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# Health, Education Key to J&K's Growth: CM Omar

## CM Inaugurates 120-Bed Block at Bone & Joint Hospital

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 15:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated a 120-bedded state-of-the-art additional block at the Bone & Joint Hospital, Srinagar, reaffirming his government's firm commitment to strengthening the two foundational pillars of development—health and education.

Post inauguration, the Chief Minister also took a round of the operation theatres, staircase, ramp and wards, and interacted with the hospital staff and faculty members.

Addressing a large gathering on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that no amount of infrastructure development—be it roads, power projects, or



commercial complexes—can substitute for quality healthcare and education. "Without robust schools, colleges, universities and hospitals, our progress as a society will remain incomplete," he stated.

Recalling the rich legacy of the Bone & Joint Hospital, CM Omar said that the institution has faced extraordinary challenges over the past 30–35 years. "From natural disasters to tragic accidents, this hospital has stood as a symbol of resilience and commitment," he said.

He reminisced about the 2014 floods, when floodwaters first breached the Bone & Joint Hospital. "I vividly remember standing under this bridge, trying to protect the hospital from being

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## CM Omar Addresses Annual Day at SKIMS Bemina

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 15:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today addressed the Annual Day function of SKIMS Medical College & Hospital, Bemina, where he commended the commitment of the faculty, students and newly inducted doctors.

Addressing a gathering of medical professionals, students, staff, and parents, the Chief Minister said that the role of doctors in society is one of immense responsibility and trust. "Patients in our region place their utmost faith in their doctors, almost as much as they place in Allah," he said. "It is our collective duty to uphold that sacred trust with integrity and compassion."

Highlighting the rapid evolution in medical  
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Highlighting the vision of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who had inaugurated the hospital in May 1982, the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed pride in carrying that vision forward. "Today, we are opening a new chapter in the hospital's journey—one that will serve not just Srinagar, but patients from every corner of the Valley, and even from Chenab, Pir Panjal, and Kargil," he said.

## His feat has inspired a billion dreams: PM

United News of India

**NEW DELHI, JUL 15:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday that Shubhanshu Shukla has inspired a billion dreams with his dedication, cour-



age and pioneering spirit, as the astronaut returned to the Earth after an 18-day stay at the International Space Station.

Modi said on X, "I join the nation in welcoming Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla as he returns to Earth from his historic mission to Space." He lauded Shukla's feat, noting that he is the first India to have visited the International Space Station.

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## Over 13,000 Perform Darshan as Amarnath Yatra Continues Smoothly

Till date 2.34 lakh pilgrims pay obeisance at holy cave shrine

HT News Desk / KNO

**SRINAGAR, JUL 15:** Despite overcast weather conditions in the higher reaches of Kashmir, the annual Amarnath Yatra continues to progress smoothly, with thousands of devotees undertaking the pilgrimage to the holy cave.

According to official figures accessed by news agency—Kash-

mir News Observer (KNO), a total of 13,490 pilgrims performed darshan at the holy cave on July 15, including 9,096 male, 3,546 female, 199 children, 67 sadhus, and 14 sadhvis. 568 security personnel also availed darshan.

The cumulative number of yatris who have paid obeisance at the holy cave shrine so far this year has now reached 2,34,001,

officials said. Meanwhile, fresh batches of pilgrims continue to proceed from the Jammu base camp towards the Valley. As per data, a total of 6,388 yatris left Jammu in the 14th batch on Tuesday. These included 2,501 pilgrims via the Baltal axis and 3,887 via the Pahalgam route.

The convoy consisted of 248 vehicles, comprising 129 buses,

38 medium motor vehicles (MMVs), 73 light motor vehicles (LMVs), and 8 two-wheelers.

Among the pilgrims were 4,886 males, 1,300 females, 15 children, 158 sadhus, and 21 sadhvis.

Despite intermittent rain and cloudy conditions, authorities said the yatra is continuing peacefully and all necessary arrange-

ments including medical aid, escort security, and traffic regulation remain in place.

Over 51 lakh undertake Amarnath Yatra in past 15 years

Over the past decade and a half, the Amarnath Yatra has seen a cumulative footfall of more than 51 lakh pilgrims. Official figures reflect sharp fluctuations in

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## 7 dead, 17 injured in Doda accident

LG, CM, others express grief

HT News Desk / KNO

**DODA, JUL 15:** Seven persons were killed and 17 were injured after a passenger vehicle skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge in Ponda area of hilly Doda district on Tuesday, officials said.

An official said that an accident occurred when a tempo traveller (JK06-4847) skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge along the Doda-Barath road near Ponda.

The vehicle was carrying multiple pas-

sengers when it lost its control, resulting in the fatal road accident, the official said.

According to officials, 26 passengers were travelling in the vehicle at the time of the accident. Rescue operations were immediately launched by the local police and volunteers, with authorities rushing to the scene to assist in retrieving the victims and providing emergency medical aid.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Doda, Harvinder Singh said that a total of seven

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## Govt to discuss ULB, Panchayat Polls in J&K after Yatra

HT News Desk / KINS

**SRINAGAR, JULY 15:** The government is expected to discuss 'holding of long-pending Urban Local Body (ULB) and Panchayat elections', soon after the annual Amarnath Yatra concludes on August 9.

The elections, once held, will mark a major step in reviving grassroots democracy in the Union Territory after a pro-

longed gap.

"We are committed to conduct the elections at the earliest and ensure that democratic processes are restored at the grassroots. We will start the discussion on these crucial elections after the yatra concludes, a senior official said.

The last ULB and Panchayat elections in Jammu and Kashmir were held in 2018. Their respective terms ended in

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## Pahalgam attack aimed to undermine J&K's tourism economy: EAM

United News of India

**TIANJIN (CHINA), JUL 15:** The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) needs to remain true to its founding objective of combating terrorism and extremism and take an "uncompromising" position on combating the challenges, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said at a conclave of the grouping on Tuesday while strongly justifying India's response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

With his counterparts from Pakistan, China

and other SCO member nations listening, Jaishankar said the Pahalgam attack was "deliberately conducted" to undermine the tourism economy of Jammu and Kashmir and sow a religious divide, asserting that India will remain firm in its response to confront terrorism.

In an address at the SCO foreign ministers meeting in this Chinese city, Jaishankar said India will continue to positively approach new ideas and proposals, asserting that such cooperation must be based on "mutual respect", "sovereign

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## Shubhanshu Shukla returns to earth

United News of India

**NEW DELHI, JUL 15:** With waves and smiles, Shubhanshu Shukla returned to Earth on Tuesday after an 18-day stay on the International Space Station, a feat that holds the promise to herald India's own human spaceflight ambitions.

The Lucknow-born Shukla and three other astronauts of the private Axiom-4 mission splashed down in the Pacific Ocean off the San Diego coast in California in the pre-dawn darkness at 2:31 am Pacific Time (3:01 pm IST) amid cheers from the citizens

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## Jitendra hails Shukla's return

United News of India

**BENGALURU, JULY 15:** "Bharat has found an enduring space in the world of space," declared Union Minister of State for Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh,

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## In JK, 1900 Govt schools lack separate toilets for girls

8.5% schools without electricity; 50% without benches, desks

HT News Desk / KNO

**SRINAGAR, JUL 15:** In Jammu and Kashmir at least 1900 government-run schools lack basic amenities of separate girls toilets while 8.5 percent schools are without electricity.

Besides, at least 184 'Hanging Schools' upgraded from time to time without creation of staff and are functioning through internal arrangement.

According to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Education Minister Sakina Itoo in a review meeting about the basic amenities such as functional girls toilets, drinking water and power supply was informed that "Still 1900 schools are without separate girls toilets and 8.5 percent schools are without electricity."

The minister directed all the CEOs to ensure the availability of girls toilets within four months. "Besides, all the Hols

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## CS Calls for Time-Bound Cyber Security Audits

Deptt Assures All Websites To Go Live Within Next 2 Months

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 15:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a crucial meeting to thoroughly review cyber security measures safeguarding government websites and critical infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting besides the Secretary IT was attended by all Administrative Secretaries of various departments, and key officers from NIC, JaKeGA,

and the IT Department.

In this meeting the Chief Secretary underscored the urgent need for fixing clear timelines for completing website security audits, stressing that prolonged website downtime causes significant inconvenience to the public. He emphasized that all exercises must be time-bound, with a focus on reviving all important websites at the earliest.

Furthermore, he directed the immediate decommissioning of all

redundant and unused websites, stating they serve no purpose and pose unnecessary security risks.

To bolster internal capabilities, the Chief Secretary advocated for capacity building of all departmental Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and Information Security Officers (ISOs). This initiative aims to empower them to conduct future website audits independently, thereby mitigating potential security compromises.

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## CS, MoTA Secretary Review Tribal Development in J&K

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 15:** Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo together with Secretary, Union Ministry for Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Vibhu Nayar today held detailed

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

**Health, Education.....**

overrun. Despite the devastation, this hospital never turned its back on people—it continued to provide treatment," he said.

The Chief Minister also referred to the 2022 fire that destroyed major sections of the hospital, including four operation theatres, referral rooms, teaching areas, and multiple wards. "Even without a roof for six months, our doctors and administrators resumed surgeries within days. Their dedication is commendable," he added.

Highlighting the vision of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who had inaugurated the hospital in May 1982, the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed pride in carrying that vision forward. "Today, we are opening a new chapter in the hospital's journey—one that will serve not just Srinagar, but patients from every corner of the Valley, and even from Chenab, Pir Panjal, and Kargil," he said.

Sharing a personal anecdote, CM Omar revealed that he, too, had been a patient at the hospital following a cycling accident five years after its inauguration. "Thanks to the skill of the surgeons here, I can still run 10-12 kilometers at the age of 55. That's the quality of care this hospital provides," he remarked.

The Chief Minister emphasized the urgent need for staffing in the newly inaugurated facility and directed concerned departments to expedite the creation of required posts. "We didn't cut this ribbon for a photo opportunity. It will only be meaningful when these beds are occupied, OTs are functional, and our faculty is teaching future doctors," he asserted.

As Minister for Housing & Urban Development, Omar Abdullah also announced a special survey to identify water-logging hotspots in Srinagar. He said a comprehensive project will be framed to address the issue, drain by drain, to make Srinagar a true smart city.

He further assured that two to three major infrastructure projects will soon be launched to ease traffic congestion in the city.

The Chief Minister extended his congratulations to the Principal of Government Medical College Srinagar, faculty members, doctors, staff, and administration of Bone and Joint Hospital. "This hospital is not just a building—it's a beacon of hope and healing. Together, we will ensure it continues to serve generations to come," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary reaffirmed that the mission and vision laid down by Sher-e-Kashmir will continue with renewed focus and energy under the able leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

Minister for Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, in her address, said that following the formation of the present government under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the Bone & Joint Hospital project has witnessed significant progress and was successfully completed.

She further emphasized that medical care facilities across Jammu and Kashmir are being continuously upgraded. "From MRI facilities to Cath Labs and other advanced diagnostic and treatment services, our aim is to provide world-class healthcare through our Government Medical Colleges and associated hospitals," she said.

Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Lal Chowk Sheikh Ahsan Pardeesi, and Secretary Health & Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah also addressed the gathering, lauding the efforts of the administration and healthcare workers involved in the project.

The event was attended by several legislators from across Kashmir, Principal GMC Srinagar Dr. Iffat Hassan, Medical Superintendent Bone & Joint Hospital, senior faculty members, doctors and a large number of citizens.

**CM Omar.....**

science, the Chief Minister noted the constant advancement in technologies, treatments, and surgical methods. "From robotics to artificial intelligence, the medical profession is now at a crossroads of human care and machine efficiency. While tools like ChatGPT can simulate empathy and generate treatment suggestions, they can never replace the human touch that defines this profession," he remarked.

In a light-hearted personal reflection, Omar Abdullah recalled how he narrowly avoided a career in medicine due to his fear of cadaver dissection, choosing instead to pursue commerce. "Lacked the aptitude and courage to become a doctor—but I have always had the utmost respect for those who do," he said.

The Chief Minister emphasized that earning a medical degree is only the beginning, and the real challenge lies in applying that knowledge to serve people, especially in underserved and rural areas. He urged young doctors to embrace government service not merely for job security but as a platform to deliver care where it is most needed. "I meet aspirants who seek government jobs but don't want to be posted even a few kilometers away from home. That mindset needs to change," he added.

Underscoring the government's focus on healthcare, the Chief Minister said that health and medical education would continue to receive top priority in budgetary allocations. "You have our full support—whether it's infrastructure, staffing or training. But improving urban hospitals alone is not enough. If we are referring normal deliveries and minor surgeries to tertiary care due to staff shortages in rural areas, we are failing our system," he said. Omar Abdullah also praised the Principal of SKIMS Medical College for gaining wide popularity and earning the trust of students and staff in a remarkably short time. "It's rare to see a rising popularity graph after four months in any leadership role. This speaks volumes about the direction in which this institution is headed," he said.

Congratulating the graduating students and their families, the Chief Minister assured the parents that their sacrifices will not go in vain. "You have fulfilled your responsibility by educating your children. Now it is our duty to ensure they thrive and contribute meaningfully to the health sector of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He wished the students continued success and reaffirmed the government's unwavering support for SKIMS and its affiliated institutions.

Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakina Itoo, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Secretary H&ME Dr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah, Director SKIMS Soura Prof. Mohammad Ashraf Ganai, and Principal SKIMS Medical College & Hospital Dr. Fazlul Qadir Parray also addressed the gathering.

The event was attended by several MLAs, former Directors of SKIMS, senior faculty members, outgoing graduates, students, parents, and other distinguished guests.

On the occasion, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah presented certificates to the graduates of the 2019 batch and felicitated the families of deceased faculty members in recognition of their invaluable contributions to the college and hospital. CM Omar Addresses Annual Day at SKIMS Bemina.

**Over 13,000....**

pilgrim turnout, influenced by both natural and administrative factors.

In 2010, 4.55 lakh pilgrims made their way to the Amarnath cave shrine. The numbers peaked in the following two years, with 6.21 lakh pilgrims recorded in 2011 and 6.35 lakh in 2012. However, subsequent years witnessed a decline, reaching a low of 2.21 lakh in 2016.

The dip was attributed to weather-related disruptions and security concerns. The turnaround began in the years that followed, with authorities ramping up facilities and tightening safety arrangements.

The Yatra began regaining momentum, crossing 3 lakh in 2018 and remaining steady until the pandemic halted the pilgrimage entirely in 2020 and 2021.

In 2022, the Yatra resumed with 3.04 lakh pilgrims, followed by a notable increase in 2023 as 4.50 lakh devotees participated. The upward trend continued into 2024, when a record 5 lakh pilgrims—both domestic and international—undertook the journey to the high-altitude shrine.

It was the highest turnout since 2012. Between 2021 and 2024, the duration of the pilgrimage varied widely. In 2021, it was scheduled for 56 days but was suspended midway due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The yatra was conducted over 43 days in 2022, 62 days in 2023, and 52 days in 2024. (KNO)

**In JK, 1900 Govt.....**

shall be designated as estate officers of their schools with the responsibility of ensuring the availability of basic facilities and proper maintenance of the institutions.

In the meeting, Itoo while reviewing the availability of school buildings and basic infrastructure, it was appraised that some schools do not have own school buildings and are functioning in rented buildings.

The minister in this regard directed the both the directors to furnish the proposals for construction of school buildings within available funds to ensure that all schools have their own buildings and sufficient class rooms.

"Besides this, both the directors shall share the list of building less schools and schools with deficient infrastructure with the Project Director, Samagra Shiksha, J&K for their projection in the PAB of Samagra Shiksha," she said.

About the availability of desks, the minister was appraised that only 50 percent desks are available in the schools.

"Both the directors of Jammu and Kashmir divisions shall workout the deficiency with regard to availability of Desks for their respective divisions and shall formulate a District-wise proposal for providing of school desks of appropriate size. Besides, both the directors shall expedite the procurement of school desks for which funds are available with the CEOs so that students may not suffer any more," the minister directed—(KNO)

**7 dead, 17....**

persons were killed and 17 others were injured in the accident. The bodies of the deceased have been handed over to their families for last rites after post-mortem and completion of legal formalities, while the injured are undergoing treatment at GMC Doda and Jammu, the official said.

