders and civil society to ensure a peaceful and respectful observance of Muharram. Additional SP Poonch assured that comprehensive security arrangements would be made, including the deployment of adequate police personnel at all key locations.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Additional SP Poonch, Chief Medical Officer, Executive Engineers of PWDD (R&B), Jal Shakti, JPDCL, ARTO, DIO, Tehsildars of Haveli and Mandi, AD FCS&CA, officers from other line departments and prominent civil society representatives of Poonch.

## DC Samba reviews anti-flood preparedness measures

HT NEWS DESK



SAMBA, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma today chaired a crucial meeting here in the Conference Hall to review and assess anti-flood control measures in view of the upcoming monsoon season.

The DC emphasized the need for coordinated efforts, quick response mechanism and inter-agency preparedness to mitigate flood-related risks and ensure the safety of life and property. He directed all departments to remain on high alert and submit updated contingency plans and resource inventories.

The session concluded with a detailed discussion on vulnerable zones, emergency response protocols and public awareness strategies.

The meeting witnessed the active participation of ADDC Champa Devi, ADC Jagdish Singh & senior officers from civil administration, representatives of BSF, NDRF and officials from concerned departments.

## Mega Yoga event organised at historic Samba Fort as prelude to 11th International Day of Yoga

HT NEWS DESK

SAMBA, JUNE 17: The Department of AYUSH, in collaboration with District Administration Samba, organized a Yoga Event at the historic Samba Fort today, marking a significant prelude to the upcoming 11th International Day of Yoga celebrations.

The wellness initiative was conducted under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma and Director AYUSH J&K, Dr. Nuzhat Bashir Shah, with direct supervision by District Nodal Officer AYUSH Dr. Renu Dass.

The comprehensive program commenced with an enlightening awareness

session on yoga delivered by Dr. Rozy, Medical Officer, AHWC Gho Brahmna, followed by an engaging demonstration and practice of the Common Yoga Protocol. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from government officials, staff members and citizens from across the district.

Adding educational value to the event, Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Medical Officer AHWC Nud, shared comprehensive insights into yoga's rich history, underlying philosophy and extensive health benefits, enriching participants' understanding of this ancient practice.

The event achieved exceptional success with more than 180 participants,

actively engaging in the yoga session, demonstrating the community's growing commitment to holistic wellness practices. The enthusiastic response reflects the increasing awareness and acceptance of yoga as an integral component of healthy living.

Held at the culturally significant Samba Fort, this mega event not only promoted physical and mental wellness but also highlighted the integration of traditional practices with modern health initiatives.

Dr. Divya Sharma, Medical Officer AYUSH, presented the formal vote of thanks, while the session concluded with inspiring remarks from DC Samba Rajesh Sharma.

## DC Ramban reviews disaster preparedness, mitigation strategies ahead of monsoon, SANJY 2025

HT NEWS DESK/KNS

RAMBAN, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan today convened a meeting of frontline departments to discuss Disaster Preparedness and the effective implementation of the mitigation Plan in the district, especially in view of the upcoming monsoon season and Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY), 2025.

The meeting was attended by SSP Kulbir Singh, SSP Traffic NHW Raja Adil Hamid Ganaie, ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak, ACR Dr. Shokat Hayat Mattoo, SDMs, Tehsildars, Dy. SPs and heads of all frontline departments. Referring to the natural calamities wit-

nessed in the recent past, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for effective implementation of the District Disaster Management Plan with special focus on Hazard Vulnerability Capacity and Risk Assessment (HVCRA), prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response protocols and standard operating procedures.

The DC directed the stakeholder departments dealing with emergencies and disasters to remain in a state of alertness and preparedness, especially during the monsoon period and during the SANJY-2025. He underlined the need for keeping the Quick Response Teams (QRTs), SDRF, Civil Defence and

Tehsil Disaster Management Committees on high alert. He directed for ensuring flawless functioning of Control Rooms established at the district level to coordinate and respond to any emergent situation. Later, the Deputy Commissioner, accompanied by the team of officers inspected the ongoing construction work of the cut-and-cover tunnel at Mehar, which is nearing completion. He directed the Project Director National Highway Authority to deploy adequate manpower and machinery at all vulnerable spots along NH-44 from Nashri to Banihal to ensure the smooth flow of traffic and timely.

## DDC Reasi reviews implementation of agriculture & allied sector Credit-Linked Schemes

HT NEWS DESK

REASI, JUNE 17: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Reasi, Nidhi Malik convened a comprehensive review meeting today to assess the progress of the agriculture and allied sector credit-linked schemes. The meeting was attended by functionaries of stakeholder departments and representatives from banking institutions. The meeting focused on the per-

formance matrix, sanctioning, and disbursement status of key schemes, including the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (PM-FME), PM-KISAN, Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF). The DDC emphasized the vital role of banks in supporting farmers by ensuring hassle-free and timely credit disbursement, which is crucial to achieving the district's agricultural development goals.

