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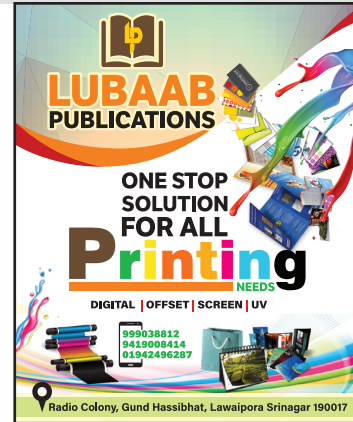
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15TH
YEAR OF
PUBLICATIONHEADLINES
TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



Adventure Tourism Crucial for Kashmir: CM Omar

CM launches Mehmood Shah's book "Valleys of Jammu and Kashmir"

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today said that in order to promote repeat tourism in Kashmir, it is essential to offer something new and refreshing each time—like adventure tourism.

He was speaking at the launch of the book "Valleys of Jammu and Kashmir – A Tribute to the Soul of Jammu and Kashmir" authored by Mehmood A. Shah, Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited, at a local hotel here.

"If we aspire to promote repeat tourism, we must recognize that tourists won't return solely for our Mughal gardens or the Tulip bloom,

nor just for the gondola rides. They return when offered something new—something refreshing each time. Adventure tourism provides exactly that. No two experiences are ever the same. The trail looks different in the morning than it does at sunset. Each trek offers a unique story," the Chief Minister said.

Calling for preservation and promotion of the region's historic trekking routes, he said these trails, connecting Jammu with Kashmir and Kashmir with Ladakh—are not just physical pathways, but cultural corridors of heritage and sustainable tourism.

"It is imperative that we market our trekking routes not just as a

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CM Omar Meets Delegations at Raabita

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today met several delegations at the Public Outreach Office, Raabita here, and held wide-ranging discussions on development, overall functioning of Institutions and public welfare issues.

Dr. Mohd. Jaffar Akhoun, Chief Executive Councillor from Kargil, led a deputation to apprise the Chief Minister of several challenges being faced by students and patients from Ladakh, particularly from Kargil, in different educational and healthcare institutions across Jammu and Kashmir. The deputation also raised various civic issues affecting the residents of Ladakh living in the J&K, seeking timely redressal and support.

Prof. Jawaid Iqbal, Vice Chancellor of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU), Rajouri, briefed the Chief Minister about the functioning of the university. The VC discussed several ongoing academic and administrative initiatives at the university and sought the Chief Minister's support for strengthening higher

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Pahalgam Terror Attack

Sales of J&K's Arts & Emporium Department hit

'Sales dropped by Rs 2 cr in first quarter of current FY'

■ HT News Desk / KINS

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: In the aftermath of the terror attack in Pahalgam, the Jammu and Kashmir Arts and Emporium Department has witnessed a sharp dip in its revenue, with sales declining by Rs 2 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

A senior official from the department said that the financial crisis has severely impacted its functioning. "After the Pahalgam attack, the sales went down by Rs 2 crore in the first quarter. We are already under pressure and struggling to manage day-to-day operations despite having cleared liabilities worth Rs 2.5 crore," the official said.

The department, which plays a crucial role in promoting and preserving the region's rich handicraft and artisan culture, is now facing an acute resource crunch. The official added that staff shortages have worsened the situation. "Out of 414 sanctioned posts, only 79 are currently filled. The department is even struggling to pay salaries to the existing staff," he revealed.

The Pahalgam attack, which triggered panic among tourists and dented the confidence of buyers and visitors, has had a cascading impact on local businesses, especially those linked to the

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Kavinder Gupta is New Lt. Governor Ladakh

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JUL 14: Former Jammu and Kashmir deputy Chief Minister and senior BJP leader Kavinder Gupta has been appointed as the new Lt Governor of Ladakh.

In a press communiqué, Gupta has been appointed the new Lt Governor following the



resignation of Brig. (Dr) B D Mishra (Retd.) as LG Ladakh.

"The President of India has accepted the resignation of Brig. (Dr) B D Mishra (Retd.) as Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Ladakh. Kavinder Gupta has been appointed as new Lieutenant Governor," reads the communiqué.

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Will Work With All for Ladakh's Development: Kavinder

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, JUL 14: After holding several key positions including as Deputy Chief Minister and Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, senior BJP leader Kavinder Gupta, who is poised to start a new innings as the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, on Monday

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Contribute to vision of Viksit Bharat @2047: Dr Jitendra to students

■ United News of India

JAMMU, JUL 14: Union Minister of State, Dr. Jitendra Singh Monday delivered a powerful and engaging address at IIM Jammu, during its Orientation Programme, urging students to seize the moment and contribute meaningfully to the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

Earlier, the Minister inaugurated a new hostel in the campus comprising four aesthetic blocks, together providing 688 single rooms occupancy. He also noted that only last week, the union cabinet had authorised the Director Rs 200 cr tender approval.

In his keynote, Dr. Jitendra Singh stated, "You are born at

a time when India is at the cusp of historic change. Your birth in this era is not your achievement, but how you use this opportunity will define your legacy." He described the youth as the true architects of Viksit Bharat, emphasizing their crucial role in shaping the India of 2047.

Dr. Jitendra Singh lauded

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Fresh rains bring mercury down; MeT predicts flash floods

■ HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUL 14: After a recent rise in maximum temperatures, the mercury has once again plummeted across the valley, with several parts recording rainfall on Monday. The weather department here has predicted continued wet weather until 17 July.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the recent rains further lowered temperatures in Jammu and Kashmir.

Yellow and Orange alerts have been issued for J&K for the next week. "For Jammu division, an Orange alert has been

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Harness ONDC to promote e-commerce: Dulloo



■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: In a move to catalyze the growth of small businesses through digital integration, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Monday chaired a high-level meeting with the CEO of Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to explore opportunities for leveraging the ONDC platform to promote e-commerce in J&K.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Executive Director, J&K Bank; Secretary, Labour & Employment; Secretary, Tribal Affairs; Secretary in Industries & Commerce; Director General, Budget; Director, Labour & Employment;

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CS for 100% digital health records under ABDM

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Monday chaired a meeting to review implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) in Jammu and Kashmir with a focus on ensuring seamless integration of healthcare data and digital services across the UT.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, Health & Medical Education; Managing Director, ABDM; Principals of Government Medical Colleges; Director Coordination (Medical Colleges) and other senior officers of the Department.

Taking stock of the ongoing initiatives under ABDM, the Chief Secretary underscored the urgency of linking patient health records with ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account) IDs, emphasizing that no

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Govt Mulls De-Freezing Of 50% General Line Teacher Posts

■ HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUL 14: In a major development, the government is mulling to de-freeze the half of General Line Teachers (GLTs) posts that were freed by the erstwhile State Administrative Council (SAC) in December-2018.

Pertinently, in 2018, the SAC had freed 6576 GLT posts for drawl of salaries of Rehbar-e-Taleem (ReTs) teachers.

According to the news agency—Kashmir

News Observer (KNO), Education Minister Sakina Itoo in a review meeting has directed to de-freeze the posts of General Line Teachers.

"While deliberating on the issue of shortage of teaching staff in view of subsuming of General Line Teacher vacancies against the supernumerary posts created for RRET transition as per SAC decision of 2018, it was directed that department shall move a proposal for de-freezing of

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BJP MLAs protest in Jammu

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, JUL 14: The BJP legislative party on Monday staged a protest outside the Civil Secretariat and Assembly here, demanding the revocation of a government order mandating Urdu as a compulsory language for the Naib Tehsildar recruitment examination in Jammu and Kashmir.

The BJP has been opposing the move across Jammu for over three weeks,

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Amarnath Yatra

2.20 lakh devotees perform darshan in 12 days

13th batch of 6,143 pilgrims leaves from Jammu

■ HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, JUL 14: The annual Amarnath Yatra has entered its twelfth day and continues to proceed smoothly, witnessing a steady rise in the number of pilgrims each day.

As of Monday, over 2.20 lakh devotees have offered prayers at the holy cave shrine since the pilgrimage began on July 3.

Officials told the news agency—

Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a total of 20,448 pilgrims performed 'darshan' at the 3,800-meter-high holy cave shrine on Monday including 14,145 men, 5,214 women, 242 children, 84 sadhus, six sadhvis and 757 security force personnel paid their respects at the holy cave shrine.

Over the last twelve days, a total of 2,20,511 pilgrims have undertaken the ongoing pilgrimage,

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UP Man Walks 111 Days to Reach Pahalgam for Yatra

■ HT News Desk

PAHALGAM, JUL 14: Harnam Prasad, a resident of Jasnagar in Uttar Pradesh, who has been undertaking the Amarnath Yatra on foot, reached

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Adventure.....

tourism product, but as part of our ecological and cultural legacy. We must not confine ourselves to markets where advisories act as obstacles. There are many countries with no such restrictions, whose tourists would be eager to explore our terrain," he said, calling for joint efforts with Ladakh to keep traditional routes alive and accessible.

Referring to the current situation, Omar Abdullah said it was unfortunate that the book is being released at a time when many of the trekking routes described in it remain inaccessible due to recent developments.

"Reading this book evokes both admiration and sadness. Admiration for the unmatched natural wealth we possess, and sadness because we are not able to experience or share it at present. It is my heartfelt hope, and indeed my effort, that these routes will soon be reopened for our youth, trekkers and visitors," he said.

Reflecting on his personal regret at not having trekked these trails, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah praised the author's dedication and passion. "Mr. Shah is truly fortunate to have explored these routes over the last 20–25 years. His experiences, beautifully documented in this volume, reflect deep commitment and love for the land."

The Chief Minister emphasized the need for digitizing the book to ensure wider accessibility. "If we want this work to benefit those who are truly interested in trekking, we must digitize it—perhaps through an app. Let the coordinates, photographs, anecdotes, and waypoints become a digital guide for adventure lovers," he suggested.

He added that while the book will adorn coffee tables, its real value lies in becoming a functional resource that inspires exploration and fosters sustainable tourism.

On the occasion, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, and the author Mehmood A. Shah also spoke. The event was moderated by noted endocrinologist Dr. Shariq Masoodi and was attended by prominent figures from the travel, trade, tourism and media.

Omar Questions.....

made to block his movement and restrict the democratic space.

"The same people who claim that their responsibility is only law and order, didn't let us step out yesterday. I informed the control room that I wanted to visit the graveyard, and within minutes, a security bunker was placed right outside my residence gate, it remained there till midnight."

He said that on Monday, without informing anyone, he decided to visit the graveyard quietly. "Even today, they shamelessly tried to stop us. A CRPF vehicle was parked in the middle of Nowhatta Chowk to block our movement. They even attempted to attack us," Omar alleged.

He questioned the legality of such actions. "Which law allows them to stop elected representatives from paying tribute to martyrs? Is this democracy or dictatorship? They say India is a free country, but treat us like slaves," he said.

Omar said that if he is a servant, he is a servant of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "We are not anyone's slaves. We are answerable to the people, not to uniformed officers who misuse power and violate the law."

Despite the alleged obstacles, Omar said they succeeded in offering prayers. "They thought we only come here on July 13. They forget these graves are here every day of the year. We will come whenever we want, July 12, 14, 15, December, January or February. How long will they stop us?" he asked.

Omar also claimed that police tried to seize their party flag. "They tried everything to stop us, block our way, tear our flag. But they failed. We paid our respects, and we will continue to honour our martyrs," he added.

A day after political leaders were stopped from visiting Mazaar-e-Shuhada in Srinagar due to restrictions, Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) President Dr Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister Javed Ahmad Dar, Minister Sakina Ito, Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq, provisional president Showkat Mir and other senior leaders visited the site to offer prayers and pay homage to the martyrs of July 13, 1931.(KNS)

CM Omar.....

education in the region.

Sandeep Sharma, Zonal Head of ICICI Bank, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed matters related to the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. He informed the Chief Minister about the rescue vehicle provided for Dachigam and initiatives aimed at employment generation and community welfare.

Brigadier Deepak Sajjan Har from NCC, Srinagar, met the Chief Minister to present a memento in connection with the NCC Everest Expedition–2025, highlighting the achievements and commitment of the NCC cadets to contribute to national pride and adventure sports activities.

Later, Sameer Bakto, Chairman of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), J&K Chapter, met the Chief Minister along with a visiting team from SKAL INTERNATIONAL. The team, currently on a visit from Mumbai, discussed the upcoming SKAL India Convention and proposed to make the event Kashmir-centric in the post-Yatra season, with an aim to promote the region's tourism potential globally.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to all deputations and assured appropriate action and continued government support as may be necessary.

Sales of J&K's.....

tourism and handicrafts sector.

Officials said the department is in urgent need of financial and administrative support to continue its operations. "We appeal to the government to provide immediate assistance. Without support, the department's revival will be extremely difficult," the official

noted.

The Arts and Emporium Department has historically served as a key platform for local artisans, showcasing traditional Kashmiri handicrafts, shawls, carpets, papier-mâché, and other products to tourists and national markets. The current setback raises concerns about the livelihood of hundreds of artisans who depend on the department for sales and exposure. (KINS)

Kavinder Gupta.....

Meanwhile, Gupta said that it is a challenging assignment and he will work together with everyone for the development of the region.

"I am thankful to those who considered me worthy—be it the Honourable Prime Minister, the Honourable President, the Home Minister, or the national leadership—who have placed me in this position. I want to express my gratitude to all of them," Gupta told reporters here.

He served as the Deputy Chief Minister of J-K from April 30, 2018, in the BJP-PDP government headed by Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti.

Gupta said there are "certainly challenges involved, but I accept them. I will try my best to serve the Union Territory." The BJP leader, who also served as Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly from 2014, said, "This is a big responsibility, and I am confident of fulfilling it sincerely. We will work together with everyone (for the development of the region)." Hailing from Jammu city's Janipur area, 66-year-old Gupta served as the Mayor of Jammu for a record three consecutive terms from 2005 to 2010. He served as general secretary of the BJP's state unit and headed the J-K unit of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) for two consecutive terms from 1993 to 1998.

Gupta was elected as an MLA for the first time from the Gandhi Nagar constituency, defeating sitting Congress minister Raman Bhalla in the 2014 Assembly elections.

Following the PDP-BJP Alliance's victory in the 2014 Assembly elections, Gupta was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the House.

Gupta, who earlier also served as secretary of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), spent about 13 months in jail during the Emergency as a Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh (RSS) worker. (Agencies)

Will Work With.....

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President Droupadi Murmu appointed Gupta as the new Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh on Monday.

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Contribute to.....

the institute's focus on student welfare and infrastructure development, noting that such facilities not only enhance the residential experience but also contribute to a more productive academic environment. The Minister appreciated the aesthetic design and thoughtful layout of the hostel, emphasizing that world-class infrastructure is vital for nurturing talent and fostering innovation on campus.

Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted that the Government's youth-centric governance model has created a dynamic ecosystem fostering education, innovation, startups, and research. He cited the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a game-changing reform that empowers students with interdisciplinary choices. "You are no longer prisoners of subjects chosen by your parents. Today, you can blend literature with science, or management with medicine. That is true empowerment," he said.

The Minister noted that structural reforms, such as the relaxation of General Financial Rules (GFRs) and empowering Directors to approve Global Tenders up to 200 crore, have significantly improved the ease of conducting research and managing institutions. These measures, he added, reflect the government's deep trust in academic leadership and the scientific community. Touching upon India's innovation journey, Dr. Jitendra Singh stated, "From just 350 startups a decade ago, India now has over 1.75 lakh startups—creating 17.56 lakh jobs, more than many government recruitment initiatives." He urged students to shift their mindset from being job seekers to becoming job creators, leveraging the enormous support available through various startup schemes.

