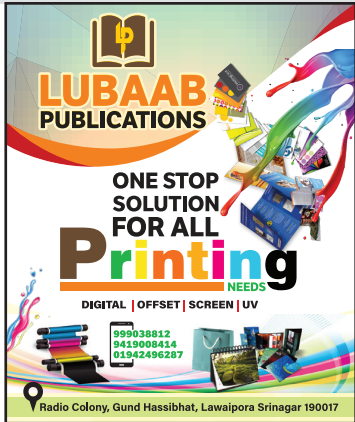


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# We Shoulder the Responsibility of Raising Professionally, Perfectly Skilled Next Generation: LG Manoj Sinha

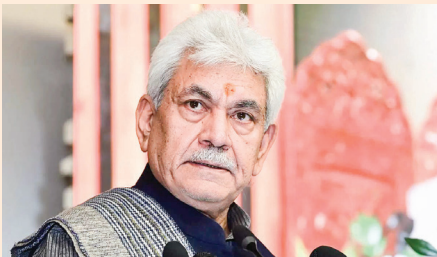
Lauds SMVD University For Playing Important Role in Training Human Resources In Accordance With Global Standards

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha delivered the inaugural address at 22nd Foundation Day of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University through video conference. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University today stands as a

beacon of knowledge, innovation, inspiration and cultural pride of Jammu & Kashmir, recognized and respected not only at national but global level.

“Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University is playing an important role in creating human resources in accordance with the global changes. In its journey the University has blossomed into an institution of excellence,



nurturing minds and transforming lives,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor announced that the long pending persistent demand of non-teaching employees of the University belonging to lower middle level and below has been fulfilled.

“As per the approval accorded all non-teaching employees of this category who

were earlier on 05 years contract system and whose contract period were continuously renewed shall now be regularised and the contract system is hereby removed.

This decision reaffirms our commitment to fairness, talent retention, and professional growth. This move will strengthen the foundation of Shri Mata Vaishno

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**Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University is playing an important role in creating human resources in accordance with the global changes. In its journey the University has blossomed into an institution of excellence, nurturing minds and transforming lives,” the Lieutenant Governor said.** The Lieutenant Governor announced that the long pending persistent demand of non-teaching employees of the University belonging to lower middle level and below has been fulfilled

## Girl held for killing minor sister in Gbl

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** In a shocking development, Jammu and Kashmir Police on Tuesday said they have cracked the case of the Ganderbal minor girl's murder and arrested the victim's elder sister for her involvement.

Addressing a press conference, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ganderbal, Khalil Poswal, said the elder sister had initially misled police by claiming that both girls were abducted before the younger sibling was killed. “During the investigation, we found no evidence supporting the abduction theory. When we interrogated the elder sister further, she admitted to her role in the crime,” the SSP said.

According to police, the two sisters had gone to a nearby field where an argument broke out over some personal issues. The quarrel soon escalated into a physical scuffle, during which the elder sister, in a fit of rage, attacked her sibling. “In her confession, she revealed that she used a rod to fatally assault her younger sister. We have also recovered the weapon of offence,” Poswal stated.

The police said the case highlights how initial narratives provided by suspects can sometimes be misleading, requiring thorough investigations to uncover the truth. “Our teams worked tirelessly on the case. It was only after sustained questioning and evidence gathering that the

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## Upliftment For Imparting Quality Education Will Make Government Schools The First Choice of Every Parent: CM Omar

■ HT News Desk



**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today emphasized the need to uplift government schools to a standard where parents consider enrolling their children in them as the best choice for their future.

The Chief Minister stated this while addressing a day long Educational Stakeholders Meet on NEP 2020- Challenges and Prospects in Jammu and Kashmir, organised

by Directorate of School Education Kashmir in collaboration with Bal Raksha Bharat (Save the Children) supported by HCL Foundation at Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC).

Addressing the gathering of educationists, Principals, Chief Education officers, Lecturers, Masters, Teachers and students, the Chief Minister said that education and health sectors form the core for the development of any

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## ICRISAT Delegation Meets CM Omar, Explores Agri Self-Reliance for J&K

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** A delegation led by Vice-Chancellor SKUAST-Kashmir, accompanied by

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## India-China relations made steady progress: PM Narendra Modi

■ HT News Network

**NEW DELHI, AUG 19:** India-China relations have made steady progress guided by respect for each other's interests and sensitivities in the last 10 months, Prime Minister Narendra

Modi said on Tuesday.

Modi said this in a social media post after visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi called on him.

The prime minister also referred to his talks with Chinese President

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## DEATH TOLL RISES AS RESCUE OPS CONTINUES IN KISHTWAR

■ HT News Network

**KISHTWAR, AUG 19:** The body of a woman was recovered on Tuesday from the debris in Chisoti village of Kishtwar, taking the death toll to 64 as large-scale rescue and relief operations entered their sixth consecutive day.