DDC Reasi Malik inquired about the number of pending cases under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and sought clarification on the reasons for pendency in the AIF scheme. She also directed the Agriculture Department to organise special training sessions for KKGs to enhance their understanding and outreach capabilities.

Further, the DDC instructed to widely circulate the calendar of upcoming aware-

ness camps, ensuring transparency and public participation. She directed the Agriculture Department to organise awareness camps in Mahore and other areas to inform the local population about various schemes and how to avail the benefits of the same.

The meeting was attended by CPO Reasi Narinder Kumar, CAO, CHO, CAHO, DSHO, Cluster head and other concerned officers.

# District Administration Ramban gears up for Int'l Yoga Day celebration

HT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan today chaired a meeting of senior officers at the DC Office Complex to review the preparedness for the International Yoga Day, being observed across the district under the theme "Yoga for One Earth, One Health." The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police Ramban Kulbir Singh; SSP Traffic NHW Raja Adil Hamid Ganaie; Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Shokat Hayat Mattoo; Chief Planning Officer Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather, SDMs, Tehsildars, Dy. SPs, district heads of the departments and representatives of Beopar Mandal Ramban.

The meeting decided that the district-level Yoga event will be organized at the District Administrative Complex, Maitra, while similar programs will be hosted at Sub-Division and Tehsil Headquarters and other designated locations across the



district. The Deputy Commissioner briefed the officers on their respective roles and responsibilities while stressing maximum participation of government employees from their respective departments, prominent citizens and youth of the area in the district-level function and other venues. The District Nodal Officer for Yoga was

directed to coordinate with the concerned departments to ensure smooth and fool-proof arrangements for the event. The Chief Education Officer was instructed to arrange transport facilities for students and furnish the list of officials and students participating in the district-level program within two days.

He also directed the line departments to make all necessary arrangements at the venues well in advance, including logistics, seating, water supply, power supply, PAS and first aid to facilitate smooth conduct of the yoga sessions across the district. The Deputy Commissioner briefed the officers on their respective roles and responsibilities while stressing maximum participation of government employees from their respective departments, prominent citizens and youth of the area in the district-level function and other venues. The District Nodal Officer for Yoga was directed to coordinate with the concerned departments to ensure smooth and fool-proof arrangements for the event. The Chief Education Officer was instructed to arrange transport facilities for students and furnish the list of officials and students participating in the district-level program within two days. He also directed the line departments to make all necessary arrangements at the venues well in advance, including logistics, seating, water supply, power supply, PAS and first aid to facilitate smooth conduct of the yoga.

## Israel has right to defend itself: G7 leaders, while Trump leaves Summit early

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
Alberta (Canada), June 17

The Group of Seven leaders, meeting here for the 51st Summit, on Tuesday affirmed support to Israel, describing Iran as the 'principal source of regional instability and terror', while US President Donald Trump left the meeting early after warning Iranian people to evacuate Tehran. The G-7 leaders who are attending the two-day Summit, reiterated commitment to peace and stability in the Middle East and called for resolution of the Iranian crisis leading to a broader de-escalation of hostilities in the region, including a ceasefire in Gaza. In a statement 'Recent Developments Between Israel And Iran', the G-7 leaders asserted that Israel has a right to defend itself and Iran can never have a nuclear weapon. 'We, the leaders of the G7, reiterate our commitment to peace and stability in the Middle East. In this



context we affirm that Israel has a right to defend itself. We reiterate our support for the security of Israel. We also affirm the importance of the protection of civilians. Iran is the principal source of regional instability and terror. We have been consistently clear that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon,' they said in a brief statement. They said they would remain vigilant to the implications for international energy markets and stand ready to coordinate, including with like-minded partners, to safeguard

market stability. The statement came as the US President abruptly left for home on Monday evening cutting short his visit to Canada as the Israel-Iran crisis deepened further. President Trump warned Iranian people to 'immediately evacuate Tehran.' 'Iran should have signed the (nuclear) deal I told them to sign. What a shame and waste of human life. Simply stated, Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. I said it over and over again,' Trump said. Before he left the US President asked his National

Security Council to be prepared in the situation room as he returns early from the G7 Summit. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said on X on Monday that because of what was going on in the Middle East, President Trump would be leaving tonight after dinner with Heads of State. 'President Trump had a great day at the G7, even signing a major trade deal with the United Kingdom and Prime Minister Keir Starmer. Much was accomplished, but because of what's going on in the Middle East, President Trump will be leaving tonight after dinner with Heads of State.' Trump told reporters he had to leave early for 'obvious reasons' but later posted on Truth Social that his early exit had 'nothing to do with' working on a ceasefire between Israel and Iran. He said the reason for his early departure was 'much bigger.'