Having been associated with IIM Jammu since its inception, Dr. Jitendra Singh lauded its dynamic growth and rapid strides in institutional development. "Among

the IIMs established in the last 11 years, IIM Jammu has emerged as a standout performer," he remarked. He also inaugurated a newly constructed four-block hostel complex, featuring 688 single-bed rooms, and commended the institute's modern infrastructure and student-centric facilities.

He advised the institute to initiate in-house B2B startup meets, leveraging its proximity to IIT, AIIMS, IIM, and the Institute of Mass Communication in Jammu. He said this rare cluster of premier institutions within a few kilometers offers an exceptional ecosystem for interdisciplinary learning and early industry-academic.

Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized the democratization of aspiration, noting that students from remote and underrepresented regions are now excelling in top national institutions and services. "You will be the ones to celebrate India's 100 years of independence in 2047. The responsibility of building Viksit Bharat lies with you. Take it not as a burden, but as a gift from destiny," he said.

At the same time, he reminded students and faculty to use their newfound autonomy with responsibility, observing that "every freedom carries an inherent obligation. The purpose of relaxing controls is not for comfort, but for greater creativity and accountability."

Among the prominent attendees were Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu; Dr. Shakti Gupta, Director, AIIMS Jammu; Prof. Manoj Singh Gaur, Director, IIT Jammu; Amitava Chatterjee, MD and CEO, J&K Bank; Prof. Upadhyay, Dean (Academics); and Dr. Sarbjit Singh, along with esteemed members of the faculty and student community. (Agencies)

Fresh rains bring.....

issued. There is a possibility of isolated heavy rains, thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds until 16 July," the details reveal. A Yellow alert has been issued for the division from 18 to 20 July.

The Yellow alert has also been issued for the Kashmir division for the next seven days.

Director of the Meteorological Department (MeT), Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, told KNO that generally cloudy weather is expected, with the possibility of intermittent spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places, with intense showers and heavy rain at a few locations until 17 July.

He said that fresh spells of rain and thundershowers are expected at scattered places from 18 to 21 July.

Moreover, the MeT has issued an advisory saying that there is a possibility of intense showers at a few places in J&K, with heavy rain expected at isolated locations in Jammu division from July 14 to 17.

It added that flash floods are expected at vulnerable sites, along with landslides, mudslides, and shooting stones.

Meanwhile, the Srinagar district administration has issued a weather advisory in view of the forecast of heavy rain, thunderstorms, and strong winds from 14 July (today) to 17 July across parts of Kashmir, including Srinagar.

Officials have advised residents, especially those living near the Jhelum River; its tributaries, and nearby streams, to stay away from water bodies during this period.

The advisory issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Office of the District Magistrate Srinagar, states that in light of the forecast of heavy rain and thunderstorms with strong winds, tourists, Shikara riders, sand extractors, and boat operators are advised to avoid travel on Dal Lake, the Jhelum River, and other water bodies until weather conditions improve.

It has urged people to remain alert and follow safety instructions. In case of emergencies or queries, the public can contact the District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC), the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), or the Police Control Room.

The important helpline numbers are: 0194-2457543 / 0194-2483651 / 0194-2457552; 9103998355 / 9103998356 / 9103998357; 112; and 0194-2477567.

Govt Mulls.....

50 percent of posts thereby extending the period from 2029 to 2034 so that new recruitment is undertaken through JKSSB to infuse fresh manpower to the department," Ittoo directed.

About the filling of vacancies at different levels, the education minister further directed vacant posts especially CEOs, ZEOs, Principals and Head Masters be filled at an earliest.

In the meeting, instructions were issued for filling up of vacancies under promotion quota in all the cadres by July-31-2025 and submission of proposals for conduct of DPCs to the JKPSB simultaneously.

"The female literacy rate has been observed to be lower as compared to male literacy rate. Special focus should be given on the education of girl child and 100 percent pass percentage be ensured at High and Higher Secondary level," the minister directed.

In the meeting, both the directors of school education directed to work out the details of unutilized funds lying in the shape of drafts under the scheme 'Beti Anmol' and the same may be deposited back into the government treasury.

About the availability of school buildings and basic infrastructure, it was apprised in the meeting that some schools do not have their own school buildings and are functioning in rented buildings.

"Both the Directors shall furnish the proposals for construction of school buildings within available funds to ensure that all schools have their own buildings and sufficient class rooms," the minister said.

BJP MLAs.....

holding protests and rallies at the district level. The party has warned of launching a region-wide agitation if the order is not withdrawn.

The MLAs of the saffron party arrived at the Civil Secretariat in the morning and staged a dharna, calling the order discriminatory and detrimental to the interests of Jammu's youth.

Carrying placards highlighting injustice against Jammu's youth, Dogras and other official languages of the union territory, the BJP leaders raised slogans against

the government and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, accusing the part of trying to create unrest in the region.

"We are staging a dharna against the decision to make Urdu mandatory for Naib Tehsildar examinations in Jammu and Kashmir, which is not acceptable to us," BJP MLA and former minister Sham Lal Sharma said.

He said, "Kashmir-centric parties, particularly the National Conference, have been discriminating against this region for decades. This is a fresh example of it." Taking a swipe at the National Conference governments for decades-long discrimination against Jammu and its people, he said "we thought their discriminatory approach had changed after 2019, but it continues even today." Issuing such an order is a clear attempt to deny jobs to Jammu's youth in the examination. It also discriminates against other official languages, he alleged.

"By making Urdu mandatory for such important posts in the government, the NC rulers have overruled previous provisions where knowing the language Urdu was not compulsory," Sharma further said.

"We are holding protests to get it revoked. Youth are already on the streets protesting. The matter has been brought to the notice of the Lieutenant Governor as well and memorandums have been submitted through deputy commissioners, but nothing has been done so far," he said.

Sharma said that 14 BJP MLAs had even met Chief Minister Omar Abdullah over the issue. "His approach was positive. Still, no action has been taken, and tomorrow is the last day to apply for the posts." "They are trying to create unrest in Jammu and are forcing us to go on agitation. All 28 BJP MLAs have started it with today's two-hour-long token dharna," he added.

The former minister further said that the party will soon announce its next course of action.

"We are warning the government not to play with the sentiments of the people of Jammu, who are fed up with the discriminatory attitude of Kashmir-centric rulers," he said.

Other BJP MLAs also warned of an agitation if the Urdu language requirement is not withdrawn for the examination advertised by the government.

"Making Urdu a compulsory subject in recruitment for Naib Tehsildars is a gross injustice to the youth of the Jammu region," BJP MLA Yudhvir Sethi said, adding that such injustice will not be tolerated.

The MLAs strongly opposed the decision and said it was a "deliberate attempt" to marginalise the youth of the Jammu region.

"This is a calculated move to deprive Jammu's youth of equal opportunities," Sethi added.

The imposition of Urdu, he said, reflects the divisive and exclusionary policies once pursued by the Omar Abdullah-led government.

"We will not allow the repetition of such injustice," he said and added that the move is a clear violation of equal status accorded to multiple official languages, including Dogri, Hindi, Kashmiri, Urdu, and English. (Agencies)

Harness ONDC.....

State Informatics Officer, NIC; Representative from BISAG-N besides other senior officers.

During the deliberations, the Chief Secretary emphasized the immense potential of digital commerce in strengthening the local economy and creating new livelihood avenues. He underscored the importance of initiating the digital push with simple, scalable models, and expanding gradually by addressing implementation challenges in a phased manner.

Dulloo emphasised on the fact that J&K must embrace the digital shift by harnessing the capabilities of ONDC to empower the small and nano entrepreneurs first to serve locally. He directed the Labour & Employment Department to begin with a hyper-local delivery system within a defined radius around businesses.

He also called for onboarding service providers such as electricians, plumbers and other technicians on the digital platform, enabling the citizens to avail their services conveniently here.

The CEO, ONDC, shared success stories from other states, including that of Sri Vidhya Handlooms and Himira in Himachal Pradesh and their initiatives taken in Andhra Pradesh where ONDC played a transformative role in supporting the entrepreneurs to reach national markets in shorter time durations. He elaborated on ONDC's potential to digitize local economy of J&K and link the same with the national digital market, thereby uplifting key economic drivers here.

Speaking on J&K's roadmap, Director, Labour & Employment, Shahzad Alam, informed that the UT is looking to adopt a hyper-local delivery model within a 3–4 km radius through a seller app developed by BISAG-N. He added that various categories of service providers would soon be onboarded to offer their services through an integrated online hiring platform.

CS for 100%.....

stone should be left unturned to complete this vital digital transition without any further delay.

He called for interlinking of Sehat, ABDM and HMIS portals, to create a unified digital ecosystem that empowers the patients, healthcare professionals and institutions to access and share data effortlessly through a single platform.

Dulloo stressed that continuous updating of patient health records must be ensured so that individuals need not carry paper records when visiting any hospital or doctor. He called for universal implementation of the Scan and Share

facility across all health institutions. He directed the department to rationalize manpower, especially for data entry tasks critical to the success of the HMIS module.

In a significant push towards improving accountability and data integrity, the Chief Secretary instructed the department to expedite the Health Professional Registry (HPR) and take strict measures against professionals delaying compliance. He also advised for seeking technical support from BISAG-N to professionally and swiftly conclude digitization targets under the ABDM framework.

During the meeting, Secretary H&ME, Dr. Shah, briefed about the steps already taken to accelerate digital transformation. He highlighted the Department's success in initiating the HPR, digitizing patient health records, integrating radio diagnostic reports with ABHA IDs and rolling out the Scan and Share facility in numerous health institutions.

Here affirmed the Department's commitment towards ensuring full saturation of these initiatives within a defined timeline. He delineated the strategies that are going to accomplish the mission satisfactorily across all the healthcare facilities in J&K.

Adding to the deliberations, MD ABDM, Anant Dwivedi, outlined the mission's three core pillars including ABHA ID, Health Professional Registry (HPR) and the Health Facility Registry (HFR). He informed that J&K has made notable strides in all these domains.

As per the latest figures, it was informed that 94.49 lakh ABHA IDs have been created, covering 69.7% of the target population. It was further revealed that 100% registration of all 3,607 public health facilities (HFR) has been completed besides 87% registration of public doctors (6,713 out of 7,730) and 100% registration of public nurses (5,149) has been achieved.

Moreover, 20.58 lakh digital health records have been linked with ABHA IDs, with 1.44 lakh new records added since May. Additionally, 104 out of 105 health facilities are now actively using the HMIS (JK-e-Sahaj) portal. Notably, 71.16 lakh Scan and Share tokens have been generated so far, as was informed in this meeting.

These milestones reflect the UT's firm commitment towards harnessing technology for better healthcare delivery.

The Chief Secretary lauded the department for the progress and stressed on sustaining momentum to ensure full digital inclusion of all citizens in the futuristic health ecosystem in the days to come.

2.20 lakh.....

officials said.

They said the annual pilgrimage has been progressing smoothly amid tight security arrangements and favourable weather conditions.

On Sunday, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announced that the ongoing Amarnath Yatra has surpassed the 2-lakh mark, with devotees continuing to throng the holy cave shrine.

In a post on X, LG Sinha expressed his joy, stating, "With Baba Amarnath Ji's blessings, the holy pilgrimage has crossed the 2 lakh mark today. This is a sacred journey of a lifetime, and I welcome all the devotees to discover and experience the divinity. Har Har Mahadev!"

Meanwhile, the 13th batch of 6,143 pilgrims undertaking the annual Amarnath Yatra left from the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu on Monday morning amid tight security arrangements.

Officials said that the pilgrims were divided into two escorted convoys heading towards the twin base camps of Baltal and Pahalgam. The first convoy comprising 100 vehicles left for the Baltal base camp in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district, carrying 2,215 pilgrims. The second convoy of 135 vehicles departed for the Nunwan base camp in South Kashmir's Pahalgam, with 3,928 pilgrims on board.

The Baltal-bound pilgrims included 1,646 men, 507 women, 5 children, 44 sadhus and 13 sadhvis.

"The Pahalgam-bound group consisted of 3,045 men, 741 women, 12 children, 123 sadhus and 7 sadhvis. In terms of transportation, 235 vehicles were used for Monday's convoy, including 100 for Baltal and 135 for Pahalgam," official said. The annual yatra started on July 3 and will culminate on August 9, the officials added.

UP Man Walks.....

Pahalgam on Monday after walking for 111 days.

Carrying a Kaware (sacred water pot) weighing 17 kilograms on his shoulders, Prasad began his journey from Rameshwaram Jyotirling, covering thousands of kilometres.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Prasad said, "I started my journey on March 27 and today, after 111 days on foot, I have reached Pahalgam. I am extremely happy. There were many hurdles along the way, but I overcame them all with faith in Baba Bholenath."

Harnam said he aims to inspire others with the message of faith and perseverance. "Leave everything to Baba Bholenath. With hope and confidence, victory will definitely follow," he said.

The devotee appreciated the arrangements made along the Yatra route. "We receive full support from the army and authorities. Food and shelter are easily available, and the overall management is commendable."

Prasad added, "I will pray for the happiness of our country and a united India (Akhand Bharat). I urge people not to fear—come and have Baba Barfani's darshan, there is no problem here."



Retail inflation eases to over 6-year low of 2.1% in June on subdued food prices

PTI

Retail inflation declined to over six-year low of 2.1 per cent in June, nearing the RBI's comfort zone, on account of subdued prices of food items, including vegetables, driven by widespread monsoon. The Consumer Price Index-based inflation was 2.82 per cent in May and 5.08 per cent in June 2024. Inflation is on a decline since November 2024. Year-on-year inflation rate based on CPI for the month of June 2025 over June 2024 is 2.1 per cent, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said in a statement.

"There is a decline of 72 basis points in headline inflation of June 2025 in comparison to May 2025. It is the lowest year-on-year inflation after January 2019," it said. The previous low of 1.97 per cent was recorded in January 2019.

The NSO said the significant decline in headline inflation and food inflation in June 2025 is mainly attributed to favourable base effect and decline in inflation of vegetables, pulses and products, meat and fish, cereals and products, sugar and confectionery, milk and products and spices. The Reserve Bank, which has been tasked to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent (with a margin of 2 per cent on either side), has cumulatively reduced the key short-term lending rate by 100 basis points since February in the wake of slowing retail inflation.

Meanwhile, the wholesale price inflation (WPI) turned negative after a gap of 19 months, declining 0.13 per cent in June as deflation widened in food articles and fuel, along with softening in manufactured product costs.

WPI-based inflation was 0.39 per cent in May. It was 3.43 per cent in June last year.



"Negative rate of inflation in June, 2025 is primarily due to decrease in prices of food articles, mineral oils, manufacture of basic metals, crude petroleum & natural gas etc.," the industry ministry said in a statement.

As per WPI data, food articles saw a deflation of 3.75 per cent in June, as against a deflation of 1.56 per cent in May, with vegetables seeing a sharp drop. According to the NSO data on CPI, the annual inflation in the food basket during June 2025 over June 2024 was (-) 1.06 per cent. A sharp decline of 205 basis points is observed in food inflation in June 2025 in comparison to May 2025. The food inflation in June was also the lowest after January 2019. The inflation rural was lower than the national average at 1.72 per cent while it was higher in urban areas at 2.56 per cent.

The lowest inflation was in Telangana (-0.93 per cent) and the highest in Kerala (6.71 per cent). On all India basis, the annual

inflation was negative in vegetables (-19 per cent), 'meat and fish' (-1.62 per cent), 'pulses and products' (-11.76 per cent), and spices (-3.03 per cent). Commenting on the CPI data, Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, ICRA, said the cooling was entirely led by the food and beverages (F&B) segment, which witnessed a deflation of 0.2 per cent after a gap of 75 months, after printing at 1.5 per cent in the previous month.

"The CPI inflation eased for the eighth consecutive month to a softer-than-expected 2.1 per cent in June 2025 from 2.8 per cent in May 2025, touching the lowest level since January 2019. We are not ruling out the possibility of a final 25bps rate cut in the August 2025 meeting, carrying forward the front-loading seen in June 2025," Nayar said. Paras Jasrai, Associate Director at India Ratings and Research, said that notwithstanding the deflationary turn of food items, core inflation increased to 4.4 per cent in June

2025, the highest since September 2023.