The mountain hamlet, devastated by a sudden cloudburst and flash floods on August 14, continues to witness relentless search efforts by multiple agencies.

According to officials, the fresh recovery came from the badly affected stretch near a langar

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‘Kashmir Meat Scandal’

## 11,000 Kg Seized, 9 Licenses Suspended in Srinagar & Anantnag: Food Safety Dept

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** The Jammu and Kashmir Food Safety Department on Tuesday said that so far, 11,000 kg of meat has been seized in the Union Territory as part of its intensified drive against the ongoing meat scandal in

Kashmir.

The department also stated that it has suspended four licenses of violators in Srinagar, in addition to five already suspended in Anantnag.

It further said that five complaints against rotten meat sellers have been filed in court under the Food Safety

Act, while meat and fish samples have been sent outside J&K for testing.

Assistant Commissioner, intelligence cell Food Safety Kashmir, Hilal Ahmad Mir, said that more than 11,000 kilograms of meat have been seized during the ongoing drive across the

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## Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom Sahib (RA) observed with devotion

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** The annual Urs of revered Sufi saint, Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom Sahib (RA), was observed with immense devotion in Srinagar on Tuesday, as thousands of devotees from across the Valley gathered at the historic shrine located on the beautiful Hari Parbat.

Throughout the night, the shrine reverberated with soulful recitation of the Holy Quran, Naats, and special prayers.

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## RDD sounds alarm on fake NMMS MGNREGA App, FIR lodged

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** The Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department over-seeing the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Jammu and Kashmir has sounded an alarm over the circulation of unauthorized clone applications being misused in place of the official “National Mobile Monitoring System (NMMS)” app in the Kashmir division.

According to officials, these illegal applications are being sold to individuals for monetary consideration and are allegedly used to generate fake attendance records of workers under the scheme.

“Such practices not only compromise the integrity of MGNREGA but also severely affect the transparency and credibility of the system,” officials said.

Taking serious note of the matter, the Department has lodged a First Information Report (FIR) with the Cyber Investigation Centre of Excellence (CICE) of the Crime Branch, Jammu & Kashmir Police, against suspected numbers and unknown persons involved in promoting and using these fake apps.

Authorities have reiterated that only the official NMMS application, provided by the Government of India, is authorized for recording attendance under MGNREGA. Any use of clone or unauthorized applications, they cautioned, will invite strict legal action.

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## J&K Gears Up For UT-Wide Skilling Mission

Chief Secretary Reviews Roadmap To Achieve The Target

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired a meeting to take assessment of the progress made in his initiative of creating the requisite skilling ecosystem across J&K envisaged to ensure 'Skilling for All' as per the capabilities of each section of the population in an inclusive manner.

Those who attended this meeting includes Commissioner Secretary, Labour & Employment; MD, Skill Development Mission; DG, Budget; Director, L&E and other concerned officers.

Applauding the role of the Department, the Chief Secretary



observed that it is quite satisfying to note that the department had come up with the initial blueprint of the skilling plan in the shortest possible timeframe after the holding of the stakeholders conference here in the month of July. He termed it promising and a sure way of moving ahead. He also encouraged them to keep this momentum intact till the objectives are not realized here.

He further underscored the need of consulting all the stakeholders for discussing the framework for incorporation of their insights as well. He advised for holding multi-player discourses to make this skilling plan more robust and effective

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## CS Backs Online Systems for RR Updation & DPCs

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** The Jammu and Kashmir administration is set to introduce a major governance reform aimed at digitizing and streamlining the updation of Recruitment Rules (RRs) and the timely conduct of Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) across all government departments.

The initiative took shape during a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, and attended by Administrative Secretaries of major

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# Laurels for J&K: Aijaz Asad secures top position in National Training Course

■ HT News Desk

MUSSOORIE, AUG 19: Bringing pride to Jammu & Kashmir, Shri Mohammad Aijaz Asad, IAS, has been recognised as one of the Best Five Officers in Overall Assessment at the prestigious 23rd Round of the Mid-Career Training Programme (Phase-III) for IAS officers, conducted at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie.

The Mid-Career Training Programme is designed to prepare

officers for leadership roles in governance, policy innovation, law and order management and technology-driven administration. Shri Aijaz's performance was adjudged outstanding, reflecting his strong administrative acumen, innovative governance practices and commitment to public service.

Hailing from the border region of Rajouri-Poonch, Shri Aijaz has served in several challenging assignments as District Magistrate of as many as six Districts including Srinagar. Presently he



is Secretary Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, J&K Government.

