

Srinagar  
 Tuesday  
 July 22 | 2025  
 26 Muharram, 1447 AH  
 Issue No: 172  
 Volume: 15  
 Pages: 12  
 Price: Rs 02/-

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**HT- EDITORIAL DESK**

# “J&K on Path of Real, Positive and Irreversible Change”: LG Manoj Sinha

*Through a Candid Conversation on National Television, LG Highlighted Transformative Governance, Security Stability, Youth Empowerment as Key Pillars of Progress in J&K*

■ **Jahangir Bukhari**

In a wide-ranging and insightful interview with a National television channel, the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha, spoke at length about the remarkable journey of the Union Territory over the past five years, touching upon governance reforms, infrastructural strides, and the growing aspirations of its youth. He described it as the Journey from Conflict to Confidence. Pertinently, since assuming office in August 2020, LG Manoj Sinha has steered Jammu & Kashmir toward what he calls an era of “unprecedented transformation”. Public life in the Valley has resumed its rhythm: no shut-



down calendars, uninterrupted schooling, reopened cinemas, and peaceful Muharram processions. Terrifyingly high rates of youth recruitment into terror groups have shrunk dramatically to almost zero with reportedly just one youth joining a terror outfit in the past year, compared to dozens earlier. “Jammu and Kashmir is no longer seen through the lens of conflict, but through the lens of opportunity,” said LG Sinha, emphasizing that the region has witnessed a historic turnaround in development and public confidence. He asserted that peace has been the foundation of progress. “We’ve broken

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## 2 dead, 14 injured as landslides hit Reasi, Poonch

LG Sinha, CM Omar express grief

■ **HT News Desk / KNO**

**JAMMU, JUL 21:** A 70-year-old pilgrim and a five-year-old student were killed while 14 others were injured after the landslides hit twin areas in Reasi and Poonch in Jammu division, officials said on Monday.

A pilgrim was killed while nine others were injured when a massive landslide struck the old track to the Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district on Monday, officials said.

Officials informed that the incident, triggered by heavy rainfall in Katra town, occurred around 8:30 am near ‘Gulshan Ka Langar’, close to Banganga, the starting point of the pilgrimage route frequented by pony riders and devotees.

The landslide caused significant damage, with a booking office and an overhead iron structure collapsing under the weight of falling debris.

According to the meteorological department, Katra town recorded 184.2 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending at 8:30 AM on Monday, contributing to the disaster.

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDB) has suspended the yatra on the old track until further notice.

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## Monsoon Session begins, tributes paid to Pahalgam victims

PM Modi calls session 'a celebration of national military strength'

■ **Sajid Raina**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21:** The Monsoon Session of Parliament began on Monday with Members of the Lok Sabha observing a two-minute silence to pay tribute to those who lost their lives in two recent tragedies — the Pahalgam terror attack and the Air India AI-171 crash.

The Pahalgam attack on April 22 in Jam-

mu and Kashmir claimed 26 lives, while the June 12 crash of the Air India flight resulted in 260 fatalities. Lawmakers stood in silence to honour the victims before taking up the session’s agenda.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the media, describing the Monsoon Session as a “celebration of victory,” citing the success of Operation Sindoor.

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## ‘J&K, LADAKH GET RS 1,881 CR UNDER EDUCATION SCHEMES’

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21:** On the first day of the Monsoon Session, the Centre informed Parliament that it has released rupees 1,689 crore to Jammu and Kashmir and rupees 192 crore to Ladakh under the

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## Govt OKs 16-Hour Debate on Op Sindoor, Pahalgam Attack

■ **HT News Desk**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21:** Government on Monday agreed to a 16-hour discussion on Operation Sindoor and Pahalgam terror attack in the Lok Sabha, and it is likely to be taken up next week, even as the opposition insisted that it should start this week itself and Prime Minister

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## JAMMU SEES HEAVY RAINFALL, KATRA TOPS WITH 184.2 MM

MeT predicts more rains for next 2 days

■ **HT News Desk / KNO**

**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** Jammu and Kashmir has received fresh rainfall on Monday with the weatherman here predicting more

rains till July 23 across the region.

A three-day wet spell was predicted from July 21 to 23 as the Meteorological department (MeT) here had issued

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## Drug-Free J&K Imperative For Well-Being Of Future Generations: Sakeena Itoo

■ **HT News Desk**

**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education Sakeena Itoo

today emphasized that a constant and collective effort from community stakeholders, religious leaders, government officials, law enforcement agencies and citizens is crucial to combat the growing menace of drug abuse in the society.

The Minister made these remarks while addressing a day long seminar on Drug-Free Kashmir (A practical step towards Drug-Free society) at Government College of Education (GCOE), MA Road here today.

In her keynote address, Sakeena emphasized the urgent need for a uni-



fied front against substance abuse, stressing that every individual in society has a crucial role to play in eliminat-

ing this threat.

Highlighting the disturbing rise of drug addiction among youth, the Minister said that the government cannot fight this societal hazard alone. She pushed for coordinated efforts from religious leaders, families, civil society groups and other agencies to combat this social evil.

“A drug-free Jammu and Kashmir is not only the need of hour, it is a necessity for the survival and well-being of our future generations”, maintained Sakeena.

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## Devise training modules for trainers, beneficiaries: CS

■ **HT News Desk**

**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting regarding implementation of the Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project in J&K (JKCIP).

The meeting, organised by the Agriculture Production Department, was attended by Principal Secretary, APD; VC, SKUAST, Jammu; MD, J&K Bank; MD, HADP; Deputy Commissioners; HoDs of Agriculture Departments; representatives from SKUAST, Kashmir and other concerned officials.

The meeting focused on the project’s progress, annual work plan, financial mechanisms and future strategies to enhance the competitiveness and climate resilience of farmers across the UT.

During the review meeting, the Chief Secretary appreciated the project design and called for its effective implementation while meeting all the targets set for the ensuing financial year. He called upon the Bank authorities to integrate the bank processes with that of the JKCIP portal. He also asked them to create a loan product for making this programme a success.

The Chief Secretary stressed on giving swift approvals to the applications submitted by the applicants. He also impressed upon them to devise training modules for the trainers and beneficiaries to enhance their capacity to make their ventures a grand success.

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## AMARNATH YATRA

# 17,000 perform darshan at holy cave shrine

■ **HT News Desk / UNI**

**SRINAGAR, JUL 21:** The annual Amarnath Yatra continued on Monday with over 17,000 pilgrims paying obeisance at the holy cave shrine nestled in the Himalayas of South Kashmir.

With this, the cumulative figure of devotees, who have undertaken the pilgrimage since its commencement on July 3, has crossed 3.21 lakh, officials said.

Officials said that a total of 17,016 pilgrims performed darshan at the sacred cave on Monday. Among them were 12,757 men, 3,270 women, 150 children, 158 sadhus, 9 sadhvis, 3 transgender persons and 669 security personnel.

While the footfall at the shrine remained

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## J&K Police Review Security for Budha Amarnath Yatra

■ **HT News Desk / UNI**

**JAMMU, JUL 21:** Top police officials on Monday reviewed the security setup for the upcoming Budha Amarnath Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir’s Rajouri district and stressed the need for foolproof security measures for the pilgrimage.

The 13-day-long ‘Budha Amarnath’ pilgrimage in J-K’s Poonch border district

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## AN APPEAL TO MAKE A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

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**‘J&K on Path....**

the backbone of the Terror ecosystem. For the first time in decades, stone-pelting has ended, and normal life has resumed in the Valley," he stated. According to him, this change wasn't just through security measures but through consistent public outreach and confidence-building initiatives.

Answering questions on Governance with Transparency LG touching upon administrative reforms, the LG said that transparency and accountability have been at the core of his administration. "We have eliminated middlemen from public services. Over 450 government services are now available online, and every file is tracked. The citizen is at the center of governance," he said citing the 'Janbhagidari Portal', where every development project is listed with timelines, costs, and implementing agencies. "This is the kind of open government people had hoped for," he noted.

One of the standout themes of the interview was youth empowerment. "The youth of Jammu and Kashmir are second to none in their talent. Our focus is to provide them with platforms, training, and global exposure," Sinha said. He referred to successful programs like Mission Youth, Parvaaz, and Hausla, which have trained thousands in entrepreneurship, skill development, and innovation. LG added that investment summits, new industrial estates, and film tourism policies have started opening employment opportunities. "In the last two years alone, over ₹80,000 crore worth of investment proposals have been received," he shared.

J&K's economy has nearly doubled in size, with private investment escalating from ₹14,000 crore to nearly ₹30,000 crore. Of this, ₹10,000-₹12,000 crore are already in production, creating thousands of direct and indirect jobs. J&K Bank, previously in losses, now reports profits of ₹1.7 crore from losses of ₹1.2-1.3 crore before Sinha's tenure.

On Tourism and Cultural Identity, Manoj Sinha credited the improved law and order for the revival of tourism, stating, "In 2024, over 2 crore tourists visited Jammu and Kashmir, breaking all previous records. Tourism reached historic levels last year, 2.38 crore tourists visited J&K, generating a flourishing hospitality sector and spawning over 5,000 new hotels in four years, resulting growth in ancillary sectors handicrafts, transport, guiding offered thousands of livelihoods. We're not only bringing back visitors but also restoring our cultural identity." He added that new circuits like Sufi tourism, offbeat treks, and homestays in remote villages are becoming popular, providing income to locals and reshaping the region's image.

Addressing long-pending grievances of terror-affected families became a key governance focus. Across Baramulla and other districts, 40 affected families have now received jobs, compensation, and dependent certificates, restoring dignity and aiding rehabilitation.

Despite many strides, the April 22, 2025 Pahalgam terror attack, which claimed 25 lives, rekindled scrutiny on security lapses. Sinha accepted "personal responsibility" but rebutted narratives of a broader militant resurgence.

Responding to questions about the political process, Sinha maintained that grassroots democracy has been revitalized. One of the hallmarks of Sinha's tenure has been reinvigorating local governance conducting district development council elections, empowering panchayats and urban local bodies, and reforming election representation for OBCs under a new commission. Following the 2022 delimitation and 2024 Assembly elections, Omar Abdullah assumed the Chief Ministership in October 2024, setting the stage for smoother LG-CM cooperation. Sinha has emphasized compliance with administrative boundaries defined under the Reorganisation Act and affirmed his limits respectfully.

After five years, Manoj Sinha leaves behind a Jammu & Kashmir in transition marked by improved infrastructure, expanded local democracy, booming tourism, and renewed economic optimism. Yet questions linger can sustained trust be built with local political voices? Is peace durable, or merely paused? And when will full statehood return? As J&K looks beyond 2025 with a legislated roadmap for state restoration underway the true measure of transformation will lie not only in statistics, but in democratic inclusion, healing, and long-term stability.

In a powerful closing statement, the LG said, "My mission is to serve the people of Jammu and Kashmir, to ensure every citizen feels empowered, secure, and hopeful. This transformation is real, positive and irreversible."

The interview has drawn wide appreciation for its openness and the clear articulation of the government's roadmap. As Jammu and Kashmir moves forward, the people are watching not only with expectation but with belief.

**2 dead, 14....**

advising pilgrims to use the safer Tarakote Marg route, which was restored by 2:00 PM after a temporary suspension.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who also serves as the Chairman of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, expressed profound grief over the tragedy.

In an official statement, he said, "I am deeply saddened by the tragic landslide incident at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine in which a devotee unfortunately lost his life. He directed Shrine Board to provide best possible medical care and support to the injured pilgrims.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed deep sorrow over the incident, extending condolences to the family of the deceased and wishing a speedy recovery to the injured.

Officiating Chief Executive Officer of the SMVDB, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, who also serves as the

District Magistrate of Jammu, rushed to the site to oversee rescue operations.

Speaking to media, Vaishya said, "The landslide resulted in critical injuries to three persons and minor injuries to seven others. All the injured were promptly taken to hospitals for treatment."

He confirmed that a full-fledged rescue and debris clearance operation is underway, with earth-movers deployed to expedite efforts.

The critically injured pilgrims, identified as Uppan Srivastava (70) of Chennai, his wife K Radha (66), and Rajinder Bhalla (70) of Haryana -- were admitted to Narayan hospital, where Srivastava breathed his last.

Leela Raikwar (56) from Uttar Pradesh is receiving treatment at the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Katra.

Three others, Suresh Kumar (66) from Maharashtra and locals Nikhil Thakur (26) and Vicky Sharma, were discharged after receiving first aid.

Tragically, one of the critically injured pilgrims succumbed to their injuries.

Moreover, Indian Army's White Knight Corps swiftly mobilised to assist in relief and rescue operations.

In a statement posted on X, the White Knight Corps said, "In response to a landslide in the general area of Katra, troops of White Knight Corps were swiftly mobilised to assist in relief and rescue operations in collaboration with civil authorities. Immediate support was provided to affected locals, showcasing Indian Army's unwavering commitment to the people. Rescue and support operations currently in progress. We serve, We Protect!"

BJP MLA from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi constituency, Baldev Raj Sharma said, "This isn't an accident. Like many states are currently facing a flood situation, this is also a part of that... If this shed had not been there, the accident could have been bigger... Currently, only 1-2 injured people are in serious condition. The shrine board opened the other path for the journey."

Katra Block Medical Officer (BMO) Rashpal Bangotra provided an update on the medical response, stating, "Around 8:20 AM, we received information about the landslide, and within 15 minutes, six injured devotees reached us. Four with orthopaedic injuries were shifted to Narayana Hospital for advanced treatment."

Meanwhile, a five-year-old student was killed and five others were injured after a landslide hit a government school here in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, officials said.

As per officials, the landslide was triggered at the building of Government Primary School (GPS) Kalsia, situated in Ward No. 4, Village Bhainch, Tehsil Haveli, District Poonch by overnight heavy rains, during which a large boulder fell in a classroom of the primary school in the Bhainch-Kalsian area, killing a 5-year-old Ehsan Ali and injuring students and a teacher.

The injured students have been identified as Mohammad Safeer, age 7, son of Mohammad Shareef, resident of Kalsan Bhainch, Bilal Farooq, age 8, son of Farooq Ahmed, resident of Bhainch, Aftab Ahmed, age 6, son of Idress Ahmed, resident of Bhainch, Tobia Kouser, age 7, daughter of Basharat Hussain, resident of Bhainch.

They are undergoing treatment at Raja Sukhdev Singh District Hospital in Poonch along with the teacher, who had suffered minor injuries.

Following the incident, Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the loss of life.

"The news of the death of a 5-year-old child due to the rockslide that crashed into Primary School, Kalsian, Poonch, is heart-rending. May God give strength to the bereaved parents to bear this shock. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured children," LG Sinha wrote on X.

CM Abdullah also extended his condolences to the bereaved family on a social media post. He also directed the administration to ensure proper treatment of the injured and to conduct a thorough inquiry into the incident.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal visited the district hospital and met the injured and their families. He also disbursed financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh to the family of Ehsan and Rs 50,000 each to the families of the injured children under the Red Cross Fund. He also assured all possible assistance to the families from the district administration.