"A closer look indicates that it was largely on account of an uptick in inflation of jewellery items. Inflation of gold increased to a 58-month high of 36 per cent (as geopolitical tensions flared up in the Middle-East), the inflation of silver and other ornaments was also at elevated levels of 17.8 per cent and 21.5 per cent, respectively, in June 2025," Jasrai said. Garima Kapoor, Economist and Executive Vice President, Elara Capital, said the CPI inflation for June cooled to a six-year low led by moderating food prices and aided by a high base.

"We expect full year CPI inflation to remain below RBI's full year estimate of 3.7% and hence do not rule out the possibility of another rate cut post-end of monsoon," Kapoor said. The NSO collects the price data for CPI from selected 1,114 urban markets and 1,181 villages covering all States/UTs.

Golden Temple receives bomb threat over email, security tightened

HT News Desk

Amritsar Commissioner Gurpreet Singh Bhullar confirmed receiving a complaint about bomb threat and said the police will ensure security and crack the case. The Golden Temple in Amritsar on Monday received a bomb threat, following which the Punjab Police launched an investigation. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), in its complaint, said that the committee received an email threatening a blast in the Golden Temple.

Amritsar Commissioner Gurpreet Singh Bhullar confirmed receiving a complaint regarding the bomb threat on Golden Temple and said that the police will crack the case and ensure security.

"We received a complaint from the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) authorities that they have received an email threatening a blast in the Golden Temple... We are taking the help of the state cybercrime and other agencies," the Police Commissioner told ANI.



"We are hopeful that we will crack the case soon. We are taking this case very seriously. We are ensuring foolproof security. There is no need to get panicked," Commissioner Bhullar said, adding that the police have registered an FIR and launched an investigation.

Bomb disposal squads, SGPC force and additional security forces have been deployed around the temple premises in Amritsar. The authorities have assured the public that all necessary precautions are being taken to ensure safety and security.

Commissioner Gurpreet Singh Bhullar said that the police have appealed to the public to remain calm and report any suspicious activity immediately.

2 Chhattisgarh sisters arrested for cheating in sub-engineer recruitment exam: Police

HT News Desk

RAIPUR: An engineer and her sister have been arrested for allegedly cheating in the Chhattisgarh VYAPAM Sub-Engineer recruitment exam in Bilaspur on Sunday, police said. Electronic devices including a hidden camera, miniature earbuds and a walkie-talkie set that were used to transmit images of the question paper and receive answers, have been seized from the two sisters identified by the police as Annu Surya, who had an engineering degree from the state's Korea district, and her sister Anuradha Surya. The case came to light after members of the Congress's students wing, National Students' Union of India (NSUI) received a tip about a woman, later identified as Anuradha, using the electronic devices under suspicious circumstances in an autorickshaw parked near an examination centre. The exam was being conducted by the Chhattisgarh Vyavsayik Pariksha Mandal (CG VYAPAM) for recruitment to Sub-Engineer (Civil, Electrical, and Mechanical) posts under the Public Works Department. Police said seven electronic

devices, including a secret camera hidden in Annu's clothing, a microphone, a Bluetooth device, walkie-talkies, a tablet, and mobile phones, were seized from the two sisters.

According to the police, Annu used the hidden camera to send out images of the question paper. Her sister searched online for the answers to the questions and relayed the answer via a walkie-talkie connected to a micro-earpiece worn by Annu.

Both sisters were arrested under sections 318(2) (cheating), 112(2) (organised crime), and 61(2) (criminal conspiracy) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, as well as relevant sections of the Information Technology Act and the Chhattisgarh Examination Act.

Police said Annu Surya, a native of Jashpur, was an engineering graduate from Korea and currently works as a schoolteacher. Her sister Anuradha is a student based in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Following the incident, Congress and National Students Union of India (NSUI) workers staged a protest, alleging a larger conspiracy behind the case.

2003 techie murder: SC upholds life term to four, allows them to seek clemency

PTI

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the punishment of four persons for the murder of a software engineer in 2003 while allowing them to seek clemency before Governor. A bench of Justices M M Sundaresh and Aravind Kumar said the convicts, who committed the offence in 2003 when they were young with "adrenaline pumping in their veins", were now middle aged. "As we are satisfied with the adequacy of the evidence on record, though for different reasons, we are inclined to uphold the conviction and sentence rendered by the high court in the impugned judgment," the court observed.

The bench, therefore, confirmed their conviction upheld by the high court under Section 302 read with Section 120-B of IPC as done from Section 201 of IPC for one of the accused.

"The sentence of life imprisonment imposed upon them also stands confirmed."

The top court said two of the four accused persons were teenagers at the time of incident whereas the fiancée of the victim had barely "crossed that phase". "As a court, we seek to view the matter from a different

perspective, only for the purpose of giving a new lease of life to the appellants who have committed a heinous crime...", the bench said, observing their conduct in the prison was also not adverse.

The verdict continued, "They were not born as criminals, but it was an error of judgment through a dangerous adventure which led to the commission of a heinous crime. It is difficult for us to decide at this stage who influenced the other, although there is a clear meeting of minds."

The bench then allowed them to file appropriate petitions before Karnataka Governor in eight weeks.

"We would only request the constitutional authority to consider the same, which we hope and trust would be done by taking note of the relevant circumstances governing the case," it said. Dealing with the deceased's fiancée's conduct, the bench said that this unfortunate event would not have occurred, had the family been more sympathetic in understanding her mental predilection and disposition.

The top court said it was a case where the voice of a young ambitious girl, muffled by a forced family decision, created the fiercest of turmoil in her mind.

"This, backed by an unholy alliance of a mental rebellion and wild romanticism, led to the tragic murder of an innocent young man, while simultaneously destroying the lives of three others," it observed.

The top court delivered its verdict on the appeals challenging the Karnataka High Court order upholding the life term awarded to the four accused.

B V Girish, a software engineer, was engaged to Shubha and he was murdered on December 3, 2003. The police alleged Shubha and three others Arun Verma, Venkatesh and Dinesh conspired and murdered Girish two days after his engagement on November 30, 2003.

Shubha allegedly acted in cahoots with her boyfriend Arun and others to murder Girish after her father forced her to get engaged on learning of her affair.

On December 3, 2003 Shubha asked Girish to take her out for dinner at a hotel and made him stop his scooter near an airport to view airplanes landing.

All the four were sentenced to life by the trial court.

This article was generated from an automated news agency feed without modifications to text.

Kanwar Yatra: All educational institutions in UP's Muzaffarnagar to remain closed from July 16 to 23



PTI

All educational institutions in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district will remain closed from July 16 to July 23 in view of the Kanwar Yatra, district authorities said on Monday. District Magistrate Umesh Mishra told reporters that the decision has been taken to ensure

smooth conduct of the annual religious pilgrimage and to avoid any inconvenience to students and staff during the festival period. "All schools and colleges in the district will remain closed from July 16 to July 23, 2025. Strict action will be taken against any institution found open during this period," Mishra warned. Kanwar Yatra, which sees

a large number of kanwariyas travelling on foot to collect sacred water from the Ganga river and offer it at Shiva temples, witnesses heavy movement and heightened security arrangements across western Uttar Pradesh, including Muzaffarnagar.

The administration has appealed to all educational institutions to strictly comply with the order.

4 die in Himachal, 5 in Rajasthan's Kota as rain plays havoc

PTI

New Delhi: Four people died in Himachal Pradesh as rain continues to wreak havoc in the state, while five were swept away in Rajasthan's Kota at a barrage after a heavy downpour caused the authorities to release water from a reservoir. In Himachal, more than 200 roads are out

of bounds for vehicular traffic, a majority of them in Mandi, while a flash flood warning has been issued for 12 districts in Jharkhand. An individual each drowned in Kullu and Kangra districts, one died after being bitten by a snake in Bilaspur, while one was killed after falling from a height, the State Emergency Operation Centre said. Since the onset of

monsoon on June 20, 61 people have died in the state in rain-related incidents. In Rajasthan, Khatauli in Kota district recorded 198 mm of rain over 24 hours - the highest in the state. Five youths were swept away in the Chambal River Monday afternoon after the water level suddenly rose following the release of water from 12 gates of the Kota

Barrage. "The identity of the five missing youths is yet to be confirmed, as the rescued individual is not in a condition to provide detailed information at this stage," Digod Police Station SHO Purshottam Mehta said. Due to continuous rainfall in the region, the authorities opened all 12 gates of the Kota Barrage at 11.30 am on Monday, releasing approximately 2.2692

lakh cusecs of water downstream, said Nisha Sharma, Junior Engineer at Kota Barrage. A met department official said that a circulation system over Madhya Pradesh has intensified into a low-pressure area. Due to the system, parts of Kota, Ajmer, Jodhpur, and Udaipur divisions have seen heavy rain since yesterday. Delhi got a decent

drizzle towards the evening, lifting the heavy humid pall it had sweltered under during the day. According to IMD data, Lodhi Road recorded the highest cumulative rainfall at 18.5 mm till 8.30 am on Monday. Pragati Maidan received 24.3 mm of rain, Ayanagar, 15.5 mm, Safdarjung, 15.8 mm, and Palam, 8.5 mm. In Himachal Pradesh, 208

roads, including 157 in the disaster-hit Mandi district, are closed for vehicular traffic, while 745 water supply schemes and 139 power distribution transformers were affected.

The local Met office has issued an Orange alert of heavy to very heavy rain in Kangra, Mandi and Sirmaur on Monday, and Shimla, Solan, and Sirmaur on Tuesday.



HT EDITORIAL

Maintain parks and gardens of Srinagar city

Over the past few years many parks and gardens have come up in Srinagar city and these have provided a space for the city residents to go and enjoy nature. Since it is important to maintain the parks and gardens, necessary staff should be put in place. Adequate number of gardeners needs to be engaged for maintaining the parks and gardens across the city. This would give a refreshing look to the overall landscape of the Srinagar city.

As on date there are just a few gardeners available to maintain the parks and gardens of Srinagar city. Since most of these parks come under the jurisdiction of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) the corporation is not in a position to engage the gardeners for maintaining these parks. As such wild grass has come up in most of these parks and gardens and the whole area presents a shabby look. In such a manner the beauty and magnificence of the parks and gardens is no more there.

The SMC should get in touch with the Department of Floriculture for the maintenance and upkeep of the parks and gardens located in the Srinagar city. Since the Department of Floriculture has got the mandate to look after the parks and gardens across the union territory the experts of the department can provide useful tips to the SMC and the concerned wing of the corporation. As the primary aim of SMC and the people manning the affairs of the corporation is to maintain the beauty and magnificence of Srinagar it is important to get serious about the issue.

The SMC should engage the gardeners so that there is no compromise on the overall landscape of parks and gardens being looked after by the corporation. This would give a refreshing look to the parks and gardens. At the same time employment can be generated for the youth who have expertise in gardening and allied activities. It is not necessary to engage gardeners on a regular basis but this can be done from one season to another.

Not maintaining the parks and gardens gives a bad look to the overall surroundings and does not augur well for a city which is one of the smart cities of the country. Action needs to be taken at the earliest so that a change is made on the ground and people are elated. Once parks and gardens are maintained properly more and more people will go and visit them.

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Books: A Silent Friend and a Promising Guide



■ Sahil Manzoor

Books are more than paper and ink. They are silent friends, patient teachers, and lifelong companions. They never demand, never complain—they simply sit, ready to enlighten, entertain, and guide. In fact, books are precious assets, a treasury of knowledge, and the best alternative to idleness. They nurture curiosity, spark imagination, and build a strong foundation of knowledge.

Why Read Books?

For students, especially up to 10th grade, reading is essential not just for exams but for holistic development. NCERT books, along with weekly or monthly general knowledge magazines, are ideal resources. They provide essential insights into various subjects, including science, mathematics, history, civics, and languages like Urdu, Hindi, and English.

It is unfortunate that many students pursuing professional courses tend to ignore these subjects, assuming they are irrelevant. However, a strong grip on foundational subjects enriches our overall understanding and enhances our ability to communicate and think critically.

We must remember:
Reading should be a habit, a lifestyle, and a source of lifelong learning.

Encouraging Independent



Learning

As teachers and parents, we must provide students with access to a variety of books—storybooks, novels, biographies, reference books, and religious texts. These help them explore new ideas and develop interests beyond the syllabus. A free and happy learning zone—where reading is done without pressure—encourages children to become independent learners.

- A student who reads regularly:
- Builds a strong vocabulary
 - Improves communication

Skills

- Gains general awareness
- Develops analytical thinking
- Becomes more confident
- Spoken English & Basic Knowledge

By the time students reach 10th standard, they should have a good command of spoken English and a firm grip on basic concepts across all subjects. A degree alone is not enough. The real value lies in the ability to express, explain, and engage—skills that are sharpened by reading.

Home Library: A Valuable Initiative

One powerful idea is to encourage students to maintain a home library with at least 15–20 books. This initiative can be supported by rewarding students with stars or remarks in their progress reports.

Let's transform the use of almirahs and shelves. Instead of showpieces and decoration items, let them hold books—books that open windows to the world, books that build character and understanding.

Having a personal book collection at home gives students:

- Easy access to trending books for exams
- Storybooks to nurture imagination
- Novels to build language and empathy
- Religious books to strengthen morals
- The joy of reading in their own space

This small step can create a reading culture at home and reduce dependence on public libraries.

In Conclusion

Reading books is a gift we give ourselves. As educators and guardians, we must promote the joy of reading, build mini home libraries, and reward book-loving behavior. This habit will not only enhance academic performance but also prepare students for life's real challenges—with knowledge, confidence, and wisdom.

"Books are a uniquely portable magic." – Stephen King

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

The Silent Erosion of Urdu in Recruitment: A Crisis in J&K

Zabaan-e-Urdu hai jiske lahu mein Hind ki mitti ki khushboo basi hai

Allama Iqbal



■ Dr. Mohiuddin Zore Kashmiri

A quiet but consequential crisis has been unfolding in Jammu and Kashmir—one that concerns not politics or security, but the gradual marginalization of Urdu, the very language that forms the soul of its cultural and administrative identity. At the heart of this issue lies a troubling mindset, especially among certain urban populations, that sees Urdu as obsolete—irrelevant in the modern architecture of governance, competitive examinations, and even daily life.

This dismissive attitude, born of both ignorance and arrogance, has steadily undermined the status of Urdu in public service. Institutions like UPSC, JKPS, and JKSSB have traditionally upheld Urdu's significance—either as a core subject in administrative services like IAS and JKAS, or as a compulsory paper in certain technical and clerical posts. But today, this legacy stands in peril, challenged not by merit but by apathy.

A growing segment of youth, particularly those swayed by superficial notions of modernity, now view Urdu not as a bridge to opportunity, but as a barrier. Tragically, these same young individuals—often lacking direction or deep academic preparation—resist any positive initiative involving the language. Instead of rising to the challenge, they choose to politicize progress, derailing steps that could empower them.

In this climate, the very institutions meant to nurture competence—schools, colleges, and coaching centres—have largely turned away from Urdu, omitting it from serious instruction. The result? When aspirants face recruitment examinations such as those conducted by the JKSSB, they are left floundering—unprepared to respond in a language that should have been second nature.

Urdu is not merely a subject to be memorized; it is a secular, inclusive medium—a language that



transcends caste, creed, and community. It carries within it the echo of shared history, poetry, jurisprudence, and administration. Its neglect is not just an educational lapse but a cultural amputation that threatens the fabric of Jammu and Kashmir.