The injured include Mohammad Rafi, son of Bashir Ahmad from Aul; Hakim, son of Gh. Mohd from Dhar; Gulam Mohammad, son of Abdul Subhan from Aul; Abdul Qasim, son of Asdoo Wani from Aul; another individual named Mohd Rafi, son of Gulam Mohammad from Aul; Abdul Rashid, son of Abdul Gani from Aul; Muzee-ur-Rehman, son of Shams Din Parray from Gundna; Sahil Farooq, son of Farooq Ahmed from Udyanpur; Saima Banoo, daughter of Lassa Naik from Aul; Shamima Begum, wife of Mohd Amin from Aul; Shamala Begum, wife of Amjad from Aul; Heena Banoo, daughter of Gulam Malik from Aul; Aqib Hussain, son of Gulam Mohd; Abdul Qayoom, son of Ghulam Wani from Aul; Shakoor Din, son of Asdullah Wani from Aul; Uzma, daughter of Amjad from Aul; and Kulsma, wife of Tariq Hussain from Aul.

Five of the deceased have been identified as Mohd Ashraf, son of Mohd Abdullah from Aul; Mangta, son of Gh. Wani from Aul; Atta Mohd, son of Gh. Mohd from Balidhar; Tariq Hussain, son of Abdul Jabbar; and Rafiq Begum, wife of Abdul Latif, both residents of Aul. The identities of two others are yet to be ascertained.

Meanwhile, police have registered a case and started an investigation in this regard.

Moreover, J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Democratic Progressive Azad Party president Gulam Nabi Azad, and Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari have condoled the loss of lives in the tragic accident.

In a condolence message, the Lt Governor said: "Pained by the loss of lives due to the tragic road accident in Doda. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of grief. Praying for a speedy recovery of the injured."

In a post on X, the Office of the CM wrote, "Deeply saddened by the tragic road accident in Doda that has

claimed six lives and left several injured. The Chief Minister extends heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prays for the speedy recovery of the injured."

"The administration has been directed to ensure immediate medical assistance and support to all affected," the post reads.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh said he spoke to Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh, upon receiving the information about the accident. "All possible help and medical aid are being provided. The DC is personally supervising the entire exercise and giving me regular updates. Any further assistance, as required, will also be provided," Singh said in a post on X. He expressed condolences to the families of the deceased. (KNO)

**Govt to discuss....**

October and December 2023. The elections had been delayed primarily due to the pending report on the percentage of reservation to be given to the Other Backward Classes (OBC).

After the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, several new communities were added to the OBC list in J&K, making the reservation policy a key factor in the upcoming polls.

Because OBCs are now entitled to reservation in local body elections, the polls are expected to be highly competitive. Even though Panchayat and ULB elections are officially non-party based, political parties are known to support specific candidates, who often join their ranks after winning.

The Jammu and Kashmir State Election Commission has already begun the groundwork.

A formal election notification is expected, depending on the overall security situation.

According to Rule 7 of the J&K Panchayat Raj Rules, 1996, the government must consult the Election Authority before announcing Panchayat polls. Similarly, under Rule 3 of the J&K Municipal Corporation and Municipal (Elections) Rules, 2003, the State Election Commission must prepare electoral rolls before holding ULB elections once it receives instructions from the government.

Thousands of security personnel are currently deployed for the smooth conduct of the Amarnath Yatra, making it difficult to hold elections during this period. Once the Yatra concludes, these forces can be redeployed for election duties.

Political parties and civil society groups across the Union Territory have repeatedly urged the government to hold elections, stating that the absence of elected bodies has slowed down development works and weakened grievance redressal systems. Reports from various districts suggest that essential services and public works have suffered in the absence of elected Panchayats and municipal bodies.

Experts believe that the return of elected representatives will help improve delivery of government schemes related to sanitation, housing, rural employment, and water supply. It will also help restore local accountability and increase citizen participation in development planning. (KINS)

**Pahalgam attack.....**

equality" and in accordance with "territorial integrity and sovereignty" of member states.

His remarks came against the backdrop of growing global criticism of China's mega connectivity project—the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)—on the ground that it showed disregard for the sovereignty of the nations and lacked transparency.

The external affairs minister's comments calling for SCO to adopt an "uncompromising" position to combat terrorism amid some disquiet in New Delhi over Beijing's tacit support to Islamabad during Operation Sindoor as well as instances of China blocking efforts at the UN Security Council to sanction Pakistan-based terrorists.

In his address, Jaishankar also flagged concerns over "conflicts, competition and coercion" as well as economic instability and underlined the need to stabilise the global order and address longstanding challenges that "threaten our collective interests".

The major focus of the external affairs minister's address was his call to effectively deal with terrorism.

Jaishankar said the UN Security Council condemned the attack and underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of the reprehensible act and bring them to justice.

The external affairs minister said India has done "exactly that" and it will continue doing so.

"The three evils that SCO was founded to combat were terrorism, separatism and extremism. Not surprisingly, they often occur together. Recently, we in India witnessed a graphic example in the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22," Jaishankar said.

"The UN Security Council, of which some of us are currently members, issued a statement that condemned it in the strongest terms and 'underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of this reprehensible act of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice,'" he said.

"We have since done exactly that and will continue doing so. It is imperative that the SCO, to remain true to its founding objectives, take an uncompromising position on this challenge," he said.

The external affairs minister also listed India's initiatives in the SCO in various domains ranging from startup and innovation to traditional medicine and digital public infrastructure.

"We will continue to positively approach new ideas and proposals that are genuinely for our collective good," he said. "It is essential that such cooperation is based on mutual respect, sovereign equality and in accordance with territorial integrity and sovereignty of member states," he asserted. (Agencies)

**Shubhanshu....**

of India, literally on the other side of the world. Shukla, a Group Captain in the Indian Air Force, became the second Indian to travel to space after Rakesh Sharma's 1984 sojourn as part of a Soviet Russian mission. He also scripted history by becoming the first

Indian to travel to the International Space Station with the longest stint—20 days—in orbit around the Earth.

For India, Hungary and Poland, this mission has realised the return to human spaceflight, with astronauts from these countries travelling to space for the first time in more than 40 years.

The Dragon Grace spacecraft lifted off from Florida on June 25 and docked at the International Space Station on June 26 after a 28-hour journey.

Onboard the orbital laboratory, the Axiom-4 mission crew comprising Shukla, commander Peggy Whitson, and mission specialists Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski of Poland and Tibor Kapu of Hungary spent the next 18 days conducting 60 experiments and 20 outreach sessions.

Travelling at a speed of over 28,000 km per hour, the Dragon spacecraft, carrying the Axiom-4 crew members, executed a series of manoeuvres to gradually slow down and enter the Earth's atmosphere, braving intense heat before a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean.

Minutes later, the Dragon spacecraft was hauled up over SpaceX's recovery ship 'Shannon', where Shukla and the other astronauts emerged from the spacecraft, smiling and waving at the cameras.

Family members of astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla celebrate the landing of Space-X spacecraft, in Lucknow.

The astronauts were helped by the ground staff to get on their feet as they adapted to gravity on Earth after experiencing weightless conditions during their 20-day trip.

Soon after Shukla returned from the space odyssey, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "I join the nation in welcoming Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla as he returns to Earth from his historic mission to Space." The astronaut's parents, who watched the splashdown in Lucknow, heaved a sigh of relief as their son returned to Earth. While Shukla's father, Shambhu Dayal Shukla, and mother Asha Devi wiped their tears, his sister, Suchi Misra, welcomed her brother's landing with moist eyes and folded hands.

"He has been to space and back, and we are all over the moon because this mission has its own importance for the country's Gaganyaan programme," Shambhu Dayal Shukla said.

ISRO had invested Rs 550 crore for the spaceflight, and the learnings from the mission are expected to help India fulfil its own human spaceflight ambitions—the Gaganyaan project, which is eyeing a 2027 lift-off.

The prime minister said that as India's first astronaut to have visited the International Space Station, Shukla has inspired a billion dreams through his dedication, courage and pioneering spirit. "It marks another milestone towards our own Human Space Flight Mission—Gaganyaan," Modi said in a post on X.

The Axiom-4 crew underwent a series of medical checks on board the ship before boarding a helicopter for a ride back to the shore.

The four astronauts are expected to spend seven days in rehabilitation as they adjust back to life on Earth under the influence of gravity, unlike the weightlessness experienced in orbit.

ISRO said Shukla has successfully completed all seven microgravity experiments and other planned activities, achieving a significant milestone in the Axiom-4 mission.

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. (Agencies)

**Jitendra hails....**

as he hailed the triumphant return of Indian astronaut Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla from his landmark mission aboard the International Space Station (ISS).

Celebrating the successful completion of the Axiom-4 mission, which splashed down off the coast of San Diego earlier today, Singh described it as "a moment of glory for India" and a proud occasion not just for the country but for the entire global scientific community.

"It's a moment of pride for the whole world and a moment of glory for India, as one of our illustrious sons returns after accomplishing a successful voyage," the Minister told reporters.

Singh emphasised the scientific value of the mission, noting that Shukla had conducted "some of the very vital life-bearing experiments never done before," marking a significant contribution to future space exploration and biomedical advancements.

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, India's second astronaut in space and the first to visit the ISS, spent over two weeks conducting research as part of the Axiom-4 commercial mission—a collaboration between ISRO, SpaceX, NASA, and private partners. Dr Singh congratulated the mission team and reaffirmed India's resolve to further strengthen its position as a key player in space science and technology. (Agencies)

**His feat has....**

The prime minister said it marks another milestone towards India's own human space flight mission—Gaganyaan. The Dragon 'Grace' spacecraft carrying Shukla and three others made a splashdown off San Diego coast in southern California on Tuesday, capping a 22.5-hour journey from space. (Agencies)

**CS Calls for....**

He also mandated the installation of necessary security software on all devices used for official work and strictly directed the discontinuation

of private email IDs for official communications, citing the inherent security risks to official data and devices.

Addressing infrastructure needs, the Chief Secretary took note of the requirement for augmenting the State Data Centre (SDC) in Jammu. He directed the IT Department to promptly initiate the process using available funds, assuring that additional requisite funding would be provided as the work progresses.

During the meeting, Administrative Secretaries also contributed valuable suggestions to enhance the overall security of IT assets and prevent data breaches.

The Secretary, IT, Dr. Piyush Singla took this occasion to provide a comprehensive presentation detailing the safety and security precautionary measures undertaken by the department to ensure the cyber security of all government websites and assets. He informed the meeting that an audit agency has been engaged to conduct security audits of websites/portals hosted at the J&K SDC.

Dr. Singla highlighted the current status of websites hosted at the J&K SDC. He gave out that of a total of 239 websites, 140 are live. Of the 99 non-live websites, 70 are currently under audit by a Third-Party Auditor (TPA), 11 are under departmental audit, 10 are yet to be audited but are covered under the audit plan, 6 more have been allocated for auditing but their staging is not ready, and 2 websites have been decommissioned till date.

He further informed that to expedite the security audit process, the TPA has been requested to engage four additional resources, with the audit of all pending websites expected to be completed within the next two months. Regular follow-ups with CSOs/ISOs is done by the Department and detailed reports are being shared with all Administrative Secretaries for their appraisal.

Regarding other departmental measures, it was reported that Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) deployment is underway at the Civil Secretariat in Jammu and Srinagar, with 4011 EDR and 1789 UEM installations completed. VPN access has been restricted to users with Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), and all routers have been configured to accept requests only from India. Furthermore, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been mandated for opening IP/Ports via firewalls only.

The meeting was also informed that compliance with CERT-In and OWASP top 10 guidelines is being strictly enforced for all websites and web applications. To ensure public convenience and data security, the audit of critical applications such as Land Records, NGDRS, and CVS Portal has been initiated, and reports have been shared with respective departments for mitigation actions and necessary source code patching as required under the cyber security framework.

**CS, MoTA.....**

deliberations over implementation of the Dharti Aaba Janatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA) and Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan aimed at tribal welfare and development in J&K.

The meeting besides the Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department was participated by Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Planning and Tourism Departments; Principal Secretaries of Power Development, Public Works and Finance Departments; Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs; Secretary, School Education Department; Director General, Budget and other senior officers of the UT administration. The Deputy Commissioners joined the session via video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized the need for building capacity among local officers and community resource persons to strengthen last-mile delivery of services, ensuring participatory governance in tribal areas. He called upon the officers to remain grounded and engage closely with the communities, resolving local issues through a coordinated approach with the concerned departments.

Highlighting the importance of empowered human resources, Dulloo directed the ACS Planning to identify the capable resource persons across departments who could be trained as master trainers. These trainers, he said, would further build capacities at district and block levels, thereby institutionalizing an effective implementation mechanism across the UT.

The Union Secretary, in his remarks, reiterated the Ministry's steadfast support to the UT administration in achieving saturation of welfare services in tribal areas. He informed the participants that a cumulative outlay of Rs 2.5 crore has been earmarked nationally under various schemes for upliftment of tribal communities. He said that efficient utilization of these funds could significantly transform the socio-economic landscape of tribal areas.

Nayar further advocated for a focused, village-centric strategy rooted in inter-departmental collaboration. He recommended establishing single-window centres in tribal villages to serve as grievance redressal points, provide scheme information and act as touch points for direct community engagement. Stressing on ownership, accountability and fast-track service delivery, he emphasized the importance of grooming a cadre of empowered trainers at each level of administration. Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department, Prasanna Ramaswamy G, apprised the meeting of the progress made in J&K under DA-JGUA. He informed that a comprehensive gap analysis for all selected tribal villages has been completed and subsequently ratified by respective Gram Sabhas through the Deputy Commissioners.



# Bhumesh Sharma flags off farmers for field visit; pushes for adopting modern agriculture practices

HT News Desk/DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 15: Secretary J&K Advisory Board for Development of Kisans, Bhumesh Sharma, accompanied by Director Horticulture, Kashmir, Vikas Anand, today flagged off 40 progressive farmers from Horticulture sector for one day field visit cum training on "Best Field Practices".

The event, with a focus on "How to double the income of farmers", was organised in collaboration with the Directorate of Extension Education Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agriculture Science and Technology (SKUAST) Kashmir.

Bhumesh Sharma highlighted the importance of such exposure programmes for the farmers. He informed that the Board plays a crucial role in introducing the farmers of J&K with the latest research work and best field practices devised by the scientists and technocrats at SKUAST-Kashmir.

He emphasised the need to acquaint the farmers with the modern agriculture technology so that they succeed in doubling their income, contributing towards sustainable agriculture development in Jammu and



Kashmir. The Secretary advised the farmers to optimally utilize initiatives of the government and take full ad-

vantage of schemes available under HADP in agriculture, Horticulture, fisheries, Floriculture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry and Sericulture. He asked the farmers to adopt integrated farming in their fields which will enable them to double their farm income.

He informed that more than 90% population of Jammu and Kashmir is directly or indirectly involved with Agriculture and with the growth of population land has got fragmented and now on an average each family has land holdings ranging from 10 to 20 kanals. Hence there is a need to adopt multi cropping and integrating farming approach. Besides, we should explore better marketing for our surplus crops, he added.

Director Horticulture Kashmir appreciated the initiatives of Kisan Advisory Board for organizing such Kisan friendly awareness programmes. He exhorted upon the farmers to take full advantage of this one-day visit cum training programme.

During the flag off ceremony, Chief Horticulture Officer, Srinagar, District SMS along with Assistant Director Horticulture were also present.

## DC Srinagar reviews progress of construction of Panchayat Ghars

Directs timely completion to facilitate rural population



HT News Desk/DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 15: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Tuesday chaired a meeting at Meeting Hall of the DC office here to review the current status of construction of Panchayat Ghars in the district.

At the outset, DC took a block wise review on the progress of works on the construction of the Panchayat Ghars.

Speaking on the occasion, DC directed the Block Development Officers, Executing agencies & the concerned Tehsildar to have synergetic coordination to resolve any teething issues on ground and ensure timely completion of all the sanctioned Panchayat Ghars. He also directed them to resolve land issues, if any, regarding the construction of Panchayat Ghars to ensure timely project completion.

While highlighting the significance of the Panchayat Ghars, DC said that the initiative is a part of broader efforts to empower and facilitate rural population by strengthening

local self-governance, enhancing rural administration, and ensuring better service delivery to residents.

DC was apprised that out of 10 Panchayat Ghars sanctioned in 2023-24, construction of 4 Panchayat Ghars have been completed and work on 3 Panchayat Ghars is going on while land has been identified for the remaining 3 Panchayat Ghars.