In response to the landslide and ongoing heavy rainfall, which recorded 184.2 mm in the region over the past 24 hours, authorities have ordered the closure of all schools in Poonch district on July 22, 2025, as a precautionary measure.

The district administration, in coordination with the Education Department, has also initiated a structural safety audit of school buildings in vulnerable areas to mitigate risks during the monsoon season. (KNO)

**Monsoon Session....**

He said the mission carried out by Indian defence forces, achieved its goals within 22 minutes, targeting and destroying structures linked to terror masterminds. He added that this operation has drawn global attention to India's military capability and the strength of its domestic defence sector.

"When the Parliament speaks in one voice during this session, it will support military morale, encourage citizens, and contribute to progress in defence research, innovation, and manufacturing," he added.

He also said that security forces are making steady progress in eliminating Maoists and Naxalites and that several previously affected districts are now free from such activities, and the Constitution is prevailing over violence.

He urged MPs across parties to ensure smooth functioning of the house and that interests may vary, but national interest must remain the shared

priority.

Meanwhile, both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha witnessed continuous sloganeering by Opposition MPs demanding a discussion on the recent Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor.

Reacting to the protests, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee has been scheduled to decide the agenda for discussion.

"The government is ready for a discussion, but Opposition MPs are protesting in the Well of the House. It is not appropriate to begin the session like this," Rijiju said.

Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, questioned the government over its response to the Pahalgam terror attack and asked for clarity on the current status of the militants involved.

Kharge said the Opposition had extended full support to the Centre following the incident but emphasized the need for accountability, especially in light of the acknowledged intelligence failure. "Even the Army chief and the government have admitted lapses. The country deserves to know what went wrong," he told the House.

He also took sharp exception to recent comments by former US President Donald Trump, who reportedly spoke of mediating a ceasefire between India and Pakistan after Operation Sindoor. "It's unacceptable for any outsider to make such claims. This is an insult to our sovereignty," Kharge said.

Speaking in the Rajya Sabha, BJP leader and Union Minister JP Nadda said the government was fully prepared to hold a detailed discussion on Operation Sindoor.

"We are willing and ready to talk about it. There should be no perception that we are avoiding a debate," Nadda said, adding that the scale and execution of the operation under Prime Minister Modi's leadership was unprecedented. "This kind of mission has never been carried out before. We will share every detail," he told the House.

This year's Monsoon Session will run until August 21, with a scheduled recess from August 12 to 18. The session includes 21 sittings over 32 days. (KNO)

**‘J&K, Ladakh....**

Samagra Shiksha and PM-SHRI schemes for 2023-24 and 2024-25.

According to a written statement laid in Lok Sabha by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in response to a question, Jammu and Kashmir received Rs 865.44 crore in 2023-24 and Rs 823.49 crore in 2024-25 under Samagra Shiksha. In addition, it received 52.39 crore and 99.72 crore under the PM-SHRI scheme in the two respective years.

Ladakh was allocated Rs 52.23 crore and Rs 140 crore under Samagra Shiksha in 2023-24 and 2024-25. Under PM-SHRI, it received 4.04 crore and 11.91 crore, respectively.

The minister said that the Samagra Shiksha scheme is being implemented in partnership with states and UTs, and funding is based on approved annual work plans and fulfilment of certain financial criteria.

He said the PM-SHRI scheme aims to develop select schools as exemplars of the National Education Policy 2020. So far, 33 of 36 states and UTs have signed the MoU required to implement the PM-SHRI scheme. West Bengal and Kerala have not signed the agreement, the Minister informed the House. (KNO)

**Govt OKs 16....**

Narendra Modi must reply.

At the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee, sources said government representatives noted that PM Modi is leaving on a foreign visit this week, and a debate when he is present in the House can be possible only next week.

Opposition members protested that the government's agenda for this week did not mention their demand for a debate on the issue.

They said the home minister and the defence minister should also be present.

Some opposition members also called for a debate on the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Bihar and the situation in Manipur.

The Monsoon Session of Parliament began on Monday. (Agencies)

**Jammu sees....**

yellow and orange alerts for the region.

The temperature settled above normal today with Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recording a maximum temperature of 34.9 degrees.

As per the data, the mercury in Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded a maximum temperature of 29.0 degrees while Pahalgam recorded 28.0 degrees.

In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 35.3 degrees followed by 30.8 degrees in Kokernag while Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, recorded a maximum temperature of 23.5 degrees.

Jammu division, however, recorded the below normal temperature today with several areas recording the heavy rainfall.

As per the data, Katra has recorded the highest precipitation in the last 24 hours. 184.2mm rainfall was recorded at Katra station today while Jammu recorded 31.6 mm since this morning.

Several areas across Kashmir also received fresh rainfall this evening with the Director MET, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad predicting intermittent spells of light to moderate rain and thundershower till July 23 at many places with intense showers at few places and heavy rain at isolated places of J&K.

From July 24 to 27, he said that there is a possibility of brief showers at scattered places.

Moreover, the MeT has issued an advisory,

stating that there is a possibility of intense showers with gusty winds at few places with heavy rain at isolated to scattered places of J&K during 21-23rd July.

"Flash floods at few vulnerable places with landslides, mudslides & shooting stones," it reads, adding that rise in water level in rivers, streams, local Nallas & water logging in few low lying areas is also expected. (KNO)

**Drug-Free....**

The Minister further said that the government is keenly working towards combating this menace from society. She added that drug de-addiction centres have been established in district headquarters to provide required support to individuals affected by drug addiction.

While commending the organisers and college for organising the seminar in this burning societal issue, the Minister asserted that this seminar should chalk out some actionable strategies needed for making Kashmir free of drug abuse, a challenge that continues to threaten our social and cultural fabric.

During the event, cultural performances were showcased to depict the impact of drug abuse on families as well as overall society.

The event saw huge participation of educators, youth leaders, students, healthcare professionals, law enforcement officials as well as representatives from civil society.

Among others, Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari; Nodal Principal Kashmir Division Colleges, Prof. Seema Naz; Principal Government Women's College Srinagar, Principal GCOE Srinagar and other senior officers of district administration were present on the occasion.

**Devise training....**

During the review meeting, the Chief Secretary appreciated the design and structure of the project and emphasized the need for its effective and timely implementation, ensuring all targets set for the ensuing financial year are met. He urged the bank authorities to fully integrate their operational processes with the JKICP portal to streamline service delivery and enhance coordination.

The Chief Secretary also called for creation of a tailored loan product to support implementation of the programme and ensure its long-term success.

Highlighting the need for efficiency and responsiveness, he directed all the concerned departments and institutions to ensure swift approvals of applications submitted by the beneficiaries.

Furthermore, the Chief Secretary impressed upon the importance of capacity-building initiatives, advising formulation of training modules for both the trainers and beneficiaries to empower them with the skills necessary to make their ventures successful.

While giving overview of this prestigious project, Principal Secretary, APD, Shaileendra Kumar, revealed that the project encompasses a total investment of approximately US\$ 217 million (Rs 1800 Cr). He informed that it has been designed to improve the competitiveness and climate resilience of farmers through enhanced production, value addition and marketing of high-value niche commodities in J&K.

Regarding the funding pattern, the Principal Secretary mentioned that the same constitutes substantial contributions from IFAD (46%), the UT (12%), beneficiary contributions (21%), private sector involvement (10%) and bank credit (10%), along with convergence support (2%).

MD, HADP, Sandeep Kumar, in his presentation, revealed that the JKICP is structured around three main verticals including Climate-smart and Market-led Production (52% of total cost).

Elucidating further, he divulged that another vertical of the programme called Agri-business Ecosystem Development constitutes 33% of total cost. It aims at enterprise promotion, market promotion and incubation/startup support. The fourth vertical of Project Management encompasses 5% of total cost ensuring efficient oversight, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management.

About the objectives of this project, it was given out that it targets to reach out to 3 lakh households (15 lakh individuals) across 90 blocks in both Jammu (45 blocks) and Kashmir (45 blocks) divisions. Special emphasis is being placed on vulnerable groups, including 141,000 women (47%), 90,000 youth (30%) and 30,000 individuals from other vulnerable communities (10%).

With respect to Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWPB) for 2025-26, it was informed that the same stands at Rs 150.06 crore. Key allocations include Rs 110.33 crore for climate-smart and market-led production, Rs 14.21 crore for agri-business ecosystem development and Rs 15.90 crore for supporting the pastoralists and other vulnerable communities.

Out of 172 approved activities for AWPB 2025-26, a procurement plan for 151 activities totaling Rs 138 crore has received IFAD's approval. This included consulting services, grants and goods. For 2025-26, Rs 75 crore has been released on Beams, with an additional Rs 12.50 crore advance drawal sanctioned by the Finance Department on July 15, 2025.

As of July 19, 2025, about 1240 farmers have been registered and 478 applications have been received, with key activities focusing on sheep/goat units, vegetable cultivation, water management, protected cultivation and apple crop management. Besides, a farmer-friendly loan product has been developed in collaboration with UTLBC, featuring a 10% marginal money with no processing charges, a moratorium period of up to 2 years and a repayment period of up to 8 years.

It was informed that various feasibility studies and business plans are underway for key sectors like Tulip, Saffron, Apple and Wool Value Chains. Besides, extensive HRD initiatives are being implemented, with interviews scheduled for various officer positions across departments to strengthen the human resources for effective implementation of this project.

The Chief Secretary emphasized the importance of timely execution and effective implementation of all planned activities to ensure successful achievement of JKICP's objectives and upliftment of the agricultural and allied sectors in Jammu & Kashmir.

Pertinently, the rural credit workshops will commence in August to raise awareness among the farmers and stakeholders.

**17,000 perform....**

good, the number of pilgrims departing from Jammu—the starting point for most yatris—has shown a consistent downward trend over the past few days.

From 7908 pilgrims on July 18, the number dropped to 6,365 on July 19, 4,388 on July 20, and 3,791 on July 21 — the lowest daily departure figure recorded so far during this year's yatra.

Despite the decline, officials said that the pilgrimage is progressing smoothly and peacefully, with robust security and logistical arrangements in place across all transit and base locations.

On Monday morning, a fresh batch of 3,791 pilgrims left from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu under tight security cover for the twin base camps of Baltal and Pahalgam, which serve as the two main routes to the cave shrine.

The group comprised 3,067 men, 522 women, 9 children, 192 sadhus and sadhvis, and 1 transgender pilgrim. The convoy was split into two: the Baltal-bound convoy carried 1,208 pilgrims in 52 vehicles, while the Pahalgam-bound convoy transported 2,583 pilgrims in 96 vehicles, officials said.

"Even though there is a slight decline in pilgrim turnout from Jammu, the overall yatra is proceeding without disruptions. All necessary facilities including shelter, food, medical assistance, and route security are fully operational," an official said.

This year's Amarnath Yatra, scheduled to conclude on August 9, is being conducted amid unprecedented security measures, including drone surveillance, RFID tracking for pilgrims and a multi-layered deployment of forces.

**J&K Police....**

will begin on July 28 from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu. It will conclude on August 9.

"A high-level coordination and security review meeting was held by Sarah Rezi, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Udhampur-Reasi range, at Sunderbani, for the upcoming Budha Amarnath Yatra," a police spokesperson said.

The meeting, which was also attended by DIG Shiv Kumar Sharma and the district police chiefs of Jammu and Rajouri, besides officers from the Army and paramilitary forces, was briefed about the deployment and security scenario in their areas of responsibility.

DIG Rezi mainly focused on ensuring foolproof security measures for the upcoming yatra, seamless traffic management, medical preparedness, sanitation and basic facilities for the yatris, the spokesperson said.

The officer emphasised inter-agency coordination, real-time communication and round-the-clock monitoring of the yatra route. She directed all concerned officers to remain on high alert during the yatra period and ensure that standard operating procedures are strictly followed.

"Budha Amarnath Yatra is not just a religious event but also a symbol of communal harmony. It is the joint responsibility of all agencies to ensure that the yatra is conducted smoothly, peacefully, and safely," said the DIG.

The DIG added that the movement of yatris shall be in convoys only, with proper escort. "Stray vehicles shall be escorted in mini convoys. No yatra vehicle shall move without escort," she said.

She further called for the deployment of adequate security personnel along the entire route and at vulnerable points.

The DIG called for the installation of CCTV cameras and checking points for surveillance, besides the establishment of control rooms for continuous monitoring.

The officer appreciated the efforts of all stakeholders and called for constant review and real-time coordination throughout the yatra period.

She assured the public and yatris of all possible support and appealed for their cooperation in making the yatra a grand success.



# Public Accounts Committee holds meeting in Srinagar

## Discusses Audit Paras of Mining, I&C Departments

HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly convened a meeting today at the Assembly Complex in Srinagar to review and discuss the audit paras related to the Mining and Industries & Commerce (I&C) Departments.

The meeting was chaired by PAC Chairman Sham Lal Sharma and attended by members Mubarak Gul, Javid Hassan Baig, Devinder Kumar Manyal, Sajad Shaheen and Muzaffar Iqbal Khan.

During the session, the Committee undertook a detailed examination of audit paras 2.14 (2011-12), 3.14 (2000-01), 4.10 (2003-04), and 3.13 (2015-16) pertaining to the Mining and I&C Departments.

The Committee deliberated on the key issues including land acquisition for the Industrial Export Promotion Park at SIDCO Ompora, procurement of Broadband Seismograph and establishment of a Seismograph Observatory, construction of Zone Office Complex for Handloom at Rajouri and drawal and utilization of public funds.

The Chairman directed the



concerned departments to submit a comprehensive report on the Industrial Export Promotion Park project and fix accountability where necessary.

Emphasizing the need to curb illegal mining across Jammu and Kashmir, the Chairman called for sustainable mining practices and leveraging the

modern technologies to monitor and prevent illegal activities. He stressed the importance of working with a sense of duty and accountability. He directed

that Action Taken Reports (ATRs) be submitted in a time-bound manner on all discussed matters.

The meeting was attended by Principal Accountant General J&K, K. P. Yadaw; Principal Secretary, Mining, Anil Kumar Singh; Commissioner Secretary I&C Department, Vikramjit Singh; Secretary I&C, Khalid Jahangir; Secretary Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandita; Director General Accounts and Treasuries, F.A. Lone; Director, Handicrafts and Handloom; Director, Geology and Mining; MD SIDCO; Director Finance and other senior officials.

Chairman Sham Lal Sharma emphasized the PAC's crucial role in ensuring transparency, fiscal discipline and accountability in governance. He reiterated the Committee's mandate to scrutinize public expenditure, examine CAG audit reports, identify lapses and recommend necessary reforms.

He commended the dedication of Committee members and officials, urging them to maintain high standards of oversight and continue contributing meaningfully towards good governance and public accountability.

## 25th Muharram Procession Concludes Peacefully at Chainabal, Pattan

Ubaid Mehdi

**BARAMULLA, JULY 21:** The 25th Muharram procession at Chainabal, Pattan in Baramulla district concluded peacefully today amid tight security and spiritual fervor. Over one lakh (100,000) devotees participated in the solemn event, commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (A.S) and his companions in Karbala.