What is required now is bold and deliberate action, both at the policy level and within the educational framework. Urdu must be reclaimed—not as a burden, but as an essential skill for governance, communication, and civil society. It should be seen not only as an academic discipline but as a tool that enables effective administration in a region where official documentation, correspondence, and interpersonal dealings are still deeply rooted in its vocabulary. To continue ignoring Urdu in the recruitment landscape is to deny access to deserving candidates,

especially those who would otherwise thrive if given proper training. It is also to weaken the very foundation of inclusive and representative governance in Jammu and Kashmir.

In conclusion, Urdu is not in crisis because it has failed us—rather, we have failed it. If we are to preserve both the administrative cohesion and the cultural dignity of Jammu and Kashmir, we must act with urgency. Let us return Urdu to its rightful place—not just in examination halls, but in the hearts and minds of our youth.

The author is an Associate Prof. Urdu Dept. of Hr Edu JK Gov. R/o Daruladab Farashgund Soibugh, Budgam Kashmir 191111. Email: drzoreurdu@gmail.com

Transfer Policy Delayed, Teachers Anxious

Transfer Policy 2025: Results Ready, Hopes on Hold



■ Dr. Satyawan Saurabh

Teachers in Haryana are once again caught in confusion, rumours and incomplete information. Every morning in schools begins with tea and a discussion in the staffroom – “When will the transfers take place?” No one has an answer to this question, but everyone has a guess. Some say in August, some say after the cabinet, some believe that now that the session is in the middle, the department will not do anything. Everything seems to be stagnant, blurred and hanging in the balance.

The results of the examination conducted for teacher deployment in Model Sanskriti Vidyalayas and schools selected under the Pradhan Mantri Shri Yojana are ready. But the announcement is not being made because the Common Transfer Policy 2025 has not yet received cabinet approval. Here the question becomes imperative that before conducting the examination, was it not ensured that the policy has been made or what will be the time limit for its approval? If the result of the examination depends on the policy, then why was it taken earlier? Is this an administrative lapse or political delay?

Another argument being given for not declaring the results is that they are kept in sealed envelopes which no one has seen, so that no interference is possible. This tradition of “sealed honesty” on one hand shows that the department is pretending to be transparent and on the other hand it also makes it clear that the department itself is afraid of some possible ‘game’ with the results.



What makes this situation even more ridiculous is the department’s double standards – when it creates a structure like SMC (School Management Committee) and then dissolves it within a month. This is the same department that has been talking about transfers since December and did not take any concrete steps until July. Every week a new order comes and the next week some other officer cancels it. This makes it clear that there is a complete lack of coordination in the department. Everyone is ready to take a “decision” at their own level, but there is no one to give direction to the education system.

The teachers have become mentally exhausted due to this confusion and opaqueness. In every school, the discussion revolves around this one issue – someone is getting the transfer file prepared, someone is getting the CCL form filled, someone is waiting for the result, and someone is trying to gather information from his contacts. There is a kind of mental tension and instability which is affecting the work of the teachers. In such a situation, it is worth thinking that the system on which

the future generation is dependent has itself become unstable and confusing.

The reason behind this is not only the indecisiveness of the administration but also the neglect of political priorities. Governments are busy with elections, announcements and showy schemes but there is no clarity on basic needs like the teacher transfer policy. When teachers are mentally unstable, how will the education of children remain stable? In many districts of Haryana, the same teacher is teaching in two schools, some schools do not have subject experts, and on the other hand, those who should be transferred are stuck at the same place for years.

There was talk of an online transfer system based on MIS (Management Information System). But due to the lack of a policy, this system is also not able to be updated. Claims were made to make the processes transparent in the name of technology, but until the policy is made, everything is just a click away. This is a digital dream that has not yet come true.

Teachers were promoted, many positions became vacant. Now the question is

whether transfers will happen after promotion? If yes, then how many more promotions are pending? There is no answer to these questions on the departmental website, there are only rumours in the WhatsApp groups of teachers’ organizations. Not only this, according to an official of the department itself, the cabinet meeting is proposed in August. This means that the policy will come by the last week of August, by then the middle of the session will come. And then the same argument will be given that transfers should be postponed till the next session so that the studies of the children are not interrupted.

This cycle is repeated every year. The policy is not made, then it is said that the session is in between. Teachers are not able to plan themselves. Neither can they take CCL, nor can they prepare mentally whether they will get a transfer or not. The department is in a serious crisis – where files are moving but no decision is being taken.

Students suffer the most due to this confusion. When a teacher is waiting for a transfer for two years, his attention

naturally shifts from teaching. There are many teachers who are working hundreds of kilometres away from home and are mentally disturbed due to family responsibilities. Will they be able to educate children with this mindset?

It is also true that politics has been going on in the name of transfers in Haryana for years. Sometimes there is nepotism in the transfer list, sometimes transfers are stopped before panchayat elections, sometimes names are added or removed at the behest of some leader. Transparency is talked about only in policy papers, there is no sign of it on the ground.

If the government and the department really want to take education reform seriously, they will have to take concrete steps to improve this situation. Firstly – a clear timeline should be given as to when the transfer policy will come. Second – confusion should not be spread about exam results until the policy comes. Third – departmental coordination should be increased so that after an order is issued, no other officer can cancel it. And most important – every process should be made trackable online.

Transfer is not a favour, it is the teacher’s right. Presenting it as a “favour” is a derogatory attitude. Teachers are neither political workers nor part of any group. They are the foundation stones on which the future of society stands. And if the foundation itself is kept in uncertainty, how can the peak be strong?

This article is a request to the education department and the government to come out of this confusion, indecisiveness and administrative cowardice. Instead of keeping the transfer policy confined to files and lockers, it should be implemented on the ground. Because the teacher is tired now. And when the teacher is tired, the whole society becomes lethargic.

The author is an Independent columnist and educationist, Hisar (Haryana)

The Forgotten Battle Against HIV



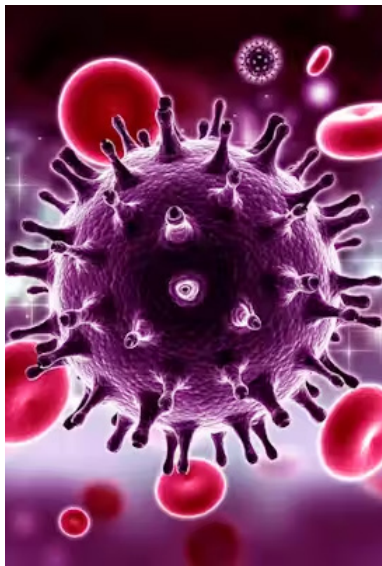
■ Munish Bhatia

Today, as the world navigates new chapters of health security, biological disasters, and pandemic management, the fight against HIV remains a major unfinished agenda. If an effective AIDS vaccine were to be developed and made accessible in India, it could bring about far-reaching and multidimensional positive outcomes. Nearly 2.4 million people in India are living with HIV, many of whom come from rural, economically disadvantaged, and socially marginalized backgrounds. The availability of a vaccine could lead to a dramatic drop in infection rates, reduce the burden on the healthcare system, increase life expectancy, and accelerate socioeconomic progress.

Such a vaccine would be particularly impactful for high-risk groups like commercial sex workers, the transgender community, homosexual men, and individuals with substance abuse disorders. It would not only be a solution to a public health crisis but also mark a historic step toward social justice and equality.

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us that when science, government, and society work together, even the seemingly impossible becomes achievable. A vaccine for COVID was developed within a year, while even after four decades of the HIV epidemic, an effective vaccine still eludes us. This comparison forces us to question: did HIV vaccine research receive the same political will, financial investment, and public support that COVID did?

Even today, vulnerable groups like



rural populations, the uneducated, and transgender individuals suffer from discrimination, misinformation, and ignorance. HIV weakens the immune system, making even common diseases potentially fatal. If not diagnosed and treated in time, it can lead to AIDS, significantly reducing chances of survival. The virus spreads through unprotected sexual contact, use of infected needles, and blood transfusion. Therefore, AIDS remains a significant health threat, and continued awareness, safe practices, and persistent research are crucial to its containment.

In today’s digital age, where information is more accessible than ever, the myths and stigma surrounding AIDS still persist. These mental and societal barriers must be broken—perhaps even more urgently than the search for a vaccine. Today’s youth are more aware, tech-savvy, and socially sensitive. They must engage openly in discussions about HIV in schools, colleges, and on social media platforms. Promoting safe sexual behavior, regular testing, and compassionate treatment of those infected should become a norm. This will create the social foundation upon

which any vaccine program can be successful.

As India moves rapidly toward becoming a global hub for biotechnology, it is essential that the government and policymakers give the highest priority to HIV vaccine research and ensure adequate financial support. Simultaneously, we must strengthen public health infrastructure to make testing, treatment, and prevention services universally accessible. Ensuring smooth access to health education and resources, especially for rural and underprivileged populations, is of utmost importance so they can receive timely information and assistance.

A broad national awareness campaign must be launched to combat the stigma and discrimination associated with AIDS. Such efforts would foster inclusion and empathy, enabling those living with HIV to receive the respect and support they deserve. Every citizen is expected to play an active role in dispelling myths and misconceptions about AIDS. By educating themselves and spreading awareness in their families and communities, adopting safe sexual practices, and getting tested periodically, they can contribute significantly to the collective fight against this disease. By treating HIV-positive individuals with empathy and refraining from discrimination, they can help foster a more inclusive society.

Through social media and interpersonal communication, people can spread the right messages and play a vital part in building an AIDS-free society. In today’s era—where science has demonstrated its capacity for miracles—it becomes even more imperative to focus public attention on the HIV vaccine. If we resolve today that the future must be AIDS-free, then science, society, and governance—together—can build that future.

munishbhatia122@gmail.com

THE SUBJECT I LIKE THE MOST



■ Insha Shafia

A good subject is the one that sharpens your mind, grabs your interest, helps you to understand the world and its happenings in a better way, the subject that you enjoy studying, which feels more like a journey.

For me that subject is political science. The word politics has been derived from a Greek word Polis which means city state. It is a social science subject in which we study about state, govt, political power, Public administration, self governance, peace, conflicts, war, elections, political behavior, international law and much more.

It is said that a teacher plays an important role at every stage of learning. A student’s liking for a subject completely depends on the efforts of teacher. In my journey of liking pol science respected “Qazi Syed Sajad” sir played a major role. He is Senior Lecturer of this marvelous subject at my Govt Higher Secondary School Delina Baramulla. I never thought that the subject I always felt boredom will become my favourite. But his teaching method, way of imparting knowledge, makes even the toughest topic simple and interesting. How he connects topics with real life examples makes learning more interesting. In the first lecture of his class I was introduced to the political science which was much more interesting, reliable and fascinating. I came to know that political science is not just book oriented but it also gives us information which is useful in our everyday life. It is a subject of serving people, promoting justice and ensuring dignity of each and every citizen of country.

I like political science because it makes me feel curious and excited, it makes learning feel like a journey of truth, justice, equality. Studying political science feels fun not bardon as it is related to our real life. We understand how the govt works, the election system of our country, rights of people, duties of citizens of india, different organs of govt (I.e legislature, executive and judiciary), concepts like federalism, secularism, social justice, freedom, equality etc only through political science. And having knowledge about these concept is important for each and every citizen of india.

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While science is based on fixed formulas political science is a dynamic subject, covering all aspects of society, helps to bring change in the society and make it better.

As far as scope of this subject is concerned it paved way for student to become a politician, PM, journalist, lawyer judge, IAS, KAS and provides many more career opportunities.

In net shall political science is an interesting and mind challenging subject that comes with a number of career opportunities for students and is being highly admired by a number of students.

The author is a Class 11th Student at GHSS Delina Baramulla



DGP J&K Visits Handwara's Rajwar Region, Interacts With Frontline Forces

DR.AB QAYOOM
HT CORRESPONDENT

Handwara, Jul, 14: In a significant and first-of-its-kind development, the Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Nalin Prabhat (IPS), on Monday visited the remote and hilly Rajwar forest area in Zachaldara, Handwara. This marked the first-ever visit by Police Chief to this inaccessible region of North Kashmir. The visit was aimed at encouraging and boosting the morale of the Special Operations Group (SOG) personnel deployed in the challenging forested terrains. The DGP's direct interaction with the frontline personnel was widely welcomed by officers and jawans alike. During his interaction, the DGP emphasized the importance of mastering modern jungle warfare tactics, especially in areas where prolonged anti-terror operations demand exceptional physical endurance, tactical aware-



ness, and deep familiarity with the local terrain. He urged the forces to enhance their operational preparedness and maintain high levels of vigilance to deny militants any opportunity to establish footholds in such difficult areas. The visit was received with enthusiasm by the SOG teams, who ap-

preciated the leadership's direct engagement and assurance of operational and welfare support. The move reaffirms the Jammu and Kashmir Police's commitment to maintaining peace and strengthening anti-terror operations in every corner of the Union Territory, including its most

REMEMBERING THE BRAVE:

MILITARY VETERANS VEERNARI DELEGATION VISITS CHINAR CORPS AHEAD OF 26TH KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS



HT NEWS NETWORK

Srinagar, 03 Jul 2025 : Kargil Vijay Diwas is an opportunity for us to re-dedicate ourselves to intrepid leadership, grit, selflessness and sacrifice rendered by the Indian Army in the rarefied heights of Kargil, while evicting devious Pakistani aggressors and defending sovereignty of our motherland during the Kargil War of 1999. Kargil Vijay Diwas is hence, just not a date for remembrance but also a day for celebration of patriotism, valour and of our Nation's Resolve. This year we shall celebrate 26th anniversary of our victory by hosting solemn events at Srinagar, Drass and Kargil.

As a pre-cursor to 26th Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrations, Akhil Bhartiya Poorva Sainik Seva Parishad initiated an Ex-Servicemen visit to Srinagar, followed by visit to Drass and Kargil as part of Kargil Vijay Diwas 2025, underscoring the spirit and fervour of patriotism amongst the Armed Forces Veterans. The team of our valiant Veterans & Veer Naris was led by Rear Admiral Rajvir Singh (Retd), who held the prestigious appointment of Principal of Indian Naval Academy before superannuation, arrived at Badami Bagh Cantonment, Srinagar on 02 Jul 2025. The Veterans & Veer Naris paid obeisance and tribute at the Chinara War Memorial, visited "Ibadat-e-Shaha-

dat" museum and took a walk through the rich heritage & culture of Jammu and Kashmir as well as the history of valour of the Indian Army & Chinara Corps towards vanquishing our enemy and in establishing peace in the Kashmir Valley.

The team interacted with the Chinara Corps Commander and discussed the role of Ex-Servicemen, in collaborating with the Kashmiri society towards Nation Building. The Corps Commander lauded the energy, spirit and camaraderie of the Veterans and the Kargil Bravehearts which epitomise the motto of "Naam Namak aur Nishaan" and highlights the fact that "Once a Soldier Always a Soldier".

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining

to Birth of AYRA DAWOOD D/O DAWOOD AHMAD LONE R/O NAID KHAIE Tehsil HAJAN Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 28/12/2022 and event has been shown to be occurred at SDH KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

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

Executive Magistrate 1st Class KREERI

Annual Urs of Sufi Saint Celebrated with Fervour in Ganderbal

HT NEWS NETWORK

Ganderbal, 13 July 2025: The annual Urs of revered Sufi Saint Syed Peer Akbar Shah Khaleefa-e-Naqashbandi (RA) was observed with great religious fervour in Ganderbal, Kashmir. The serene surroundings of Waliwar Lar resonated with prayers, hymns, and the fragrant aroma of incense, as devotees of all ages congregated to pay homage and partake in the sacred rituals of the Urs.

Devotees gathered at the shrine to seek blessings and pay their respects to Hazrat Syed Peer Akbar Shah Khaleefa-e-Naqashbandi (RA). Among the attendees was Mohd Usman Gujjar from Reasi district, Jammu, who expressed his devotion, saying, "Attending the Urs fills my heart with tranquility and brings me closer to the teachings of Hazrat Syed Peer Akbar Shah Khaleefa-e-Naqashbandi (RA). His message of love, peace, and unity resonates with me, and I feel blessed to be part of this spiritual gathering."