It was also informed that 3 additional Panchayat Ghars have been sanctioned for the year 2024-25 including 2 in Harwan block and one in Srinagar Block. The work is in progress for construction of the Panchayat Ghar at Theed-A in Harwan Block, while land is being identified for the remaining 2 Panchayat Ghars on fast track basis.

Chief Planning officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Assistant commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar; Tehsildars of Panthachowk, North, Shalteng, Block Development Officers of Harwan, Khonmoh, Srinagar and Qamarwari, Executive Engineer REW and other concerned were present in the meeting.

## DC Srinagar chairs DLSCC meeting on processing of SRO-43, relief cases for terror victims



HT News Desk/DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 15: A meeting of District Level Screening cum Coordination Committee (DLSCC) regarding processing of SRO-43 and relief cases of terror victims of the district was Tuesday held under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo in his office chamber here.

The meeting was held to ensure speedy processing and resolution of SRO-43 cases, relief cases and resolution of grievances pertaining to terror affected families across the district.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner who is also chairman DLSCC reviewed the cases/claims submitted under SRO-43 by NoKs of those killed in terror related incidents in Srinagar

district. A total of 50 cases were put up for examination in the meeting and were discussed in detail.

On the occasion, DC underscored the importance of a proactive and coordinated approach among all stakeholders to ensure that affected families receive timely justice and support. He further stressed the need to complete all necessary formalities and verifications on priority, enabling the swift processing of the cases in the district.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Adil Fareed; SP headquarter, Umer Shah; Additional SP, CID, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, District Social Welfare Officer, all Tehsildars, senior officers from BSP, Army, and other security agencies, besides officials from the concerned departments.

## Special Lok-Adalat for MACT & Matrimonial cases on July 26 in Srinagar deferred

HT News Desk/DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 15: As per an official communication received from DLSA Srinagar, the Special Lok Adalat on Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT), Matrimonial Cases and Bank Cases which was scheduled to be held on 26th July, 2025 at District Court Complex Moominabad Srinagar and Addl. Special Mobile Magistrate Panthachowk, has been deferred for the time being.

The Special Lok Adalat has been postponed in view of the upcoming North Zone Regional Conference to be held on 26th & 27th July.

Meanwhile, the next date for the conduct of the Special Lok Adalat will be notified separately.

## Satish Sharma reviews functioning of State Motor Garages

HT News Desk/DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 15: Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, IT, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma today conducted a comprehensive review of functioning of the State Motor Garages (SMG) Department during his visit to the Directorate at Bemina here today.

Director State Motor Garages, Malik Tahir and other senior officers were present.

During his visit, the Minister inspected the workshop and office premises, interacted with the employees and took stock of the facilities and operational requirements.

Raising concern over the shortage of drivers, the Minister directed for deput-



ing the necessary staff from other departments to ensure uninterrupted functioning. He emphasized the need to strengthen the workforce to improve service delivery.

The Minister also inspected the workshop area, taking feedback about the repair and

maintenance procedures. He instructed the officials to expedite the auctioning of obsolete parts and initiate the process for disposing off condemned vehicles lying idle in the premises.

Satish Sharma also reviewed the status of the Car

Policy 2015, which has remained pending for revision for the last two years. He called for immediate steps to update and revise the policy in line with the present requirements and departmental needs.

It was informed during the meeting that 581 vehicles have been allotted to different government officers.

The Minister asked for a detailed audit and review of these allotments to ensure transparency and accountability.

Reaffirming the government's commitment towards institutional reforms and efficiency, the Minister assured that all necessary policy and operational bottlenecks will be addressed on priority.

## Delegations, Legislators raise welfare issues with Javed Rana

HT News Desk/DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 15: Several delegations and legislators today called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, at Civil Secretariat here and raised critical issues impacting the welfare of the people.

During the interactions, the legislators brought forth several

constituency-specific concerns, including water supply challenges, road infrastructure upgradation and implementation of the Forest Rights Act.

They emphasized the need for targeted interventions to enhance potable water supply, civic amenities, road connectivity and employment opportunities in their respective constituencies. Individuals

from different walks of life also met the Minister, highlighting their grievances and seeking timely redressal.

Rana attentively listened to the issues, assured prompt action and encouraged the legislators and delegations to continue voicing important public concerns that benefit the welfare of the people.

## CS, Secretary MoTA review tribal development measures in J&K

HT News Desk/DIPR

SRINAGAR, JULY 15: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo together with Secretary, Union Ministry for Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Vibhu Nayyar today held detailed deliberations over implementation of the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA) and Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan aimed at tribal welfare and development in J&K.

The meeting besides the Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department was participated by Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Planning and Tourism Departments; Principal Secretaries of Power Development,

Public Works and Finance Departments; Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs; Secretary, School Education Department; Director General, Budget and other senior officers of the UT administration.

The Deputy Commissioners joined the session via video conferencing. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized the need for building capacity among local officers and community resource persons to strengthen last-mile delivery of services, ensuring participatory governance in tribal areas. He called upon the officers to remain grounded and engage close-



ly with the communities, resolving local issues through a coordinated approach with the concerned departments.

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persons across departments who could be trained as master trainers. These trainers, he said, would further build capacities at district and block levels, thereby institutionalizing an effective implementation mechanism across the UT.

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that efficient utilization of these funds could significantly transform the socio-economic landscape of tribal areas.

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HT EDITORIAL

Need to pull strings of private schools owners in Kashmir

There was a time when education and health sectors were considered to be the noble sectors in Kashmir. With the passage of time both these sectors have been commercialized and they have turned out to be money minting machines. The people who have set up educational institutions and hospitals become millionaires in no time and they are looked upon as respectable citizens in the society.

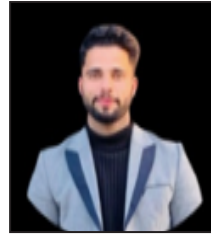
In the present day context most of the masses are not bothered as to how the school and hospital owners earn huge amounts of money within no time. Recently when the entire Kashmir valley was simmering with hot and sultry conditions a private school in Srinagar issued an order asking the students of the school to pay for the air conditioning (AC) charges. Facing flak from the people the school management withdrew the order in the evening and as such the students were not forced to pay for the AC charges.

The proactive role played by the people in this regard came as a huge relief for the parents of the students and it acted as a deterrent. If this order had been implemented in letter and spirit the management of other schools would have chipped in and they too would have issued the same bizarre order. One fails to understand the mindset of the school owners who come out with illogical and irrational orders from time to time. On most of the occasions the parents are forced to accept such orders.

Ever since the Fee Fixation Regulation Committee (FFRC) has been set up to regulate the fees being charged by the private schools there has been a lot of streamlining of the fee structure of the private schools. As on date most of the schools think twice before raising the tuition fees for the different classes. However, there are many other issues that need to be looked into by the FFRC and once this is done the education system in the private sector would be streamlined.

Issuance of a bizarre order like charging of AC charges from the students is bound to create ripples among the people. Since the winter season is approaching one cannot rule out issuance of an order by any private school seeking deposition of an amount from parents for the heating charges. In fact such orders have been issued in the past and the parents were forced to pay for charges that they would not normally pay.

# Mission YUVA: A Game-Changer for J&K's Youth, Igniting Dreams and Driving Economic Growth



By Shahid Nazeer

A new era of opportunity and empowerment has dawned upon the youth of Jammu and Kashmir with the launch of Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan), a visionary initiative introduced under the inspiring slogan "Yuva Sapne, Nayi Ummeedain" (Youth Dreams, New Hopes). This mission sets out to address one of the region's most pressing challenges: youth unemployment.

Mission YUVA is not merely a scheme it is a holistic movement aimed at reshaping the future of Jammu and Kashmir's young generation by equipping them with entrepreneurial skills, providing career support, and promoting self-employment. As the region strides toward inclusive development and economic self-reliance, this initiative is being seen as a cornerstone for long-term sustainable growth from the grassroots level.

**Empowering Youth Through Innovation and Opportunity**

At its core, Mission YUVA aims to nurture a generation of self-reliant entrepreneurs by offering financial aid, professional training, incubation support, and strong market linkages. Whether it is budding startups, skilled artisans, or enthusiastic job seekers, the mission targets a broad spectrum of youth with a promise of empowerment. By promoting sectors like IT, agriculture, tourism, handicrafts, and e-commerce, the initiative is working



to create a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Focused training in both traditional and modern industries is already paving the way for young talent to emerge as confident contributors to the economy.

**Leadership Rooted in Vision and Action**

The transformation being witnessed in Jammu and Kashmir is a reflection of the strong and visionary leadership of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, whose efforts have consistently prioritized youth-centric policies and inclusive development. With his proactive governance and clear vision, Jammu and Kashmir is seeing a rejuvenation in every sector education, employment, infrastructure, and innovation.

Lieutenant Governor Sinha has always advocated for creating opportunities that are accessible, sustainable, and inclusive, especially for the youth. His administration's continuous focus on strengthening local capacities and eliminating bureaucratic hurdles has made the implementation of schemes like Mission YUVA more impactful.

His belief that progress must begin at the grassroots has been evident in every initiative undertaken under his leadership be it reforms in education, promotion of entrepreneurship, or digitization of services. Through Mission YUVA, that belief is now empowering thousands of young people with dreams and direction.

**Rewriting the Story of a Resilient Generation**

For years, the youth of Jammu and Kashmir faced challenges stemming from unemployment, limited skill development programs, and a lack of career guidance. Mission YUVA is changing that narrative. By bringing together education, mentorship, financial assistance, and innovation under one umbrella, the mission is turning job seekers into job creators.

District-level youth facilitation centers are already being set up to guide aspiring entrepreneurs through various stages from idea generation to market expansion. Access to credit, business development training, and government incentives are making it easier than ever for youth to pursue their dreams. The mission is

also fostering partnerships with academic institutions, private sector players, NGOs, and experts to build a support system that is dynamic, adaptive, and result-oriented.

**Voices of Aspiration and Impact**

Across towns and villages, stories of transformation are emerging. Mehreen Qadri, a young woman from Baramulla, has successfully launched her handicrafts brand online with support from Mission YUVA. "I always believed in my art, but I never knew how to turn it into a business. Today, I am earning and inspiring others in my locality," she shared.

Similarly, Umar Farooq, once unemployed and frustrated, is now managing a tech startup after undergoing digital training through the scheme. "This initiative gave me hope, skills, and belief in myself," he said.

These stories are no longer rare. They are becoming the new normal proof that with the right guidance and support, the youth of Jammu and Kashmir can achieve anything.

**Towards a Brighter and Resilient Future**

Mission YUVA is not just about economic revival it's about building confidence, dignity, and long-term resilience among the youth. It is about making sure that young people in Jammu and Kashmir no longer have to leave their homeland in search of opportunity but can build successful futures right where they are.

Under the leadership of LG Manoj Sinha, the administration is committed to ensuring that every initiative serves its true purpose: uplifting lives, nurturing talent, and bringing lasting peace and prosperity to the Union Territory.

As dreams begin to take shape and opportunities multiply, Mission YUVA is quickly emerging as a model for youth empowerment one that will define the journey of Jammu and Kashmir for generations to come.

# Keshav Maurya as BJP's OBC Trump Card Balancing Power and Organization for 2027



Ajay Kumar

The long-standing deliberations within the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) regarding the appointment of a new Uttar Pradesh state president seem to be nearing a decisive point. After receiving a relatively weaker mandate in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh, the need for a restructuring of the organization has become evident. So far, no new state president has been announced after Bhupendra Chaudhary, and this delay has raised questions among party workers. Meanwhile, the increasing activity of Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, his frequent meetings with top leaders in Delhi, and the OBC equation have brought his name to the center of discussions.

BJP's performance in the Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh was concerning. In 2019, the party, along with allies, won 64 seats, but this dropped to just 36 in 2024. Out of these, BJP alone secured 33 seats, while the SP-Congress alliance captured 43 seats clearly indicating that the opposition's social strategy has made inroads into BJP's traditional vote bank. The shift in OBC and Dalit votes toward SP's PDA (Backward, Dalit, Minority) formula was particularly notable.

BJP strategists have now realized that if the party wants to score a hat-trick victory in the 2027 assembly elections, the organization must be revitalized. This is why the party is looking for a face that not only brings organizational experience but is also capable of aligning social equations. In this context, Keshav Prasad Maurya has once again emerged as the most suitable name. His meetings on July 8 with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Defense Minister Rajnath Singh in Delhi have fueled speculations. These meetings are not being seen as mere courtesy calls but are being linked to the party's organizational restructuring and upcoming election strategies. Maurya himself has confirmed that the discussions focused on strategies for winning 2027. It was under Maurya's leadership in the 2017 assembly elections that BJP made history by winning 312 out of 403 seats. At that time, he was the state president and

played a key role in strengthening the party at the grassroots level.

Maurya's greatest strength is his background as a grassroots BJP worker, who rose through the ranks of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad before joining the party mainstream. His journey from a regular worker to Deputy Chief Minister makes him highly popular among party workers. This is why his name is being seriously considered to reinvigorate and energize the organization.

Keshav Maurya's name becomes even more relevant for the BJP right now because the party must once again firmly align with the OBC community. BJP is well aware that the opposition, especially the Samajwadi Party, is making every effort to woo the OBC vote bank. Akhilesh Yadav has projected the PDA formula in a way that prominently highlights OBC and Dalit groups. In this situation, BJP must respond in kind. And this task can best be achieved by a strong OBC leader like Keshav Maurya, who enjoys wide social acceptability.

However, the decision on the state president post will not be based solely on social equations. Balancing between organization and governance also plays a crucial role. Party sources say that it is already decided that Yogi Adityanath will be projected again as the Chief Ministerial face in 2027. But from time to time, there have also been voices within the party that Keshav Maurya should be declared a contender for the CM's post. In such a scenario, it becomes essential for the party to bring Maurya into the organization to keep him out of the power race and clear the path for Yogi Adityanath.

The central leadership's thinking behind this entire strategy is to find a leader who can not only manage social alliances but also strengthen the organization. Keshav Maurya fits this criteria perfectly. This is why Amit Shah recently referred to Maurya as a "dear friend" at an event, while calling Yogi Adityanath a "popular Chief Minister." This indicates that the party leadership wants to promote both leaders in a balanced manner.

Meanwhile, several other names are also being considered within the BJP. From the OBC category, names like Swatantra Singh, Amar Pal Maurya, Dharmpal Singh Lodhi, B.L. Maurya, and Baburam Nishad are under discussion. From the Dalit community, Baby Rani Maurya's name has emerged. For a Brahmin face, former Deputy CM Dr. Dinesh Sharma, Laxmikant Bajpai, and Union Minister Jitin Prasada are being considered. If the party aims to strengthen its hold on western Uttar Pradesh, leaders like Jitin Prasada and Mahesh Sharma

could be options.

However, BJP has often followed a strategy of assigning key roles to leaders who are not publicly discussed much. Recent appointments of Chief Ministers in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Delhi support this trend. Therefore, it would be premature to say that Maurya's name is finalized, but it is certain that he is leading the race.

Senior BJP leader Dr. Dinesh Sharma has clarified that the party follows a fixed process for appointments. First, elections are held in all state units, then the national president is elected, and after that, the state presidents are appointed. He also added that elections have been completed in most states, so the appointments of the national and state presidents can happen at any time.

There are four key reasons behind the delay in the appointment of a state president in Uttar Pradesh. First, from which caste or community will the new president be? Second, will they be from Purvanchal or western UP? Third, can they effectively counter the opposition's PDA strategy? And fourth, will Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath be comfortable with the appointment? According to sources, the party is deeply contemplating all four aspects and a decision is expected soon.

So far, BJP's strategy has been to prepare the organization in advance for the 2026 panchayat elections and the 2027 assembly elections. This is why the party is not rushing the appointment of the state president. But it is also true that an organizational vacuum cannot persist for long. The role of a state president is crucial in providing direction to workers. This is why pressure is building on the party to finalize the appointment soon.

If Keshav Maurya is reappointed as state president, the BJP will be able to achieve multiple objectives simultaneously. First, the organization will get leadership with both experience and mass appeal. Second, the OBC community will receive a clear message that the party values their trust. Third, a balance between power and organization will be maintained, ensuring no challenge to Yogi Adityanath's leadership. All eyes are now on Delhi, from where the major decisions of the BJP originate. It will be interesting to see whether the BJP places its trust once again in Keshav Maurya or surprises everyone with a new face. One thing is certain the appointment of the state president will be the BJP's first major signal towards its 2027 strategy. And possibly, it will mark the first step toward revitalizing the organization and mounting a direct challenge to the opposition.