## Trump warns Iranians to leave Tehran amid escalating tensions

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
Washington/Tel Aviv, June 17

US President Donald Trump has called for a mass exodus in the Iranian capital, as Israel's war with Iran has entered its fifth day, with massive strikes being carried out by Tel Aviv against Tehran. 'Iran should have signed the deal I told them to sign. What a shame, and waste of human life. Simply stated, IRAN CAN NOT HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON. I said it over and over again!' Trump said in a post on Truth Social, according to Iran International. 'Everyone should immediately evacuate Tehran!' he added. 'AMERICA FIRST means many GREAT things, including the fact that, IRAN CAN NOT HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!!!' Trump's post and announcement came after Israel struck Iran's state-run IRIB media agency during a live broadcast, after 8 Israeli citizens were



killed in Tel Aviv by Iranian missile strikes. Following the attack, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz had vowed retribution, stating that Iranian citizens will have to 'pay the price.' So far, over 24 people have been killed in Israel and more 227 Iranians were killed on Friday by Israeli strikes. Additionally, Israel apart from killing several members of Iran's top brass on Friday also killed the newly appointed IRGC commander Gen Ali Shadmani today just days after his predecessor Gholam Ali Rashid was

killed. After Trump cut short his G7 visit to address the new situation, the US deployed more aircraft to Europe, placing them closer to West Asia in to protect its interests, reports Time. Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth said in a Monday statement on X that 'additional capabilities' have also been deployed to the Middle East. 'Protecting US forces is our top priority and these deployments are intended to enhance our defensive posture in the region,' he said. White House spokesperson Alex Pfeiffer rebutted the suggestion that the moves indicate that the U.S. has joined the war. 'American forces are maintaining their defensive posture, and that has not changed. We will defend American interests,' he said on X. 'We are vigilant. We are prepared. We have messaged consistently from the beginning that we're in the region to defend our people and our assets,' Hegseth said on Fox News on Monday.

## Indian Army contingent departs for France to participate in exercise Shakti

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
New Delhi, June 17

An Indian Army contingent departed on Tuesday to participate in the 8th edition of the biennial India-France joint military exercise, Shakti, scheduled to be held from June 18 to July 1, at Camp Larzac, La Cavalerie, in France. The Indian contingent comprising of 90 personnel is being represented primarily by a Battalion of the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles besides personnel from other arms and services. The French contingent comprising of 90 personnel will be represented by the 13th Foreign Legion Half-Brigade (13th DBLE), a Defence Ministry statement said.



Exercise Shakti is a biennial training engagement between the Indian and French Armies, aimed at enhancing interoperability, operational coordination, and military to military connect. This edition will focus on joint operations in a sub-conventional

environment under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, with training being conducted in semi-urban terrain. The exercise will provide a platform for both contingents to rehearse and refine tactical drills, share best practices in Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs), train on new generation equipment (contemporary military technologies) and strengthen physical endurance. It will also foster esprit-de-corps, mutual respect and professional camaraderie between the two armies. Exercise Shakti-VIII underscores the growing defence cooperation between India and France and will strengthen strategic ties between the two friendly nations.

## Action will be taken against erring officials for delay in Kundmala bridge repair: BJP

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
New Delhi, June 17

Soon after the government issued a notification declaring the 16th Caste Census to begin from 2027, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday accused the opposition Congress party of always cheating and suppressing the rights of OBCs. 'The OBC community has always been betrayed by the Congress. If the Congress had genuine intent, it would have formed a new commission after scrapping the Kaka Kalelkar Commission... Instead, they dismissed the commission's report and continued to rule...' Later, when the Mandal Commission was constituted and the Supreme Court upheld its legality, the Congress worked to weaken the OBC Commission,' Union Minister Bhupender Yadav said at a press conference here. While slamming the Opposition party for 'suppressing OBC rights and caste census reports', Minister Yadav gave credit to his



party for taking various initiatives for the community including granting constitutional status to the OBC Commission and implementing welfare schemes. He said, 'It was the BJP government that granted reservation to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). Congress has never stood with the poor, OBCs, or SC/ST communities. Congress MP & LoP Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, calls Karnataka an ideal state — but the timing and internal contradictions of their stance show that social justice is merely a showpiece for Congress.