The event featured special congregational prayers at Darga Aliyaa, where devotees fervently prayed for the well-being and prosperity of the Muslim Ummah, with particular emphasis on the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The atmosphere was imbued with faith and devotion as individuals sought spiritual enlightenment and divine blessings.

During the Urs, devotees also had the opportunity to witness the Tabarakat (sacred relics) associated with Hazrat Syed Peer Akbar Shah Khaleefa-e-Naqashbandi (RA). It is believed that these relics hold spiritual blessings and serve as sources of inspira-



tion and healing for the faithful.

Sajada Nasaden Khaleefa Silsilla, Syed Peer Afsar Shah, Syed Peer Skindar Shah, and Per Aksar Shah highlighted the significance of the Urs and emphasized the teachings of Hazrat Syed Peer Akbar Shah Khaleefa-e-Naqashbandi (RA) in fostering societal virtues. They stated, "The annual Urs is a time for introspection and renewing our commitment to live by the teachings of our revered saint. It is an occasion to promote unity, love, and harmony within our communities."

Mufti Nazir Ahmad Qadari underscored that the Urs serves as a re-

minder of the timeless values advocated by Hazrat Syed Peer Akbar Shah Khaleefa-e-Naqashbandi (RA)—values of peace, compassion, and social harmony. The event unites people from diverse backgrounds, transcending caste, creed, and gender, as they come together in devotion and seek spiritual guidance.

The celebration of the Urs in Ganderbal reflects the enduring spiritual legacy of Hazrat Syed Peer Akbar Shah Khaleefa-e-Naqashbandi (RA) and reinforces the messages of love, unity, and peaceful coexistence in society.

Young Kashmiri Lawyer Umar Masoodi Selected for Prestigious Human Rights Program at University of Oslo in Norway

Masoodi earns place in globally competitive NCHR Intensive Course in Human Rights, joining a distinguished cohort selected from a pool of over 4,700 applicants worldwide.

HT NEWS NETWORK

Srinagar, July 13, Continuing his trajectory of international recognition, Umar Masoodi, a young lawyer from Kashmir, has been selected for the Intensive Course in Human Rights hosted by the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) at the University of Oslo.

The course, to be held in Oslo from September 1-5, 2025, is one of the most sought-after short-term global human rights training programs and received an unprecedented 4,758 applications this year. Masoodi is among the very few selected participants who will also receive a full stipend to attend.

Currently engaged as a Research Assistant at the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. His professional role, paired with his academic background and grassroots advocacy, positioned him as a strong candidate for the NCHR program, which prioritizes diversity in experience and regional representation.

The NCHR Intensive Course is a rigorous, interdisciplinary program designed to equip professionals with a foundational understanding of international human rights law, enforcement mechanisms, and emerging global challenges. It brings together legal practitioners, public officials, civil society actors, academics, and independent institution representatives from around the world to foster cross-sectoral dialogue and collaboration.

Masoodi's participation is fully funded by NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) covering international travel, accommodation, meals during the program, as well as a NOK 3,500 stipend to cover visa-related and incidental costs. The curriculum emphasizes participatory learning, group



work, and real-world application of legal standards, with lectures delivered by globally renowned human rights scholars and experts.

His professional background and interest in international law made him a standout applicant for this interdisciplinary course, which is known for attracting legal professionals, civil society representatives, and public officials from diverse regions.

Organizers highlighted the course's value as a platform for professional exchange and learning, stating that this year's selection was particularly competitive. Participants are expected to complete preparatory readings and fully engage with the academic content and group exercises during the course.

"I'm grateful and honored to be selected for this unique international opportunity," said Masoodi. "The chance to learn from and collaborate with peers and experts from around the world is something I value deeply."



This marks another international achievement for Masoodi. In 2024, he completed advanced training in "business & human rights" at the Lucerne Academy for Human Rights Implementation in Switzerland.

Earlier this year in May, Masoodi was also selected for the beVisioneers Fellowship, a prestigious global program backed by Mercedes-Benz, which supports young changemakers working on sustainability and environmental projects.

He was also invited by the European Union to participate in the European Youth Event (EYE2025) at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France this year in June.

With a growing list of recognitions, Masoodi's upcoming participation in the Oslo program marks another step in his journey. It also reflects a broader trend of young professionals from the region stepping into global policy and academic spaces with purpose and clarity of vision.

Union Joint Secretary reviews Baramulla district's progress under NITI Aayog's ADP

Directs targeted action for TB eradication, KCC loan uptake, district-wide soil health assessment

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BARAMULLA, JULY 14: Union Joint Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Central Prabhari Officer for NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme, Ajeet Kumar Sahu, today chaired a meeting to review district's progress under various indicators of NITI Aayog's Aspirational District Programme (ADP).

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, Joint Director Planning, Principal GMC, ACD, CMO and officers from various line departments.

The Union Joint Secretary was informed that the district has made remarkable progress in its Delta Ranking, issued by NITI Aayog and has improved significantly, moving from the 108th position to 35th out of 112 districts, achieving a composite score of 61.3.

Apprising the JS of key health indicators, the DC stated that the district has achieved 100% saturation in major areas, including nutrition support for pregnant women, full child immunization, institutional deliveries and major reduction in infant and maternal mortality rates, reduction in TB cases and effective implementation of Poshan Abhiyan in combating malnutrition.

Further, the Central Prabhari Officer was informed that the education sector has seen marked improvement with increased student enrolment, 18 Model Academic Schools and Lab Schools in each of the educational zone, increase in Atal Tinkering Labs from 2 to 42, consistent pedagogical teacher trainings and sanitary facilities like incinerators and vending machines.

Meanwhile, the Union Joint Secretary took a comprehensive review of the district under Agriculture and Financial Inclusion,



Skill Development and Infrastructure.

The Union Joint Secretary also conducted a comprehensive review of the progress on projects undertaken under the ADP, along with key centrally and state-

sponsored schemes such as PMSBY, PMJBY, PM-JDY, PM-APY, PM-MUDRA and HADP.

Speaking during the meeting, Ajeet Kumar Sahu directed the Health Department officials to carry out comprehensive research

to identify the root causes of TB in the district and take targeted measures to eliminate them.

Addressing the issue of low uptake of KCC loans by the farmers, the Central Prabhari Officer directed the concerned depart-

ment to constitute a team to thoroughly examine the reasons behind the poor response and suggest measures to improve participation in the scheme.

Meanwhile, the Union Joint Secretary instructed the concerned department to carry out thorough soil testing across agricultural lands in the district. He asked to ensure that farmers are clearly informed about the findings, particularly any nutrient deficiencies and provide them with tailored recommendations on the types of fertilizers and soil health measures needed to enhance the productivity and sustainability. Earlier, Deputy Commissioner, Minga Sherpa presented a comprehensive overview of the district's performance under 5 key indicators of the ADP, including Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Water Resources, Financial Inclusion and Skill Development besides Infrastructure.

DC Srinagar, Commissioner SMC review progress of PMAY-Urban 2.0

Emphasize the need for transparency, accuracy in beneficiary selection under the scheme for benefit of the target population

Instruct SMC & Revenue Officers to expedite verification process & ensure no eligible beneficiary is left out

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRIANGAR JULY 14: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo and Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb Monday held a joint meeting of Revenue and SMC Officers here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office to review the progress achieved in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY-U 2.0) in the district.

The meeting was among others attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab Qureshi; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Joint



Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid; Assistant Com-

missioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, all Tehsildars, SMC Ward Officers, and Officers from J&K Housing Board.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner & Commissioner SMC emphasized the need for maintaining transparency and accuracy in beneficiary selection under the scheme to ensure benefit reaches the deserving population. They instructed the Revenue and SMC Officers to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out and no ineligible case is included in the final beneficiary list.

The Revenue and SMC Officers were instructed to expedite the verification process at their respective levels swiftly in line with scheme guidelines to meet the scheme objectives of providing 'Housing for All.'

While reviewing the status of registrations on Unified Web Portal of PMAY-U 2.0, Deputy Commissioner & SMC Commissioner were apprised that several applications in thousands under the scheme have been so far received in the district.

DC Anantnag convenes preparatory meeting for Independence Day celebrations-2025

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

ANANTNAG, JULY 14: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. S. F. Hamid, convened the preparatory meeting to review the arrangements for the celebration of upcoming Independence Day, 2025 with the concerned officers today, here. Emphasising the historical importance of Independence Day, DC described it as a momentous occasion that should be celebrated with zeal and patriotic fervour. He underscored the need for seamless coordination among the concerned departments and exhorted them to make collective efforts for the successful conduct of the National event in its true spirit. During the meeting, key aspects and arrangements including the schedule and timing of the event, prepara-

tion and consolidation of venue, stage/dice preparation and management, security arrangements, sanitation and cleanliness, seating arrangements, medical facilities, uninterrupted power and water supply, venue illumination and decoration, deployment of fire tenders, transportation, printing and distribution of invitation cards, installation of the public address system, prize distribution, etc were reviewed threadbare. Dr. Hamid issued directions to all concerned officers to discharge their assigned tasks diligently and put in place the necessary arrangements well in time so that a smooth and memorable celebration befitting the national event is held. It was informed that the main function will be held at the Shaheed Himayun Muzamil, Government Degree College (Boys), Khanabal, where the

National Flag will be hoisted by the chief guest, followed by a parade featuring contingents of the J&K Police, other security forces, School Education and NCC. In addition, colourful cultural programmes reflecting themes of patriotism, nationalism, and local folk traditions will be presented. Besides, it was decided that Jhankis from various departments showcasing their achievements and disseminating public awareness about the respective schemes will take part in the main event. Independence Day celebrations will also be held at the Sub-divisional, Tehsil and Block levels across the district. The meeting was attended by ADC, Principal GMC and SHM, GDC (B) Anantnag, DPO ICDS, GM, DIC, ACD, CPO, CMO, CEO, officers from engineering departments and other concerned officers of the district.

DEO Shopian conducts training program on Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls-2025

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, JULY 14: Two training programs for BLO Supervisors and BLOs of 36-Zainapora and 37-Shopian Assembly Constituencies were held today as part of

the Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls, 2025 by District Election Office (DEO), Shopian. The training was conducted simultaneously in two batches at DIET Shopian and Mini Secretariat Shopian during morning and

afternoon sessions. Key topics included house-to-house verification, handling of claims/objections, and use of IT tools as per ECI guidelines. The program aimed to ensure accuracy and transparency in the electoral rolls.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name wrongly mentioned in my Aadhar card as Neelofar Masooda instead of Neelofar Masooda. Now I am applying for its correction if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact concerned Authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

NEELOFAR MASOODA
W/O MUSHTAQ AHMAD WANI R/O
NOORBAGH BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

Change of Electricity Connection Ownership
It is hereby notified that the ownership of the electricity connection bearing Consumer Number: 0202050023314, currently in the name of Late Riyaz Ahmad Dar, is being transferred to Ubaid Ahmad Dar R/O Parraypora Srinagar. If anyone has any objection to this change, they are requested to report the same to the office of the Assistant Executive Engineer (AAE) within 7 days from the date of this notice.



DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER (HANDICRAFTS)
Ministry of Textiles, Government of India

Kashmiri Handicrafts Exhibition cum Sale

Venue:- MFC Restaurant National Highway main Bazar Khawja Bagh Baramulla

Sale For:-

Kashmiri handicrafts items, Semi Pashmina shawls, jamawar, Pashmina Shawls, Cushion Cover, Ladies Top, Bed Covers, Sarees & all kind of handicraft items are available on Discount rates

Sponsored by:-

O/o the Development Commissioner Handicrafts Ministry of Textiles, Government of India

Sanction order No:-

C-12011/25(PC)2024-25-(NR)/F-EXB/GEN-3 Dated:- 09-05-2025

Under:-

NATIONAL HANDICRAFTS PROGRAMME (NHDP) Scheme DEVELOPMENT

Organized By:-

M/s REHMAN HANDICRAFTS PRODUCER COMPANY LIMITED BUIHAMA

W.e.from:- 08-07-2025 TO 17-07-2025

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (for Road work/Bridges/Buildings)

TWO COVER SYSTEM (above Rs. 2.50 Crores)

NIT No.25/EEA/ R&B/2025-26/2314-24

Dated: 11-07-2025 (E-tendering)

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for of the following work:-

S. No	Name of Work	Advertised Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Time of Completion	Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid)	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Construction of Govt. Degree College at Awantipora	Rs 1221.80 Lacs (Inclusive of GST @38%) (Base Contract Price= 1035.42 Lacs + GST Amount= 186.38 Lac)	11000/=	2% of Advertised Cost	2 years	02/08/2025 11.00 A.M	AAY Class Only having MoU with an Electrical and Mechanical Contractor/Agency / Firm

Project Authority = Higher Education Department
Major Head of Account = Higher Education
Position of AA = Accorded by Principal Secretary vide order No: 256-JK(HE) of 2024 Dated 30-04-2024 &
Position of TS = Accorded by Chief Engineer PW(R&B) Department South Kashmir
Vide No: CE/R&B/SK/TS/40 of 2025-26 dated: 26.06.2025.

1. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per below schedule:

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	11/07/2025
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 12/07/2025, 10.00 A.M
3.	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting	15/07/2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of Chief Engineer PW(R&B) Department South Kashmir at Khanabal Anantnag Kashmir
4.	Bid submission Start Date	12-07-2025 From 11.00 A.M
5.	Bid Submission End Date	01-08-2025 up to 4.00 P.M
6.	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	02-08-2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Office of Chief Engineer PW(R&B) Department South Kashmir
7.	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

DIPK 3685/25 DATED: 14-07-25 SD/EX. ENG. PWD R&B DIV. AWANTIPORA

Rana reviews welfare initiatives for Tribals in J&K

Calls for proactive inter-departmental coordination



HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: Minister for Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a meeting of the Tribal Affairs Department (TAD) at the Civil Secretariat here to review the initiatives aimed at furthering empowerment of tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting aimed to fast-track the tribal welfare initiatives and review ongoing projects, schemes and infrastructure development for tribal communities across J&K. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Secretary TAD, Secretary Health & Medical Education, Commissioner SMC concerned Deputy Commissioners and other senior officers. Rana emphasized Omar Abdullah led Government's commitment to inclusive growth and social justice, particularly for the tribal population. He said that upliftment of downtrodden and backward communities is our collective responsibility. The present government has taken a slew of measures to ensure inclusive growth and social justice for all, especially the tribal population, he

added. The meeting focused on resolving land-related issues concerning the hostels for Gujar-Bakerwal tribe, which are crucial for providing educational and residential support to the students from these marginalized groups.

Rana asked the Secretaries of concerned departments to establish effective and proactive coordination mechanism to push faster execution of key infra projects in tribal areas. He directed the concerned officials to expedite the resolution of land matters and ensure timely completion of tribal welfare projects.

Regarding establishment of hostels, the Minister was assured that the land has been identified for establishment of hostels in Srinagar, Jammu and Poonch districts and all issues will be sorted out within 10 days. He emphasized that all Gujar-Bakerwal hostels should have proper buildings with requisite facilities to provide students with a nurturing environment.

The Minister also reviewed the progress on Tribal Bhawan Jammu and instructed the concerned authorities to immediately identify suitable land for its establishment, as the funds have al-

ready been transferred to JDA.

Reviewing the Human Resource (HR) management in TAD, the Minister stressed the need for concerted efforts to fill vacancies to ensure administrative efficiency and timely resolution of issues affecting the tribal people.

Rana also took note of deployment of Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) to tribal areas, designed to facilitate access to public healthcare, particularly for people living in remote and under-served areas.

Secretary Health informed that six MMUs are ready to be deployed and work on other units is in progress.