The author is a Senior Journalist

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# The invisible God is the first and on the mother Earth Humanity is second!



By M S Nazki

The invisible God is the first and on the mother Earth Humanity is second! Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase.....Perhaps that is what this officer deserves a lot of respect for and his name is Amod Ashok Nagpure( IPS) presently in Udhampur!

He just plucked a moment out of his busy schedule, got of his vehicle and went on to meet the street sweepers and after a handshake perhaps said, guys, if you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward!

But it has to be what is famously called "The Street Sweeper" or "What is Your Life's Blueprint" that has had the biggest impact on me.

He must have also said if it falls to you to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures, sweep streets like Beethoven composed music, sweep streets like Leontyne Price sings before the Metropolitan Opera. Sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry. Sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will have to pause and say: Here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well.

If you can't be a pine at the top of the hill, be a shrub in the valley. But be the best little shrub on the side of the hill. Be a bush if you can't be a tree. If you can't be a highway, just be a trail. If you can't be a sun, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or fail. Be the best of whatever you are.

As a former landscaper, I still love being outside and working with the plants in my yard as well as in the yards of a few neighbors! One of the fascinating things I see in my landscaping is how some plants are fragile and easily damaged while others, like trees, are strong enough that you can use their wood to build a house. Yet all

plants are made from a similar cell structure. The difference is due to something very, very small – the concentration of the cells found in trees is much higher than what is found in other plants. Small things can make big difference in our leadership as well. Here are 6 small actions that can have an unexpectedly big impact. (From Major's Diary)

- And the impact is the following:
  - Exceeding someone's expectations.
  - Providing a word of encouragement.
  - Performing an unplanned act of kindness.
  - Sending a personal note.
  - Giving a gift.
  - Taking a moment to connect.
  - This is what life is all about!

In the context of the military/Police/Paramilitary Forces, "humanity" and an officer's rank are not directly related in terms of a specific rank title. However, an officer's rank is often associated with the level of responsibility and decision-making that impacts human lives and well-being, highlighting the importance of empathy and ethical considerations in military leadership.

**Rank and Responsibility:** Ranks, from enlisted personnel to general officers, denote a hierarchy of authority and responsibility within the armed forces. Higher ranks typically involve greater leadership roles, strategic decision-making, and responsibility for the welfare of subordinates.

**Humanity in Leadership:** While rank itself doesn't equate to humanity, the execution of an officer's duties at any level should be informed by ethical considerations and a sense of responsibility for the well-being of their troops and the civilians they may encounter.

**Beyond Rank:** Ultimately, the demonstration of humanity within the military context is not solely dependent on rank, but rather on the individual's character and commitment to ethical conduct, regardless of their position in the chain of command.

Love for humans, in its broadest sense, encompasses various forms of affection, care, and benevolence towards other people. It can manifest as romantic love, familial love, platonic love, or even a more general sense of compassion and concern



for humanity. This love, in its various forms, is a fundamental aspect of the human experience, driving connection, cooperation, and overall well-being.

Here's a breakdown of different facets of love for humans:

**Love as a Biological and Social Imperative:** Love is often seen as an innate human drive, crucial for survival and social bonding.

It fosters cooperation, empathy, and a sense of belonging, which are essential for individual and collective flourishing.

The human brain is wired for connection and empathy, suggesting a biological basis

for love and its importance in our lives.

**Love as a Source of Strength and Resilience:**

Love provides a sense of security, validation, and emotional support, which can be particularly important during challenging times.

It can boost self-esteem, motivation, and overall happiness.

Love can inspire individuals to overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential.

**Love as an Expression of Care and Compassion:** Love extends beyond personal relationships to encompass a broader sense

of concern for the well-being of others. Acts of kindness, empathy, and generosity are expressions of this love for humanity.

Philanthropy, or the love of humankind, involves actively working to improve the lives of others through charitable actions. The Complexity of Human Love: While love is often seen as a positive force, it can also be complex and challenging.

The Police officer Nagpure had well understood the word compassion when he advanced his hand to the two street sweepers! Obviously the latter would have been stunned and perhaps for the first time would have felt what warm hands full of love mean!

Compassion is fundamentally about recognizing and responding to the suffering of others with empathy and a desire to help. It involves feeling for others, understanding their pain, and being motivated to alleviate their suffering. Compassion extends beyond simple empathy, encompassing a desire to act and offer support or relief.

Here's a more detailed look at what compassion entails:

**Recognizing suffering:** Compassion begins with acknowledging that someone is experiencing pain, whether physical, emotional, or mental.

**Empathy:** This involves understanding and sharing the feelings of the person suffering.

**Motivated action:** Compassion drives a desire to help alleviate the suffering, going beyond mere sympathy.

**Non-judgmental acceptance:** Compassion means being able to tolerate the discomfort that another's suffering can cause without judgment.

**Universal application:** Compassion extends to all people, regardless of their background, status, or relationship to us.

**Positive impact:** Practicing compassion can lead to improved relationships, greater happiness, and a more supportive community.

In essence, compassion is a powerful force that connects us to others and motivates us to make a positive difference in the world. It is a skill that can be developed and strengthened through intentional practice.

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## Doodhpathri:

# Where You Feel Spring in Summer



Sahil Manzoor

Doodhpathri, nestled in the heart of Budgam district, is a lush and vibrant gem of the Kashmir Valley. This place, with its breathtaking views and cool breeze even in peak summer, feels like spring amid the heat—a true escape into serenity. The majestic Pir Panjal range opens its arms in the summer, unveiling countless trekking routes and natural wonders.

As the snow melts, mountains that once seemed distant and unreachable come alive with color. The brown and green hues of the towering peaks, standing tall with pine and fir trees across their slopes, paint a stunning picture. Every corner of this region calls out to nature lovers and adventurers.

Personally, I find every season in Kashmir to be pleasant and sensuous, but summer holds a special place for trekkers. Unlike winter, when snow restricts access, summer brings freedom—freedom to explore, to climb, and to connect with the mountains. Tourist destinations like Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Yousmarg, Doodhpathri, and Tosamaidan buzz with life from June to September, as trekkers flood



these valleys. In Doodhpathri, popular trails like Diskhal, Ashtaar, Daani Deer, and Marg offer unparalleled experiences.

**Exploring Labkhal: A Hidden Treasure**  
Today, I want to highlight Labkhal, a lesser-known yet extraordinarily mesmerizing Bahak (pasture area) in the Pir Panjal range.

As you walk toward Labkhal, you'll hear birds chirping like a guitar melody. Cattle graze calmly, almost as if posed in perfect harmony with the surroundings. The traditional mud huts (Kothas) look like natu-

ral sculptures, and the water from nearby springs is crystal clear and refreshing.

Labkhal lies south of the famous Shaliganga River. Once you cross the river and turn left, a trek through thick forests—taking about 1.5 hours—leads you to this peaceful paradise. It can also be accessed via Pal Maidan, Triken Bahak, and then onwards to Labkhal.

**Gujjar and Bakarwal Communities: The Soul of the Mountains**

During the summer months, the upper areas of Kashmir welcome the Gujjar and

Bakarwal communities—gentle, hospitable, and hardworking people who graze their cattle in the high-altitude meadows. They bring cows, buffaloes, goats, and sheep to these pastures. Even hens and cocks can be seen roaming freely around the Bahaks, their temporary summer homes made of mud and wood.

These communities have lived in harmony with nature for centuries. Their Bahaks are legally registered areas used specifically for grazing. The Gujjars and Bakarwals not only sustain their livelihood here but also serve as guardians of the

forest—protecting against illegal logging, reporting damage from storms, and working with forest officials on environmental issues.

**What Do These Communities Need?**  
Despite their crucial role, these communities face challenges:

The glacial water is extremely cold and not suitable for regular use.

There's an urgent need for mobile latrines to maintain hygiene and prevent diseases.

Solar panels could offer light during night hours, helping them care for their cattle.

These are not luxuries—they are essentials that would greatly enhance their living conditions and support sustainable tourism.

**Suggestions and Way Forward**  
To empower the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities and enhance the trekking experience for visitors:

Basic facilities should be established in Bahaks—clean water, sanitation, and lighting. The community can be employed as local guides, offering valuable knowledge of the terrain.

Eco-tourism models can be introduced, where trekkers and locals benefit together.

These mountain guardians are the unsung heroes of our forests. Supporting them means preserving the culture, beauty, and ecology of places like Labkhal and Doodhpathri.

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## DLIC Samba approves 53 Mission YUVA cases

HT News Desk/DIPR

SAMBA, JULY 15: In a significant move to foster youth entrepreneurship and promote self-employment, the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) Samba for the Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyamita Vikas Abhiyan) today approved 53 cases.

The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma. The meeting scrutinized each proposal submitted by the aspiring entrepreneurs seeking support under the scheme. Mis-

sion YUVA aims to provide financial assistance, skill and capacity-building support to enable youth to start and sustain their entrepreneurial ventures.

During the meeting, concerned departments presented a comprehensive review of the applications received. After detailed scrutiny and discussions, the Committee approved 53 eligible cases for financial support and necessary guidance.

Speaking at the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the transformative

potential of Mission YUVA in empowering local youth and promoting sustainable livelihoods. He called for intensified awareness campaigns to reach a broader section of eligible beneficiaries and directed the District Employment & Counselling Centre Samba to proactively engage with the youth and encourage participation in the scheme.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Champa Devi Thakur; AD Employment, officers from DIC, Social Welfare Department, JKEDI and other concerned departments.

## DLSA Udhampur convenes UTRC meeting

HT News Desk/DIPR

UDHAMPUR, JULY 15: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Udhampur today convened an Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC) meeting in compliance with the Quarterly Schedule of UTRC Meetings-2025 and in adherence to the directives of the National Legal Services Authority (NLSA) and J&K Legal Services Authority (J&K LSA).

The meeting was chaired by Chairperson DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge) Virinder Singh Bhou and attended by Secretary DLSA Dr. Smriti Sharma; Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai; Senior Superintendent of Police Amod Ashok Nagpure; Superintendent



District Jail Mohammad Irfan; Chief LADC Pawan Gupta; Deputy LADC Atul Singh and Veney Singh Kotwal.

The committee reviewed cases based on guidelines from the Supreme Court and NALSA SOPs, focusing on

prisoners with no proper representation or those who have spent substantial time behind bars without trial. The Committee recommended the release of eligible prisoners, ensuring that the benefits of legal provisions reach the intended

beneficiaries. The meeting also discussed action items, such as conducting regular meetings to track progress, maintaining a consolidated data sheet to monitor prisoner cases, and preparing quarterly reports.

## DC Rajouri launches Vibrant Village Programme 2.0

Pays Tributes to Brigadier Usman- The Lion of Nowshera

HT News Desk/DIPR

JHANGAR (NOW-SHERA), JULY 15: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today launched the Vibrant Village Programme 2.0 and led the district in celebrating the 113th birth anniversary of Brigadier Mohammad Usman popularly known as "The Lion of Nowshera."

The event was organized at the historic Jhangar village near the Line of Control in Nowshera Subdivision.

The event was organized by the District Administration Rajouri in collaboration with the Indian Army, attracting enthusiastic participation from officers, students, locals and representatives of different departments.

The commemoration began with a grand welcome ceremony followed by paying of floral tributes at the memorial of Brigadier Usman. A documentary showcasing the life and valour of Brigadier Mohammad Usman was screened, highlighting his supreme sacrifice in the 1947-48 Indo-Pak war.

To honour the legacy of service and patriotism, school



students spoke on the life and contribution of Brigadier Usman and presented patriotic songs. The Deputy Commissioner felicitated the participating students for their efforts and patriotic spirit.

The government departments had set up awareness stalls at the venue to inform

the public about different schemes and initiatives under the Vibrant Village Programme.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC underscored the significance of the Vibrant Village Programme in transforming the lives of people residing in remote and border areas. He

reiterated the commitment of the administration to bridge critical gaps in infrastructure and services delivery.

"The supreme sacrifice of Brigadier Mohammad Usman is an eternal source of inspiration for all of us," said the DC. "I extend heartfelt congratulations to his family, the institution he served and the residents of his native place who continue to uphold his legacy with pride," he added.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner chaired a meeting with district officers, instructing them to identify gaps and improve basic facilities, including drinking water, road connectivity, reading rooms, play zones, and dispensary services in the border villages.

Refreshments were served to all participants as the event concluded on a note of national pride and developmental resolve.

Among the dignitaries present were SSP Rajouri Gaurav Sikarwar, ADC Nowshera, CO Saurav Panday, SE Tilak Raj, CPO Maqsood Ahmed, ACD Auqil Naveed, DSWO Abdul Raheem, Tehsildar Nowshera, BDO Nowshera and other district and sectoral officers.

## Director Horticulture Jammu launches fruit plantation drive in Reasi District

HT News Desk/DIPR

REASI, JULY 15: Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed today conducted an extensive tour of Reasi district. During the tour, he formally kick-started Rainy Season Plantation Drive by planting a sapling of citrus plant at village Nomain Katra. The initiative marks a significant step toward sustainable horticultural development and aims to boost fruit cultivation in the region's rainfed and sub-tropical areas.

The Director was accompanied by Chief Horticulture Officer Rajinder Sharma; Assistant Director Sunil Gupta; MCC Dheeraj Bailam and other officials of the department. The event drew enthusiastic participation from local farmers and community

members, reflecting a growing awareness and interest in horticulture-based livelihood opportunities.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director explained in detail various government schemes run by the Department of Horticulture for the welfare of farmers. He highlighted the benefits of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), and other centrally sponsored schemes.

He impressed upon farmers to purchase the fruit plants from departmental nurseries. He further highlighted the solar fencing being introduced through JKIP scheme for the areas affected by monkeys & other wild animals.

Later, he visited Govern-

ment Fruit Plant Nursery Dagochibagh and inspected mother blocks of different fruit crops and protected cultivation structures equipped with micro-irrigation facilities. The Director took stock of the ongoing developmental activities in the nursery and gave on spot instructions to the nursery staff regarding the production of quality grafted planting material in the nursery.

Further, the Director Horticulture chaired a meeting of the District Officers, Horticulture Development Officers, officials & field functionaries of district Reasi. He instructed the officers to organize awareness camps, Kisan-sangoshtis, to ensure better implementation of departmental schemes especially HADP for the ultimate benefit of the fruit growers.

### >>>> Operation Sadbhavana

## Army organises Quiz Competition on Agra Summit

HT News Desk/DIPR

RAMBAN, JULY 15: To foster educational engagement and spread awareness about historical events among the youth, the Halemaidan Company Operating Base (COB) of the 12 Rashtriya Rifles today organized an insightful Quiz Competition at Upper Primary School Tantraypara Banihal. The event centered on the historic Indo-Pak Agra Summit, aiming to deepen students' understanding of regional diplomacy and peace efforts.

The competition saw enthusiastic participation from students of different classes, who displayed remarkable knowledge and curiosity on the theme. Structured in multiple rounds, the quiz covered key facts, notable personalities, historical context, and the outcome of the Agra Summit held in July 2001.

Officers and senior officials from the 12 RR were



present to motivate the students, emphasizing the importance of understanding India's diplomatic history and encouraging a spirit of critical thinking and national pride among young minds.

Speaking on the occasion, a senior Army officer stated, "Our aim is not just to ensure security, but also to contribute to the holistic development of the region's youth. Events like these promote awareness, foster education, and build a bridge of trust and

knowledge between the Army and the local community."

Prizes were awarded to the top-performing teams, while all participants received tokens of appreciation for their active and spirited involvement.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by the Head of the Institution, who lauded the Indian Army's continuous support and impactful role in community engagement and youth empowerment in the region.

## JMC launches Swachhta Internship Program to foster cleanliness culture in Schools

HT News Desk/DIPR

JAMMU, JULY 15: Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) in coordination with the Directorate of School Education through M/s Ladli Foundation, inaugurated the Swachhta Internship Program today at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Shastri Nagar. The program aims to foster a culture of cleanliness and sanitation among students in 13 government schools across Jammu City.

The inauguration ceremony was graced by Commissioner, JMC Dr. Devansh Yadav and Mission Director, Swachh



Bharat Mission 2.0, UT of J&K, as the Chief Guest.