## Sonia Gandhi's health stable: Sir Ganga Ram Hospital

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
New Delhi, June 17

The health of Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi is steadily improving, hospital sources said today. Sources at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital said that the former Congress president is responding well to treatment for an abdominal infection and is recovering steadily. The 78-year-old veteran leader was admitted to Sir Ganga Ram Hospital on Sunday night after she complained of abdominal pain. Hospital sources said that she is under medical supervision. Gandhi had also undergone a medical check-up at the hospital last week



## SC denies anticipatory bail in 'Donkey Route' immigration scam

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
New Delhi, June 17

The Supreme Court has declined to grant anticipatory bail to a Haryana man accused of orchestrating an illegal immigration racket through the notorious 'donkey route,' expressing strong disapproval over such activities that, according to the Court, tarnish the reputation of Indian passports globally. A vacation bench comprising Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and Manmohan, while rejecting the plea filed by Om Prakash, observed on Monday (June 16), 'Because of people like you, the value of the Indian passport is diminished.' The bench noted that the



charges against the petitioner involved grave allegations of human smuggling and fraud. The 'donkey route' is a term commonly used to describe illicit migration pathways involving multiple border crossings via human traffickers. Individuals attempting to reach countries like the United States and

the United Kingdom often endure perilous journeys through forests, deserts, and detention zones, bypassing formal immigration procedures. The Court took note of the prosecution's claims that Om Prakash conspired with the main accused to cheat the complainant under the pretext of facilitating legal migration to the United States in exchange for Rs 43 lakh. Instead, the victim was sent through a harrowing sequence of countries starting in Dubai, moving across Central America, and eventually into Mexico, before being forced to cross the U.S. border illegally via the dangerous terrain of Panama's jungles.

## Netanyahu says war against Iran has ignited a 'light to freedom' for Iranians

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
Tel Aviv/Tehran, June 17 (UNI)

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called Israel's ongoing war with Iran a campaign to rid the country of its 'evil rulers', stating that the regime's days were numbered, and 'a light' to 'freedom' has been lit. 'A light has been lit — carry it to freedom,' Netanyahu told Iran International. Netanyahu said Israel's military campaign against Iran is giving its people a chance to topple the Islamic Republic, adding that the ruling system's days were numbered. 'This is the time,' he said. 'Your hour of freedom is near — it's happening now.'

Calling the regime an enduring threat against Israel with its nuclear weapons ambitions and ballistic missile programmes, he said that the 'tyrants of Iran' would stop at nothing short of the complete destruction of the Jewish state. Stating that Iran's project for Israel's destruction was to be carried out in two stages, he said 'One is to rush forward with their nuclear programme to develop atomic bombs to destroy Israel. 'Second, they've programmed to build a vast missile, ballistic missile arsenal ... Each missile carrying a one-ton payload, just slamming into our cities, killing our women, our children.' 'They were going to build 20,000 of

these,' he added. Netanyahu called Israel's ongoing campaign as both a defensive war and an opportunity for the leadership in Tehran to be overthrown. 'This is evil against good, and it's time for good people to stand up with the good, the good people of Iran, and good people everywhere against this madness foisted on all of us by this radical tyranny. It's about to end.' He went to add that while Tehran feared Israel, its biggest fear was its own people, due to the regime's massive unpopularity in the country. 'These dictators in Iran, sure they fear us — but they fear you, the people of Iran, even more,' he said. 'They understand that 80 per cent of Iranians despise them.'

## Amit Shah releases flood hazard zonation atlas of Assam

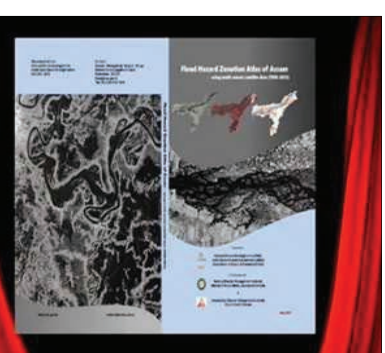
UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
Guwahati, June 17

Union Home minister Amit Shah has released the Flood Hazard Zonation Atlas of Assam during the annual conference of relief commissioners/secretaries of disaster management and state disaster response forces (SDRFs), civil defence, home guards and fire services of states/UTs. 'Today (Monday), the Union Home Minister launched the Flood Hazard Zonation Atlas of Assam, a satellite-based analysis of flooding patterns in the state. This Atlas will help us in regulating development in flood-

plains, promoting flood resilient agriculture, support crop insurance schemes, preparing disaster management plans among others,' said Assam Chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on his X handle. This is the third version of the Flood Hazard Zonation Atlas prepared by NRSC/ISRO on request from Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) using satellite data from 1998 to 2023. Since Assam is one of the worst flood-affected states in the country, ISRO has been providing extensive space-based support to the state govern-



ment in disaster management from time to time. NRSC/ISRO released the first version of the Atlas for Assam



in 2011, which was updated in 2015. The Atlas aims to provide the analysis of satellite-derived flood inunda-

tion layers during 1998-2023. It also helped in generation of a flood frequency map, flood hazard zonation categories/maps at state/district and village levels. This also provides an overall scenario of the flood situation in Assam in the last 26 years. A statement issued by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority said that about 400 satellite images (optical and microwave) acquired, covering various flood magnitudes in Assam were thoroughly analyzed in generating flood hazard maps. 'This is instrumental in controlling developmental activities in flood-

prone areas and constructing relief, rescue, and healthcare facilities. The study included the analysis of flood frequency, inundation areas at administrative levels in districts and villages and water-level observations obtained from Central Water Commission for identified river gauge sites along the main Brahmaputra river and its tributaries,' the statement said. 'The Atlas will be available on the ASDMA website for the benefit of the public and for the district administration for effective planning and decision-making,' it said.