The procession, marked by chest-beating, Nauha Khwani, and Majlis-e-Aza, passed through its traditional route and witnessed large-scale participation from across north Kashmir. Devotees walked in unity, expressing their deep sorrow and reaffirming their commitment to the teachings of Karbala.

Molvi Imran Reza ansari also shed light on the trials faced by Bibi Zainab (SA) and Imam Zainul Abideen (AS) after the tragedy of Ashura — particu-



larly their painful journey through the courts and streets of Shaam (Syria).

The resilience and courage shown by Bibi Zainab (SA) in the aftermath of Karbala turned the pain into a message, and the captivity into a revolution," he added.

The event was organized by local religious bodies with support from the administration. Authorities had made elaborate arrangements to ensure the safety and smooth conduct of the procession, including deployment of security personnel, medical teams, and traffic diversions.

Community leaders expressed satisfaction over the peaceful atmosphere and appreciated the cooperation between mourners and officials.

## Loot of Green Gold in Forest Division Langate, Authorities Concerned

However Environmental Tragedy Awaits Urgent Attention

Dr. Ab Qayoom

**LANGATE, JUL 21:** The Forest Division of Langate is witnessing a distressing environmental crisis as the growing cover of young saplings often referred to as "green gold" is being systematically destroyed by unknown miscreants. The saplings, now at their final stage of growth, have been targeted alongside mature trees, causing serious ecological concern in the area.

According to reports, dozens of fully grown trees have been illegally axed, while the bark of many others has been deliberately damaged in Compartment No. 1/2 in Rajwar and Compartment No. 1/A Mawar in Gund Chobtarablock of Qaziabad. Hundreds of young saplings, the future green canopy of the region, have also been cut down mercilessly.

Local sources have alleged that this destruction is a result of gross negligence by concerned forest

officials. The situation has drawn sharp criticism from across the region. Officials from district administration, police, and civil departments, as well as civil society organizations from Kashmir Division, have strongly condemned the incident, calling it a brutal attack on the region's fragile environment.

Speaking to the media, Dr. Shaikh Owais, a local Ph.D research scholar, termed the situation in Qaziabad forests as "alarming." He emphasized the urgent need for public awareness, saying, "People must understand the long-term damage caused by deforestation. Climate change and rising heatwaves are deeply linked to such environmental destruction. Protecting these green siblings is essential for our future generations."

In response to public outcry, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Langate stated while talking to Headlines Today that an official team has been constituted to



conduct a ground-level assessment in Rajwar and Qaziabad. "Once the report is submitted, we will take strict action against

the miscreants and any negligent officials involved, in accordance with the Forest Act and Government service rules," he said.

The DFO further appealed to local civil society members, social activists, and educated citizens to cooperate with the department in identifying the culprits. He added, "It is not just the department's duty — it is a collective responsibility to promote afforestation and raise awareness about the serious consequences of deforestation." The Forest Division has also registered formal cases regarding the incidents at both Rajwar and Mawar.

Meanwhile, Civil Society Forum Kashmir has demanded immediate and strict action against those responsible, and has called for clear accountability of forest officials in Langate Division.

The incident has once again brought to the forefront the urgent need for better forest protection, stronger community engagement, and stricter enforcement of environmental laws to safeguard Kashmir's invaluable green wealth.

## CEO Ganderbal Oneel Kumar Bhat conducts surprise inspection of schools

HT News Desk

**GANDERBAL, JULY 21:** Chief Education Officer (CEO) Ganderbal, Oneel Kumar Bhat, today conducted a surprise inspection of several educational institutions in Zone Tullamulla. The visit was aimed at assessing the overall functionality of the schools, reviewing the punctuality of the teaching staff, and ensuring adherence to academic standards. As part of the inspection, Oneel Kumar Bhat visited Government Primary School Theeru, MS Barsoo, PS Ahan and Government High School Theeru. He interacted with students to gauge their learning levels and observed classroom activities to assess the academic environment.

During the visit, the CEO emphasized the importance of staff punctuality and accountability in shaping the educational landscape. He urged the teachers to make concerted and sincere



efforts to bridge the learning gaps among students.

He asked questions to the students regarding the basic concepts of different subjects including English, mathematics, EVS, science, and Urdu.

The CEO also checked the attendance of staff, students, school record, sanitation and Midday meal.

Highlighting the transformative vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Shri Kumar impressed upon the staff to ensure its smooth and

effective implementation in letter and spirit. He reiterated that the reforms outlined in NEP 2020 are key to improving foundational learning, promoting holistic education, and preparing students for future challenges.

The local education fraternity welcomed the proactive initiative and expressed confidence that such surprise visits would help reinforce discipline, enhance learning outcomes, and bring qualitative improvements in the government education sector.

## "Say No To Drugs, Save Life" Kulgam Police organizes awareness programme on "NASHA MUKT BHARAT ABHIYAAN"

Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, JULY 21:** Kulgam Police under the aegis of Civic Action Programme (CAP) 2024-2025, conducted an awareness programme on "NASHA MUKT BHARAT ABHIYAAN" at Government Higher secondary school DH Pora.

The programme was attended by Principal, faculty members of GHSS DH Pora, Senior Police officers of Kulgam Police including SDPO DH Pora Shri "Reyaz Ahmad", DySP DAR Kulgam Shri "Mohd Ayub Rather", SHO PS



Manzgam, students and other respectable citizens.

Officers emphasized the need to protect the young generation from the menace of drug abuse, highlighting its devastating impact on individuals and society. Also stressed the importance of youths staying drug free and propagating the ill effects of drugs to the society thereby ensuring a Nasha Mukht Bharat.

Debate competition was held wherein the participants shared their perspectives, views, assumptions and exploring concrete solutions to the complex, challenging and pressing issue of drug abuse that threatens the very fabric of our society.

This initiative demonstrates J&K Police's commitment to eradicating drug abuse and promoting a safer, healthier community. Participants thanked Police for conducting such awareness programmes, thus building a bridge of trust between police and the youth.

At the conclusion, first two position holders were awarded with mementos & cash prize to boost their morale.

## "Kashmir Viewer" News Magazine Unveiled at Tagore Hall, Srinagar

Faizan Qureshi's new media venture Receives Praise from Media Professionals

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** The unveiling ceremony of the Kashmir Viewer news magazine was held at Tagore Hall, Srinagar. The event witnessed the participation of numerous intellectuals, broadcasters, authors, renowned journalists, and bureaucrats.

The ceremony was presided over by Prof. Saifuddin Soz, former Union Minister of India.

Speakers at the event lauded the Editor-in-Chief of the magazine, Faizan Qureshi, for his commendable initiative in launching Kashmir Viewer. They appreciated his efforts in creating a platform for thought-



ful journalism and in-depth reporting from the region.

The speakers also highlighted the challenges currently facing journalism in Kashmir, particularly due to the increasing pres-

ence of unqualified online vloggers posing as journalists. They urged the management of Kashmir Viewer to remain committed to upholding the core values and integrity of genuine journalism.

While speaking at the event, Faizan Qureshi thanked all the guests for their presence and support. He reaffirmed his commitment to making Kashmir Viewer a quality magazine that prioritizes

journalistic integrity and relevance. He also emphasized the importance of digital outreach, stating that the magazine will maintain a strong and active presence across social media platforms.



HT EDITORIAL

Eyes focused on parliament about restoration of statehood to J&K

As some of the media reports recently suggested that the Government of India may bring a resolution for restoration of statehood to Jammu & Kashmir in the parliament, all eyes are set on the monsoon session of parliament that began on Monday (July 21). These media reports had said that the statehood would be restored to Jammu & Kashmir very soon with the maximum possible chances being on August 5.

August 5 is a significant day in the history of Jammu & Kashmir as it was on this date in 2019, Articles 370 and 35A were abrogated. It was on the same date the state of Jammu & Kashmir was converted into two union territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The present union territory government led by chief minister Omar Abdullah has been pitching for the restoration of statehood ever since it came to power in October last year.

It would be in place to mention here that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah had time and again said that statehood would be restored to Jammu & Kashmir at an appropriate time. Both PM and HM had last year said that Jammu & Kashmir will become a state as and when the assembly elections are over and a popular government assumes charge. Even though the popular government is more than nine months old, statehood is yet to be restored to Jammu & Kashmir.

The demand for restoration of statehood is not only being made by the National Conference but all the other political parties. Political parties like Congress, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Apni Party and others have been issuing statements in this regard. Over the past few days the leaders of Congress party have been carrying out protests in support of their demand for restoration of statehood to Jammu & Kashmir. Some of the party leaders were detained at Srinagar and Jammu only to be released later on.

Since the monsoon session of parliament has already begun all eyes are focussed on the proceedings of the both houses of the same. People of Jammu & Kashmir are hoping that the restoration of statehood takes place earlier than later and they enjoy the status of being the residents of a state rather than a union territory. The people as a whole believe that all their problems would be solved once Jammu & Kashmir yet again becomes a state of Union of India.

15TH PUBLICATION HEADLINES TODAY Voice To The Voiceless

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# The Enduring Relevance of Urdu in Governance and Competitive Examinations in J&K

Urdu ki naubat-e-tarannum hai,  
Dil ka har saaz is mein humdum hai.

Josh Malihabadi



Dr. Mohiudin Zore Kashmiri

In the shifting sands of policy and progress, the fate of regional languages—most notably Urdu, the official tongue of Jammu and Kashmir—has once again emerged as a subject of fervent discourse. A recent notification by the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB), announcing 75 vacancies for the esteemed post of Naib Tehsildar, has stirred debate across the aspirant landscape. The crux of contention? The inclusion of Urdu and English as compulsory subjects in the written examination.

This requirement, seemingly modest, has ignited disquiet in certain quarters, especially among candidates from Jammu, many of whom feel alienated due to their unfamiliarity—or at times, indifference—toward Urdu. Ironically, while a vast number of these aspirants engage fluently with the language in everyday speech—owing to its cultural prominence across the subcontinent—they falter when tasked with reading or writing it. This linguistic gap has led to demands for the removal of Urdu as a mandatory paper, a move that

has not only dismayed lovers of the language but also sparked introspection across the Union Territory.

The question arises: If we, the residents of a region where Urdu is both officially sanctioned and widely spoken, cannot shoulder its academic weight, who else can? And more provocatively: If Urdu is dispensable in our examinations, what regional language stands poised to take its place?

The matter transcends academic convenience. Urdu is no esoteric relic like Persian or Sanskrit, nor is it a foreign linguistic artifact. It is a living, breathing thread woven deeply into the cultural and administrative tapestry of Jammu and Kashmir. To strip it from essential examinations would be to fracture a vital artery of our bureaucratic heritage and public identity.

The posts under question—be they Patwaris, Naib Tehsildars, court clerks, Urdu writers, Munshis, or document readers—are not merely jobs, but roles sculpted by the demands of Urdu proficiency.

One must also consider the real-world duties of a Naib Tehsildar. Such an officer is expected to traverse every corner of the Union Territory, engaging with documents, land records, and local correspondence—all predominantly rendered in Urdu. Without a functional command of the language, administrative integrity would falter, disrupting not just workflow but the dignity of official conduct itself.

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One must also consider the real-world duties of a Naib Tehsildar. Such an officer is expected to traverse every corner of the Union Territory, engaging with documents, land records, and local correspondence—all predominantly rendered in Urdu. Without a functional command of the language, administrative integrity would falter, disrupting not just workflow but the dignity of official conduct itself.

The real challenge lies not in Urdu's relevance, but in the failure of our educational institutions to instill fluency in it. Schools and colleges, both public and private, have long neglected to foster Urdu literacy with the seriousness it demands. The result is a generation that stumbles over

the script of its own soil, unprepared to meet the linguistic expectations of public service.

Rather than questioning Urdu's place in competitive examinations, the onus lies on students, teachers, and institutions alike to resuscitate Urdu instruction, to uplift it from marginality and place it where it rightly belongs: at the heart of language education across Jammu and Kashmir.

Only then can we prepare youth not just for exams, but for a lifetime of civic participation and cultural stewardship.

To allow Urdu to wither would be more than an educational oversight—it would be a cultural amputation. Our roads are named in Urdu, our administrative orders composed in it, our identity echoed in its script. Preserving and promoting it is not a sentimental gesture; it is a pragmatic necessity.

In summation, regional languages like Urdu are not mere academic subjects to be ticked off a syllabus—they are the lifeblood of governance, the pulse of communication, the voice of a people. The time has come to recognize their worth, restore their presence in our curricula, and ensure our youth are equipped to carry them forward—beyond the realm of exams, into the heart of society itself.

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## From Shared Lives to Isolated Hearts



Abid Hussain Rather

Reliving old memories, I remember well that there was a time, not too long ago, when life was lived in community—fully, openly, and without walls. In the neighbourhoods of our childhood, boundaries existed only on maps, neither on the ground nor in our hearts. Every joy was communal, every sorrow shared. There was no concept of “my happiness or sorrow is mine alone,” for the happiness or sorrow of one was the concern of many. In any neighbourhood, if a child took their first steps, sweet fritters would find their way to every doorstep. Whenever a cow gave birth to a calf in any household, colostrum cheese was shared among all the neighbours. If someone passed an exam, the entire street would celebrate. When tragedy struck, radios and televisions fell silent, laughter was hushed and celebrations were postponed out of respect. Neighbours were treated like extended family. Their smiles were ours and so were their tears.

But today, that world seems like a dream long lost—like a once-bright photograph, now faded and forgotten in the quiet corner of an old attic drawer. We now live in an age where privacy is glorified. We wear our secrecy like a badge of sophistication. “Don't tell anyone,” “Keep it between us,” “It's none of their business”—these phrases, once considered cold or even rude, are now common and even celebrated. We proudly say, “I mind my own business,” without realizing that in doing so, we've given up the greatest asset of humanity—the ability to truly connect with one another. Our elders often said, “A shared sorrow is half a sorrow, and a shared joy is double the joy.” This wasn't poetic exaggeration—it was lived experience. A neighbour's unemployment was not whispered about; it was responded to. A sick person in one house meant concerned visitors, herbal remedies, generous financial help and prayers for every corner.

Today, in our concrete houses, tightly locked apartments and digitally guarded lives, we know nothing of the people who live just a wall away. The sounds of celebration or mourning might drift through occasionally, but we rarely knock to ask what is wrong or what is right. There was a time when children carried plates of food and other small offerings to neighbours, with warm smiles and gentle messages. Life was woven together with kindness, and every joy or sorrow was shared like a family secret. Now, meals arrive at doorsteps

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through apps and sentiments are reduced to emojis on screens. We have gained convenience, but lost intimacy and left behind connection. Our hands are fuller, but our hearts are emptier. We have built fences—emotional, digital, and even spiritual. We curate our lives into social media highlight reels, where sorrow is photoshopped out and imperfections are edited away.