Addressing the gathering, the Commissioner JMC commended the collaborative efforts and emphasized the significance of in-

volving youth in creating 'Swachh' and healthy communities. He highlighted that the Swachhta Internship Program is designed to empower students as ambassadors for cleanliness and sustain-

able hygiene practices. He said that this initiative is not just about cleaning our surroundings; it is about transforming mindsets and nurturing a sense of responsibility among the youth.

The founder and CEO of Ladli Foundation Devinder Kumar, in his presentation, explained that the Swachhta internship programme is designed to engage & empower the young students, making them aware of various aspects of cleanliness & hygiene. "The programme will span over a period of 03 months. It will not just be a theoretical learning programme, but will be full of field insights and community connection," he added.

## Dharti Abha Abhiyan concludes in Vijaypur

HT News Desk/DIPR

VIJAYPUR, JULY 15: The month-long Dharti Abha Abhiyan - Awareness and Benefit Saturation Campaign, launched on June 15-2025, concluded today in Vijaypur with a mega valedictory event held in the Block Development Office.

The campaign was held under the overall supervision of District Development Commissioner Rajesh Sharma and it primarily focused on village Rakh Barotian, an area with a substantial Scheduled Tribe (ST) population.

The month-long campaign witnessed participation of over 1500 ST community members, who availed various welfare services and participated in awareness activities.

All 17 line departments took part by setting up information and service stalls, providing on-the-spot registration and assistance under key government schemes. Depart-



ments of health, education, agriculture, social welfare, rural development, and others played pivotal

roles in driving citizen-centric outreach. One of the major highlights of

the Abhiyan was the distribution of Biomass Cook Stoves to eligible households, promoting clean energy and eco-friendly cooking practices—especially benefiting tribal families by reducing indoor air pollution.

The campaign also facilitated direct benefit transfers, new enrolments in welfare schemes, and real-time grievance redressal, with a core focus on benefit saturation to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out.

At the valedictory function, officials from the Block Administration appreciated the active participation of villagers and commended the dedication of all departmental teams. The successful culmination of the Dharti Abha Abhiyan underscores the effectiveness of integrated outreach efforts in empowering under-served communities and advancing the vision of inclusive and sustainable development.

## Training imparted to Supervisors, BLOs at Doda

HT News Desk/DIPR

DODA, JULY 15: A comprehensive day-long training programme for Supervisors and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) was conducted at Town Hall Doda, the other Day. The event was organized by the District Administration under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Harvinder Singh.

The primary objective of the training was to familiarize the participants with constitutional provisions related to elections, their role and responsibilities as key field-level functionaries and detailed procedures for the preparation and updating of the Draft Electoral Roll. The session emphasized the importance of accuracy, inclusiveness and accountability in maintaining voter lists and addressing claims and objections in a time-bound and transparent manner.

The participants were guided



on verifying voter details, removing duplicate or ineligible entries and ensuring that no eligible voter is left out. The resource persons also highlighted the ethical responsibilities of Supervisors and BLOs in assisting citizens, safeguarding sensitive information and preventing malpractices. Discussions included practical challenges faced during field verification, the use of technology in electoral roll management and the significance of public awareness campaigns to enhance voter participation.

# SC Fixes July 31 For Hearing Pleas For Review Of 2022 Verdict Upholding Powers Of ED



**NEW DELHI (UNI)** The Supreme Court on Tuesday fixed July 31 for hearing a batch of pleas seeking review of the 2022 verdict that upheld the Enforcement Directorate (ED) powers of arrest and attachment of property involved in money laundering, search and seizure under PMLA.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi adjourned the matter, which was listed for hearing on Wednesday, to July 31 after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said he was not available.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the petitioners, said he has no objection, if the matter

is listed on July 31.

On May 7, the top court asked the Centre and the petitioners to frame issues to be adjudicated in challenge to a verdict which upheld the ED's powers to arrest and attach property of the accused.

The Centre had contended that the hearing on the review petitions cannot go beyond the two specific issues flagged by the bench which issued notice on the petitions in August 2022. Sibal had earlier submitted that the matter was required to be referred to a larger bench. Mehta had contended that the bench, which considered the review petitions for admission in August 2022, issued notice only on two aspects - the

supply of the ECIR copy to the accused and reversal of burden of proof under Section 24 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The apex court in July 2022 upheld the ED powers of arrest and attachment of property involved in money laundering, search and seizure under PMLA.

In August the same year, the top court agreed to hear pleas seeking review of its verdict and observed that two aspects "prima facie" required reconsideration. Observing money laundering was a "threat" to the good functioning of a financial system world over, the apex court upheld the validity of certain provisions of the PMLA, underlining it was not an "ordinary offence".

The top court said authorities under the 2002 law were "not police officers as such" and the ECIR could not be equated with an FIR under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The supply of an ECIR copy in every case to the person concerned was not mandatory and it was enough if the ED, at the time of arrest, disclosed the grounds for it, it added.

The 2022 verdict had come on a batch of over 200 petitions questioning various provisions of the PMLA, a law the opposition often claims is weaponised by the government to harass its political adversaries. Section 45 of the PMLA, which deals with offences to be cognisable and non-bailable and have twin conditions for bail, is reasonable and does not suffer from the vice of arbitrariness or unreasonableness, the top court said.

# Modern tech changing people's lives, but be careful of its misuse: Prez Murmu to students



**CUTTACK (UNI)** President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said advanced technologies have brought about a vast change in people's thinking and working style, but advised them to be careful about the misuse of inventions like artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Addressing the 13th annual convocation of Ravenshaw University here, Murmu said she was happy to note that the varsity was making good use of these technologies.

"This is the era of science and technology. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, 3D printing and cloud computing have brought about a vast change in our thinking and working style," she said.

Murmu, however, "advised all to be careful about the misuse of these advanced technologies".

Highlighting the rising academic performance of girl students - who topped 21 of 27 departments in the varsity this year - she said, "Over the last five years, girl students have consistently outperformed boys in academics at the institute. At the post-graduate level, the number of girl students who topped was more than three-and-a-half times that of the boys. This reflects India was moving from women empowerment to women-led development."

She also expressed satisfaction over the university's steady increase in enrolment of tribal students, and underprivileged and 'divyang' students.

Calling upon the graduating students to be more sincere and hardworking in future, Murmu said: "From today onwards, your life will take a new turn. You will move out of the academic university and step into a bigger university of life and society. I hope you will also achieve success and laurels in the university of life and society."

The President said the educational institution was an active centre of the freedom struggle, and associated with the movement for the formation of the state of Odisha.

She also stressed the importance of entrepreneurship and societal contribution

by not only getting a job, but providing jobs to others as well.

"If you desire, you can become entrepreneurs and set up your own ventures," Murmu told the students.

"The sense of nation first is our biggest strength. Our soldiers, farmers, scientists, engineers, doctors and people active in various fields are working with the sentiment of increasing the pride of India," she said.

During the occasion, Murmu also conferred honorary degrees on four noted personalities in recognition of their contributions to different fields.

Later, she laid the foundation stone for the redevelopment of three buildings of Ravenshaw Girls' High School in Cuttack.

In her brief remarks on the occasion, Murmu said during various convocation ceremonies, she noted that girls perform better when given equal facilities and opportunities.

She highlighted that women are contributing actively in every field - be it education and literature or science, technology, industry and commerce.

In the afternoon, the President attended the birth anniversary celebrations of Adikabi Sarala Das and presented the Kalinga Ratna Award-2024 to Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan. She also presented the literary award, 'Sarala Samman' to Bijaya Nayak.

"Our diversity is like a rainbow. Our unity has been very strong for ages. We have many languages, but the sentiment is one. The world remains amazed at how India remains united and integrated amidst so many languages and so many religions," she said.

Stating that Indian languages have contributed immensely in enriching its educational tradition, Murmu said, "It is a matter of happiness that in the National Education Policy 2020, emphasis has been laid on imparting education in the mother tongue." The President returned to New Delhi in the evening after completing her two-day visit to Odisha.

# Ex-PM P V Narasimha Rao as an example of balanced leadership: AP CM

**NEW DELHI (UNI)** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu described former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao as an example for balanced leadership and recalled the economic reforms implemented during his regime. Mr. Naidu delivered a lecture on the life of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao at the Prime Minister Museum here on Tuesday.

The Chief Minister paid rich tributes to PV Narasimha Rao, praising his intellect, reformist zeal, and his profound contributions to India's political and economic landscape. Mr. Naidu, speaking about the economic scenario of pre-1991 India, he outlined how the country was shackled under the License Raj, with growth stagnating at 3-4%. By 1991, India faced an unprecedented economic crisis, and foreign reserves had dropped dangerously low, he recalled. Mr. Naidu compared P V Narasimha Rao's strategic courage to that of Deng Xiaoping of China, who initiated China's reforms in 1978. He emphasized that public policy and political will to execute it were a strong combination in a leader. Recognizing the crisis as an opportunity, Rao launched the historic 1991 economic reforms, decisively

transforming India's future. "We are all here today enjoying the fruits of the reforms he initiated," Chandrababu Naidu said. Mr. Naidu recalled that despite leading a minority government, Mr. Rao achieved the near-impossible by forging consensus among socialists, communists, and capitalists alike. The AP CM emphasized India's strength in its demographic dividend, stating, "All countries are facing ageing problems. India has youngsters. I am 100% confident that India will become a global leader," he asserted, adding that economic reforms, demographic dividend, and first mover advantage in IT continue to be India's biggest strengths. The Chief Minister fondly recalled his association with former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, recognizing his vision in building India's infrastructure and telecom backbone. He shared anecdotes of his efforts to influence national highway policy, including a visit to Malaysia that inspired him to push for the Golden Quadrilateral Project, beginning with the Nellore-Chennai highway as a proof of concept. He also referenced his role in the telecom revolution, which deregulated the sector and ensured mobile accessibility for every citizen.

# Bihar Collects Over 86% Voter Forms; Final Door-to-Door Visits Begin: ECI

**NEW DELHI (UNI)** : With just ten days remaining for the conclusion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, the Election Commission has announced that 86.32% of Enumeration Forms (EFs) have already been collected, reflecting significant progress in the drive to ensure comprehensive voter inclusion.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Convener, an official spokesperson of ECI said As of 6:00 PM Monday, out of the 7.89 crore electors in Bihar, filled EFs of 6.81 crore voters have been received. When adjusted for deceased voters, those permanently shifted, and duplicate enrollments, the coverage stands at 90.84% of the eligible electorate. Only 9.16% of electors are yet to submit their forms before the July 25 deadline.

Local Bodies (ULBs) in Bihar to facilitate form submission. Additionally, public awareness



To bridge this gap, a third round of household visits will soon begin across the state. Nearly one lakh Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will revisit homes where electors were unavailable during previous visits. The BLOs are being supported by 1.5 lakh Booth Level Agents (BLAs) appointed by various political parties, with each agent authorized to verify and submit up to 50 forms daily. Special camps have also been set up across all 5,683 wards of the 261 Urban

through newspaper advertisements has been launched to encourage remaining electors to fill and submit their EFs promptly. Electors are being urged to use digital platforms to ease the process. Forms can be submitted online through the ECINet App or via the Election Commission's portal at <https://voters.eci.gov.in>. The ECINet platform, which also allows voters to verify entries in the 2003 electoral roll and contact election officials, has already recorded over 6.20 crore uploaded forms.

# The Statesman invites entries for awards in rural and environmental journalism

**NEW DELHI, (UNI)** The Statesman, one of India's oldest and most respected newspapers, has invited entries for its prestigious Awards for Excellence in Rural Reporting and the Cushrow Irani Prize for Environmental Reporting.

These awards are aimed at recognising journalistic excellence in reporting issues of critical importance to India's rural communities and environmental landscape, said the award organising committee in a statement here.

The Statesman Awards for Rural Reporting carries three cash prizes of Rs 25,000, Rs 15,000 and Rs 10,000. This award seeks to encourage and honour journalists who bring to light

the socio-political and economic challenges faced by rural India.

Submissions are invited to send in their investigative and analytical articles or reports, published in any Indian language or English, that focussed on rural issues in 2024. Articles will be judged for their accuracy, journalistic integrity, and storytelling quality, said the statement.

Instituted by the C R Irani Foundation in 2011, the Cushrow Irani Prize for Environmental Reporting carries a cash prize of Rs 28,000. It recognises outstanding reporting on environmental issues, encouraging awareness and action through responsible journalism.

The award is open to Indian journalists, whether working in print or digital media. Submissions must be original printed copies (photocopies will not be accepted), clearly showing the publication name and date. Entries may be in English or any Indian language (with translations, if possible). Reports must be investigative in nature and demonstrate journalistic rigour, as per the statement. The entries must be marked "Rural Reporting" or "Environmental Reporting" and sent in the form of original clippings to "The Awards Committee, The Statesman Ltd., Statesman House, 4 Chowringhee Square, Kolkata 700001 by August 10, 2025 or mail to [statesmanra2025@gmail.com](mailto:statesmanra2025@gmail.com).

# Health Ministry says no directive on warning labels for Indian snacks



**NEW DELHI (UNI)** A recent health advisory recommending the display of "oil and sugar boards" in public and workplace settings has sparked debate, with some reports alleging selective targeting of traditional Indian snacks such as samosas, kachoris, and vadapav. In response, however, the Union Health Ministry has issued a clarification, calling these reports "misleading, incorrect, and baseless."

In a statement issued here, the Ministry made it clear that it has not mandated warning labels on traditional Indian snacks or any food products sold by vendors.

"The Health Ministry Advisory does not direct Warning Labels on food products sold

by vendors, and has not been selective towards Indian snacks. It does not target India's rich street food culture," it said.

Rather, the Ministry had earlier released a general advisory aimed at promoting healthier food choices in workplace settings.

This advisory is part of a broader public health initiative under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD), said the statement.

The advisory encourages the installation of informational boards in common workplace areas such as lobbies, canteens, cafeterias, and meeting rooms.

These boards are designed to raise awareness about the consumption of hidden fats and excess sugar in various foods and serve as daily prompts to combat rising rates of obesity, diabetes, and hypertension in the country, it said.

The Ministry emphasised that the advisory is a behavioural nudge, not a regulatory measure, and does not single out specific Indian food items. It also includes messaging to promote consumption of fruits, vegetables, and low-fat alternatives, and encourages physical activity through initiatives such as stair usage, short exercise breaks, and accessible walking routes within office premises.

"The general advisory is a behavioural nudge to make people aware about hidden fats and excess sugar in all food products and not specifically to any particular food product.

The Advisory mentions other health messages such as promoting healthy meals such as fruits, vegetables and low-fat options along with making

suggestions for physical activity such as encouraging use of stairs, organising short exercise breaks and facilitating walking routes," it added.

The clarification comes amid growing concern over lifestyle-related diseases in India, with health authorities working to encourage preventive strategies without undermining cultural food practices.

# 65 Days, 22 Times: Jairam Ramesh After Trump Repeats India-Pak Ceasefire Claim

**NEW DELHI (UNI)** : With US President Donald Trump reiterating his claim that he stopped the conflict between India and Pakistan, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Tuesday said the same claim keeps getting repeated "22 times in 65 days".

Trump Monday reiterated his claim that he stopped the conflict between India and Pakistan, which could have turned into a "nuclear war", through trade.

"We've been very successful in settling wars. You have India, (and) Pakistan. You have Rwanda and the Congo that was going on for 30 years," Trump said during his meeting with NATO Secretary General Rutte in the Oval Office.

Tagging a video of Trump's remarks, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Ramesh said, "65 days. 22 times. The same claim. It keeps getting repeated." In his remarks, Trump said, "India, by the way, Pakistan would have been a nuclear war within another week the way that was going. That was going very badly, and we did that through trade. I said, 'we're not going to talk to you about trade unless you get this thing settled', and they did, and they were both great, great leaders, and they were great." Since May 10, when Trump announced on social media that India and Pakistan had agreed to a full



and immediate ceasefire after a long night of talks mediated by Washington, he has repeated his claim more than a dozen times on several occasions that he helped settle the tensions between India and Pakistan.

However, India has been consistently maintaining that the understanding on cessation of hostilities with Pakistan was reached following direct talks between the Directors General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of the two militaries.

In a nearly 35-minute phone call with Trump last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi firmly stated that India does not and

will "never accept" mediation and that the discussions between Indian and Pakistani militaries on cessation of military actions were initiated at Islamabad's request.

India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians.