The Minister directed the TAD to utilize available manpower and resources judiciously, ensuring transparency, efficiency and timely execution of welfare schemes. He reaffirmed the Government's commitment to empower the tribal communities through improved access to education, healthcare and livelihood opportunities.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo emphasized the importance of taking forward programs and policies related to tribal welfare, ensuring their effective implementation in a time bound manner.

DLIC Kulgam approves 106 fresh cases under Mission YUVA

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KULGAM, JULY 14: In a significant push towards fostering self-reliance and entrepreneurial growth among the youth, District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) Kulgam, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today approved 106 new self-employment proposals under the ambitious Mission YUVA scheme. The meeting held at the DC Office Complex, witnessed detailed deliberations over the proposals that had been scrutinized and recommended for approval by the Small Business Development Unit (SBDU) after due verification and feasibility assessment. The SBDU had conducted a rigorous appraisal of each application before presenting them to the DLIC.

The newly approved cases span over a diverse array of sectors, including

agriculture and allied activities, retail ventures, services, small-scale manufacturing and other skill-based enterprises. The variety of business ideas reflects the growing entrepreneurial spirit among the youth of the district and their willingness to explore innovative livelihood options.

While speaking on the occasion, DC lauded the collective efforts of the SBDU, BHDs and field functionaries in identifying, guiding, and mentoring aspiring youth entrepreneurs. He emphasized that Mission YUVA is not just a scheme, but a movement aimed at empowering the younger generation with tools for sustainable income generation and self-worth.

DC issued instructions to ensure timely disbursement of financial assistance, active mentoring post-approval, and continuous monitoring of the performance and viability

of the sanctioned units. He reiterated the importance of structured weekly review mechanisms, with BHD meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays, SBDU sittings every Friday, and DLIC reviews every Saturday, to maintain momentum and transparency in the implementation process.

GM DIC, DSWO, AD Employment, Lead Bank Manager, DDM NABARD, DNO JKEDI, CCO & EO DE&CC Kulgam attended the meeting and shared their insights regarding inter-departmental coordination and timely support to the approved beneficiaries.

With the addition of these 106 cases, the cumulative outreach of Mission YUVA in Kulgam continues to expand, reaffirming the administration's steadfast commitment to create a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and nurturing youth-driven economic development.

DC Kupwara reviews arrangements for Independence Day celebrations

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, JULY 14: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting of district officers and various security agencies to review the preparedness for ensuing Independence Day-2025 celebrations. The meeting was informed that the main function of the Independence Day shall be held at DPL-Zangli while similar functions will be held at sub-division and Tehsil levels also. It was further informed that contingents of JKP, CRPF, Forest Protection Force, students of various government schools will participate in the march past parade. Besides, various cultural programmes and Display of tableaux would also be part of national event celebrations. Different departments viz, Educa-

tion, PHE, R&B, Information, Health, Sports, Traffic, Motor Vehicles, Police, Floriculture, PDD, Municipality and Paramilitary Forces were directed to look after their respective assignments.

The decoration of the main venue, seating arrangements, uninterrupted power supply, drinking water/ tanker service, availability of ambulance, deployment of fire tenders, transportation facilities, refreshment, invitations, PAS system, cleanliness and sanitation measures were discussed threadbare in the meeting while, as special emphasis was laid on march past parades, cultural programmes, display of tableaux by different departments showcasing achievements.

DC directed concerned departments to send the nominations for awards

by or before 10 days of the Independence Day.

She said that in the run up to the Independence Day function, all the important buildings and main offices will be illuminated.

Ayushi emphasized the importance of National event and directed the departments to make sure that every arrangement is meticulously planned and executed.

She exhorted all departments to work in close coordination to ensure the seamless celebration of the Independence day functions. SSP Kupwara, Gulam Jeelani; ADDC Kupwara, Mufti Fareed ud Din; ADC Handwara, Javid Naseem Masoodi; ACR, SDM Lolab, CMO, CEO, Officers from CRPF, Police, District Officers of different departments and other concerned attended the meeting.

DC Bandipora visits Ziyarat Sharief Hazrat Nanga Baji Sahib, Malangam

Reviews arrangements for annual Urs

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, JULY 14: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, on Monday visited the Ziyarat Sharief of Hazrat Nanga Baji Sahib in Malangam village to review the arrangements for the upcoming Annual Urs Mubarak, scheduled to commence on August 04. During the visit, DC was accompanied by DDC Member Mewa Jan, ACR, Tehsildar Bandipora, and officers from KPDCCL, Jal Shakti, and other concerned departments. On the occasion, DC interacted with the

management committee, listened to their concerns, and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned departments for prompt redressal of genuine issues. He assured full support from the district administration for the smooth and hassle-free conduct of the Urs.

The management committee, among other things, requested uninterrupted power and water supply during the Urs days. In response, the DC directed KPDCCL to ensure maximum possible uninterrupted electricity during the event.

He also instructed the Jal Shakti Department to make the borewell functional at the earliest and to keep water tankers available as a backup. Additionally, he empha-

sized the need for adequate availability of firewood and foodgrains.

BDO Aloosa was directed to ensure proper cleanliness and sanitation in the area, while the Health department was instructed to deploy medical teams and ensure availability of healthcare facilities throughout the Urs.

DC also directed the Police department and the Motor Vehicles department to coordinate efforts for ensuring smooth traffic movement during the event.

Qadri urged all departments and stakeholders to adopt a collaborative approach in making the necessary arrangements to ensure that the Annual Urs is conducted in a smooth, peaceful, and well-organized manner.

Secy RDD reviews progress on Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin; asks to accelerate sanitation projects

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, chaired a review meeting on Monday to evaluate the progress on the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2025-26, assess the status of locational plans, verify water assets and review progress on the GOBARdhan plants. The meeting was attended by Director General Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; Director Rural Development Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat; Director Rural Development Jammu, Shahnaz Akhter; Superintending Engineer REW Jammu, Rajesh Kumar Agastam; Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Shafat Hussain besides Deputy Directors Rural Sanitation, Assistant Commissioners Panchayat (ACPs) and Executive Engineers of REW from all districts. During the review, the Secretary emphasized the need for timely tendering, land identification and rapid execution of all planned works under the AIP 2025-26. He urged the district teams to eliminate procedural delays and ensure real-time progress reporting. A detailed district-wise discussion was held on pending locational plans for various sanitation-related assets, including Compost Pits, Soak Pits, Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs), Segregation Sheds, Plastic Waste Management Units (PWMUs), GOBARdhan units, Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs), Waste Stabilization Ponds (WSPs) and Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS). The Secretary emphasized that Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin is not just about building sanitation infrastructure, it is about bringing



systemic change, ensuring sustainability and achieving measurable outcomes. He asked the ACPs to take ownership at the ground level. From DEWATS and FSTPs to compost pits and segregation sheds, the success of these interventions lies in timely land identification, proactive coordination and a mission-mode approach, he added. Aijaz Asad directed the districts to submit all pending locational plans to the Directorate of Rural Sanitation within five days.

The Secretary underscored the importance of 100% digital asset verification through the mWater platform. He directed all the districts to ensure that every completed asset is geo-tagged and digitally verified in accordance with SBM-G protocols to maintain full transparency and accountability.

A detailed status of the GOBARdhan was also reviewed, with a focus on organic waste management and bio-energy production. Districts were instructed to expedite physical work progress, highlight challenges if any, and regularly update progress with the Directorate.

The Secretary stressed upon the ACPs to conduct physical site visits for all major infrastructure components, including WSPs, DEWATS and water bodies, ensuring quality control and verification. In districts where land issues were cited. He emphasized that land identification issues must be resolved at the district level in consultation with the respective Deputy Commissioners (DCs).

In many districts, Assistant Commissioners Panchayat (ACPs) were directed to personally visit the asset sites, conduct thorough inspections and ensure that all constructed assets, especially those related to water bodies, Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS) and Waste Stabilization Ponds (WSPs), are verified for functionality, compliance and quality. These visits are crucial for on-ground validation and must be followed by updated status reporting.

Given the critical role of DEWATS and WSPs in environmental protection, the Secretary directed for conducting the a virtual workshop on these technologies for all the field officers.

The Secretary stressed the urgent need for all the districts to update their Self-Assessment data on the Swachh Survekshan Grameen (SSG) 2025 portal (<https://ssg2025.in/State/Index>).

He reminded the officials that Self-Assessment contributes 140 out of 1000 marks as per SSG guidelines and directly impacts the district rankings.

Earlier, the Director General, Rural Sanitation, presented a detailed presentation highlighting the current status, achievements, challenges and actionable points under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) across all districts of Jammu & Kashmir.

Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan:

Distt Admin Pulwama organises Panchayat-level awareness camps

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

PULWAMA, JULY 14: As part of the ongoing efforts to curb substance abuse under the Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan, district administration Pulwama today conducted a series of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) awareness camps across various panchayats in all blocks of the district. The programmes were aimed at promoting awareness among the general public, especially youth, regarding the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of a drug-free and healthy society.

During the sessions, resource persons sensitised the participants about the physical, psychological, and social consequences of drug addiction. Topics such as early detection, role of families in rehabilitation, and community vigilance were also discussed in detail.

To support the outreach, a variety of IEC materials including posters, brochures, and pamphlets were distributed, containing key messages about prevention strategies, available counselling and rehabilitation services, and important helpline numbers. Participants were also encouraged to act as community ambassadors and spread awareness in their respective areas.

The camps saw active participation from officials of the Health, Education, Social Welfare, Rural Development, and Police Departments. Panchayat representatives, Self Help Groups (SHGs), students, civil society members, and local youth also took part with great enthusiasm.

The campaign will continue in the coming days with similar programmes scheduled in educational institutes, rural and urban areas, ensuring grassroots engagement and community involvement in the fight against drug addiction.

Food Safety Department Anantnag cracks-down on Unsafe Snack and Confectionery Manufacturers

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

ANANTNAG, JULY 14: In a decisive move to safeguard public health particularly the well-being of young children, Food Safety department Anantnag conducted extensive raids on various snack, sweet, and confectionery manufacturing units across the district. The enforcement action followed credible inputs regarding the use of unpermitted additives and improper storage conditions in the production of food items primarily consumed by children. During the raids, approximately 200 kilograms of snacks, sweets, and other confectionery products valued at an estimated Rs.1.65 lakh were seized. Additionally, around 50 kilograms of deteriorated and perishable food items were found unfit for consumption and were destroyed on the spot by the Food Business Operators (FBOs) under supervision. Further, two FBOs were booked for operating in gross violation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, including the absence of basic infrastructure and non-compliance with hygiene and manufacturing standards as outlined in Schedule IV of the FSSAI. Samples of the suspected food items have been collected and sent to a NABL-accredited laboratory for detailed testing and analysis. Food Safety department has reiterated its zero-tolerance policy toward unsafe and unethical food manufacturing practices. Officials have once again urged all food business operators to ensure the use of only permitted and high-quality ingredients and to strictly adhere to food safety norms and regulations.

Calls for efficient and compassionate public health service delivery

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, JULY 14: In a bid to ensure effective functioning of healthcare services, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat today paid a surprise late-night visit to District Hospital Budgam.

The visit, aimed at reviewing the emergency services, maternal and child health care, and overall hospital operations, led to the identification of several gaps that require immediate action. During his thorough inspection, DC closely examined the facilities being provided to patients, and interacted with both staff and visitors to understand their concerns. While acknowledging the hospital's critical role in serving the population of district, Dr Bilal stressed

that government health services must be delivered efficiently and with compassion. He inspected various wards and the emergency department, identifying areas where improvements are necessary. DC emphasised the need for the hospital administration to focus on the gaps and directed swift action against any dereliction of duty by the staff.

Additionally, DC highlighted the importance of maintaining accurate medical records and the

timely issuance of essential medicines to patients.

Medical Superintendent (MS) Budgam was directed to ensure the availability of doctors as per the roster and to implement a more efficient duty management system, especially in critical areas like the emergency ward, to avoid any disruption in services.

Among others, DC was accompanied by CMO Budgam, MS Budgam and other medical staff during his visit.

Dr Jitendra inaugurates IIM Jammu 5-day holistic orientation programme for incoming batches

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, JULY 14: The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu commenced its five day Holistic Orientation Programme with a grand inaugural ceremony held here today at Jagti campus. The programme marked formal induction of the 6th Batch of Ph.D, 4th Batch of Ph.D. (Working Professionals), 10th Batch of MBA, 4th Batch of MBA in Healthcare Management and the 5th Batch of Executive MBA (EMBA) into the IIM Jammu academic community.

The event was inaugurated by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences.

Professor B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, presided over the event.

A special message from Dr. Milind P. Kamble, Chairman, Board of Governors, IIM Jammu, was read out by Professor Jabir Ali, Dean, Faculty and Research, IIM Jammu.

Also present on the occasion were Amitava Chatterjee, MD & CEO, J&K Bank, as the guest of honor besides Professor Shakti Gupta, Director, AIIMS Jammu; Professor Jabir Ali, Dean, Faculty and Research; Professor Nitin Upadhyay, Dean Academics; and Dr. Sarbjit Singh, Chairperson, Admissions, IIM Jammu.

A major highlight of the day was



inauguration of the newly constructed Hostel Complex by Chief Guest Dr. Jitendra Singh. The complex comprises of four state-of-the-art hostels including Krishna, Sindhu, Narmada, and Yamuna, each with 172 rooms totalling 688 rooms. This remarkable addition to the institute's infrastructure reaffirms IIM Jammu's commitment

towards providing world-class residential and academic facilities to its students.

In line with the institute's emphasis on environmental consciousness and sustainability, Dr. Jitendra Singh also participated in a symbolic sapling plantation ceremony, planting a Rudraksh sapling near

hostel complex.

The grand inaugural ceremony set an inspiring and enthusiastic tone for the days ahead, as the newly inducted batches prepare to embark on a transformative academic journey at one of India's most dynamic and rapidly advancing IIMs.

2-day International Workshop on 'OMICS for Crop Improvement' begins at SKUAST-Kashmir



HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: Division of Plant Biotechnology, Faculty of Horticulture, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), inaugurated a two-day International Workshop on 'OMICS for Crop Improvement' today at the university's Shalimar campus.

The event is being held on 14th and 15th July, 2025, with participation from scientists, researchers, and students from different institutes.

Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-K, delivered the 'Words of Wisdom' as the chief guest of the event. He appreciated the department's efforts in organizing this international workshop and highlighted the transformative role of integrative OMICS in revolutionizing plant breeding, stress tolerance, and genetic resource utilization to mitigate aberrant climatic changes for sustainable agriculture in J&K.

Prof. Nazir A. Ganai also mentioned about 'Evergreen revolution' initiatives taken by SKUAST-Kashmir under HADP project for safeguarding fragile climatic conditions of Kashmir.

Earlier, the program commenced with a welcome address by Prof. Amjad M. Husaini, Head, Division of Plant Biotechnology, who welcomed the dignitaries, invited speakers and all participants.

The session was also graced by Prof. Haroon Rashid Naik, Director of Research; Prof. Mohammad Altaf Bhat, Director of Education; Prof. Azmat Alam Khan, Registrar, SKUAST-K; Prof. Neelofar Banday, Dean, Faculty of Horticulture.

A formal Vote of Thanks was presented by Dr. Sajad Majeed Zargar, Workshop Coordinator, Division of Plant Biotechnology, who expressed gratitude to the university leadership, expert speakers, participants, and the organizing team for their support and contribution in making the event successful.

It was followed by an expert talk on Genome Harvest by Prof. Rupesh Deshmukh, Head, Department of Biotechnology, Central University of Haryana.

Over the course of the two days, participants will receive exposure to both hands-on training and expert lectures on cutting-edge topics Genome Harvest, Multivariate Proteome Analysis, Genome Editing for Crop Improvement, QTL Mapping, Genome Informatics and Experimental Design etc.