Mental health professionals are now ringing the alarm bells, calling loneliness the epidemic of the 21st century. Depression, anxiety, and suicides are on the rise—not just because of economic stress or societal pressures, but because people no longer feel seen. We have replaced community with connectivity, but the Wi-Fi signal doesn't reach the soul. Our older generation remembers a world where even marriage decisions were made with neighbourhood input—not due to interference, but because relationships were considered too important to be built in isolation. Neighbours mediated disputes. Families intervened in times of crisis. An unemployed father, a struggling student, a lonely widow—no one suffered alone but everyone in neighbourhood shared their sufferings. But world has changed now and so are the people. Now, personal space has turned into personal exile. We confuse silence with dignity and distance with strength. In our race to protect our “private lives,” we have sacrificed our public bonds. Even grief is now a solitary affair. Funerals that once brought entire communities together are now modest, brief, and often poorly attended. The pandemic amplified this, but the trend predates it. Joys too are muted. Engagements, marriages, pregnancies, promotions—all are often kept under wraps, shared selectively, if at all. What was once called razzdari (confidentiality) is now a permanent cloak—one that suffocates more than it protects.

We often say that we don't like to depend on anyone. It sounds strong. But what it really means is that we are

afraid to be disappointed. We no longer trust our communities to hold our truths with compassion. And in doing so, we deny ourselves the most profound human experience, which is to be known and still be loved. Children raised in such environments inherit this guardedness. They learn early that emotions must be managed quietly, victories downplayed, problems hidden. The art of sharing, once a sacred skill, is now dismissed as oversharing, and vulnerability is perceived as weakness. This is not just about nostalgia; it is about a cultural crisis. When a society loses the ability to share, it loses the ability to care.

Now the question is not whether we can return to our traditional way of living and past ethos but whether we are willing to. The antidote to this growing poison of secrecy is deceptively simple: intentional heartfelt connection. A knock on the neighbour's door. A shared cup of tea with news and dears. An offline conversation without screens. A willingness to say that I am not okay and to listen when others say it too. Let us remember that communities are not built through policies or apps; they are built through small, sincere acts of openness. The woman next door who cries at night might just need someone to ask if she is okay. The elderly man who sits alone on the bench might have a story to tell. The child who seems withdrawn may need a little attention.

Let me make one thing clear here that this is not about abandoning privacy; it is about reclaiming community. It is about remembering that life is not meant to be lived in isolation but in shared humanity. Of course, secrecy has its place. Not all information is meant for public consumption. But secrecy should be a tool for protection, not isolation. When we use secrecy to hide our pain, we suffer alone. When we use it to protect others' dignity, we act with wisdom. In its purest form, secrecy is an ethical principle, not a wall. It is the understanding of when to speak and when to listen; when to share and when to hold. But today's version has mutated into emotional hoarding—where nothing is shared, and everything is suppressed.

As we move forward in our digital, fast-paced, hyper-private lives, perhaps it is time to pause and remember what we have left behind. Maybe it is time to dust off the old values—not for the sake of tradition, but for the survival of our humanity. Let us normalize asking, “How are you?” Let us celebrate each other's joys together. Let us grieve together. Let us teach our children that being open is not a flaw but a strength. Let us turn off our screens and turn toward each other. The poison of secrecy thrives in silence. But a single act of connection can be the antidote. Let us go and knock on the door. Someone might be waiting.

The author teaches Geography at GDC Kulgam and can be reached at: rather1294@gmail.com

# Perseverance: A Vital Force Behind Overall Development



■ Sahil Manzoor

Perseverance plays a vital role in our overall development. To achieve success, one must remain engaged, focused, and committed to their goals.

Around the world, nations are prioritizing the strengthening of their education sectors. A well-developed education system serves as the foundation for progress in all other fields. Sensible and committed individuals always give their best to any task assigned to them. Success doesn't come overnight—it requires a trained, educated, and dedicated workforce.

In today's world, it often feels as though machines dominate our lives. From smartphones to Xerox machines, from vehicles to artificial intelligence—everything we use is the product of the human mind. These inventions are made possible by brilliantly educated youth. Machines may be built with iron, plastic, and wires, but they are controlled and programmed by humans.

The Almighty has gifted us with remarkable brains. Sadly, most of us use only a fraction of our mental capacity. Studies suggest that even scientists use only about 30% of their brainpower—and yet, they revolutionize the world. Imagine the potential we all carry, untapped and waiting to be used.

Each of us possesses unique talents and capabilities. Some dream of becoming teachers—support them. Encourage learners based on their interests, not by imposing decisions on them. Others aspire to join the medical or engineering fields—respect their choices. Today, the government has launched various schemes to help youth pursue their dreams. All they need is proper support, guidance, and opportunity.

The world is full of possibilities. Believe in yourself and in your potential to bring change. Use social media wisely, not to waste time, but to connect, learn, and grow. Never allow your talents to go to rust—keep yourself engaged, and strive to discover what you're truly capable of.

Success requires patience, perseverance, consistency, and hard work. Unlike the past, today we have countless resources at our fingertips. Take advantage of them—keep learning, stay informed, and expand your horizons.

Tips to Score Well in Exams Handwriting Matters: Ensure your handwriting is neat and legible. Avoid excessive cutting, overwriting, or scribbles. Start Early: Begin your exam preparation from day one. Avoid procrastination—it only leads to pressure and confusion later. Solve Difficult Questions First: Prioritize the questions or topics you find challenging. Overcoming them builds confidence. Stick to the Point: While answering, write clearly and to the point. Avoid unnecessary or unrelated content. Use Quality Tools: Use a good-quality pen, pencil, ruler, and other materials. Also, space out your answers clearly to maintain neatness. Double-Check Your Details: After completing your paper, verify your roll number and other personal information before submitting it.

sahilmanzoor0401@gmail.com

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## New trend of becoming a Sadhvi: A brand of happiness under the guise of sacrifice?



■ Priyanka Saurabh

In childhood, we used to hear that a Sadhvi is one who has risen above worldly attachment, illusion, adornment, attraction and worldly responsibilities. She is one who dedicates herself to meditation, sadhana and purification of the soul. In today's world, when we hear the word 'Sadhvi', we don't imagine a meditative woman, but rather a 'modern Sadhvi', dressed in designer saffron clothes, giving sermons on a stage under bright lights, with thousands of followers on social media, emerges.

Now becoming a Sadhvi does not mean self-sacrifice, but is associated with a new lifestyle—in which there is a claim of renouncing pleasures, but the enjoyment of happiness and popularity continues. Now a safe branding is done in the name of sacrifice, in which a woman creates a spiritual aura by separating herself from home, family, marriage and social obligations—in which there is glitter, crowds, donations, trips to the country and abroad, but there is no deep connection with self-restraint and self-reflection.

This trend is not a spiritual awakening, but a strategic escape—where women do not run away from the world, but reshape it in their own way, according to their convenience and expectations. They say—we have renounced everything, but in reality they renounced only that which troubled them—responsibility, expectation, accountability, and the burden of relationships. But they did not renounce their 'I', did not renounce their 'importance'.

Many of today's so-called Sadhvis preach on public platforms that enjoyment is an illusion, domesticity is a bondage, the true form of a woman is one who is silent inside and surrendered outside. But when the same Sadhvi uploads videos on Instagram with filters, when she advertises her every event, when there are special passes and VIP galleries at her events—then the question arises whether this is spirituality or just a successful public relations plan?

In old times, becoming a Sadhvi was an act of courage. When a woman separated herself from the world, she had to face the society at every step. Today, when someone says—I am now a Sadhvi—all social criticism of her becomes silent. Because we have accepted that the woman who wears saffron, keeps a veil on her head, and speaks in Sanskrit language—she is now a “goddess” and cannot be questioned.

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The biggest danger in this trend is that it is giving women a new escape route - the path of self-conceit in the name of self-development. They neither want to take up the responsibility of the house, nor do they want to compete in the workplace, nor do they want to clash with family, society or politics. They want a field where they are worshipped but not scrutinised. Becoming a Sadhvi has become a medium of that 'holy image', which neither makes anyone question, nor forces anyone to answer.

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When an ordinary woman struggles with mental exhaustion, she is silenced with “take rest”, “give yourself time” and so on. But when someone says “I am now a Sadhvi”, her exhaustion is turned into a spiritual epic. She gets a platform, media support, and a crowd of followers.

This Sadhvi now speaks on the mike - “I renounced everything”, but what I got after renouncing that - no ordinary housewife can ever get. She gives sermons, but never talks about women's rights, social justice, or economic equality, because these topics can make her self-created spiritual field uncomfortable. She does not clash with any government, does not speak on any inequality, she just keeps creating the cycle of meditation, mind, soul and life.

This is what we can call - “refined enjoyment”.

This is such enjoyment which is not directly obtained in material things, but through attention, power, recognition and prestige. This is not lust, but definitely a 'hunger for fame'. There is no adornment in it, but definitely a desire for self-display. There is no personal responsibility in it, but there is definitely a shadow of collective control.

Society, especially the male-dominated mindset, finds this role very acceptable. It does not want a woman who questions, thinks, and struggles. It wants an 'obedient Sadhvi' who stays silent under the cover of religion and remains the face of 'peaceful spirituality'. In such a situation, becoming a Sadhvi becomes a safe platform - which not only protects the woman from her inner questions, but also fulfils the expectations of society.

Therefore, many of today's Sadhvis are not actually 'renunciants', but women who are tired of life, broken by relationships, dissatisfied with society, and hide this dissatisfaction in the 'search for God'. They want that no one should say anything to them, no one should have any expectations, but everyone should respect them, everyone should listen to them, everyone should believe them. This is not spirituality, but 'social cleverness'.

In this modern spirituality, there is stage in place of sacrifice, limelight in place of penance, and digital glamour in place of peace. This is a spirituality where salvation is still the goal, but the path is now traversed through YouTube channels, Instagram live and online courses.

Therefore, we have to understand that renunciation is not only proved by clothes, hair or speech. It is related to the mind, conduct and intention. As long as the process of becoming a Sadhvi remains not of self-introspection but of self-display, this Sadhvi culture will continue to swallow real Sadhana.

This is not a protest, but a humble request - if women become Sadhvis, they should really do Sadhana. They should come down from the stage and speak on those topics which the society is afraid of. They should not only meditate, but also adopt the path of contemplation and movement. Because if every woman becomes silent after becoming a Sadhvi, then who will bring that change?

Sacrifice is not something that is seen, sacrifice is something that is done from within. And enjoyment does not come only through the senses, it also comes through admiration, ego and identity.

Unless we understand this new 'Sadhvi trend', spirituality will remain an industry, a style, a marketing model - in which one will keep smiling on every platform wearing the clothes of renunciation of worldly pleasures.

The author is a Research Scholar in Political Science, Poet, freelance journalist and columnist.

## Amarnath Yatra Balancing Faith And Ecology



■ Mool Raj

Every year, the Amarnath Yatra draws lakhs of pilgrims from across India to the holy cave shrine nestled in the Himalayas of Jammu and Kashmir. The journey, infused with immense spiritual significance, symbolizes devotion, endurance, and unity. However, as the footfall continues to rise—expected to surpass 5 lakh in 2025—the fragile ecological balance of the region demands urgent attention.

The pilgrimage, though sacred, passes through environmentally sensitive zones. The routes via Baltal and Pahalgam traverse glacier-fed streams, alpine meadows, and wildlife habitats. Increased human activity, littering, over-construction of facilities, and vehicular emissions are posing serious risks to the pristine environment. The effects are visible: receding glaciers, disrupted water sources, and frequent landslides. In a region already vulnerable to climate change, unchecked pilgrim inflow without ecological planning could lead to irreversible damage.

This year's Yatra, while logistically smoother due to better roads and enhanced security, still faces criticism for overlooking sustainability. Temporary langars (community kitchens), plastic waste from bottled water and snacks, and non-biodegradable camping materials continue to accumulate along the route. The recent cloudburst warnings have further raised concerns about the

changing climate patterns in the region.

Balancing faith and ecology is not about limiting devotion but enhancing responsibility. It is time for the government, shrine board, and pilgrims to adopt an “eco-yatra” model. Mandatory eco-training for pilgrims before the journey, bans on single-use plastic, strict waste disposal norms, and sustainable langar practices must become standard. The Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) has introduced RFID tracking and digital permits, but ecological regulation needs to be equally prioritized.

Moreover, involving local communities in sustainable tourism can ensure both economic upliftment and environmental protection. Encouraging eco-tour guides, biodegradable supplies, and regulated tent camps can create a balance between tradition and terrain.

The need for environmental impact assessments (EIA) before expanding infrastructure—like roads or helipads—must not be bypassed. While helicopters reduce travel time, they also increase noise pollution, affect high-altitude wildlife, and can disturb the fragile ecosystem.

Faith must coexist with foresight. Lord Shiva, the deity of Amarnath, is also considered the “Lord of Destruction”—a reminder that nature, when pushed too far, can retaliate. In protecting this sacred land, we honour both the divine and the delicate ecosystem that supports it.

Amarnath Yatra 2025 should set an example for future pilgrimages—not just in religious harmony, but in ecological responsibility. Let this be the year where spiritual journeys align with sustainable paths. Because devotion doesn't end at the shrine—it begins with the way we tread the earth that leads to it.

The Author is a regular Columnist and Freelance Writer

**Should you worry about heartburn? When to see a doctor for chest pains**

Camilla Foster

**LONDON, JUL 21:** That familiar burning sensation in your chest after a heavy meal, often dismissed as mere heartburn, could signal something more serious. While typically a harmless digestive reaction, this common discomfort can, in some instances, be a red flag for underlying health concerns.

One such condition is Barrett's oesophagus, where cells in the food pipe undergo abnormal changes, significantly elevating the risk of oesophageal cancer, according to NHS guidance.

From next year, approximately 1,500 individuals across London and the East Midlands will be offered new 'heartburn health checks' specifically designed to screen for Barrett's oesophagus.

The innovative test involves swallowing a capsule attached to a string. Once in the stomach, the capsule dissolves, releasing a small sponge. After a brief wait, NHS staff retrieve the sponge, which has collected cells from the oesophagus for laboratory analysis.

Professor Peter Johnson, NHS national cancer director, said: "For the majority of people with persistent reflux, these quick and easy heartburn health checks will provide peace of mind that you aren't at increased risk of cancer, and for those who do find out they have Barrett's oesophagus, regular follow-up checks will be put in place so any further cell changes can be spotted early."

"Heartburn, also known as reflux, is characterised by a burning discomfort or pain behind the breastbone, which can sometimes extend into the throat," explains Dr Matthew Long, consultant gastroenterologist at The Lister Hospital, part of HCA Healthcare UK.

"It usually occurs after eating or when lying down and is caused by stomach acid irritating the lining of the oesophagus. Additional symptoms may include a sour taste in the mouth, hoarseness, or a chronic cough."

"The most common cause of heartburn is acid reflux, which occurs when the lower oesophageal sphincter – the ring of muscle at the bottom of the oesophagus – weakens or relaxes inappropriately," explains Long. "Heartburn may also be associated with a hiatus hernia, where part of the stomach pushes through the diaphragm opening that the oesophagus passes through. This condition allows stomach acid to travel upwards."