India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. (AGENCIES) Jammu and Kashmir real estate

# Russian FM says Moscow baffled by US' 50-day ultimatum, seek to understand President Trump's reasoning

**MOSCOW(UNI)** Reacting to the ultimatum issued by US President Donald Trump given to the Kremlin by Washington, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that Moscow seeks to understand the reasoning behind Trump's statement about a 50-day deadline to resolve the Ukrainian conflict.

"We want to understand what is behind this statement. Fifty days. It used to be 24 hours. And 100 days.

"We have all been through this and really want to understand what motivates the US president," Lavrov said at a press conference following the SCO foreign ministers' meeting.

It cannot be said that there was no progress during negotiations in Istanbul on the Ukraine settlement, Lavrov added commenting on Trump's remark on 50-day deadline.

"If our explanations, which we have repeatedly conveyed to our colleagues, including at my meetings on the sidelines of ASEAN events, if they are simply ignored, or not reported to president Trump — it is difficult to judge what is behind this.

"But to say that there is no progress and therefore 50 days... If in the week of June 22, the Ukrainian side had agreed to name



the date of the third round, maybe there would already be 30 days left," Lavrov said. The Russian FM went on to say that the POTUS is under strong pressure from his allies in European Union and NATO, which support Volodymyr Zelensky's demands to supply Ukraine with modern weapons. "The sanctions that the EU has now imposed and that are being prepared again in Brussels are trying to drag the US into the sanctions vortex, but President Trump very specifically explained that Europe will pay for all this.

"All this, of course, has already caused

damage to the European economy. Sound and objective European analysts and economists, political scientists admit that the damage is borne primarily by the author of this sanctions war," Lavrov said.

If new sanctions are imposed, Russia will manage to overcome them, he added.

"This conclusion is also based on an assessment on an analysis of independent, including many Western economists and politicians. Our trade partners hear what has been said, but they can hardly predict their actions now.

"They have international obligations and knowing our partners, I do not see how they can abandon their independent policy, the policy of observing agreements reached both through bilateral channels and in multilateral formats."

Yesterday, Trump said that Washington would impose 100% tariffs on Russian goods and secondary sanctions on countries purchasing Russian oil if no deal on the Ukraine conflict is reached in the next 50 days.

He also said that the United States will supply weapons to Ukraine, including Patriot air defence systems, with European nations covering all the costs.

Washington is well aware of Moscow's stance on the negotiations in Istanbul on the Ukrainian issue, Lavrov said, adding that this format has not been exhausted.

"Our American colleagues know our position very well. We told them about this, about the 'exhaustion of the format' it has not been exhausted," Lavrov said.

At the same time, Kyiv statements that the Istanbul format had exhausted itself demonstrate Ukraine's careless attitude towards its own citizens, as well as absence of desire to find an agreement, the Russian minister added.

# Russian FM urges for peaceful resolution of Iranian nuclear deal during talks with Iranian FM Abbas Araghchi



**MOSCOW/TEHRAN (UNI)** Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, during a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi today, emphasised the importance of resolving the crisis over Iran's nuclear program through political and diplomatic efforts, in an official statement issued by the Russian Foreign Ministry.

"The sides continued to exchange views on issues of mutual interest on the regional and international agenda.

The importance of resolving the crisis over the Iranian nuclear program exclusively through political and diplomatic means in accordance with the norms of international law was once again emphasised. The ministers agreed on upcoming

contacts at various levels." Moscow has repeatedly urged a peaceful resolution of Iran's nuclear deal, noting that the unresolved issue is ever plunging the already war-torn region of West Asia region into a deeper crisis.

Despite its clear support for Iran during its war with Israel, as well as its condemnation of the US strikes on the country's nuclear sites on June 22, Russia has even backed the non-enrichment of uranium condition imposed by the US and Israel, urging Iran to accept if possible.

However, Iran has flat out rejected any proposal regarding non uranium enrichment, stating that Tehran is always willing to negotiate, but zero enrichment is unacceptable.

## Mexico asks US to double its efforts to curb cross-border drugs, arms smuggling amid tariff hike threat

**Mexico City/Washington (UNI)** Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has called on the United States to do more to curb drug and arms trafficking across the border, as Washington threatens tariff hikes on Mexico.

US President Donald Trump on Saturday threatened to impose a 30% tariff on Mexican imports starting from August 1 in a letter addressed to Sheinbaum, accusing Mexico of failing to stop drug trafficking and illegal immigration to the United States.

Sheinbaum hit back at the criticism yesterday, calling on the United States to redouble its efforts to curb drug and arms trafficking on its own turf. "We do our part and they also have to do their part," she said at her daily press conference.

"There is collaboration. There is coordination," Sheinbaum noted she hopes to reach a deal with the United States to avoid Trump's proposed 30% tariff. "We believe... that we will reach an agreement with the United States government -- and that we will, of course, reach better terms," Sheinbaum said. Mexico sent a government delegation to the US on July 11 to begin talks with Washington on trade, energy, immigration and crime.

## Strategic reforms needed to transform Philippines into a middle-class-society by 2040: World Bank

Manilla, July 15 (UNI) Strategic reforms to boost job creation could help transform the Philippines into a middle-class society by 2040, according to a new World Bank report released yesterday. The report said that a new playbook focused on creating more and better-paying jobs is increasingly urgent as the country confronts a new global context characterised by global uncertainty, rapidly evolving technologies with significant implications for jobs, and recurrent climate shocks. To achieve the goal of becoming a middle-class society, the report said the Philippines needs to sustain annual growth of 6-10% for decades. "Challenges remain," the World Bank said in a press release. "The Philippines still underperforms its peers in Asia and the Pacific." Productivity has not been a large contributor to growth, limited competition in key sectors constrains the growth and job creation of top-tier firms, and complex permitting processes in enabling services dull the effects of past reforms, the report added. "The economy's

increasing inward orientation, less exporting, and participation in global value chains, constrains future growth, and the creation of quality jobs," it said, noting that infrastructure gaps remain,



making transport costs high. To address those challenges, the report said public policy needs to ensure adequate investment in three pillars of development: physical and digital infrastructure and human capital, and a business-enabling policy environment that reduces barriers to entry and promotes competition, and smart, targeted interventions to mobilise private capital.

## Flash floods triggered by rains cause widespread destruction in Afghanistan's Laghman province

**MEHAR LAM (UNI)** Torrential rains in Afghanistan triggered severe flash floods today that swept through parts of the country's Laghman province, injuring 11 people and causing widespread destruction, reports state-owned media Bakhtar news agency.

The floods affected the capital of the province, Mehtarlam city, and multiple districts, destroying at least 80 residential houses and inflicting serious damage on local infrastructure and agriculture.

Around 525 acres of farmland were submerged, while 160 livestock perished in the flooding.

Additionally, the floods washed away 25 km of rural roads and 700 meters of protective retaining walls in the province.

Last week, the Nangarhar province was also hit by heavy rainstorms and flash floods, which claimed two lives and caused extensive financial losses to local communities.

Afghanistan's weather department has issued fresh warnings for more rainfall in the coming days, raising concerns about further flooding in mountainous and vulnerable regions. Asides from disrupting farming, and dealing damage to residential places, the floods have also made travel difficult, obstructing access to several districts within the province. Local authorities are urging residents to remain vigilant and prepare for further weather-related challenges, as the region continues to grapple with the impacts of severe monsoon conditions.

## End Ukraine war or face 100 pc tariffs: Trump tells Russia

Washington, July 15 (UNI) Frustrated with Russian President Vladimir Putin for not ending the war with Ukraine, President Donald Trump today said that the US will impose 100 per cent tariffs on countries that do business with Russia if there is no peace deal to end the war in Ukraine within 50 days.

During a meeting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte in the Oval Office, Trump said, "We're going to be doing secondary tariffs if we don't have a deal within 50 days. It's very simple, And they'll be at 100 per cent."

"We are very unhappy, I am, with Russia," the President explained. Trump reiterated that he had called up Putin several times. "I always hang up and say, 'Well, that was a nice phone call.'



And then missiles are launched into Kyiv or some other city, and I say, 'That's strange.' And after that happens three or four times, you say the talk doesn't mean anything," he said.

"He is, I don't want to say he's an assassin, but he's a tough guy," Trump said of Putin, adding, "but

he didn't fool me." "Ultimately, talk doesn't work; it's got to be action, it's got to be results," Trump said.

"It's actually more now, mostly soldiers but a lot of people in cities and towns that are getting blown up to it's a horrible war and it should be stopped. And so

if it's not done, if we don't have an agreement in 50 days, that's what we're doing secondary tariffs and they're biting and I hope we don't get to the point where we do, but I've been hearing so much talk. It's all talk. It's all talk and then missiles go into Kyiv and kill 60 people. It's got to stop," Trump said.

Announcing a deal under which NATO will buy arms from the US and then distribute them to Ukraine amid the ongoing war with Russia, Trump said, "The purpose of this is to say that this is a very big deal we've made today. This is billions of dollars worth of military equipment is going to be purchased from the United States going to NATO etc. And that's going to be quickly distributed to the battlefield, Ukraine will take it up.

## Shubhanshu returns to earth after Axiom-4 mission

San Diego/Bengaluru, July 15 (UNI) Indian astronaut Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla and three other crew members of the Axiom-4 commercial mission safely returned to Earth with a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of San Diego, California today.

The return marked the successful completion of India's second human spaceflight and Shukla's pioneering role as the first Indian astronaut to visit the International Space Station (ISS).

The Dragon (Grace) capsule, developed by SpaceX, began its de-orbit burn approximately at 2:07 PM IST over the Pacific Ocean. The critical manoeuvre, lasting just under 18 minutes, allowed the spacecraft to re-enter the Earth's atmosphere. During this time, communication with the capsule was temporarily lost for seven minutes due to the high heat and plasma formation



around the vehicle.

At approximately 2:26 PM IST, the capsule's trunk was detached, and the heat shield was oriented to face the re-entry path. The spacecraft endured temperatures nearing 1,600 degrees Celsius as it blazed through the atmosphere.

Parachutes were deployed in two stages to ensure a safe descent — stabilising parachutes were released at 5.7 km altitude

approximately at 2:57 PM IST, followed by the main chutes around 2 km above the ocean surface, leading to a gentle splashdown just four minutes later.

Earlier, Shukla and his fellow astronauts had undocked from the ISS to begin their 22.5-hour return journey after completing a highly productive 18-day stay aboard the orbiting lab.

During the mission, Shukla completed over 310 orbits around the Earth, covering more than 1.3 crore kilometres, a distance equivalent to 33 times the Earth-Moon journey. The crew also witnessed over 300 sunrises and sunsets, a surreal reminder of the orbital velocity of the ISS and the wonders of life in low-Earth orbit.

The Axiom-4 mission, operated by US-based Axiom Space in partnership with NASA and SpaceX, is a significant milestone in commercial spaceflight. It also highlights India's growing footprint in global human space exploration as it prepares for its own Gaganyaan mission.

As celebrations begin back home, Shukla's safe return has been hailed as a moment of national pride, marking yet another historic chapter in India's space odyssey.

## Antisemitic posts appear on Elmo's X account after hack

**NEW YORK (UNI)** The hacking of Elmo's X account has caused the beloved "Sesame Street" character to appear to post expletive-filled antisemitic rants and anti-Trump statements.

The posts have since been deleted, but widely circulated screenshots show Elmo apparently calling for violence against Jews and calling for the release of files related to the Jeffrey Epstein case, reports CNN.

"Elmo's X account was compromised on Sunday by an unknown hacker who posted disgusting messages, including antisemitic and racist posts," a spokesperson for Sesame Workshop, the makers of "Sesame Street," told CNN in a statement. "We are working to restore full control of the account."

CNN has contacted X for comment. The tirade was a jarring departure from Elmo's usual upbeat, motivational posts and wholesome pictures with other "Sesame Street" characters or celebrities. Some of the posts even mimicked his habit of referring to himself in the third person.

The posts came a week after Elon Musk's artificial intelligence company, xAI, froze its Grok chatbot's X account after it began spouting antisemitic tropes and White nationalist talking points.

The company later issued a lengthy apology, saying that a system update caused Grok to refer to "existing X user posts;



including when such posts contained extremist views," meaning that it issued responses praising Adolf Hitler, repeated conspiracy theories and spewed longstanding antisemitic tropes.

Jewish leaders in the United States have been alarmed by the rise in antisemitic threats since Hamas' deadly terrorist attack on Israel on October seven, 2023 and Israel's subsequent response in Gaza, which has devastated the enclave.

In June, a man is accused of targeting a group of people demonstrating in support of Israeli hostages in a firebombing attack in Boulder, Colorado, resulting in the death of an 82-year-old woman. He faces federal hate crimes charges, among others.

In May, two Israeli embassy workers in Washington, DC, were killed outside the Capital Jewish Museum; and, in April, an arsonist set the Pennsylvania governor's mansion on fire on the first night of Passover because of Gov. Josh Shapiro's views on the war in Gaza, according to search warrants.

The Elmo hacker's posts also referenced documents relating to the Epstein case, which has been in the headlines again in recent days. Last week, US President Donald Trump's administration released a memo about Epstein — an accused sex trafficker and disgraced financier who died by suicide in 2019 — that were directly at odds with conspiracy theories previously pushed by the president and some of his top lieutenants.

**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 Wagoor) chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of ATIQA BEGUM D/O ABDUL RAHIM WAZA R/O FRASHTAR Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/01/1968 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection .  
 If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine  
**Executive Magistrate 1st Class KREERI**

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI**  
 (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)  
 Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoor) chokedar hassubmitted 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**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 My name wrongly mentioned in my Aadhar card as Neelofar Mustaq 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**

**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 Wagoor) chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of ABDUL AHAD WAZA S/O MOHAMMAD SULTAN WAZA R/O FRASHTAR Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/01/1964 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME 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**

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI**  
 Subject: Application for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of SUHAIL MANZOOR BHAT S/O MANZOOR AHMAD BHAT R/O BURZAWACHAN Tehsil KREERI for the issuance of RBA in his /her / their favor

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of RBA in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of BURZAWACHAN of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the BHAT community having annual income 240000 // the details of family of the applicant are as follows  
 1...MANZOOR AHMAD BHAT father 50 years Numberdar  
 2..HABLA BEGAM Mother 48 years Housewife  
 3... MUBEENA MANZOOR Sister 29 years student  
 4...SAHIR MANZOOR Brother 29 years //  
 5...SUHAIL MANZOOR self 22 years //  
 If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine  
**NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI**

**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 Wagoor) chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of MOHAMMAD SALIQ SHEIKH S/O MUSHTAQ AHMAD SHEIKH R/O KREERI Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 28/09/2022 and event has been shown to be occurred at CHC KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection .  
 If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine  
**Executive Magistrate 1st Class KREERI**

**NCDC Proposes Monitoring of Underage Couples in Public Spaces, Calls for Government Oversight and ID Checks**

Srinagar | July 15, 2025: The National Child Development Council (NCDC) has proposed a new resolution calling for government officials, including female police officers, to monitor underage couples in public spaces such as beaches and parks.  
 The resolution emerged from a recent core committee meeting, where members expressed concerns over what they described as "immoral activities" among children below 18 years of age.  
 According to the resolution, officials stationed at public locations would have the authority to question individuals who appear to be under 18 and ask for age verification through ID cards. If confirmed to be minors, their details could be forwarded to their parents or school authorities.  
 The resolution stresses that such measures are aimed at "protecting children from bad influences and guiding them morally."  
 "The government should control the students. Officials must have the power to approach and question those who are under 18, and inform their parents if needed," one core committee member said during the meeting.  
 Committee members said that minors need stricter oversight, arguing that many are engaging in public displays of affection without understanding the implications.

**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, stools, 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 BIJHAMA  
 W.e.from:- 08-07-2025 10:17-07-2025

**DISTRICT POLICE SRINAGAR VICTIMS OF TERRORISM**  
**Any victim of terrorism may call at below mentioned dedicated helpline numbers (from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM on any working day) if having grievance on the following:**

- Non- registration of FIR in cases of victims of terrorism.
- Non-Receipt of benefits from Govt. by victims of terrorism.
- Encroachment of land/property/harassment faced by victims of terrorism.