The workshop is expected to foster interdisciplinary collaborations and enhance technical skills relevant to modern plant science and agricultural biotechnology focusing on the role of OMICS technologies in sustainable agriculture and precision crop breeding.

Researchers, academicians, and students from various institutions are participating in the program. This program is sponsored by Neuberger Diagnostics, Ahmedabad.

KVK Shopian organizes CBP for tribal, rural youth at GDC Shopian

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, JULY 14: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Shopian today conducted a Capacity Building Programme (CBP) for 30 tribal students at Government Degree College (GDC) Shopian. The event was held under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) initiative of ICAR, aiming to empower young minds from marginalized sections through knowledge and skill development. Prof. Rihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-K, was the chief guest of the event, who delivered an inspiring keynote address. She highlighted the importance of education for tribal youth, urging participants to develop themselves through SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) in order to better understand their potential and areas of growth. Earlier, the programme formally began with an opening

talk by Dr. Zaffar Afroz Badri, Head of KVK Shopian, who introduced the objectives and structure of the capacity-building session. The event was attended by several dignitaries including Dr. Amal Saxena, who stressed the importance of improving communication skills to unlock opportunities in both professional and personal development. Dr. Liqyat Ahmad Choudhary spoke on the vast scope of agriculture as a sustainable career path for rural youth. Dr. Irfan Basti spoke on awareness talk focusing on rural empowerment and access to Government schemes.

Dr. Shaiq Ahmad Ganai, who also led a parallel Front Line Demonstration (FLD) session, enriched students' practical benefits of proper hygiene and sanitation.

As part of the programme, soap, detergent, and towels were distributed among the participants to promote hygiene awareness.



DC Budgam conducts surprise inspection of Distt Hospital



Cardiologist says ‘eat these 10 foods daily’ to reduce heart disease risk, lower cholesterol and control blood pressure

HT News Desk

When it comes to heart health, what you eat can play a major role in preventing heart disease and supporting overall well-being.

While exercise and stress management are crucial, your daily diet can be the simplest way to nourish your heart.

In a YouTube video shared on September 16, cardiologist Dr. Bimal Chhajer revealed a list of the 10 best heart-friendly foods that can help reduce cholesterol, control blood pressure, and fight inflammation.

1. Black grapes
Packed with antioxidants like resveratrol, black grapes help reduce bad cholesterol, protect blood vessels, and support heart health.

2. Apple
Rich in fibre and polyphenols, apples help lower cholesterol levels, manage blood pressure,



and improve overall cardiovascular function.

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3. Pear
A potassium-rich fruit that helps regulate heart rhythms and maintain normal blood pressure, supporting overall heart function.

4. Strawberries
Loaded with antioxidants

and vitamin C, strawberries reduce inflammation, support healthy arteries, and promote heart health.

5. Fresh salads
Raw vegetables like cucumbers, tomatoes, and carrots provide fibre, vitamins, and minerals that help maintain a healthy heart.

6. Fruits and juices
Fresh seasonal fruits and

natural, unsweetened juices hydrate the body and provide essential nutrients that nourish the heart.

7. Oats
Known for their high soluble fibre content, oats help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol and keep arteries clear for smooth blood flow.

8. Green leafy vegetables
Foods like spinach and kale are rich in nitrates that help lower blood pressure and support strong, healthy blood vessels.

9. Green tea

Rich in catechins and antioxidants, green tea improves blood circulation, lowers cholesterol, and supports overall cardiovascular health.

10. Low-fat milk
A great source of calcium and protein without unhealthy fats, low-fat milk helps strengthen heart muscles and supports overall wellbeing. [health.com](#)

Top 5 vegan protein powders to boost muscle growth naturally

HT News Desk

Vegan protein powders have gained popularity over the years, with many options available in the market for those looking for plant-based alternatives to traditional whey-based protein supplements. These superior quality source of protein helps fitness enthusiasts achieve their daily protein requirements in an effective and more natural way. Vegan protein powders support tissue repair post-workout, boost the immune system, and contribute to lean muscle growth. Packed with natural ingredients like pea, brown rice, and hemp, which contain amino acids for muscle repair, growth, and overall wellness, without any artificial additives. If you are a dedicated vegan, fan of lactose-intolerant, or only seeking clearer, easy-to-digest protein options, check out these top vegan protein powders of July 2025 that offer smooth blending, great taste, and various health benefits.

Top 10 must-have vegan protein powders
Going plant-based does not mean compromising on performance. Vegan protein powders not only stand for great taste and good results but are also loaded with all the essential amino acids that your body needs for daily energy. Scroll down to pick your perfect option after consulting your healthcare professional.

Cosmix No-Nonsense Plant Protein can be the best option for vegan protein powder, as it contains 24 grams of plant-based protein and 9 essential amino acids. The protein powder includes ginger, cumin, fennel, and fenugreek.

By improving digestion, this gut-friendly protein powder is for those who want to build lean muscle, boost metabolism, and manage blood sugar levels. It is made with no harmful chemicals; thus, it could not affect your kidneys and liver in the long run. It comes in different flavours, including Coconut Peppermint, Indonesian Cacao (delicious chocolate), Japanese Ceremonial Matcha, and more.

Customer's reaction: Customers praised its good quality and noted no bloating or heaviness. However, some may find it grainy and chalky, with no good value for money, and its taste.

Mypro Sport Nutrition Plant Protein Powder delivers 23g of protein from pea and brown rice, designed for easy digestion with added digestive enzymes, dairy-free, soy-free, gluten-free, and free of many other major allergens. This plant-based protein powder is suitable for gluten-free, vegan, or keto diets. Moreover, this natural vegan protein comes with a tasty chocolate flavour that will give your protein shake the best taste. It is ideal for muscle growth due to its clean formulation.

Customer's reaction: Customers praised its good quality, health benefits, and noted its 23g of protein and BCAAs. Some find it effective as it mixes easily with water, while others report their digestive issues. Origin Nutrition Protein Powder is a 100% plant-based protein powder, which is suitable for fitness enthusiasts who prefer the blend of health, taste, and flavour all in one. Every serving is packed with essential nutrients, including non-GMO. Ideal for recovery and digestion, which results in quicker recovery from strenuous activities. Free from added sugar, soya, or any preservatives, it may offer a clean source of protein. This lactose-free protein delivers 4.5 grams of BCAAs.

Customer's reaction: Customers find this protein powder to be of the best quality, with energy-boosting properties and effectiveness. However, digestive issues received mixed feedback, and some reported it as horrible in terms of taste and value for money.

OZiva Plant Protein is ideal for meeting daily protein needs. It increases metabolism, boosts immunity, and builds lean muscle. This unfavorable plant-based protein powder is Certified Clean by US CLP and Vegan by Vegan Society UK. It contains no artificial sweeteners or added sugar. Plant-based protein delivers 30g of complete plant protein per serving from brown rice protein, pea protein isolate, and quinoa. It is packed with 9 amino acids and 5.3g BCAAs. [health.com](#)

Building biceps but burning out? Ayurveda tips for men to heal your gut-gym disconnect first



HT News Desk

Modern fitness routines measure everything: sets, macros, sleep cycles — even hydration timing but one critical system is often ignored: the gut. According to experts, Ayurveda never made that mistake as for thousands of years, it has placed digestion at the core of strength and vitality because no matter how clean your diet or how intense your training, none of it matters if your body can't properly digest and absorb. Agni: The digestive fire behind every rep

In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Govindarajan, Chief Innovation Officer at Kapiva, shared, "In Ayurveda, Agni, your digestive fire, is more than metaphor. It's the engine that transforms food into usable energy, muscle tissue and mental clarity. Strong Agni means efficient nutrient absorption, smooth recovery, and sustained performance."

Weak Agni? Dr Govindarajan revealed, "That means bloating, fatigue and stalled progress—even on a "perfect" diet. Herbs like cumin, ginger, and fennel aren't just flavor—each supports digestion at a cellular level. Triphala aids detox and nutrient uptake. A cleaner gut means faster recovery and a body that doesn't waste energy on damage control."

Herbs that work while you train, sleep and recover

Dr Govindarajan said, "Ayurveda doesn't use herbs to mask fatigue; it uses them to rebuild systems." He highlighted four time-tested herbs that are showing up in new research and gym bags for good reason:

Shilajit helps support healthy testosterone levels, boosting stamina and enhancing muscle strength. It improves overall gym performance by aiding energy production and reducing fatigue. Additionally, it supports immunity and speeds up recovery. Black Musli supports faster muscle recovery by reducing inflammation and enhancing post-workout repair.

Gokshura supports healthy

metabolism and boosts energy by enhancing the body's natural ability to process and utilise nutrients efficiently.

Ashwagandha helps reduce stress and promotes better sleep by calming the nervous system and balancing cortisol levels.

Swarna Bhasma helps improve stamina by boosting cellular energy, enhancing physical endurance, and supporting overall vitality.

Dr Govindarajan said, "These aren't quick fixes. They work gradually, building the kind of baseline health that survives high-intensity weeks, plateaus and life's curveballs."

Train hard, recover smarter
Ayurveda doesn't shy away from intensity but it calls out chaos. Dr Govindarajan gushed, "It promotes training in alignment with the body's natural rhythms. Mornings, when Kapha energy is dominant, are best for strength training — grounded, stable and strong. Late-night workouts, on the other hand, disrupt circadian cycles and spike cortisol when your body should be recovering."

He added, "The Ayurvedic system of Dinacharya or daily routine isn't just tradition. It's performance science. Wake before sunrise. Hydrate with warm water. Eat meals at consistent times. Wind down without screens. These habits sharpen recovery, deepen sleep and stabilise mood. It's not boring, it's where discipline meets results."

Redefining strength, especially in men's health month

Dr Govindarajan opined, "Real strength isn't just about size or stats. It's about digestion that works invisibly, energy that doesn't crash, and a nervous system that stays resilient under pressure. Ayurveda isn't here to replace weights — it's what helps the work land. It restores what hustle culture erodes: gut health, recovery rhythm and hormone balance." So if you are already training, already tracking your macros but still feeling depleted — the answer may not be more output. It may be a smarter input and that starts from the inside. [health.com](#)

Monsoon and gut health: Doctor lists 5 reasons why gut issues spike in rainy season; shares prevention tips to stay safe



HT News Desk

With increased humidity and a higher risk of water and food contamination, gut-related issues tend to spike significantly during the monsoon season. In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Anukalp Prakash, director, gastroenterology, CK Birla Hospital, Gurugram, shared how gut complaints rise during monsoon and how dietary modifications can assist in preventing them.

Why gut problems rise during the monsoon season?

1. Tainted water source: Rainwater tends to mingle with sewage and flow into water sources, furthering the possibility of waterborne illnesses such as cholera, typhoid, and gastroenteritis.
2. Higher humidity fosters bacterial growth: The high humidity fosters quick multiplication of bacteria and fungi, which contaminate food and surfaces with ease.

3. Street food hygiene falls: Street foods and raw stuff turn into breeding grounds for germs, particularly when they are stored in humid environments. The digestive system gets compromised during monsoon, and the capacity to process heavy or adulterated food loses efficiency.

4. Mold and fungus in stored grains:

Fungal growth is caused by moist storage that results in contamination of pulses, cereals, and nuts, leading to food poisoning and inflammation in the gut.

5. Frequent infections and antibiotic use: Common colds and monsoon fevers usually result in the use of antibiotics, upsetting gut flora and producing bloating, acidity, or diarrhoea.

Prevention tips to avoid gut issues in the monsoon season:

1. Drink only boiled or filtered water: Avoid using tap water and make water safe to avoid the possibility of infection.

2. Eat freshly prepared, warm foods: Warm foods are easily digestible and less likely to be contaminated with bacteria. Skip the reheated leftovers.

3. Go for light, non-greasy meals: Consume light food such as khichdi, soups, and mildly spiced dals to aid digestion.

4. Add probiotic foods: Curd, buttermilk, and rice can help replenish good gut bacteria.

5. Utilise ginger and asafoetida (hing): These spices prevent bloating, enhance digestion, and combat gut infections.

6. Restrict leafy vegetables and salads: These are difficult to clean properly and can have dirt or parasites on them. Opt for cooked veggies.

7. Avoid cold beverages and raw foods: They can cause weakening of digestion and enhance the risk of foodborne disease. [health.com](#)

How to style your patio for the rainy season: Expert tips for a breezy, relaxed look



HT News Desk

What's the rainy season without soaking in the petrichor, catching little raindrops on your palms, and enjoying chai and pakodas with your loved ones in the balcony? The rain brings a refreshing charm to outdoor spaces. With the right furniture and thoughtful monsoon-proof styling, your patio can turn into a cosy little retreat where you can enjoy the pitter-patter of raindrops and greenery around you.

The choice is yours between making your balcony an ignored dump yard or turning it into a peaceful retreat. If you want, this space of your house can become the perfect spot to reconnect with nature without stepping too far from comfort. With a few smart additions — think water-resistant furniture, cosy throws, and potted greens — your patio can turn into a monsoon haven, Varnita Kochhar, founder and creative director of outdoor furniture brand Häuser, tells HT Lifestyle.

Patio-styling tips for monsoon

Here are five simple yet thoughtful ways to style your patio for the rainy season:

1. Pick weatherproof and stain-resistant furniture

Look for high-performance materials that can resist rain, humidity and daily wear. Surfaces that are stain-resistant and easy to wipe down will keep your patio looking clean and fresh, even after a sudden downpour or a messy spill.

2. Bring in colour and curves

Rainy days can feel dull, so introduce energy into your patio with colourful furniture. Bold hues and playful curves

help in brightening up the space. The soft shapes add a sense of flow and comfort, turning your patio into a cheerful, inviting zone that feels lively even when the skies are grey. Check out these outdoor chairs!

3. Go for quick-dry fabrics

Comfort is key during the rains, and that starts with the right fabrics. Use cushions and upholstery made with quick-dry fabrics, breathable materials that do not hold moisture. Opt for removable covers to make cleaning easier. Lighter shades and soft textures help maintain a calm, breezy look.

4. Add light shelter without losing openness

Use a sleek umbrella, a minimal pergola or sheer drapes to create cover without blocking natural light or air. These light layers protect your furniture and cushions while letting you enjoy the sounds and sights of the rain. Keep the setup open and airy so it feels like an extension of your garden.

5. Use plants and lighting for ambience
Style the patio with lush greens like ferns, areca palms or elephant ears. Choose elevated planters to avoid water collecting around the roots. Add soft lighting with lanterns, solar lamps or fairy lights to create a cosy atmosphere that works beautifully during misty evenings or post-rain calm.

How to make the most of your balcony in the monsoon?

Your balcony space can be ideal for slow mornings with a cup of chai, reading a book, or even working remotely. In a season where staying indoors becomes the norm, a well-styled patio gives you a front-row seat to the beauty of the rain. Might as well soak it in, in style! [health.com](#)

‘If we don’t have a deal: Trump gives Russia 50-day deadline on Ukraine War

HT News Desk

United States President Donald Trump on Monday issued a warning for Russia, urging for the resolution of its war with Ukraine.

Trump warned of “severe tariffs” if there was no deal on the issue in 50 days. “...if we don’t have a deal in 50 days, tariffs at about 100 percent,” Trump said. The US President said that these would be “secondary tariffs” targeting Russia’s remaining trade partners.

Trump, whomet NATO chief

Mark Rutte at the White House, said he was “very, very unhappy”. This comes amid Trump’s evident frustration with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has stepped up large-scale drone attacks on Ukraine over the past few weeks. “I don’t want to say he’s an assassin, but he’s a tough guy,” Trump said about Putin on Monday.

The US President had earlier said that he would make a “major statement” on Russia on Monday. Meanwhile, Trump’s special envoy to Ukraine and Russia, retired Lt. Gen. Keith



Kellogg, reached Kyiv, as per a senior Ukrainian official.