"Common triggers include large or fatty meals, alcohol, caffeine, smoking, and being overweight. Stress and certain medications can also contribute."

"Mild or occasional heartburn can often be managed with simple lifestyle changes, such as eating smaller meals, avoiding late-night eating, reducing alcohol and spicy or fatty food intake, and losing weight if necessary," says Long. "Over-the-counter treatments like antacids, alginates, or proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) such as omeprazole can also be effective. If symptoms persist, seeking medical advice is recommended."

Courtesy Independent

**Early diagnosis, simple lifestyle changes can prevent GERD complications: experts**

Healthline

**CHENNAI, JULY 21:** Doctors stressed the need for early diagnosis and simple lifestyle changes to prevent further complications on GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease), a digestive disorder, at a webinar 'GERD-free Living: From Burn to Balance' on Sunday.

The discussion was the final episode of the 15-part webinar series under the 'Healthy India Happy India initiative' by Naruvi Hospitals in collaboration with The Hindu.

A panel of gastroenterologists, including E. Rabindranath and Jacob Raja A.S., both consultants at Naruvi Hospitals, Vellore, along

with A.C. Arun, clinical lead, Gastroenterology at Lily Mission Hospital, Madurai, spoke on common concerns over GERD.

Explaining the digestive system and the role of esophageal sphincter, Dr. Jacob said that the sphincter acts as the gateway between the lower esophagus and the stomach to prevent regurgitation. "When the Gastroesophageal Reflux (GER) happens multiple times in a week impacting quality of life, work and sleep and causes symptoms such as persistent heart burn, chest pain, trouble in swallowing, then it can turn into a chronic medical condition called the GERD and requires treatment," he said.



Dr. Jacob said the global burden of GERD was quite high — one in every five individuals — with Europe, North America and parts of Asia reporting high numbers of cases. In

comparison, India reports fewer cases, but its prevalence is increasing in young adults given their unhealthy lifestyle and eating habits.

Speaking on diagnosis, lifestyle

changes and management of GERD, Dr. Rabindranath advised people to quit smoking and alcohol consumption and avoid spicy and fatty foods and late night meals. He also advised against sedentary lifestyle and stress and for practising intake portion control and weight management. "GERD mimics include heart issues, esophageal disorders, stomach issues, anxiety episodes, and panic attacks; therefore, medical consultation is important," he added.

Sharing tips to manage GERD, he advised "elevating the head during sleep, keeping a gap of three to four hours between dinner and sleep, sleeping on the left side and wearing loose clothes while exercising".

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# SC restrains ex-IPS officer and CBI officials from media statements in idol theft case

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21:** The Supreme Court today recorded an undertaking from retired IPS officer Pon Manickavel, accused of falsely implicating police officials in Tamil Nadu's idol theft cases, that he would refrain from giving any media interviews related to the matter. At Manickavel's request, the court also restrained officials of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the investigating officer from making any statements against him during this period. A bench comprising Justice

Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta was hearing a plea filed by the CBI seeking surrender of Manickavel's passport and a restraining order preventing him from giving media interviews. Appearing for Manickavel, Senior Advocate S Nagamuthu submitted that his client's passport is due to expire soon. Therefore, he will apply for issuance of a fresh passport, and once renewed, it will be surrendered. Nagamuthu further assured the court that Manickavel would not leave India without prior permission from the trial court. On the CBI's plea to restrain

Manickavel from giving media statements, Nagamuthu submitted that his client undertakes not to make any public statement to press or media (electronic or print) concerning the present case. He requested that CBI officials also be similarly restrained to ensure fairness. The court accepted these submissions and passed its order accordingly. The FIR against Manickavel was registered on the complaint of suspended Deputy Superintendent of Police Kader Batcha, who was arrested for allegedly colluding in the theft of idols



from a Pazhavor temple in Madras High Court granted Manickavel anticipatory bail with conditions, including In August last year, the

daily appearance before CBI for four weeks and a prohibition on tampering with evidence or influencing witnesses. However, after interrogation, Manickavel allegedly gave media interviews discussing details of the investigation, which Batcha claimed interfered with the probe and violated bail conditions. Batcha subsequently filed a representation before the CBI and a petition before the Madras High Court seeking action against Manickavel's media interactions. In March, Manickavel had submitted before the High Court

that he had stopped giving interviews and would not do so in future, following which he gave a written undertaking and the petition was disposed of. The present petition before the Supreme Court was filed by the CBI seeking additional bail conditions, impounding of his passport and prohibition on media statements. In May, the apex court had issued notice to Manickavel. Today's order restrains both parties from making public statements, maintaining the status quo until further proceedings. UNI SNG PRS

## Microsoft warns businesses and agencies of possible 'active attacks'

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21:** In an alert issued on Sunday, Microsoft, a technology conglomerate headquartered in Redmond, Washington, issued a warning of "active attacks" that aimed to target the servers leveraged by both government bodies and



global agencies. This attack will expectedly target the software sources used by agencies and the government for sharing documents internally.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) warned about this attack, with no other official information disclosed. This federal agency also said that it is collaborating with both private and federal-sector partners to combat this attack.

The FBI is the intelligence and security service of the United States. It acts as a federal law agency body and reports to both the attorney general and the director of national intelligence.

Reportedly, the attacks will be limited to the on-premises SharePoint servers, which are used internally by most organizations. Microsoft confirmed that SharePoint online and cloud-based versions of Microsoft will not be affected by these attacks. UNI SAS PRS

## In-House counsels seek protection from summons: GCAI moves SC in lawyers' privilege case

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21:** The General Counsels' Association of India (GCAI) has filed an intervention application before the Supreme Court in the suo motu proceedings concerning investigative agencies summoning advocates for legal advice rendered by them.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran today allowed the intervention applications filed in relation to the matter.

The intervention application filed through Advocate EC Agrawala, highlighted that in-house lawyers perform core legal functions, drafting pleadings, preparing affidavits, and advising

on complex corporate and taxation matters within their companies, similar to external advocates.

"The said in-house counsels undertake drafting, preparation of pleadings and affidavits, and advise on various legal issues. They are the first persons whose legal advice is sought by the company, often without seeking secondary advice from outside counsel," the application states, Agrawala said.

The plea argues that the principles of privilege and confidentiality between a lawyer and client apply equally to in-house counsel as they render legal advice in their corporate roles.

It cites that countries like Singapore, the UK, Australia, and the USA extend attorney-client priv-



ilege to in-house counsel for legal (not business) advice.

The GCAI, representing in-house legal counsel of leading companies, has argued that corporate counsel must also be

afforded safeguards against legal action for professional advice rendered.

Among the senior in-house legal counsels who have moved the Court are Hemant Kumar

(Larsen & Toubro), Sanjeev Gemawat (Essar; GCAI Founder), Akhil Prasad (Boeing India), Vineet Vij (Tech Mahindra), CV Raghu (Samvardhana Motherson Group), Deepak Jacob (Dream Sports), Sujet Jain (Nykaa)

The Supreme Court initiated suo motu proceedings on July 9 after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) issued summons to Senior Advocates Arvind Datar and Pratap Venugopal, sparking widespread criticism from bar associations nationwide.

The ED later withdrew the summons and issued a circular directing its field offices not to summon advocates in violation of Section 132, clarifying that any exception must now be approved by its Director. UNI SNG AAB

## "Don't politicise court proceedings," SC tells petitioner in contempt case against Mamata Banerjee

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21:** The Supreme Court today cautioned against politicising judicial proceedings while hearing a plea seeking initiation of criminal contempt against West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for her remarks on the Court's ruling in the teachers' recruitment scam case.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai, Justice K Vinod Chandran, and Justice NV Anjaria was hearing the petition filed by Aatmdeep, a public charitable trust, which sought criminal

contempt proceedings against Banerjee.

Senior Advocate Maninder Singh, appearing for the petitioner, requested the Bench to defer the matter as a sanction request for initiating contempt had been filed before the Attorney General.

Responding to the submission, CJI Gavai remarked, "Are you so sure that you will get the consent? Don't try to politicise before the Court; your political battle, you should fight somewhere else."

The Bench then agreed to list the matter after four weeks. The plea arises from Banerjee's

alleged objectionable comments following the Supreme Court's April verdict, delivered by a Bench of then Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar, which upheld the Calcutta High Court's decision invalidating nearly 25,000 teaching and non-teaching appointments made by the West Bengal School Service Commission (SSC) in 2016.

The Court had observed that the selection process was vitiated by fraud and tainted beyond repair, warranting cancellation of the appointments en bloc.

UNI SNG AAB

## Mammals in Australia were hardest hit by extinctions in past 100,000 years: Study

■ **United News of India**

**ADELAIDE, JULY 21:** A new study conducted by researchers in Flinders University, South Australia, found that mammals in Australia and New Guinea have been hardest hit by extinctions and invasive species over the past 100,000 years.

The study found that the loss and introduction of animals over 10 kg have radically changed local ecosystems, prompting new conservation concerns, according to a statement issued by Flinders University today.

Australia once hosted giants like the Diprotodon, a rhino-sized marsupial, and the Megalania lizard, which have been extinct for tens of thousands of years.

Since European arrival in the 18th century, invasive species such as goats, deer, and pigs have further strained native ecosystems, the study said.

Mammals and herbivores have been hardest hit by selective extinctions and species introductions, while birds and reptiles have remained more stable, said lead researcher John Llewelyn from Flinders University.

Mammals have faced the highest extinction rates and account for most large species introduced since European settlement, said the study published in Quaternary Australasia, journal of the Austral-

asian Quaternary Association.

"This bias for introducing mammals, in combination with evolutionary isolation, could partially explain why native mammals have been so strongly affected," said Flinders Professor Corey Bradshaw, a co-author of the study. Llewelyn said Australia's isolation shaped unique wildlife, but



it doesn't fully explain why mammals have declined more than birds and reptiles.

Diet may play a key role: mammals are mainly herbivores, making them more vulnerable to environmental change, while birds are largely omnivorous and reptiles carnivorous, offering them greater resilience, he said.

Bradshaw said invasive mammals threaten native species without replacing lost ecological roles, highlighting the need to identify these gaps and develop targeted conservation strategies. UNI

## Russian delegation for upcoming talks with Ukraine will remain unchanged: Kremlin

■ **United News of India**

**MOSCOW, JULY 21:** The team, comprising the Russian delegation to Ukraine will remain unchanged for the upcoming round of negotiations with Kyiv, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, reports RIA Novosti.

"There are no changes to the Russian negotiating team," Peskov said when asked by reporters whether there would be any changes to the Russian delegation for the third round of talks with Ukraine.

Earlier on July 19, Volodymyr Zelensky revealed that Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council Secretary, Rustem Umerov, had proposed resuming negotiations with Russia by arranging another meeting between the negotiating teams next week.

Russia and Ukraine have already held two rounds of direct talks, which took place in Istanbul. The talks resulted in a prisoner exchange, and Russia also handed over the bodies of fallen Ukrainian servicemen.

Additionally, both sides exchanged draft memorandums on conflict resolution.

However, a date for the third round has not yet been set, despite repeated statements from Turkey and Russia expressing readiness to proceed.



Moscow will provide an update as soon as there is clarity on the dates for the next round of Russia-Ukraine negotiations, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

The Kremlin has confirmed that Russia and Ukraine are poised to exchange differing draft memorandums concerning a settlement, underscoring the deep divisions that will necessitate extensive diplomatic efforts. UNI ANV SSP

## Aussie researchers develop new framework to identify effective shark bite prevention

■ **United News of India**

**ADELAIDE, JULY 21:** Australian researchers have developed a new framework to identify effective shark bite prevention amid rising public concern over shark incidents.

The study compares modern and traditional methods to find suitable solutions for the dynamic



surf conditions of Queensland's Gold Coast, according to a statement from Flinders University in South Australia today.

Flinders University researchers, working alongside the University of Queensland and state agencies, assess 15 shark bite prevention strategies using 12 criteria, weighing effectiveness alongside social, economic, and environmental impacts.

The study, published in the journal People and Nature under the British Ecological Society, compares lethal methods like nets and drumlines with non-lethal options, including drones, SMART drumlines, sonar, and electronic deterrents.

A SMART (Shark-Management-Alert-in-Real-Time) drumline is a shark mitigation tool that uses a baited hook and satellite alerts to notify authorities in real-time when a shark is caught, aiming to reduce harm to marine life while monitoring shark activity near beaches, according to government officials.

The study finds no single solution effective for all settings, recommending a combined approach of public education, behaviour change, and coordinated efforts.

Traditional barriers suit calm waters but not surf zones, while drones are effective and popular. Personal deterrents show promise but need greater public awareness, said the study co-author Charlie Huveneers, Southern Shark Ecology Group Research leader at Flinders University.

Non-lethal alerts and acoustic tagging show promise but need further development and public awareness, while sonar's potential may grow with improved technology, the researchers said. UNI/XINHUA ANV SSP

# PUCA announced Rs 50 Crore Scholarship for Bihar Students at Patna Education Summit

HT News Desk

**JAMMU, JULY 21:** In a significant step towards enhancing educational opportunities for students in Bihar, the Punjab Unaided Colleges Association (PUCA) announced Rs 50 crore scholarship program during the Bihar Education Summit held at Hotel Gargee Grand, Patna.

The event was organized in collaboration with the Educational Counselors Welfare Association (ECWA) and witnessed the participation of over 300 leading education consultants from Bihar and 20 top colleges from Punjab.

Dr. Anshu Kataria, President of PUCA and Chairman of Aryans Group of Colleges, Rajpura, stated that the summit aimed

to strengthen educational ties between Punjab and Bihar while presenting deserving students with new academic avenues beyond their home state. Each participating college offered scholarships worth Rs 2.5 crore to deserving students from Bihar.

Abhishek Kumar, President of ECWA, expressed his gratitude to PUCA and emphasized the importance of such collaborative efforts in providing Bihar students with better academic exposure and opportunities. He appreciated the initiative and encouraged more such events in the future.

Adv. Amit Sharma, Senior Vice President of PUCA and Chairman of Amritsar Group of Colleges, reiterated PUCA's commitment to quality education,



noting that the scholarship program demonstrated PUCA's dedication to supporting students and educators alike.

In this education summit of Bihar, famous educationists of

Punjab Dr. Anshu Kataria, Amit Sharma, Raminder Mittal, Tarsem Saini, Engr. Jaswant S. Khaira, Raman Bhalla, S. Manjit Singh, Dr. Mohit Mahajan, Dr. Akashdeep Singh, S. Gurkirat

Singh, Ankit Jain, Dr. Kapil Katyal, Dr. G.S. Nagpal, Ashok Garg, Dr. Gursimranjit Singh, Dr. Swarn Prakash Garg, Engr. S.K. Punj, Dr. Rajesh Bhardwaj, Dr. Gopal Munjal, Dr. Gurpreet

Singh, Dr. D.J. Singh participated.