**Helpline Numbers:**  
 9541903082, 9596222551

**In case victims of terrorism intend to submit grievance application, the same may be sent through email on**  
**dposrinagar@jkipolice.gov.in**

**جموں اینڈ کشمیر کی ایڈمی آف آرٹس، کچھڑ اینڈ لٹریچر**  
**بیلو پیراڈیپ، شاعرہ صفائی**  
**شہد بدگامی صائب**  
**خراج عقیدت پیش کر کے پاپتہ**  
**اکتوبری جلسہ منسٹر کران**  
**تاریخ: 17 جولائی 2025ء**  
**وقت: 2:00 بجے**  
**جاسے: کانفرنس ہال نیو ریل سٹیشن**  
**توجہ: جلسہ منسٹر کران کے پاپتہ کے لئے آرٹس**  
**ہر وندنگور (IKAS) کارڈی**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 It is hereby notified that an Electricity Bill is being issued in the name of Hotel Raj Palace, C/o Parvaiz Ahmad Sofi, S/o Haji Noor Mohammad, and Dildar Ahmad Khan, S/o Haji Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Khan, Consumer ID No.: 0209020031680  
 Any objections regarding the issuance of the electricity bill in the above-mentioned name(s) may be submitted in writing to the concerned Electricity Department within 07 days from the publication of this notice. After the stipulated period, no claims or objections shall be entertained.

**CS for making cyber security audit of websites a time-bound process**

HT News Desk/DIPR  
 SRINAGAR, JULY 15: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a crucial meeting to thoroughly review cyber security measures safeguarding government websites and critical infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir.  
 The meeting besides the Secretary IT was attended by all Administrative Secretaries of various departments, and key officers from NIC, JaKeGA, and the IT Department.  
 In this meeting the Chief Secretary underscored the urgent need for fixing clear timelines for completing website security audits, stressing that prolonged website downtime causes significant inconvenience to the public. He emphasized that all exercises must be time-bound, with a focus on reviving all important websites at the earliest.  
 Furthermore, he directed the immediate decommissioning of all redundant and unused websites, stating they serve no purpose and pose unnecessary security risks.  
 To bolster internal capabilities, the Chief Secretary advocated for capacity building of all departmental Chief Information Security Of-



ficers (CISOs) and Information Security Officers (ISOs). This initiative aims to empower them to conduct future website audits independently, thereby mitigating potential security compromises.  
 He also mandated the installation of necessary security software on all devices used for official work and strictly directed the discontinuation of private email IDs for official communications, citing the inherent security risks to official data and devices.  
 Addressing infrastructure needs, the Chief Secretary took note of the requirement for augmenting the State Data Centre (SDC) in Jammu. He directed the IT Department to promptly initiate the process using available funds, assuring that additional requisite funding would be provided as the work progresses.  
 During the meeting, Administrative Secretaries also contributed valuable suggestions to enhance the overall security of IT assets and prevent data breaches.  
 The Secretary, IT, Dr. Piyush Singla took this occasion to provide a comprehensive presentation detailing the safety and security precautionary measures undertaken by the department to ensure the cyber security of all government websites and assets. He informed the meeting that an audit agency has been engaged to conduct security audits of websites/portals hosted at the J&K SDC.

**MMU Meeting Reaffirms Sanctity of Sahaba and Ahl al-Bayt, Announces Panel to Address Sectarian Provocations**

HT News Desk  
 Srinagar | July 15, 2025  
 An important meeting of the Mut-tahida Majlis-e-Ulama (MMU) the representative umbrella body of major Sunni and Shia religious organisations in Jammu & Kashmir was held in Srinagar to address the recent provocative and deeply irresponsible statements made by Mr Imran Raza Ansari, the strong public response it evoked, and its social media fallout.  
 The meeting was attended by Mir-waiz Umar Farooq, Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam, Aga Syed Hassan Al-Moosvi, Molana Masroor Abbas Ansari, Aga Syed Mohammad Hadi, Mufti Nazir Ahmad Qasmi, Molana Showkat Keng, Mufti Mohammad Yaqoob Baba and Maulana Rahmatullah Qassimi who joined in later.



The MMU unanimously reaffirmed that the sanctity and honour of the revered Companions of the Prophet (Sahaba) and the Ahl al-Bayt (the Prophet's noble family) is a foundational belief of faith shared by all Muslims. These noble personalities are the pillars of our faith, and no disrespect, provocation, or disparagement towards them will be tolerated from any quarter.  
 While acknowledging theological diversity within the Ummah, the MMU emphasised that such differences must never be used as a pretext for division or disrespect.

**Government of Jammu and Kashmir**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT PAMPORE**  
**ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE**  
 Applications on prescribed proforma (Annexure-I) are hereby invited from the eligible female candidates of the Panch wards shown against the below mentioned Panchayat Halqas, for the engagement of AWH's (Sahayikas) for the Anganwadi Centres of POSHAN Project Pampore on "Honorarium basis". The applications along with required documents shall be submitted in the Office of undersigned i.e the Child Development Project Officer Pampore within 07 days from publication of this notice.

S.No	Name of Poshan Project	Name of the Post	No of Posts	Name of AWC	Panchayat Halqa/MC Ward	Punch Constituency No/Ward No
01	Pampore	AWH (SAHAYIKAS)	02	Awantipora-E	Barsoo	War No-10
02				Munpora-A	Androosa	Ward No-07

Criteria for Selection of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers):-  
 Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be considered for the post.  
 The candidate should be a domicile of the UT of J&K.  
 The candidate should be a resident of the Electoral Ward where Anganwadi Centre is located.  
 Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Helper shall be Matriculation.  
 In case no matriculate candidate is available in the Ward, candidates with qualification not less than 8th standard shall be considered.  
 The committee shall select the most destitute/needly married women of the ward as helper from amongst those who fulfill the qualification criteria. In case no married candidate is available, unmarried candidate can also be considered.  
 Self-attested copies of documents to be attached with the application form of Shayikas (AWH)  
 Panch Ward Certificate/ Present /contineous, Ward residence certificate issued by BDO.  
 Domicile Certificate issued by Tehsildar concerned.  
 Date of Birth Certificate.  
 Academic Qualification Certificates with Marks card of 10th  
 Non employment Certificate from a Gazetted Officer.  
 Self-Addressed envelope with postage stamp of Rs 5/-.  
 The application forms for Shayikas shall be obtained from office of the U/S free of cost.  
 No:-CDPO/Pmp/Adv/2025/196-205  
 Dated:- 12-07-2025  
**Sd/ Child Dev. Project Officer PoshanPampore**  
**DIPK-3741/25 Dtd. 15-07-2025**

**(GOVERNMENT OF INDIA)**  
**(Union Territory Of Jammu & Kashmir)**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CITY ROADS (SMC) DIVISION SRINAGAR.**  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**  
 For and on behalf of the Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e-tenders (in Single cover System) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments.

S. No	Name of Work	Advt. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rs.)	E/ Money Deposit @2% of Adv. Cost	Completion days	Class of Contractor	M.H of A/C
1	Development of link road at Sector E Lane 02 near Imam Hussain Hospital from H.No. 363 to H.No. 366 Hamdaniya Colony Beminsabwo p/l of CC Pavement.	4.78	200/-	9560/-	10 Days	DEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
2	Development of links at Hajjibagh Sharifabad near Army Camp way of p/l of nallah muck/khakbajriand WBM Grade 2nd.	7.65	300/-	15300/-	12 Days	CEE/ DEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
3	Development of link road at Sector 7 near H/o Dr. Ishtiyag at Hamdaniya Colony Bemina by way of p/l of CC pavement.	14.00	600/-	28000/-	15 Days	BEE/ CEE/ DEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
4	Improvement/Upgradation of road surface at Malpora Gogo from Masjid Sheikh ul Alam to H/o Mohd Abdullah bwo p/l of nallah muck/khakbajriand WBM Grade 2nd.	5.50	300/-	11000/-	10 Days	CEE/ DEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)

AAA: Accorded.  
 The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specification, 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 the schedule of dates given below:  
**Scheduled Dates & Time of Online Tenders.**

Sl. No.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice Online	FROM	TO
1.	14-07-2025.	14-07-2025 10:00 A.M	10:00 A.M
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	14-07-2025	4:00 P.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	14-07-2025	UPTO
4.	Bid Submission End Date	25-07-2025	UPTO
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	26-07-2025 at 10:00 A.M	in the office of the Executive Engineer City Roads SMC Division Srinagar.

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of introducing Bank Receipt as a tender fee paid in the Municipal Account No: 021601020000007 payable at J&K Bank Branch Dood Ganga Balgarden, Srinagar payable at Srinagar (With NIT No. and S.No. of work mentioned) by simply uploading a copy of necessary Bank Receipt.  
**Sd/-Executive Engineer, City Roads (SMC) Division, Srinagar.**  
**DIPK-3706/25 Dtd. 15-07-2025**

# DDC Kupwara convenes review meeting of District Capex Budget 2025-26

## Approved outlay stands at Rs.109 crore, 1874 works under execution

KUPWARA, JULY 15: Chairman, District Development Council (DDC) Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Panditpori today chaired the council meeting in the meeting hall of DC office Complex here to review the progress of various developmental projects under District CAPEX Budget 2025-26.

Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan; Vice-Chairman, District Development Council, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir; CEO District Development Council, Mufti Fareed ud din; Members of District Development Council, besides, district and sectoral officers attended the meeting.

At the outset, Chief Planning Officer Kupwara, presented a detailed overview of the ongoing projects under District CAPEX Budget 2025-26 including sectors



like Minor Irrigation, R&B, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Youth Services & Sports, Health, PHE, NFB, United Grants, ADF (DDC/BDC/PRI grants) and Samridh Seema Yojna.

The meeting was informed that total approved outlay for 2025-26 involves Rs.10908 lakh, and funds released as on date is Rs.3007 lakh for execution of 1874 ongoing works.

Chairman took a detailed review of the physical and financial status of works taken up under the District Capex schemes and other sectors. During the meeting, council

members projected various demands concerning their respective constituencies including shortage of BDOs in different blocks.

After reviewing the sector wise progress of the works, Chairman impressed upon district level officers of all departments to expedite the process of tendering, allotments and speed up the pace of development projects, keeping in mind the limited working season and ensure completion of projects so that all targets for the current financial year are achieved within the stipulated time frame.

On the occasion, Vice Chairman, DDC also asked the officers to put in their best efforts for timely completion of works for optimum utilization of funds under different schemes.

Deputy Commissioner also impressed upon all the officers to gear up their men and machinery to ensure timely execution of the works. She directed them to redouble their efforts to ensure completion of the developmental projects before the onset of winter.

ADDC Kupwara who is CEO of District Development Council urged the officers to be responsive to the public, actively address their genuine needs and embrace the role as public servants.

He emphasized upon the officers for accountability, empathy, and prioritization of proactive service and public welfare. He encouraged the officers to work diligently to propel the district Kupwara towards greater development, progress, and improving the quality of life for residents.

### DC Srinagar inspects progress of work on construction of Tehsil Office Khanyar

#### Emphasizes timely completion of the project, ensuring strict adherence to quality standards

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Akshay Labroo on Tuesday conducted onsite inspection of under construction new building for Tehsil office Khanyar in the district being executed by R&B department.

On the occasion, DC took stock of ongoing works and inspected various sections of G+2 designated Revenue Office Complex.

He directed the executing agency to accelerate the pace of construction while ensuring strict adherence to quality standards and timely completion.

Labroo emphasized the need to strengthen infrastructure and modernize Revenue offices in the district to enhance public service delivery. He added that all Revenue offices including SDM office and Tehsil office are being equipped with modern facilities to improve delivery of revenue services to the public and provide a better working environment for officials.

DC underlined that to create a more efficient and citizen-friendly work environment Revenue infrastructure is being further strengthened across the district.



### Preparations for I-Day 2025 celebrations kick-off at Budgam



**BUDGAM:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall of DC office complex to review the arrangements for the upcoming Independence Day-2025 celebrations in the district.

The meeting discussed various arrangements and measures to be taken to ensure the smooth execution of the Independence Day events.

It was given out that besides the main function at sports stadium Budgam, similar functions will also be held at sub divisional and block levels as well as at all schools, colleges and Government Institutions of the district.

DC emphasised the importance

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

He urged all departments to work in close coordination to ensure the seamless celebration of the Independence Day functions.

DC passed directives to different departments to ensure that all necessary arrangements are in place and operational well before the event, besides designating ADC Budgam as the nodal officer for the event.

Chief Medical officer was directed to ensure that emergency medical services are available throughout all the functions.

Directions were also issued to the Jal Shakti department to make

DC chairs meeting to review arrangements for drinking water facility, KPDC for power supply, R&B and Irrigation for venue arrangements, DIO for PAS system, EOMCs for cleanliness.

DC further emphasized that celebrations should foster an environment of festivity across the district and directed the Chief Education Officer to organize public and youth engagement activities including cultural and patriotic activities for wider participation of youth and students to foster a sense of patriotism and community engagement in celebrations.

He also directed the concerned officers to ensure smooth movement of traffic and prevent congestion during the event.

DC directed all sectoral and district officers to ensure arrangements for flag hoisting at office premises and also abide by the rules given in flag code.

Speaking on the occasion, SSP Budgam Nikhil Borkar assured that all security arrangements will be in place well before the function to maintain law and order.

Among others, the meeting was attended by ADDC Budgam, ADC Budgam, GM DIC, PO ICDS, ACR, CPO, ACD, CMO, CEO, Officers from CRPF, District Officers of different departments and other concerned.

### MLA Tarigami reviews Agricultural initiatives at Lalmandi Srinagar



**SRINAGAR:** In a focused effort to strengthen the agricultural and horticultural sectors of Kulgam constituency, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Kulgam M.Y. Tarigami chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Directorate of Agriculture, Lalmandi Srinagar.

The session spotlighted strategic planning for the Kulgam constituency, with emphasis on the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme, Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) formation, and market linkage enhancement.

Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation outlining current initiatives, challenges, and future goals. The presentation emphasized innovation, farmer empowerment, and sustainable growth.

The meeting was attended by key dignitaries and stakeholders, including Farooq Ahmad Dar, Managing Director,

HPMC; Jeelani Zargar, Director, Horticulture Planning and Marketing; Vikas Anand, Director, Horticulture Kashmir, Joint Directors, senior officers from relevant departments, and senior citizens

MLA commended the department's efforts toward transforming the agriculture sector through innovation, sustainability, and inclusive growth. He particularly appreciated the initiatives aimed at empowering small and marginal farmers, promoting agri-entrepreneurship among youth, and improving market access through integrated value chains.

He reiterated the importance of institutional collaboration and grassroots engagement to transform Kulgam into a model constituency for agri-horticultural development.

The gathering concluded with a shared commitment to accelerate implementation and ensure tangible benefits for farming communities.

### Samba: ₹2.72 lakh fine imposed on Distillery for violation of norms

SAMBA, JULY 15: The Legal Metrology Department Samba has imposed a penalty of ₹2.72 lakh on a prominent distillery for serious violations of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 and the Legal Metrology Act, 2009.

An enforcement team headed by the Assistant Controller Samba conducted a detailed inspection of the distillery unit and unearthed multiple violations. These included the use of unverified weighing and measuring instruments during production and packaging, along with non-compliance of mandatory declarations on packaged products.



Following the inspection, a formal case was registered by the LMD team under the applicable legal provisions. Compounding proceedings were initiated and a penalty of ₹2.72 lakh was imposed on the unit.

The distillery has been directed to immediately verify all instruments and ensure strict adherence to Legal Metrology norms.

Commenting on the enforcement action, Controller Rajinder Singh Tara said, "The department is committed to protecting consumer rights and ensuring fairness in trade practices across Jammu & Kashmir. Enforcement drives will continue with full vigour, and violations will be dealt with as per law. All manufacturers and traders are advised to strictly comply with Legal Metrology standards."

### Distt admin Pulwama begins two-day training prog for Supervisors, BLOs

**PULWAMA:** District Administration Pulwama today started a two-day training programme for Supervisors and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) across the district.

The training sessions are being conducted under the supervision of District Election Officer, Dr. Basharat Qayoom and aim to equip participants with a comprehensive understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the election process.

Sessions are being conducted by District Level Master Trainers and are being held simultaneously across all the four assembly constituencies of the district.

Concerned Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) were also present on the occasion to oversee the training sessions.

These sessions emphasized the role of BLOs as the grassroots facilitators of the Election Commission of India and stressed the need for accuracy, transparency and accountability



in maintaining electoral rolls.

The sessions focused on crucial aspects of electoral roll management, including the conduct of House-to-House verification and the correct procedures for filling Forms related to Addition, Deletion, Correction and transposition of entries in the electoral rolls. A dedicated doubt-clearing session was also held at each venue to address queries raised by the participants.