## The Incredible Health Benefits of Mango



Sahil Manzoor

**H**ealth has no alternative. It should always be our top priority. True development does not lie in owning luxurious houses, branded cars, or wearing premium clothes. Real progress begins with being physically fit and healthy. Sadly, many people focus more on earning wealth and eventually spend their entire savings on treating health issues later in life.

To maintain good health and avoid life-threatening diseases, we must adopt a nutritious and balanced diet. It is our duty to include seasonal fruits and vegetables in our meals and educate our families about their benefits. Health authorities across the world advocate for the inclusion of fresh, natural, and pure foods in our diets to ensure a healthier lifestyle.

Among the many fruits gifted to us by nature, mango stands out as one of the most delicious and beneficial. Let's explore some amazing facts and health benefits of mangoes.

### A Glimpse into the World of Mangoes

Mango is a seasonal fruit native to India and Southeast Asia. It is cultivated extensively in Indian states such as Maharashtra, Orissa, and Punjab. Mangoes come in various varieties, differing in taste, size, and texture. They are not only a treat to the taste buds but also a powerhouse of nutrients.

### Health Benefits of Mango

#### Boosts Immunity

Mango is rich in Vitamin E, which plays a vital role in strengthening the immune system. People with Vitamin E deficiencies are more susceptible to infections. Regular intake of mango helps protect the body from various illnesses.

#### Improves Digestive Health

Mango contains digestive enzymes known as amylases, which break down complex carbohydrates into simple sugars, aiding digestion. This makes mango a gut-friendly fruit.

#### Supports Heart Health

The presence of potassium and magnesium in

mango helps regulate blood flow, supports cardiovascular function, and reduces the risk of high blood pressure. It also aids in lowering bad cholesterol levels.



#### Enhances Eye Health

Mango is packed with nutrients like Vitamin A and antioxidants that are crucial for maintaining good eyesight and preventing eye-related issues such as night blindness and dry eyes.

#### Prevents Cancer

Mangoes contain powerful antioxidants that combat oxidative stress, thereby reducing the risk of certain types of cancer. These include polyphenols and other compounds that neutralize harmful free radicals in the body.

#### Rich in Essential Nutrients

Mango is a great source of vitamins and minerals including Vitamin B, folate, copper, and more. These nutrients contribute to overall physical development and the smooth functioning of body systems.

#### Final Thoughts and Suggestions

We must adopt a balanced diet—one that includes all essential components like vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, proteins, fats, and water. This not only keeps our bodies fit and healthy but also strengthens our resistance to diseases.

Equally important is staying away from junk food, especially oily and recycled street food, which deteriorates our health and weakens our immune system over time. Let's cultivate the habit of choosing healthy, seasonal, and natural food options.

Remember, health is real wealth. Let us value it before it's too late.

Sahil Manzoor  
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## Free Medical Camp Held Gagra Gool

### HT NEWS DESK

Ramban, June 17: Health Department successfully organized a comprehensive two days free Medical Camp at Gagra, catering to the healthcare needs of the local population. Over 650 patients received medical consultations and free medicines, with Haemoglobin and Diabetes Mellitus testing facilities, and screening for Tuberculosis (TB) and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). The Camp was organized by the BMO Gool Dr. Ashfaq Hassan in line with the directions of DDC Chairperson Ramban Dr. Shamsad Shan and MLA Banihal Sajjad Shaheen. The BMO consulted nearly 500 patients, while other doc-



tors attended to a significant number of patients. Local representatives and senior citizens expressed gratitude to the team of Health Department for

providing specialized care at their doorstep. BMO Gool also interacted with senior citizens and addressed their concerns.

## DC reviews functioning of Animal and Sheep Husbandry Departments in Poonch District Flags off FMD Vaccination Drive

### HT NEWS DESK

POONCH, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal chaired a meeting today to assess the functioning of the Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry Departments in the district. Earlier, the DC flagged off Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccination drive here from the District Veterinary Hospital.

At the outset, the departmental functionaries provided comprehensive updates on the initiatives for promotion of Dairy Development, Poultry Development and Artificial Insemination. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of effective grassroots implementation to ensure that the benefits of these programs reach every eligible beneficiary.