It is worth mentioning that Aryans Group of Colleges, Rajpura; Amritsar Group of Colleges, Amritsar; Ashoka Group

of Institutions, Patiala; Asian Group of Colleges, Patiala; Akal College, Mastuana; Aman Bhal-la College, Pathankot; Doaba Group of Colleges, Kharar; Golden Group of Institutions, Gurdaspur; Global Group of Institutes, Amritsar; Gulzar Group of Colleges, Khana; Jain Group of Colleges, Abhor; Long-gawal Group of Colleges, Mohali; Punjab College of Pharmacy, Bathinda; SVIET Group, Banur; Sukhjinder Group of Institutes, Gurdaspur; Saraswati Group of Colleges, Maur Mandi; Sri Sai Group of Inst, Pathankot; SBS Group of Educational Institutions, Patti; Swift Group of Colleges, Rajpura; Universal Group of Institutions, Lalru, Vidya Jyoti Eduversity, Derabassi from Punjab were the participants.

## JMC intensifies efforts to control Stray Dog Population

Opens additional Sterilization Center at Chowadi

HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, JULY 21:** In a significant step to ensure public safety, reduce dog bite incidents, and promote animal welfare, Jammu Municipal Corporation has expanded its Animal Birth Control (ABC) Program by starting an additional sterilization center at the SPCA premises in the Chowadi area. This initiative, under the direction of Dr. Devansh Yadav, Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, aims to effectively control the growing population of stray dogs in Jammu city through humane and scientific methods, following the guidelines of the Government of India and the Animal Welfare Board of India.

Until recently, sterilization of stray dogs was carried out only at the Roop Nagar center, where about 12-18 dogs were being sterilized daily. However, with the increasing number of stray dogs and the need to accelerate the process, an additional center at Chowadi became operational in July 2025. This has doubled the sterilization capacity of the Municipal Corporation, and now nearly 40-50 stray dogs are being sterilized every day at both centers.

Sterilization plays a vital role in addressing the challenges posed by the uncontrolled growth of the stray dog population, which can lead to more dog bites, increased risk of rabies, and suffering among animals due to lack of food and shelter. Sterilized dogs tend to be healthier, calmer, and unable to reproduce, leading to a gradual and humane reduction of the stray dog population over time.

Animal Welfare Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. Gaurav Chowdhary appealed to citizens to support and cooperate with this important initiative. He informed that both Roop Nagar and Chowadi centers are operating daily as per government guidelines and requested residents to inform the Municipal Corporation if they see unsterilized stray dogs in their locality so that they can be included in the program at the earliest. He also reminded the public not to harm or relocate stray dogs, as it disrupts the program and violates animal protection laws.

The Jammu Municipal Corporation remains committed to creating a safer, cleaner, and more harmonious city for residents and animals alike. Citizens are encouraged to actively participate by reporting unsterilized dogs, feeding stray dogs responsibly in designated areas, and supporting the sterilization teams. Together, we can build a safer and healthier Jammu while ensuring the welfare of animals.

## Close Schools, Colleges in Rain-Affected Areas of Poonch: Dr Shazad Declare School Holidays in Rain-Hit Areas of Poonch: BADC

HT News Desk

**JAMMU, JULY 21:** The Jammu and Kashmir Border Area Development Conference (JK-BADC), a registered organization working for the welfare of border and tribal communities of J&K, has urged the Deputy Commissioner and Chief Education Officer of Poonch to declare holidays in schools and colleges situated in the rain-affected areas of the border district.

In a statement, the organization expressed concern over the challenges faced by students, parents, and teachers in accessing educational institutions due to incessant rainfall and landslides.

"Anyone familiar with the demography and geography of Poonch knows that a majority of our schools are located on hills, slopes and near seasonal Nallahs (water bodies). During the rainy season, the risk of landslides and



flash flood is high, and roads often remain closed, making it extreme-

ly difficult and unsafe to reach schools. In the best public interest, it is imperative that holidays are declared for at least a week or a fortnight in the worst-affected areas," said Dr. Shazad Ahmad Malik, Chairman of JK-BADC and former Vice Chancellor.

He emphasized that the government and district administration must act in a timely and sensitive manner. "They should have proactively declared holi-

days in these institutions. We cannot compromise the safety of our children and teachers. Human life is paramount."

Dr. Shazad urged the Deputy Commissioner of Poonch, in consultation with the Chief Education Officer, to assess the situation across various affected zones and issue appropriate directions for temporary closure of educational institutions to prevent any untoward incident.

## Kalsan village School Mishap

### DC meets injured children at District Hospital Poonch, sanctions Ex-Gratia Relief

HT News Desk / DIPR

**POONCH, JULY 21:** In a tragic incident today, a large rock rolled and fell on the building of Government Primary School (GPS) Kalssa, situated in Ward No. 4, Village Bhainch, Tehsil Haveli, District Poonch. The unfortunate incident resulted in the death of a young student and injuries to four other children.

The deceased has been identified as Ehsan Ali, aged 5 years, son of Mohd Razaq, resident of Kalsan Bhainch. The injured children have been identified as Mohammad Safeer, age 7, son of Mohammad Shareef, resident of Kalsan Bhainch, Bilal Farooq, age 8, son of Farooq Ahmed, resident of Bhainch, Aftab Ahmed, age 6, son of Idress Ahmed, resident of Bhainch, Tobia Kouser, age 7, daughter of Basharat Hussain, resident of Bhainch.

Immediately after receiving the information about the incident, Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal visited the Maharaja Sukhdev Singh District Hospital, where the injured children were being treated. The Deputy Commissioner met with the victims and their families and directed the medical team to provide the best possible treatment to ensure speedy recovery of the children.

As immediate relief, the Deputy Commissioner disbursed financial assistance under the Red Cross Fund, with ₹1,00,000 provided to the family of the deceased child and ₹50,000 each to the families of the injured children. Additional District Development



Commissioner, Additional Deputy Commissioner, ACR, Tehsildar Haveli and other senior district officers were also present at the hospital. The Deputy Commissioner

expressed deep grief over the tragic loss of life and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. He assured all possible assistance from the district administration.

## DC Rajouri reviews implementation of flagship government schemes

HT News Desk / DIPR

**RAJOURI, JULY 21:** Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today chaired a review meeting to assess the implementation status of the flagship schemes in the district.

The review meeting covered a wide range of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and other Government initiatives, including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, AMRUT 2.0, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, PMAY-Urban 2.0, Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban and Grameen), National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM), PM Vishwakarma Yojana, Bharat Net, Lakhpati Didi, POSHAN 2.0, PM Adarsh Gram Yojana, SWAMITVA, PM SHRI Schools, and Computerisation of Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS), in addition to the Jammu-Akhnoor-Poonch National Highway Project.

While reviewing the PM SHRI (Schools for Rising India) initiative, the Chief Education Officer presented a school-wise status report. The Deputy Commissioner expressed concern over the low expenditure levels in some institutions and directed the concerned officers to take immediate corrective measures to ensure timely and optimal utilization of allocated funds. He also reviewed the physical progress of ongoing infrastructure and development works under the scheme.

Highlighting the district's strides in digital governance, the DC was informed that 100 percent computerisation of PACS has been achieved in Rajouri. Under the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA ID) initiative, the district has attained 67 percent coverage, with the DC instructing concerned departments to intensify efforts to achieve complete saturation within stipulated timelines.

The Deputy Commissioner further reviewed the implementation of social security schemes such as the PM Jan Dhan Yojana, PM Jeevan Bima Yojana, and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana, stressing the importance of timely saturation of beneficiaries. He directed the officers to adopt targeted outreach campaigns to ensure that no eligible individual is left out.

## Reasi admin finalises arrangements for Shri Budha Amarnathji Yatra-2025

HT News Desk / DIPR

**REASI, JULY 21:** The District Administration Reasi has finalized the arrangements for the upcoming Shri Budha Amarnathji Yatra 2025. A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Sukhdev Singh Samyal to review preparations and ensure the smooth and secure conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

During the meeting, the ADDC held detailed discussions with officials from line depart-

ments on key aspects such as drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, medical facilities, and sanitation.

It was informed that the first batch of pilgrims is scheduled to arrive at Bhambla on July 30, where they will halt at Shiv Shakti Ashram. In this context, the ADDC directed the Public Health Engineering (PHE) and Power Development Department (PDD) to ensure adequate water and electricity supply at both the Shiv Shakti Ashram and the langar site.

The Block Medical Officer



(BMO) was instructed to deploy sufficient medical staff, along with essential medicines and ambulances, at the Ashram to address the health needs of the pilgrims. The ADDC also directed the concerned authorities to install mobile toilets at identified locations, based on the requirements.

Furthermore, he asked the Tehsildar Pouni and BDO Pouni to conduct a joint inspection of the designated sites to ensure that all facilities are in place. The Public Works Department (PWD) was instructed to keep

standby machinery ready to handle any exigencies, particularly in the event of natural disasters or road blockages.

The ADDC emphasized the need for coordinated efforts among all departments to provide a safe, hygienic, and comfortable experience to the devotees undertaking the sacred Yatra.

ACR Nitin Verma, ACD Vijay Kumar, CMO, Dy. SP HQ, EO MC Reasi, Tehsildar Pouni, and representatives from Shri Budha Amarnathji Yatra Committee were also present at the meeting.

## PM SURYA GHAR BIJLI YOJANA

### DDC Reasi stresses accelerated action; withholds salaries of 4 JEs for Poor performance

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**REASI, JUL 21:** To assess the implementation of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, District Development Commissioner (DDC) Nidhi Malik today chaired a high-level review meeting with senior officers of the Power Development Department (PDD) and other stakeholders, today.

During the meeting, the DDC reviewed division-wise registrations, applications, and installations under the scheme. It was informed that a total of 1,057 registrations have been completed, with 207 beneficiaries having deposited the upfront cost. "So far, 168 rooftop solar systems have been installed, while 39 more are at various stages of completion" the meeting was told.

While acknowledging the progress, the DDC expressed concern over the shortfall in achieving the district's overall targets. In view of the underperformance, the DDC ordered to withhold the salaries of four Junior Engineers (JEs). DDC Malik further stated that if performance levels are not improved immediately, strict action will be taken.

The DDC directed the Executive Engineer PDD to ensure consistent follow-up on targets and to hold underperforming staff accountable. She emphasized the need for a coordinated and fast-track approach to bridge existing gaps and achieving the set goals within stipulated timelines.

The DDC also stressed the importance of intensified public awareness and outreach activities to educate citizens about the benefits of rooftop solar energy. She called for door-to-door campaigns, community engagement, and the use of all available platforms to encourage greater public participation in this flagship scheme, which promotes clean and sustainable energy solutions.

Challenges affecting implementation were also discussed, including the ongoing strike by daily wagers and issues related to banking processes. DDC Malik instructed the concerned departments to proactively engage with bank cluster heads to expedite loan processing and address procedural delays. The meeting was attended by ADDC Reasi Sukhdev Singh Samyal, CPO Narinder Kumar, Executive Engineer PDD, AEEs and other senior officials.

# Jammu DC calls for unified drive to intensify TB detection and treatment

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, JULY 21:** Deputy Commissioner Jammu Sachin Kumar Vaishya chaired a review meeting today to assess the implementation of the TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan in the district.

He directed officers to intensify screening and treatment of tuberculosis, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as senior citizens, alcohol and tobacco users, HIV-positive individuals, diabetics and socially disadvantaged population.

The meeting was

attended by Chief Medical Officer Dr Harbaksh Singh, District Tuberculosis Officer Dr Anu. SDMs, Chief Planning Officer Ajay Pal Singh, Chief Education Officer besides others concerned were also present.

The DC instructed to intensify screening to identify suspected cases and promptly put them on treatment. He underlined the importance of coordination, especially with Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development departments for effective awareness and detection efforts.

The Chief Education Officer was directed to

organise TB awareness campaigns in schools, noting that students can help disseminate key health messages.

Block Medical Officers were asked

to organise targeted screening camps in coordination with Sub-Divisional Magistrates to ensure early identification of symptoms such as persistent

cough, fever, night sweats and weight loss. The DC also stressed follow-up to ensure that diagnosed individuals complete treatment.

### Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Wagoora (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Death of MOHAMMAD ASSADULLAH MIR S/O ABDUL AHAD MIR R/O WAGOORA Tehsil WAGOORA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Death as 08/08 /2001 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 death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Wagoora

### Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

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

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of ABDUL HAMID DAR S/O ABDUL REHMAN DAR R/O KHISIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 18 /10 /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 entertained.

Sd/- 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 Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of AISHA SHABIR D/O SHABIR AHMAD BHAT R/O ALAPORA Tehsil WAGOORA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 21/02/2022 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.

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

## Office of the Assistant Director Tourism, Gulmarg

Email: gulmargtourism@gmail.com | Telefax: 01954-294439/87

Subject: Notice regarding Ineligible Registrations under j&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act.

#### Notice

Whereas, a preliminary scrutiny conducted by this office has identified a list of individuals whose registrations under the MK Registration of Tourist Trade Act have been found to be ineligible for one or more of the following reasons:

Non-renewal of registration within the prescribed time under the Act,

Being in Government employment,

Or any other grounds which render the registration ineligible under the provisions of the Act.

Whereas, in view of ensuring legal compliance and streamlining the process of registration, this office deems it necessary to issue an opportunity to such stakeholders to submit any valid claims or objections against their ineligibility.

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred under the j&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act, it is hereby notified for the information of the concerned individuals (or their legal heirs/representatives) that they may submit valid objections or claims with documentary evidence in support thereof within 30 (thirty) days from the date of publication of this notice.

Failure to respond within the stipulated period shall result in cancellation of the said registrations without any further notice, and no claims shall be entertained thereafter.

Activity/Service of Tourist Guide

Registration under Tourist Trade Act, 1978 I 1982/2011

Total Registration with the office of Assistant Director Tourism, Gulmarg.