### DC Kulgam chairs preparatory meeting regarding TaRL

**KULGAM:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a preparatory meeting in the district to initiate the process of rolling out Teaching at Right Level (TaRL) here in the meeting hall of Mini-Secretariat.

It was informed that the initiative will be for all primary and middle schools in collaboration with Pratham Foundation, and is being rolled out in all 458 primary and middle schools of Kulgam district.

During the meeting, it was shared that under the initiative the baseline assessment will be done of all students of classes 3-5 using the assessment tools for reading, arithmetic and cognitive skills.

All the teachers will be trained for the TaRL interventions through intensive capacity building programs and will be equipped with tools required.



The students from 3-5 will undergo 100 day intervention to improve their learning outcomes following the TaRL approach.

The preparatory meeting was attended by ADC Vikar Ahmed Giri, ACR Kulgam, Riyaz Ahmad, CPO Malik Suheel, CEO Kulgam M Shabir and other Officers from Education, R&B, Social Welfare departments.

Team from Pratham Foundation also gave a detailed presentation on the roll out strategy.

### DLC reviews Change of Land Use cases at Ramban



**RAMBAN:** The District Level Committee (DLC) on Change of Land Use met today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan to review the status of the cases received from different parts of the district.

The meeting was attended by ACR Shokat Hayat Mattoo; GM DIC Ravinder Anand; SDM Banihal Mohammad Naseeb Bajraan; SDM Gool Imtiazi Ahmed;

ACD Shrinath Suman; DFO Batote Abhinav Ramotra; DFO Ramban Hitender Singh Chandel; Executive Engineers of JPDC,

Jal Shakti, PWD Ramban and Banihal and other concerned officers.

A total of 14 CLU cases were taken up for review ensuring thorough scrutiny of documents and verification of compliance with land conversion rules.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to make the CLU process effective and foolproof. He further instructed the concerned officers to recommend cases strictly as per the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Land Revenue Act.

### Zone Doda Lifts Inter Zonal District Level U/19 Boys Kabaddi Trophy

**DODA:** The 2nd Phase of Inter Zonal District Level tournament on Tuesday witnessed thrilling contests at different venues across Doda District. The competitions were held in the disciplines of Rifle shooting AAG Girls, Kabaddi U/19 Boys, Football AAG Boys & Girls and archery AAG Boys.

The Tournament has been organised by Youth Services and Sports Department as per approved Calendar of activities issued by the Directorate of Youth Services and sports, J&K. The Competitions are being organised to select the best probable for the next level of competition.

In an exciting Final Kabaddi match, Zone Doda beat Zone Assar by 03 points. The competition was officiated by a selected panel and experts of the Department. The Competitions will continue till July 22 witnessing contests in different games scheduled in all categories.



# Sleep to Clean Your Brain And Prevent Neurodegeneration

## Harvard Health

**B**rainwashing, more scientifically known as brain waste clearance, is a process during which harmful waste products, so called "biological trash", is removed from your brain. This is crucial for optimal brain functioning and to lower the risk of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and dementia, which are associated with buildup of such harmful waste products. Only recently scientists discovered that your brain is cleaned only when you are sleeping.

### Waste products build up in the body and brain throughout the day

First you might be wondering what needs to be cleaned and removed here? What is "biological trash"?

Throughout the day all cells in our body produce leftover molecules and metabolites due to cellular activity. There is also cellular debris and other harmful toxic molecules that get into our body from the surrounding environment. Moreover, due to various internal and external factors such as our genetic predispositions and UV exposure, certain proteins in our body might change their structure, lose their normal function and become harmful. All of these molecules need to be removed from our body to avoid health problems and disease.

### Brain has a different system to clean waste products than the rest of the body

Our body has a wonderful "cleaning system" that removes such "biological trash" and detoxifies our tissues, called the lymphatic system. It consists



of specific lymphoid organs, such as thymus, bone marrow and lymph nodes, lymphatic vessels and a fluid called lymph that circulates throughout our body and removes excess fluid and waste products.

However, not even a single trace of the lymphatic system is detected inside our brain. This is rather surprising as the brain is the most active organ of our entire body and therefore is likely to produce most waste products. In 2012 a groundbreaking study was published which showed that our brain has a different kind of waste clearance system than the rest of the body.

The study described the anatomical pathways and the working principle of the brain's waste disposal system, which was given the name of the

glymphatic system. Apparently, the brain uses a system of tunnels that are formed around the brain's blood vessels by special brain cells called the astrocytes. Astrocytes belong to a group of so-called glial cells, hence the name glial+lymphatic = glymphatic. A special brain fluid called the cerebrospinal fluid flows in these tunnels and then through our brain, collecting waste from around the brain cells and then draining it out of the brain and out of our body.

### Brains' waste disposal system is ON when we sleep

Another groundbreaking study was released just a year later in 2013 which showed that waste

products from the brain are removed almost only during sleep. Scientists injected a green dye into the brain of mice after which half of the mice went to sleep and the other half stayed awake. After two hours scientists checked how much of the green dye was left in the brains of these mice.

Surprisingly, brains of mice which stayed awake were still full of the green dye, while the brains of the ones that slept barely had any trace of green dye. These results indicated that substances are removed from the brain much faster during sleep when compared to being awake.

Now many studies in various animal species including humans support the finding that our brains are cleaned from harmful molecules almost exclusively during sleep. For example, a 2018 study with 20 healthy adults showed that a single night of no sleep is associated with significant increase in levels of a specific brain waste product, a protein called amyloid-beta.

A 2021 study investigated how well an externally delivered molecule is cleaned from the brain if you sleep compared to if you don't sleep. Scientists delivered a special molecule called contrast agent into the brains of patients. Half of them were allowed to sleep and half were asked to spend one night not sleeping. When scientists scanned the brains of these 2 groups of patients, they found higher levels of the contrast agent in the no-sleep group compared to the group that slept. This means that even one night of sleep deprivation impairs brain waste clearance.

### Too little sleep increases the risk of neurodegenerative diseases

Build-up of certain waste products in the brain is associated with increased risk of neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's diseases and dementia. Now we know that our brain is cleaned and waste products removed when we are sleeping. This would mean that if we don't get enough sleep, we expose ourselves to higher chances of neurodegenerative diseases.

For example, one study examined nearly 8000 people and found that people who slept six hours or less per night in their 50s and 60s were 30% more likely to develop dementia later in life compared to those who slept 7 hours or more every night.

Another study investigated nearly 700 individuals who due to their genetic make-up were at risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. Researchers found that better sleep reduced the likelihood of developing clinical Alzheimer's disease and even reduced the amount of harmful proteins in the brain.

A recent 2020 study showed that sleep disturbances early on can even forecast how much of the harmful protein amyloid-beta will accumulate in a person's brain. The worse people sleep, the more likely they are to end up having larger amounts of amyloid-beta in their brain which is known to increase the risk of neurodegenerative diseases.

The build-up of waste products in our tissues is a physiological process that happens due to cellular activity. As long as these waste products are efficiently removed, we should not worry. Now we know that our brain has a different kind of waste disposal system than the rest of our body, which interestingly is ON only when we sleep. Therefore, make sure to get enough sleep every night to keep your brains "clean" (literally), and to reduce your risk of developing neurodegenerative diseases!

Harvard Health

## Study Finds Way to Help Teenagers Get More Sleep

### Harvard Health

Following a long summer of late nights and even later mornings, it can be hard for teenagers to readjust to a school schedule in the fall. A disturbed sleep schedule and lack of sleep can lead to fatigue, poor performance in school, and changes in mood and focus. Therefore, supporting teens and finding ways to help them get more sleep is crucial.

Although preliminary, the study's findings suggest that light therapy is a promising intervention for sleep problems in teenagers. It's also non-invasive, relatively low-cost, and could be easily implemented at home.

### The importance of sleep

Restorative sleep is critical for health. During sleep, the body rests and repairs itself. It's also when the brain consolidates memories and new information.

The benefits of a good night's sleep are especially important for teenagers, who are still growing and developing. They need a minimum of 8 to 10 hours each night.

Without enough sleep, the risk of chronic health conditions issues increases. These include:



Heart disease;  
Kidney problems;  
High blood pressure;  
Diabetes;  
Stroke;  
Obesity.

Sleep deficiency also contributes to mental health problems like anxiety and depression, moodiness and irritability, impaired judgment, and increased accidents and injuries.

Although getting enough sleep is critical, around 7 in 10 high school students in grades 9 to 12 don't get enough sleep on school nights.

### Teenagers and sleep issues

The teenage years are a time of significant physical and emotional changes. Teens also experience changes in their sleep biology, meaning they tend to go to bed and wake up later.

The reason is a shift in the body's 24-hour circadian rhythm — the internal process that regulates the sleep-wake cycle. As a result, teens may develop delayed sleep phase syndrome (DSPS).

DSPS is a common condition that's accentuated during adolescence when there are two competing forces — the pressures of a school schedule and the need to go to bed early and the biological changes in the body. The result is that many teenagers are sleep-deprived.

### How light therapy could help

The conflicting relationship between the shift in circadian rhythm and the need for an early night's sleep prompted researchers' interest in light therapy. In the Sleep study, they tested a 2-week intervention focusing on the circadian system and using various behavioral measures. The aim was to help teenagers maintain a better nighttime routine.

The researchers recruited adolescents who typically had late bedtimes and less than 7 hours of sleep each night. For 2 weeks, the participants followed their normal sleep pattern to



establish a baseline. Then, they received bright light therapy for 2.5 hours on the 2 weekend mornings.

Bright light therapy, also known as phototherapy, is similar to sunlight. Exposing the eyes to intense but safe amounts of light for a specific and regular length of time resets the internal clock and helps shift the circadian rhythm. The therapy involves sitting in front of a light box for a predetermined amount of time.

The participants gradually advanced their week-night bedtime to 1 hour earlier than baseline during the first week and 2 hours earlier during the second week. They also received personalized time management plans — SleepRouTeen — to help facilitate earlier bedtimes.

The control group who didn't follow the same light therapy protocol slept as usual and had no evening time management plan. The weekday sleep onset time and duration were measured with sensors.

Ultimately, the researchers shifted the teenagers' bedtime by 1.5 hours and increased total sleep time by 1 hour each night through the intervention. Plus, the teens felt less tired, irritable, and worried and had improved concentration and alertness.

The authors noted that the participants with late circadian clocks shifted their sleep by up to 2 hours earlier. However, those with an earlier circadian clock didn't shift their bedtime but benefited from the behavioral support of time management to increase sleep duration.

### Changing sleeping patterns

The research findings suggest that it's possible to change the sleep patterns of young adults with DSPS by manipulating their exposure to light and providing time management strategies.

One significant advantage of light therapy is that it's safe and easy to administer at home. There are various personal light-therapy tools available. These include table-top light boxes that house several lighting tubes. They're popular because you only need to face the box, not look directly into the light, meaning you can do other activities during the session, like reading a book or working on a computer.

Alternatively, light visors, which are worn like a baseball cap, and lighted eyeglasses, which look like regular glasses but have small LED lights on the frames, are other options.

Besides light therapy, teens can improve their sleeping patterns with good sleep hygiene practices. This involves developing healthy habits and sleep behaviors, such as:

Maintaining a regular sleep schedule throughout the week.

Avoiding caffeine and alcohol before bedtime. Establishing a relaxing bedtime routine, such as having a warm bath.

Exercising regularly. Limiting computer and phone screen time before bed.

Creating a sleep-friendly environment in the bedroom, such as ensuring the room is dark and cool.

Preparing for the morning the night before to

**Bright light therapy, also known as phototherapy, is similar to sunlight. Exposing the eyes to intense but safe amounts of light for a specific and regular length of time resets the internal clock and helps shift the circadian rhythm. The therapy involves sitting in front of a light box for a predetermined amount of time.**

reduce stress.

Although sleeping difficulties are troublesome, it's possible to re-train the body's internal clock and improve sleep quality.

Sleep is critical for overall health and well-being, but it's something that many teenagers struggle with. However, bright-light therapy appears to be an effective treatment.

In addition, practicing good sleep hygiene and establishing a regular sleep schedule can help improve overall sleep quality. By making a few simple changes, teens can get the recommended 8 or more hours of restorative sleep.

Harvard Health

## Do Females Need to Sleep More Than Males?

**B**ut when it comes to the male and female differences in sleep, research has shown that women tend to need more sleep. Let's look into some possible reasons below.

### How many hours should a female sleep?

There is a slight difference in the number of hours of sleep men and women need to get. On average, women need to sleep 12–13 minutes longer than men. It might seem like an arbitrary amount, but there are reasons why a woman's body requires a little a bit more rest than a man's.

### Why women need more sleep than men

Did you know that over 70 million Americans suffer from sleep problems, but men and women don't suffer equally? Women are more likely to have sleep issues than men — creating the need to catch up on sleep. Women are also more prone to developing various sleep disorders such as insomnia and restless legs' syndrome. Let's review the most common sleep issues that tend to affect women more than men.

### Pain

Pain makes it difficult to find a comfortable sleeping position and fall asleep. It also makes it challenging to stay asleep, as certain conditions may force you to turn and toss during the night to prevent waking up in pain.

Some illnesses associated with chronic pain are more typical among women. Cures for pain-related sleep problems may concentrate on targeting the area of pain, the sleeping difficulty, or both. Combining relaxation techniques, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), lifestyle changes, and over-the-counter and prescription medications may help.

### Insomnia

Insomnia is a difficulty falling or staying asleep throughout the night. As a result, sufferers don't feel refreshed upon waking up and have difficulty getting through the day. Insomnia is a prevalent sleep disorder, but women are 40 percent more likely to suffer from it than men.

### They are also more likely to experience

symptoms of daytime sleepiness. Women may be more prone to insomnia for several reasons:

Hormones. Hormonal changes associated with menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause can affect the sleep/wake cycle.

Mood disorders. Women are more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression than men, which can lead to insomnia and other sleep-related issues.

Treatment for insomnia often begins with better sleep habits, such as following a regular sleep schedule, reducing caffeine and alcohol intake, and improving the sleep environment — like cooling down your room before sleep or using blackout blinds.

### Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)

Restless legs' syndrome (RLS) causes tingling sensations in the legs which occur when you lay down — making you want to move your legs to reduce the discomfort. Because symptoms occur when lying down and can only be relieved through movement, many women with RLS have difficulty sleeping.

Harvard Health

# Jofra Archer Vows to Make Australia Tour

Fast bowler keen to play both remaining Tests against India before touring with Ashes party

United News of India

**LONDON:** Jofra Archer has reiterated his desire to be involved in the winter's Ashes after making a stirring return to Test cricket in England's dramatic victory over India at Lord's.

Archer had not played a Test for more than four years due to a combination of elbow and back injuries, but finally made his return in whites after a carefully managed comeback. He took a wicket with his third ball and then produced key interventions in India's fourth-innings chase, on the way to match figures of 5 for 105.

Having got through 39.2 overs, while maintaining his speeds in the region of 90mph/145kph, Archer will now have a week to recover before the fourth Test, which starts at Old Trafford on July 23. He said he would be keen to play in both remaining matches against India, though England will likely

closely manage his workloads.

Archer said in a post-match interview with Sky Sports that his overs "are still marked out for me until December", which hints at how meticulous England's planning has been. But a successful return has whetted his appetite for featuring against Australia, more than six years on from his previous Ashes experience.

"I can play the other two [against India] if they let me," he said. "I don't want to lose this series. I told Keysey [England men's managing director, Rob Key] I wanted to play the Test summer and I wanted to play the Ashes. I think one tick is already there and I will do everything possible in my power to be on the plane in November."

Archer's first outing under the captain-coach combination of Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum could scarcely have gone better, with the bowler glad that the long periods in rehab had paid off.

"Obviously it [Test cricket] would have been the format which would have taken the most time to come back to. So I played 50-over [and] T20 for the last year, year and a half, two years. And you always just wondered... the guys have played some really exciting cricket since Baz [McCullum] took over. I think the mentality of the team under Baz suits the way I like to play my cricket. So, you know, I just couldn't wait to get back and actually do it without having to be prompted to do it."

His first wicket, Yashasvi Jaiswal caught at second slip, prompted an emotional celebration - although Archer was more analytical when assessing the moment after the game.

"With the slope, that's how I bowl to left-handers anyway. So, I guess it was just a matter of when, if I kept bowling like that. I can't imagine many left-handers getting away with it."



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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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