Key discussions included the status of the DAKSH Kissan Portal, with directives for increasing farmer enrollment and timely course completion. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed milk and egg production in the district, while highlighting the need for timely execution of Foot and Mouth vaccination rounds.

In pursuit of financial inclusivity, progress on Kisan Credit Card (KCC) saturation in Dairy and Poultry sectors

was evaluated, setting the target of 100% coverage of farm-operating families. The Deputy Commissioner called for aggressive awareness campaigns regarding the National Artificial Insemination Programme (NAIP) to educate livestock owners on its benefits. The Deputy Commissioner directed the sheep Husbandry officers to focus on field activities like dipping and vaccination. The establishment of first aid camps along migratory routes was stressed to ensure timely veterinary support to nomadic breeders. In closing remarks, the Deputy Commissioner urged both departments to meet their financial year 2025-26 targets systematically, stressing the need for robust awareness campaigns and interdepartmental coordination for effective service delivery to the grassroots.

## Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan IEC campaigns to raise awareness on ill effects of drug abuse continue in Budgam

### HT NEWS DESK



BUDGAM, JUNE 17: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, a series of Information, Education & Communication (IEC) campaigns were today held across multiple panchayats and municipal areas of district Budgam to raise awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse and to mobilize communities towards a drug-free society.

The awareness programmes were conducted at Gogjipatheri A, Gogjipatheri B, Dadompura Payeen, Dadompura Balla, Bonyar, Government Middle School Surnhall, and Panchayat Ghar Choon.

In addition, several municipal wards of Khansahib also witnessed enthusiastic participation in the campaign.

These events marked another step forward in the district administration's commitment to eradicate the growing menace of substance abuse. Organised with the active collaboration of departments such as Health, Education, Social Welfare, and local bodies including the Municipal Committee Khansahib, the events drew the involvement of students, teachers, civil society members and youth volunteers.

Resource persons from the concerned departments sensitized the participants on various facets of substance abuse including its psychological, social, and legal consequences.

Focus was placed on early intervention, strengthening community-level support systems, and linking vulnerable individuals with counselling and rehabilitation services.

The programmes featured interactive sessions, anti-drug pledge ceremonies, educational skits, awareness rallies, poster exhibitions, and distribution of IEC materials. Youth participants were encouraged to act as agents of change within their peer groups and localities.

It was emphasized that the fight against drugs requires a united societal response, where schools, families, and communities work hand-in-hand to promote healthy lifestyles, identify red flags early, and provide support without stigma.

## DC Kupwara Chairs NCORD meeting, directed concerned officers to intensify the IEC activities.

### HT NEWS DESK

KUPWARA, JUNE 17: To review the progress made to curb the drug abuse in Kupwara district, a meeting of District Level Committee of Narco Coordination (NCORD) was held today under the chairpersonship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan at meeting hall of DC Office Complex, here.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal from concerned members of NCORD Committee regarding the present scenario of drug related occurrences, various issues related to menace of drug addiction, its control and rehabilitation and areas of concern.

The DC meticulously reviewed the implementation of the measures taken and progress achieved to eliminate drug abuse and its peddling in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner took feedback from the members of the Committee who presented the latest report related to action taken against drug-addiction and drug trafficking in the district.

The DC also emphasized the Officers including Enforcement agencies for identifica-



tion and close vigil of entry points, hot spots of drugs, public places and abandoned buildings.

Similarly, the DC also laid thrust on further intensifying IEC campaigns (seminars, rallies and other programmes on the harmful effects of drug menace) at Schools and Colleges levels to sensitize students and common masses about ill-effects of drugs and close coordination between Health, Education and other line departments.

The Deputy Commissioner meticulously reviewed the functioning of Drug De-addiction Centre Kupwara and Addiction Treatment Facility Centre (ATFC) Handwara and stressed for upscaling of the therapeutic management and proper counselling of the drug addicts which can help the addicts to come out of the menace.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for providing self-employment

opportunities to the drug victims who have been recovered so that they can live a dignified life in the society.

The DC said in order to combat this rising societal problem, multi-pronged Rehabilitation, Counselling and Guidance policy is indispensable to be implemented on ground to monitor drug abuse and take remedial measures to curb the menace so that sufferings of the drug-affected persons are mitigated.

The Deputy Commissioner while reviewing the IEC activities DC directed Tehsildars and other concerned officers to further intensify the awareness campaign and IEC activities and ensure maximum public participation in Nasha mukht programmes.

DC directed the concerned nodal officer to upload the IEC activities on the Portal.

DC directed concerned officers to make the Nasha Mukht banners more attractive, catchy and visible.

The meeting among others was attended by ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad, ACR Kupwara Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad ASP Kupwara Javid Ahmad ASP Hanwara Fayaz Jeelani, CMO Kupwara, Medical Superintendent DH Handwara, DEPO, Assistant Drug controller, Tehsildars.