Trump has confirmed that the US is sending Ukraine Patriot air defense missiles to help it against Russian aerial attacks. He said that the European Union would pay the US for “various pieces of very sophisticated” weaponry being supplied to Ukraine.

While the EU is not permitted to buy weapons, member countries purchase and send weapons to Ukraine, similar to NATO.

Trump’s relations with Putin had for a long time been friendly,

with the latter repeatedly claiming that Russia was ready to agree to a peace deal. On the other hand, Trump had called Zelenskyy a “dictator without elections”. However, as Russia continued attacks on civilian areas in Ukraine, Trump in a social media post said that Putin “has gone absolutely CRAZY!”.

He further said he was “disappointed” with Putin, adding, “I thought he was somebody that meant what he said.” “He’ll talk so beautifully and then he’ll bomb people at night. We don’t like that,” Trump added.

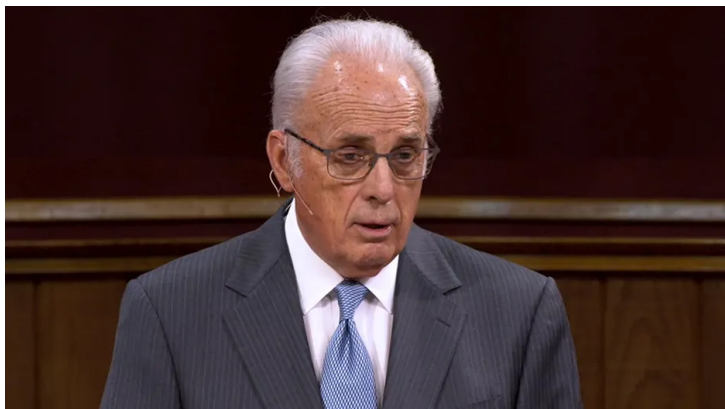
What happened to California pastor John MacArthur? All about his hospitalisation with life-threatening illness

HT News Desk

John MacArthur, the longtime pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, has reportedly been hospitalized with pneumonia.

The illness marks the latest concern in a series of his ongoing health issues. The news of the 86-year-old pastor’s condition was shared with the congregation during Sunday service, according to The Roys Report. Pastor John MacArthur’s years of health troubles

MacArthur has faced a series of health troubles, including a sudden onset of illness while conducting a 2023 service. Since then, he has undergone numerous surgeries as part of the treatment for atrial fibrillation and other



health issues, as reported by Fox News. According to The Roys Report, earlier this year, the pastor reportedly underwent surgery, which is part of a “second procedure” for his lungs. In a statement to the outlet, he said, “That procedure was successful,

and (I) am now back at home. The doctors are optimistic about my recovery, and I am eager to return to you once I regain my strength.” However, news of MacArthur’s condition has reportedly left many in the congregation uncertain and concerned about the state of his

health. Associate pastor Tom Patton previously shared that the California pastor’s recovery from “three surgeries in the second half of 2024” was “slower than expected,” in addition to “occasional setbacks affecting his heart, lungs and kidneys.” Patton reportedly announced MacArthur’s hospitalization during Sunday’s Church service.

Patton reportedly announced during the Sunday 11 am service, “This week, Pastor John contracted pneumonia. He was admitted into the hospital and may be in the presence of the Lord soon.” He added, “We place our dear pastor at the feet of the glorious Savior. Whom he has served so faithfully for so many years and now awaits His final command to be in his presence forever.”

Shubhanshu Shukla completes 7 experiments on ISS: ISRO



PTI

Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla has successfully completed all seven microgravity experiments and other planned activities, achieving a significant milestone in the Axiom-4 mission, ISRO said on Monday. It said that experiments on the Indian strain of Tardigrades, Myogenesis, Sprouting of methi and moong seeds, Cyanobacteria, Microalgae, Crop seeds and Voyager Display have been completed as planned. On July 13, 2025, the Expedition 73 Crew members onboard International Space Station (ISS) joined Axiom-4 crew members, including ISRO’s Gaganyatri, for a farewell ceremony ahead of the departure of the Axiom-4 mission crew from ISS.

“Gaganyatri Shubhanshu Shukla, while speaking at the farewell ceremony, thanked Expedition 73 crew members for their support along with team ISRO for developing a scientific research portfolio, associated protocols as well as designing student outreach activities with national participation,” ISRO said.

Shukla and three other astronauts of the Axiom-4 mission began their return journey to Earth on Monday as the Dragon Grace spacecraft undocked from the International Space Station after an 18-day stay. Following a series of orbital manoeuvres after undocking, the Dragon spacecraft is expected to splash down near the coast of California on Tuesday at 3.01 pm IST.

Satcom Industry Association-India Director General Anil Prakash said Shukla’s 18-day mission aboard the ISS isn’t just a milestone; it heralds India’s leap into the space-biotech frontier.

“This mission, made possible through strategic private-sector engagement, showcases a powerful public-private partnership, transforming space research into sustainable biotech innovation,” Prakash said.

“SIA-India applauds this collaborative breakthrough in propelling India from space exploration to global space-driven biotech leadership,” Prakash said.

During his stay at the ISS, Shukla interacted with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, school students, and also connected with ISRO centres using amateur radio.

Cambodia to begin military conscription: Check list of nations with mandatory military service

AP

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet on Monday announced that the country’s military will compulsorily begin enlisting civilians from next year.

“From 2026, the military conscription law will be implemented,” he told a ceremony at the Royal Gendarmierie Training Centre in central Kampong Chhnang province. The Prime Minister cited rising tensions with Thailand as the reason for activating a long-dormant mandatory enlistment law. The parliament of Cambodia had earlier approved a law in 2006, that would require all Cambodians aged 18 to 30 to serve in the military for 18 months.

The law had never been enforced. Hun Manet said the service period would be extended from the 18 months outlined in the earlier legislation, and pledged to “look at increasing” Cambodia’s defence budget. Cambodia-Thailand relations had been undulating since May 2025 after both nations involved in cross-border clashes, fueled by a long-standing territorial dispute over an area known as the Emerald Triangle, where the borders of both countries and Laos meet. The strife between the two countries claimed the life of one Cambodian soldier. Neighbouring Thailand already has military conscription for young and able-bodied men, who enter a lottery to determine whether they have to serve.

Here are the list of other countries that have compulsory military service:

- 1. Russia- The country’s national law mandates at least one year of volunteered military service for a period of 12 months for men aged between 18 to 27.
- 2. North Korea- Men hailing from North Korea are universally conscripted in the country whereas women undergo selective conscription. Children of the nation’s political elites are exempt from this. The procedure commences at the age of 17 and ends at 30.
- 3. South Korea- The constitution of South Korea states in Article 39, “All citizens shall have the duty of national defense under the conditions as prescribed by Act.” Male citizens of the country, between the ages of 18 and 35 are mandated to perform military

service.

- 4. Israel- Under the country’s Security Service Law of 1949, all Israeli nationals except ultra-Orthodox and Arab Israelis are mandated to serve the nation’s armed forces after they turn 18. The minimum length of military service is two years and eight months for men, and two years for women.
- 5. Brazil- Every Brazilian male is mandated to serve the armed forces under Article 143 of the Federal Republic of Brazil’s constitution. The minimum service period is a year.
- 6. Iran- Men aged 18 and above are mandated to serve in the Iranian army or the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, for anywhere between 18 to 24 months.
- 7. Turkey- According to a law passed by the Turkish parliament in 2019, the country’s nationals have to serve in the defence forces for a minimum period of six months.
- 8. Cuba- According to 1976 Constitution of the Republic of Cuba in article 65, Cuban men aged between 17 and 28, are mandated to serve in the nation’s army for at least two years. Active military service is voluntary for women. Male citizens are obliged to officially register for military service when they turn 16 years of age.
- 9. Switzerland- The country has mandatory military service for all able-bodied men once they reach the age of majority. Women of the country may volunteer for any position. According to a report by the country’s Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports, conscripts make up the majority of the manpower in the Swiss Armed Forces.
- 10. Eritrea- This East African country requires all able-bodied man and woman to serve in the military forces, for a minimum period of 18 months. During this tenure, they receive six months of military training and the rest of their time is spent working on national reconstruction projects.

Ellen DeGeneres’ 3-word sharp reaction to Trump’s warning to Rosie O’Donnell wows netizens: ‘He loves to get schooled’

HT News Desk

Ellen DeGeneres, who moved to the UK following Donald Trump’s presidential win, came out in support of his staunch critic Rosie O’Donnell after the US President threatened to revoke her American citizenship. In November 2024, DeGeneres and her spouse, Portia de Rossi, relocated to Southwest England’s Cotswolds.

Both have not officially acknowledged the reason for their departure from the US, although TMZ reported at the time that the decision was made because Trump was elected as president. Following Trump’s warning, O’Donnell retaliated on Instagram, referring to him as “King Jeffrey with a tangerine spray tan,” a reference to the despised, cruel, and tyrannical figure from Game of Thrones.

DeGeneres later posted a screenshot of Trump’s Truth Social post, showing her support to O’Donnell. “Good for you @rosie,” she wrote on Instagram.

Meanwhile, several users hailed her reaction, with one saying: “The planet is dying and he’s fighting with celebrities.”

“I love how it’s mostly women who stand up to him,” a second person wrote. “I don’t understand why previous presidents, government officials and politicians aren’t collaboratively speaking out or taking action against his blatant disregard for the constitution, incompetence and dangerous behavior...” the third person chimed in.

“The BEST clap back he loves to get schooled! Maybe his supporters can learn something too,” one more reacted.



Earlier, DeGeneres has provided updates on their lives abroad. She posted a picture of her spouse on Instagram in April, with the message, “Three things that make me happy: My wife, a rainbow, and my wife taking a photograph of a rainbow.” O’Donnell moved to Ireland with adopted daughter

Just a few days before Trump took over the White House, O’Donnell and her 12-year-old adopted daughter, Dakota, left the country.

She later confirmed they have moved to Ireland.

Taking to TikTok in March, O’Donnell talked about how much she loves living in Ireland, where people are “so loving and so kind and so welcoming.”

She also alluded to the fact that Trump was elected to a second term as president when she made the decision to relocate. “I miss many things about life there at home and I’m trying to find a home here in this beautiful country and when it is safe for all citizens to have equal rights there in America, that’s when we will consider coming back,” she wrote.

Hitting out at Trump, she said, “It’s been heartbreaking to see what’s happening politically and hard for me personally as well.”

Martin Cruz Smith, acclaimed author of ‘Gorky Park,’ dies at 82

AP

NEW YORK — Martin Cruz Smith, the best-selling mystery novelist who engaged readers for decades with “Gorky Park” and other thrillers featuring Moscow investigator Arkady Renko, has died at age 82. Smith died Friday “surrounded by those he loved,” according to his publisher, Simon & Schuster.

Further details were not immediately available, but Smith revealed a decade ago that he had Parkinson’s disease, and he gave the same condition to his protagonist. His 11th and final Renko book, “Hotel Ukraine,” will be published this week.

The Associated Press praised it as a “gem” that “upholds Smith’s reputation as a great craftsman of modern detective fiction with his sharply drawn, complex characters and a compelling plot.”

Among Smith’s honors were being named a “grand master” by the Mystery Writers of America, and winning the Hammett Prize for “Havana Bay” and a Gold Dagger award for “Gorky Park.”

Born Martin William Smith in Reading, Pennsylvania, and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied creative writing, Smith started out as a journalist, including a brief stint at the.

He had been a published novelist for more than a decade before he broke through in the early 1980s with “Gorky Park.”

His book came out when the Soviet Union and the Cold War were still very much alive and centered on Renko’s investigation into the murders of three

people whose bodies were found in the Moscow park cited in the title. “Gorky Park,” praised as a compelling and informative take on the inner workings of the Soviet Union, topped The New York Times’ fiction bestseller list and was later made into a movie starring William Hurt.

Gorky Park’ is a police procedural of uncommon excellence,” Peter Andrews wrote in the Times in 1981. “Martin Cruz Smith has managed to combine the gritty atmosphere of a Moscow police squad room with a story of detection as neatly done as any English manor-house puzzlement.

I have no idea as to the accuracy of Mr. Smith’s descriptions of Russian police operations. But they ring as true as crystal.”

Smith’s other books include science fiction, the Westerns “North to Dakota” and “Ride to Revenge,” and the “Romano Grey” mystery series. Besides “Martin Cruz Smith” — Cruz was his maternal grandmother’s name — he also wrote under the pen names “Nick Carter” and “Simon Quinn.”

Smith’s Renko books were inspired in part by his own travels in the Soviet Union and he would trace the region’s history over the past 40 years, whether the Soviet Union’s collapse, war in Chechnya, or the rise of Russian oligarchs.

The noted in its review of “Hotel Ukraine” that Smith had devised a backstory pulled straight from recent headlines, referencing such world leaders as Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine, Vladimir Putin of Russia and former President Joe Biden of the U.S.

Varun Aaron appointed SRH bowling coach ahead of IPL 2026

United News of India

NEW DELHI: Varun Aaron, the former India fast bowler, has joined Sunrisers Hyderabad as bowling coach ahead of IPL 2026. Aaron replaces New Zealand left-arm seamer James Franklin in the role.

This is the first time Aaron, 35, will be working in a coaching capacity, having retired from all forms of cricket in January this year. He joins the support staff group currently headed by Daniel Vettori.

Since the middle of 2024, Aaron has been working with trainees at the MRF Pace Academy in Chennai as a consultant. It's an institution that played a massive role in his rise as a fast bowling talent who burst through the ranks in 2010-11 with Jharkhand.

Aaron's own career was stop-start due to multiple stress fractures. He played nine Tests and nine ODIs in all, the last of those coming in November 2015, a Test against South Africa in Bengaluru.

Aaron's Test career is best remembered for the ball he bowled to Stuart Broad during the England tour of 2014. Aaron's bouncer hit Broad on the face, leaving him with



a broken nose that required surgery, and two black eyes after he top-edged the ball into the grille of his helmet.

He represented Delhi Daredevils, Royal Challengers Bengaluru,

Rajasthan Royals, Kolkata Knight Riders, Kings XI Punjab and Gujarat Titans during his IPL career. In 52 matches, he picked up 44 wickets at an economy of 8.93. Aaron's most recent stint as a player was

in 2022, when he was part of GT's title-winning run.

Since retirement, Aaron has also been involved in the game as an analyst, including with ESPNcricinfo.

Selection Trials for 9th Pencak Silat Federation Cup 2025



HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 14: The Pencak Silat Association of J&K is conducting selection trials for the 9th Pencak Silat Federation Cup 2025 on July 29, 2025, at the Indoor Stadium Polo Ground, Srinagar.

The trials are open to junior boys and girls who aspire to represent their state/region in the prestigious tournament. Senior men and women athletes can also participate in the available weight categories and events.

The selection trials will be held on July 29, 2025 at Indoor Stadium Polo Ground, Srinagar

Events:
Tanding (Match/Fighting)
Tunggal (Single-Player Artistic)
Ganda (Two-Player Artistic Team)

Regu (Three-Player Artistic Team)
Solo (Single Artistic)

Eligibility:
Junior Boys and Girls: should bring their date of birth certificate along with them and 2 passport size photographs too.

Selected players will face the screening committee on 30th July 2025 accordingly.

All the interested players will register their names through their concern district association by or before 20th July 2025. No entry will be accepted after the deadline.

The selection trials will be held under the supervision of observers from J&K Sports Council itself.

For further information please contact on +91 97971 94893 or email us at jksilat@gmail.com

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Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra -2025

Traffic Advisory

The yatris, travelling to seek blessings of Shri Amarnath Ji, in their own/rented cars/buses or any other mode, are requested to travel in the main Yatra convoy only, starting from Bhagwati Nagar Jammu daily; in the interest of smooth and secure conduct of Shri Amarnath ji Yatra 2025.

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FREE CHECKUP

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Lunch off 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

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