S.No	Name	Parentage	Residence	Redg. No	Renewal Date
1	Nissar Ahmad Khan	Gh. Mohi din Khan	Budipora Tangmarg	PW 1143	2023
2	Gh. Rasool Lone	Mohd Munwar Lone	Ferozpora Tangmarg	PW 501	2023
3	Nazir Ahmad Lone	Farid Abdullah Lone	Qazipora Tangmarg	PW 333	2021
4	Tariq Ahmad Lone	Farid Ahmad Khan	Qazipora Tangmarg	9 PW 92	2023
5	Bashir Ahmad Lone	Ab Samad Lone	Ferozpora Tangmarg	PW 1040	2023
6	Sajad Ahmad Dar	Bashir Ahmad Dar	Budipora Tangmarg	PW 906	2023
7	Manzoor Ahmad Lone	Ab Jabbar Lone	Waniloo Tangmarg	1182 PW	2023
8	Gh. Nabi Bhat	Nazir Ahmad Bhat	Ferozpora	PW 1300	2023
9	Nazir Ahmad Lone	Mohd Shbir Lone	Katipora Tangmarg	PW 872	2023
10	Bashir Ahmad Wani	Ali Mohd Wani	Khalipora Tangmarg	PW 1410	2023
11	Hilal Ahmad Malik	Mohd Sultan Malik	Katipora Tangmarg	PW 1511	2023

No: Reg/ 383/Adtg/518 | Dated: 19-07-2025

DIPK: 4029/25 | Dated: 21-07-2025

Sd/- Assistant Director Tourism Gulmarg

### Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of SHAYESTA RASHID S/O ABDUL RASHID GANAIE R/O KAKOTHAL 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 KAKOTHAL of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the GANAIE community having annual income 344000// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

1. ABDUL RASHID GANAIE father 50 years Labour
2. GULSHAN BEGAM Mother 40 years Housewife
3. ULFAT RASHID sister 21 years sister
4. SHAISTA RASHID self 18 years //
5. MOHSIN RASHID Brother 16 years //

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

### Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of MOHAMMAD AKBAR RESHI S/O GH RASOOL RESHI R/O KAKOTHAL 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 KAKOTHAL of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the RESHI community having annual income 580000// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

1. GH MOHD RESHI father in law 75 years old aged
2. SHAREEFA BEGAM Mother in law 70 years old aged
3. MOHD AKBAR RESHI 50 years self labour
4. HAFEEZA BEGUM wife 48 years H/W
5. TANZEEL AKBAR Daughtet 15 years student
6. AASIM AKBAR son 12 years //
7. AZHAR AKBAR son 10 years //
8. RUBERNA AKHTER sister in law 25 years H/W

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir (U T) Office of the Executive Engineer Machinery Division Kashmir, Mechanical & Hospital Engineering Department, Kashmir

Fax No: 0194-2497093 | email: xenmds@gmail.com | website: www.medkashmir.org

### Corrigendum 02 For Date Extension

Name of work: - Restoring functionality through repairs / maintenance of Bore Well No. 102 of department of Agriculture in District Pulwama under implementation of National Mission of Saffron (under Culuster-1).

Reference: This office e-NIT No: - MDSK/TS /2025-26/11' Date:27-06-2025. (Tender Id: - 2025\_PWDJK\_279966\_1)

Due to no response, the critical dates of the above referred e-NIT are extended as under:

S.No	Description	Previous Dates	New Dates
01.	Last date of downloading/ submission of bids	18-07-2025 upto 06:55 PM	28-07-2025 upto 06:55 PM
02.	Date of opening of bids online	19-07-2025 at 02:00 PM	29-07-2025 at 02:00 PM

All other terms, conditions and specifications as stipulated in the e-NIT shall remain unchanged.

No: MDSK/TS/1399-1402 | Date: 19 -07-2025

DIPK: 4011/25 | Dated: 21-07-2025

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Machinery Division, Kashmir

## UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR Office Of The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (Phe) Department Division Qazigund Email: qazigundphedivision@gmail.com (Phone No./Fax No. 01931-295040) BOQ Corrigendum

Due to typical error during preparation of Bill of Quantity of e-NIT No: 06 of 2025-26 issued under No/PHEQ/CC/1723-40 Dated: 16.07.2025

Please read description of item No (04 ): Filling with available flash and earth (excluding rock) in trenches or embankment in layers(each layer should not exceed 15 cm),with intermediate layer of compacted earth ( soil density of 98% ) after every four layers of compacted depth of fly ash, sides and top layer of filling shall be done with earth having total minimum compacted thickness 30cm or as directed by engineer - in charge, including compacting each layer by rolling /ramming and watering, all complete as per drawing and direction of engineer in charge.


Instead of description item No (04): Providing, supplying, lowering , laying, jointing, hydraulic testing and commissioning of PE-100and PN-10 HDPE pipes in standard lengths conforming to IS4984/14151/12786/13488 with necessary jointing material and all kinds of pipe specials including transportation, freight charges, inspection charges, loading, unloading charges, conveying to departmental store, jointing procedure with all labours as directed by engineer in charge as per IS7634-part -II, Hydraulic testing to specified pressures (including cost of all materials labour and water)for specified lengths inclusive of all kinds of taxes and carriage complete. 50mm dia HDPE pipe.

All other terms and conditions as laid down in the said NIT Shall remain unchanged.

No: PHEQ/CC/1788-1800 | Dated: 19.07.2025

DIPK: 4013/25 | Dated: 21-07-2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer,  
J.S PHE Division Qazigund

medanta  
Medanta Mediconsult Centre  
**NEURO**  
OPD  
  
Dr. Jyoti Sehgal  
Director  
Neurology  
Institute of Neurosciences  
Symptoms:  
• Paralysis  
• Loss of Memory  
• Back Pain  
• Epilepsy  
• Neuralgia  
• Numbness in Hand and Feet  
• Parkinson's Disease  
• Headache  
• Sleeplessness / Insomnia  
Wednesday, 23rd July 2025  
9:30Am to 1:30Pm  
Venue:- 30A, A/D-Green Belt,  
(Opp. Hotel Asia-Behind HP Petrol Pump),  
Gandhi Nagar ,Jammu-180004  
96222 00900 / 94191 91439

  
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 TO17-07-2025

# DC Kulgam reviews measures for smooth traffic flow in Kulgam town

■ Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, JULY 21:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan (IAS) on Monday chaired a meeting of Officers of Motor Vehicle, Revenue and Municipality to discuss and finalise the measures and steps for smooth traffic flow in Kulgam town.

The meeting held threadbare discussion on various issues including management of the traffic system in the town and making it more convenient for commuters.

Requisite measures were discussed threadbare to overcome traffic jams and ensure better regulation of traffic. Creation of parking zones near Gantaghar and Shopain Adda besides making Laroo bus stand fully func-



tional also came under discussion. The DC instructed ARTO, Traffic Police department and other

concerned to work in close coordination and act tough against traffic rules violators, who cause

a lot of inconvenience to common people in the town.

Directions were passed to uti-

lize the space near Polytechnic college for Summo ada while DH Pora Ada be used for car parking. The DC directed the traffic authorities to designate proper pick and drop points for passengers in public buses in the town.

He directed the officers to conduct a massive enforcement drive against wrong parking and roadside encroachments in town.

The DC also asked to relocate street vendors from heavy traffic junction points which hinder smooth traffic ply. He stressed concerned officers to take all required measures to decongest roads in town to ensure smooth flow of traffic. The meeting was attended by ACR Reyaz Ahmad Shah, ARTO, Tehsildar Kulgam, DSP- traffic, EO Kulgam, and other traffic police officers.

## Hussaini Mushaira Held at Imambargah Zainabia by Mir Memorial Foundation Kashmir

■ HT News Desk

**HAIGAM SOPORE, JULY 21:** The renowned Kashmiri poet Fayaz Tilgami presided over the Mushaira. Esteemed literary figures including Shabbaz Hakbari, Maqbool Ferozi, Shabnam Vijpari, Syed Akhtar Mansoor, Syed Abass Jawhar, Mohammad Ibrahim Shah, and Mushtaq Sopori graced the presidium with their presence.

The sacred gathering commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, an honour bestowed upon Syed Mujtuba. Following this, Shahnawaz Mir presented a heartfelt Naat.

On this special occasion, Majid Ganaie of Promote Kashmir and Liaqat Ali Kambay of Rehan Studio were felicitated with awards in recognition of their contributions.



Approximately thirty poets presented their poetic tributes in honour of the martyrs of Karbala, especially Hazrat Imam Hussain (P.B.U.H.). Among the participants were the Founder and President of the Foundation, Mir Hilal, along with Ghulam Hussain Haq Nawaz, Ghulam Nabi Dil Nawaz, Zahoor Haigami, Nisar Azam, Saleem Yousuf, Syed Asadullah Safvi, Showkat Shabbaz, Fida Hussain Mir, Rafeeq Hussain Mir, Master Syed Mohammad Yousuf and other members of the presidium.

Aga Syed Abass Razvi delivered a thought-provoking and spiritually enriching speech during the event.

In conclusion, the Founder and President, Mir Hilal, delivered a vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to all guests, poets, and attendees. The event was beautifully conducted by Ibrahim Muntazir and Zubair Ahmad Kambay.

## 3 day training for Internal Assessors-cum-Service Providers under NQAS begins at IMPA Srinagar

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** A three-day training programme for Internal Assessors-cum-Service Providers (IA cum SPT) under the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) commenced today at the Institute of Management & Public Administration (IMPA), Srinagar.

The training will continue until July 23, 2025, and is being conducted by the National Health Mission (NHM), J&K, in partnership with the National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

The inaugural session was inaugurated by Baseer ul Haq Chaudhary, Mission Director, NHM J&K, in presence of Dr. Bakshi Jehangir, Director Health Services Kashmir.

Dr. Vineeta Dhankhar, Consultant, Quality Promotion and Standards (QPS) Division, NHSRC, MoH&FW is the chief resource person for the training.

The inaugural session was also attended by senior officials from the Directorate of Health Services and the National Health Mission, J&K.

On the occasion, Mission Director, NHM, J&K commended the dedication of the district and block teams towards achieving high-quality standards in public health facilities. He underscored the critical importance of maintaining and enhancing the quality of healthcare services being offered to the people.

This capacity-building programme has been designed to equip healthcare professionals with the necessary skills to conduct internal assessments and improve service delivery standards across J&K's health institutions.

Participants included Chief Medical Officers (CMOs), Block Medical Officers (BMOs), Medical Officers (MOs) and Programme Management Staff from every district and block in the Kashmir Division. All the participants will undergo a post-training evaluation and the successful candidates will be awarded the Certificate of Internal Assessor.

Certified assessors will drive quality monitoring and service enhancement across their respective districts. Their work will advance the Government of India's aim to strengthen the public health system and achieve quality certification for public health facilities.

This training underscores the steadfast commitment of the National Health Mission and the Health and Medical Education Department, Government of J&K, towards institutionalizing quality assurance and ensuring continuous improvements in healthcare delivery throughout the Union Territory.

## Finance Department District Fund Office Kupwara Conducts Literacy Camps on PFMS and Financial Management

■ HT News Desk

**KUPWARA, JULY 21:** In a significant step toward promoting transparency and accountability in government financial operations, the Finance Department Kupwara has initiated a Literacy Camp on Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and related financial practices across the district at Auditorium Hall Employment office Kupwara.

The initiative is designed to enhance understanding of key financial mechanisms among Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs), dealing Assistant, from different departments, the camp aim to build capacity in areas such as digital payments, real-time fund tracking, expenditure management, and procedural compliance under PFMS, DLI, SLI and other schemes.

Addressing one of the sessions, Chief Accounts Officer Kupwara, (DFO) Kupwara, Abdul Salam Kumar, underscored the importance of financial literacy in strengthening governance and ensuring efficient utilization of public funds. He emphasized the critical role of PFMS in streamlin-



ing workflows, improving financial reporting, and supporting the effective implementation of development schemes.

During the sessions, Javid Ahmad Peer, a resource person from the Finance Department, delivered comprehensive presentations on various PFMS modules, including timely fund utilization, reconciliation procedures, and adherence to financial guidelines. The workshops also featured interactive Q&A segments to resolve practical challenges faced by participants

in day-to-day operations.

This concerted effort by the Finance Department Kupwara reflects its commitment to promoting fiscal discipline, empowering officials with critical financial knowledge, and ensuring robust implementation of welfare and development initiatives.

The programme was attended by CAO (DFO) Kupwara, Abdul Salam Kumar, AO DFO Kupwara, Abdul Rashid Bhat, Officials from DFO, DTO, Dealing Assistants from various departments.

## Ehsaas Foundation Serves Thousands with Free Tea Service on Urs of Rehman Dar Sahab (RA) in Safakadal, Srinagar

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** Continuing its mission of service and compassion, the Ehsaas Foundation organized a Free Tea Stall during the annual Urs Mubarak of Hazrat Rehman Dar Sahab (RA) at Safakadal, Srinagar. The initiative catered to thousands of devotees who gathered to pay their respects and seek blessings on the sacred occasion.

Volunteers from the Founda-

tion worked tirelessly to serve tea and refreshment, embodying the spirit of community service and hospitality. The event not only provided physical comfort but also promoted values of unity, love, and spiritual connection among attendees.

On the occasion, Vice Chairman of Ehsaas Foundation delivered a heartfelt message emphasizing the importance of unity and brotherhood in today's world. "Hazrat Rehman Dar Sahab



(RA) spent his life spreading the message of peace, love, and

togetherness. In his footsteps, Ehsaas Foundation strives to

uphold those values by serving humanity without discrimination. Our efforts today are a tribute to his teachings and a humble step towards building a society rooted in compassion and unity," he said.

The Foundation extended its gratitude to all volunteers, local residents, and devotees for their participation and support. The event concluded with special prayers for peace, harmony, and the well-being of all.

## JKCCC Raises Concern Over Months-Long Treasury Payment Delays; Demands Immediate Clearance Of All Dues

Chairman Jeelani Purza Demands Overhaul Of R&B Department; Calls For Structural Reforms And Regular Postings

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** The Jammu & Kashmir Contractors Coordination Committee (JKCCC) Chairman, Ghulam Jeelani Purza, has raised multiple pressing issues that are severely affecting the contractor fraternity in Jammu & Kashmir.

In a statement issued to the press, Jeelani Purza said, "I speak today on behalf of thousands of contractors across Jammu & Kashmir who are deeply distressed due to three major problems: delays in treasury payments, reorganization / mismanagement in the R&B Department restructuring and the non-release of payments under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)."

Purza expressed shock that bills submitted to the treasuries several months ago have still not been cleared. "This is a serious financial crisis. When the

LG administration was in place, bills would get cleared within 4-5 days. But since the formation of the newly elected government, the process is dragging on for 2-4 months. Why are our payments stuck in the treasuries?" he questioned.

He appealed to Hon'ble Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the finance department portfolio, as well as to Financial Commissioner Shaleen Kabra and Principal Secretary of the Public Works Department, Anil Kumar Singh, to intervene. "Contractors are not spending personal funds; these are the wages of labourers, payments of suppliers and vendors. Delaying them disrupts the entire economic chain. The government talks of development, but how will that happen when the basic financial system is stuck?" he asked.

The Chairman strongly criticized the reorganization of



the Roads & Buildings (R&B) Department, calling it a governance failure. "Several new divisions were announced, Chief Engineers and Executive Engineers were appointed, but there is no infrastructure on the ground, no office spaces, no technical staff. How are these divisions expected to function?"

He demanded the appointment of one Chief Engineer each for the Kashmir and Jammu provinces, in line with the model followed by the Irrigation Department, PHE, KPDC and other departments. "There aren't enough engineers to run all these newly created divisions. One officer is currently

holding charge of multiple offices including ERA, North Kashmir, South Kashmir and now Central Kashmir. This overload is unmanageable and inefficient," he stated.

Purza further noted that the reorganization has led to widespread chaos. "Even the former Chief Engineers of PMGSY and

R&B Chief Engineer Central Kashmir have retired. The government is only appointing in-charge officials instead of making regular postings. This is resulting in a governance vacuum," he said.

Highlighting a third major issue, Purza pointed to the ₹175 crore in pending payments that have been stuck in the R&B Department since 2017 in Jammu & Kashmir. "How can we complete the remaining works when we have no funds left?" he asked. Referring to the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), he said, "Contractors have laid pipelines, built reservoirs, filtration plants and completed major works under the JJM. But over ₹1100 crore in payments are still pending."