## District-Level NCORD meeting held at Udhampur DC calls for strengthening of anti-drug measures

### HT NEWS DESK

UDHAMPUR, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai on Tuesday chaired a meeting of the District-Level Committee under the Narco Coordination Centre here in the Mini Conference Hall, DC Office Complex to assess the implementation of drug control measures and their on ground impact.

The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police Amod Ashok Nagpure, Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr. Umesh Shan and other officers from line departments.

The meeting held detailed deliberations on progress achieved in identification of individuals involved in illicit drug trade and investigations into the NDPS Act cases.

The Drugs & Food Control Organization and the Police Department were tasked with submitting detailed reports on types of drugs seized and their respective locations to facilitate a targeted and coordinated crackdown on drug peddling.

The DC directed them



enforcement departments to submit comprehensive action-taken reports on earlier directives. She sought updates on freezing and attachment of financial assets of drug traffickers, action taken against pharmacies selling scheduled drugs without valid prescriptions, measures to curb illicit cultivation of narcotic crops, rehabilitation initiatives for victims of substance abuse, surveillance in educational institutions and implementation of Nasha Mukht Panchayat campaign.

The DC instructed stakeholder departments to scale up counseling services and IEC activities to raise public awareness, especially at the grassroots level.

The identification and monitoring of drug abuse hotspots in the district,

action taken against government employees found involved in drug trafficking and inspection and monitoring of drug de-addiction centres etc was also stressed upon.

Tehsildars and ETO were directed to mobilize teams and machinery to identify and destroy wild cannabis growth in their jurisdictions. The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police Amod Ashok Nagpure, Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr. Umesh Shan and other officers from line departments.

The meeting held detailed deliberations on progress achieved in identification of individuals involved in illicit drug trade and investigations into the NDPS Act cases.

## Comprehensive Anti-Drug IEC Campaign held at GHSS Chinta- Bholderwah

### HT NEWS DESK

BHADERWAH, JUNE 17: A comprehensive Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign was successfully organized at Higher Secondary School (HSS) Chinta, Bholderwah to combat the rising threat of drug abuse among youth. The campaign held under the direction of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and the guidance of Chief Education Officer Mohammad Hafiz, witnessed enthusiastic participation from multiple departments, including Education, Health, Police, Social Welfare, Rural Development, Excise and others. The awareness programme focused on sensitizing students about the harmful effects of substance abuse. Resource persons from different departments



delivered impactful talks, highlighting the adverse effect of drugs on physical, mental

and social life of the individuals. The event also included a pledge ceremony, where

students and staff committed themselves to support the goals of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, promoting a drug-free and responsible society. To enhance engagement and message retention, a sports event was organized, reinforcing the importance of a healthy lifestyle. ICT tools and video presentations were also used to communicate the anti-drug message effectively. This multimedia approach ensured a more interactive and memorable learning experience for the students. The campaign was coordinated by Lecturer Arvind Kumar, under the overall supervision of the District Administration. The sessions were moderated by Vice Principal Raj Mohammad and the program concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by the School Principal Dr. Som Shaker.

# Sportspersons Are Ambassadors of Peace and Prosperity: DG YSS

## Flags Off J&K Contingent for National Aquatic Championship

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, June 17: Sportspersons serve as messengers of peace, prosperity, and harmony, often emerging as influential ambassadors due to their widespread appeal and ability to inspire. This sentiment was echoed by Anuradha Gupta, Director General of Youth Services and Sports, Jammu & Kashmir, while flagging off the J&K contingent for the 78th Senior National Aquatic Cham-

ampionship. The ceremony, held at the MA Stadium, was a vibrant and well-attended affair. A contingent of ten swimmers—five men and five women—selected on merit, will represent Jammu & Kashmir at the championship, organized by the Swimming Federation of India in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, from June 22 to 26, 2025. Commending the J&K Swimming Association for its relentless efforts in nurturing talent and promoting sports across



the Union Territory, Gupta emphasised the UT's vast potential in athletics. She stressed the importance of grassroots development to harness this talent effectively. Extending her best wishes to the swimmers, she urged them to compete with integrity and uphold the spirit of sportsmanship. Encouraging them to excel at the national stage, she expressed hope that their performances would bring pride to their families, coaches, and

Jammu & Kashmir. Gupta also highlighted the transformative power of sports in nation-building, urging the athletes to seize the opportunity and inspire society through their dedication. The flag-off ceremony, organized by the Jammu & Kashmir Swimming Association, was conducted under the leadership of President Ramandeep Singh Soodan, General Secretary Bharat Kumar Sharma, Joint Secretary and Coach Babita Rani, and Treasurer Vikas Mahajan.

# Department of Youth Services & Sports Zone Budgam Organises U-14 Football Tournament; International Islamic School Wins Championship

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, 17 June 2025: In a proud moment, International Islamic School, Millatabad Peerbagh, won the Under-14 Inter-School Zonal Level Football Tournament 2025-26, held in Budgam. The tournament was organized by the Department of Youth Services & Sports, Zone Budgam and 11 teams took part of this tournament. The young players showed great skill and teamwork, beating strong teams like Delhi Public School (DPS) Budgam and Foundation World School (FWS) Mamath Budgam in the final match. The high-energy tournament was witnessed by key officials, including DYSSO Budgam G.H. Lone, ZPEO Budgam Tariq Ahmad Dar and Organising Secretary PZ Kausar Ahmad, alongside other officials from Zone Budgam. The International Islamic School team, comprising talented young athletes, demonstrated exemplary sportsmanship and coordination throughout the competition. The winning team included players



Mohammad Kashif Bhat, Asfar Manzoor, Arhan Baba, Usman Bin Javaid Mirchal, Hamza Nadeem Dar, Muneeb Hassan, Ahmad Altaf Rathar, Junaid Latif Mir, Sheikh Muavin Manzoor, Yariq Tariq, Mohammad Yahya Gojri, Zain Mohammad, Huzai-fah Majid Wani, Ayan Showkat Dar and Usayd Inam Makhdoomi. International Islamic School Chairman, Dr. Tariq Ahmad Bhat, expressed immense pride in the students' achievement "This victory reflects

the growing spirit of discipline, sportsmanship, and excellence that we cultivate at IIS. Our students have not only won a trophy but have shown that determination and teamwork can lead to great success. I wholeheartedly congratulate our young stars, their coach Muhtashim Sir and our sports department." Principal, Umer Malik, praised the dedication behind the scenes "Our football team's journey to the zonal title is the result of persistent hard

work, commitment and support from the entire school community. We are immensely proud of our boys for their outstanding performance and how they've carried the school's values onto the field." Board of Directors, School Management & Teaching Faculty jointly stated "This victory belongs to every student, teacher, coach and staff who believed in the power of sports as a foundation of education. We are committed to nurturing talent in all fields - academic, athletic and beyond." The school now sets its sights on the district-level championships, with renewed energy and higher aspirations. This success story serves as an inspiration to all students of International Islamic School, to strive for excellence in every endeavor, on and off the field.

# Srinagar Hosts District Pencak Silat Championship 2025.

HT NEWS DESK

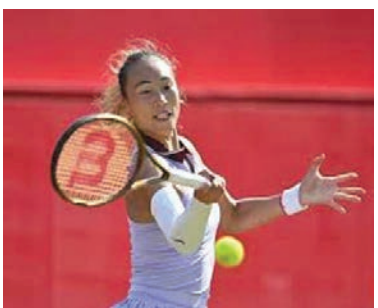


Srinagar 17 June: The 10th Srinagar District Pencak Silat Championship 2025 began at the Indoor Stadium Polo Ground & will continue till June 18. The two-day event, organised by the District Srinagar Pencak Silat Association and sponsored by the J&K Sports Council, has attracted over 450 participants from various schools & clubs across the district. Miss Anisa nabi (JKAS), Chief Sports Officer, J&K Sports Council, was the Chief Guest at the inaugural ceremony.

She lauded the efforts to promote traditional martial arts among the youth. Hilal Ahmad, Manager of the Indoor Stadium Polo Ground, was also present & extended his best wishes to the participants. The championship features competitions across all age groups & aims to encourage fitness, discipline, and sporting culture in the region. The event is a significant step towards nurturing local talent and expanding the reach of Pencak Silat in Jammu & Kashmir. The event was sponsored by J&K Sports Council

# Olympic champion Zheng defeated in semifinals at Queen's club

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
London, June 17



China's Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen ended her journey at the Queen's Club Championships as the world No. 5 lost to American Amanda Anisimova 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 in the women's singles semifinals here. The 22-year-old Zheng was obviously not in her best form as she not only struggled in her first serves but also made many unforced errors on Saturday. Although she managed to level the match while world No. 15 Anisimova also struggled in her own serving games in the second set, the top seed of the WTA 500 grass-court event was not good enough to outplay Anisimova. "I have to say that I could not concentrate on playing but worried about my shoes," revealed Zheng, who changed her shoes in the sixth game of the deciding set. "I noticed there was something wrong with my shoes, but I didn't realize that the sole has been unglued until the third set." "They were unused until yesterday, but they have been kept for years as they were from the period I was still playing in juniors," explained Zheng. As she didn't receive any new pair of grass-court shoes from her sponsor in time, Zheng had to wear the pair which she felt too slippery during the last match again.

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