He made a strong appeal to J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Principal Secretary Shaleen Kabra and the Chairman of the Jal Jeevan Mission Committee to urgently expedite the sub-

mission of the JJM report to the government. "Until the report is submitted and the necessary funds are released, most of the developmental work will remain at a standstill.

The contractor community continues to face immense hardship due to this delay. It is also extremely unfortunate that ₹175 crore have remained unpaid in the R&B Department since 2017, this long-standing issue reflects serious neglect."

In his concluding remarks, Chairman Jeelani Purza issued a strong & unified appeal: "I request CM Omar Abdullah, Financial Commissioner and the Principal Secretary of the Public Works Department, along with Jal Jeevan Mission authorities, to immediately resolve these issues. The contractor community is the backbone of infrastructure development in the J&K. Delays in payments and poor planning will paralyse progress."

# ABP vital for ensuring e-Governance at grassroots level: Chief Secretary

## Co-chairs review meet of its implementation with Secy DoT

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** A crucial meeting regarding implementation of the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) in J&K was today co-chaired by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo and Secretary, Telecom, Gol, Neeraj Mittal.

The meeting underscored the commitment towards bridging the digital divide in rural India, where broadband penetration currently stands at a mere 2%, compared to 33% in urban areas.

The meeting was also attended by the Principal Secretary, PDD; Commissioner Secretary, Forests; Secretary, IT; Secretary, Cooperatives; CGM, BSNL; Deputy Commissioners and SIO, NIC besides other concerned officers.

Terming the programme as significant for strengthening the digital governance at the grassroots, the Chief Secretary said ABP will play a transformative role in extending high-

speed internet connectivity to blocks, tehsils and remote panchayats across the Union Territory. He assured full support from the UT administration to ensure time-bound implementation of the project.

Dulloo emphasized that the project would significantly enhance the connectivity for government institutions including schools, hospitals and agriculture offices, enabling better delivery of public services and access to real-time information. This programme holds the potential to revolutionize the agriculture by delivering weather forecasts, crop advisories and other farmer-centric services directly to rural areas, he added.

Secretary Telecom, Dr Neeraj Mittal, underlined the importance of optimal utilization, regular maintenance and enhancement of the BharatNet infrastructure to maximize its impact. He suggested that the UT may consider learning from



best practices of states where ABP implementation has been highly successful.

He also outlined the inter-departmental coordination required to facilitate the rollout, directing departments like IT, PDD and RDD to ensure necessary support—ranging from logistical arrangements and power supply to space for equipment.

Regarding the Programme, the meeting was apprised that the Amended BharatNet is a flagship project designed to provide fast, reliable and afford-

able digital connectivity across the nation.

Key features of the program included Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs), connectivity to non-GP villages on a demand basis ensuring network. The programme also envisages uptime greater than 98% and 10-year Operation and Maintenance (O&M) commitment targeting 1.5 crore broadband connections nationwide.

The Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) with a total esti-

mated cost of Rs 1,39,579 crore through out the nation.

For J&K (including Ladakh), the ABP project cost is Rs 2,631 crore (including Capex & Opex). The scope of work in the region included bringing 413 connected GPs onto the ring topology and connecting an additional 3,887 new GPs in the ring.

Additionally, all non-Gram Panchayat (GP) villages will be connected on demand, with a target of 200,000 Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) connections. The FTTH rollout will be aligned with GP commissioning mile-

stones, with a phased adoption plan: moderate uptake in Year 1 due to infrastructure readiness, accelerating in Year 2 as over 50% of GPs become operational and reaching peak adoption in Years 3-4.

As far as implementation and timelines are concerned, M/s STL is the Project Implementing Agency (PIA) as the EPC contractor, while BSNL serves as the Project Management Agency (PMA). Key timelines for the project in J&K involves Handover Takeover (HOTO) of existing networks by PIAs within 6 months from the agreement signing date.

Survey of GPs for network creation on ring topology is envisaged within a period of 12 months from the agreement signing date. It also sets 36 months for commissioning of GPs in ring topology. Implementation of ABP in J&K includes establishment of a state-of-the-art Network Operation Centre (NOC) at Jammu by September

2025. The ABP network will connect the public institutions, private enterprises, local entrepreneurs and households. It will enable the digital governance through digitization of government processes and MIS systems. Besides, it will facilitate access to digital services like e-education, e-health and e-agriculture and boost the digital economy by providing platforms for businesses and digital transactions.

The meeting was informed that a centralized BharatNet Issue Management Platform has been established to track, coordinate and resolve implementation issues, ensuring structured communication and timely responses among all stakeholders.

This ambitious program is set to transform the digital landscape of Jammu & Kashmir, bringing equitable and high-speed internet access to its rural communities.

## 37th NCORD meeting held at Budgam

Wild Cannabis on 41 kanals destroyed, 35 NDPS and 11 PIT-NDPS cases registered

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BUDGAM, JULY 21:** The 37th district-level NCORD (Narco Coordination) meeting was held today in the district under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to review the ongoing efforts against drug abuse and to formulate the future strategy for a drug-free Budgam.

The meeting reviewed the action taken by various departments on previous NCORD decisions and chalked out a roadmap to intensify efforts against narcotic cultivation, trafficking, and consumption.

At the outset, DC took a comprehensive review from all departments regarding steps taken to combat the illicit trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. He emphasized that drug abuse is not only an individual problem but a serious societal issue affecting families and communities at large.

He stressed the need to address the issue through a multi-dimensional approach, involving deterrence, treatment, enforcement, and awareness.

The chair was informed that 41 kanals of wild cannabis have been destroyed in areas of Chadoora and Magam.

DC reiterated the commitment of the district administration to create a drug-free environment and said that all necessary steps will be taken to achieve this goal.

He underscored that cooperation, coordination, and collaboration are vital to contain drug peddling and break the supply chain, alongside taking strict punitive action against the culprits.

On the occasion, DC directed Assistant Drug Controller to get CBS and CCTV cameras installed in all drug stores and ensure 100% saturation. Stronger coordination between Revenue and Police departments at the sub-division level was instructed for better deterrence, especially for destruction of poppy and cannabis cultivation. Regular lodging of FIRs was also directed whenever poppy or cannabis cultivation is destroyed in the district.

Besides, he instructed that proactive awareness campaigns must be launched across schools, colleges, markets, and busy public places, promoting healthy activities and hobbies to discourage drug abuse.

DC directed all SDMs to convene meetings with religious scholars and other stakeholders at tehsil and sub-division levels, encouraging them to speak against drug abuse during Friday sermons. SDMs were further directed to constitute a committee for declaring Nasha-Mukt panchayats at sub-divisional level.

Rural development department was tasked to organize Gram Sabhas dedicated to raising awareness on drug abuse at the village level. CMO Budgam was instructed to ensure round-the-clock availability of medical facilities at the ATF Centre in District Hospital Budgam.

DC directed District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) to conduct mega awareness drives at designated hotspots across the district and to upload photographs and reports of IEC activities on the designated portal.

During the meeting, ASP Budgam briefed the chair about current enforcement actions, stating that 35 NDPS cases and 11 PIT-NDPS detentions have been made so far.

DC said the district administration is committed towards a zero-tolerance policy and called for collective resolve to make Budgam a healthier and drug-free district.

The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam, ASP Budgam, CMO, CEO, SDM Khansahib, SDM Chadoora, Assistant Drug Control Officer, Principals of all Government Degree Colleges, Executive Officers of all Municipal Committees, and other concerned stakeholders.

## DDC Budgam flags-off Millet Awareness Road Show under HADP 2025-26

Road Show marks a grassroots push towards sustainable Agriculture and farmer awareness: Dr Bilal

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BUDGAM, JULY 21:** Under sustainable agriculture and nutritional security, District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, today flagged-off a Millet Awareness Road Show, here under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) 2025-26, and as part of the Nutri-Cereals Initiative.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from progressive farmers, field extension personnel, and officials from all four subdivisions of the district viz. Budgam, Beerwah, Chadoora, and Khansahib.

While flagging-off the road show, DDC appreciated the proactive efforts of the Agriculture department in advancing the Millet Mission.

He highlighted the multiple advantages of millet cultivation

including climate resilience, low input requirements, and high nutritional value, asserting that millets play a crucial role in ensuring food security while promoting environmental sustainability.

DDC said, "This road show is not just a ceremonial event, it is a key component of Budgam's broader campaign to reposition millets as a cornerstone of health-oriented and sustainable agriculture."

He further said, Millets are not just crops, they are climate-smart, economically viable, and nutritionally rich super foods.

Their promotion aligns with our commitment to sustainable development, rural empowerment, and better public health, said DDC.

He further added that the district administration is committed to mainstreaming traditional and underutilized crops like millets to diversify the cropping pattern



and reduce dependence on water-intensive cereals.

Dr Bilal emphasized that initiatives like these are critical to changing the mindset of farmers and consumers alike.

He encouraged the farming

community to embrace millets not just as an alternative, but as a smart and future-ready choice for agriculture in the region.

DDC also assured full support from the district administration for creating market linkages,

value addition, and training support under HADP.

Besides, Chief Agriculture Officer, all district and sub-divisional Agriculture officers, along with their respective field staff, actively participated in the awareness programme, showcasing a unified departmental commitment to the millet movement.

Later, experts from the Agriculture department and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Budgam conducted an awareness session at Sheikh-ul-Alam Hall, Budgam.

The session sensitized farmers on the nutritional benefits, agronomic practices, and market potential of millets, with an aim to encourage their mainstream adoption.

The event marked a step towards the successful implementation of HADP's Nutri-Cereals Initiative in Budgam, fostering a millet-inclusive agricultural future for the district.

## Nash Mukt Abhiyan: Budgam schools host IEC campaigns to raise awareness against drug abuse

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BUDGAM, JULY 21:** As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan, impactful Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns were today conducted at GMS Check Kawoosa, Government High School NS Pora and Government High School Narkara in district Budgam.

The events aimed to sensitise students and local communities about the harmful effects of drug abuse and to promote a healthy, addiction-free lifestyle among youth.

Students, teachers, civil society members, and officials from line departments including Health, Education, Social Welfare, and the Municipal Committees enthusiastically participated in the event.

The key components of these campaigns included awareness sessions on the psychological, social and health-related consequences of substance abuse and anti-drug pledge ceremonies led by school faculty and administration, where students and participants reaffirmed their commitment to a drug-free society.

Besides these, rallies and street awareness marches involving students and youth volunteers to spread the message in surrounding areas, door-to-door outreach by health workers and volunteers in nearby localities to ensure grassroots awareness and engagement, Interactive activities like group discussions, quizzes, and the distribution of IEC material to make the sessions informative and participatory were also held.



Speakers at the events highlighted the growing challenge of drug abuse, particularly among the younger population, and underlined the importance of early intervention, awareness, and collective action.

The availability of rehabilitation, de-addiction, and counselling services was also shared with the attendees. The initiative sought not only to

inform but also to inspire students to take up the mantle of peer educators and advocates for a drug-free society within their schools and communities.

District Budgam remains committed to continuing such awareness programmes to ensure sustained efforts toward achieving the vision of a Nasha Mukt Budgam, Nasha Mukt J&K, and Nasha Mukt Bharat.

## Literacy camps on PFMS and Financial Management held at Kupwara

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**KUPWARA, JULY 21:** In a significant step toward promoting transparency and accountability in government financial operations, Finance department Kupwara has initiated a Literacy camp on Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and related financial practices across the district at Auditorium Hall Employment office Kupwara.

The initiative is designed to enhance understanding of key financial mechanisms among Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) and dealing Assistants from different departments. It also aimed to build capacity in areas such as digital payments, real-time fund tracking, expenditure management, and procedural compliance under PFMS, DLI, SLI and other schemes.

Addressing one of the sessions, Chief Accounts Officer Kupwara, (DFO) Kupwara, underscored the importance of financial literacy in strengthening governance and ensuring efficient utilization of public funds. He emphasized the critical role of PFMS in streamlining workflows, improving financial reporting, and supporting the effective implementation of development schemes. During the sessions, a resource person from the Finance department, delivered comprehensive presentations on various PFMS modules, including timely fund utilization, reconciliation procedures, and adherence to financial guidelines. The workshops also featured interactive Q&A segments to resolve practical challenges faced by participants in day-to-day operations.

This concerted effort by the Finance department Kupwara reflects its commitment to promoting fiscal discipline, empowering officials with critical financial knowledge, and ensuring robust implementation of welfare and development initiatives.

The programme was attended by CAO (DFO) Kupwara, AO DFO Kupwara, officials from DFO, DTO, Dealing Assistants from various departments.

# Asmita Pencak Silat League 2025 Concludes in Srinagar with Over 500 Female Athletes

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, JULY 21:** The three-day Asmita Pencak Silat League 2025 concluded successfully at the Indoor Stadium, Polo Ground, Srinagar. Held from July 19 to 21, the event saw the participation of over 500 female athletes from various districts across Jammu and Kashmir, marking a significant step towards empowering women through sports.

Organised under the Khelo India initiative, the Asmita League aimed to promote sporting excellence, provide a platform for emerging women athletes, and foster a vibrant martial arts culture in the region.

In a symbolic and inspiring gesture, the award ceremony was conducted by the mothers of participating athletes, highlighting the vital role of women as both supporters and sources of



strength in the sports ecosystem.

The event also reaffirmed Kashmir's growing identity as a venue for major national and international sporting events. The J&K Sports Council will soon

host the prestigious Asian Junior Pencak Silat Championship in Srinagar from September 25 to 30, 2025, with over 15 countries expected to participate.

Athletes from across India,

particularly Kashmir, have expressed their excitement, stating that such events will play a crucial role in boosting sports tourism, encouraging local talent, and placing Kashmir on the global sporting map.

In a move to further promote competitive opportunities, the Pencak Silat Association of J&K will conduct selection trials for the 9th Pencak Silat Federation Cup 2025 on July 29, 2025, at the Indoor Stadium, Polo Ground, Srinagar. These trials are open to junior boys and girls, as well as senior men and women athletes across various weight categories and events.

Additionally, the Association is also organizing the Open Kashmir Pencak Silat Championship, scheduled to be held from August 7 to 8, 2025, offering another platform for athletes to showcase their skills and promote martial arts in the region.

# BHSS Sopore Clinches District-Level Inter-School Football Championship



Aashiq Hussain

**SOPORE, JULY 21:** BHSS Sopore emerged as the champions of the District-Level Inter-School Football Championship organized by DYSSO Baramulla. Demonstrating exceptional skill, teamwork, and determination, the team remained undefeated throughout the tournament, securing five consecutive victories.

In the thrilling final match, BHSS Sopore faced HSS Wagoora and delivered an impressive performance, clinching the title with a 2-0 win. This remarkable achievement is a testament to the hard work of the players and the dedicated guidance of their coaches and support staff.

Congratulations to the team for bringing pride and glory to BHSS Sopore.

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