This recognition highlights Shri Aijaz's exemplary performance during the programme and his consistent record of dedicated public service.

The accomplishment at the national academy underscores the contribution of officers from Jammu & Kashmir in shaping the future of governance and sets a benchmark of excellence in Public Administration.

## Special Drive Against Traffic Violators Held in Qazigund

■ Farooq Rather

QAZIGUND, AUG 19: A special drive against traffic violators was carried out today in the Qazigund area under the supervision of DySP Traffic Mohd Aslam and his team. During the drive, several passenger vehicles were seized for operating without valid documents, while many others were challaned for various violations of the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act.

DySP Traffic Qazigund-Kulgam, Mohd Aslam, issued a stern warning to traffic violators, urging



them to strictly adhere to traffic rules. He emphasized that strict action will be taken against those found flouting the law.

He further appealed to the general public to remain vigilant and report any instances of traffic violations so that appropriate action can be taken. The DySP assured citizens that efforts are being made to ensure a smoother and more efficient traffic system in the Qazigund-Kulgam area.

He also stated that such special drives and awareness campaigns will continue in the future to enhance traffic discipline and safety.

## JKPC Youth President Mudasir Karim Raises Alarm on Meat Adulteration in Kashmir

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUG 19: JKPC Youth President Mudasir Karim has expressed deep shock and anger over a recent media report exposing the operation of a "meat mafia" in Kashmir that allegedly feeds people with rotten, diseased and chemically treated meat.

Calling the revelations "shocking and life-threatening," Karim said this is not just about one racket but a dangerous reminder of what could be happening across other essential food supplies. "If meat can be this badly adulterated, what do we really know about the milk, vegetables, pulses, oils, and other things our families consume every single day? Are we sitting quietly and waiting for our generations to be slowly killed?" he questioned.

Karim said this is not a minor case of malpractice



but a serious public health emergency that needs urgent action. "Why are we quiet on this? This is not about politics, this is about the survival of our people. Children, youth, elderly – everyone is being poisoned in the name of food. It is a collective responsibility to stand up and put an end to this menace."

He urged the administration to take strictest action by identifying the culprits across the chain, from suppliers, transporters, storers to restaurants and retail sellers and book them under the harshest laws. He also called out the silence and negligence of regulatory agencies, saying officers who have been "sitting in offices while such poison is being fed to people" should also be held accountable.

"This is a wake-up call. We as a society must rise above silence, come together, create awareness, and demand accountability. Identifying these culprits is not enough, we must ensure they are made examples of so that no one dares to play with the health and lives of Kashmiris again," Karim said.

## Anganwadi Workers' and Helpers Union (J&K) Holds District Conference in Anantnag

■ Farooq Rather

ANANTNAG, AUG 19: The Anganwadi Workers' and Helpers Union, Jammu and Kashmir (Registration No. TU 1560), affiliated with the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), held its District Conference in Anantnag today. The conference was attended by dozens of delegates from across the district and was presided over by Union President Hanifa Ji.

During the conference, key issues facing ICDS workers were discussed in detail. The Union reiterated its commitment to working for the rights and welfare of Anganwadi workers and helpers across the region.

Union leaders Lateefa Ji and Zamrooda Ji addressed the gathering and called upon the workers to unite and raise a strong collective voice to press the government for long-standing demands. These include the implementation of wages as per the Minimum Wages Act and the provision of comprehensive social security ben-



efits for all Anganwadi workers and helpers.

Later, the conference unanimously passed a resolution reflecting the demands and aspirations of the workers. A new district committee was

also elected, with Shahzada Ji appointed as President, Gulzara Jias Secretary, and Shameema Ji as Treasurer.

The Union pledged to intensify its struggle for justice, dignity, and rights of all ICDS functionaries in the district.

# Kisan Sampark Abhiyan-Rural Credit Workshop under JKCIP-IFAD held at Behibagh Kulgam

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, AUG 19: Kisan Sampark Abhiyan- Rural Credit Workshop under JKCIP-IFAD was today organised at Behibagh in Kulgam.

The programme was inaugurated by Chairman, District Development Council (DDC) Kulgam, M Afzal Parry.

Speaking on the occasion, he stressed the officials to work for the betterment of the farming community- which is the backbone of the National economy. He appreciated the initiatives aimed at empowering farmers and strengthening the rural



economy.

Chairman DDC advised farmers to take best advantage of the Govt. schemes and build a prosperous nation and family. He also appreciated the role of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kulgam, agriculture and allied departments in enhancing the profitability of agriculture in the district.

In his address, Chief Scientist & Head Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kulgam, Prof. Manzoor Ahmad Ganai, highlighted the golden opportunity for the farmers and rural youth to take the best advantage of the new schemes.

District Agriculture officer and District Horticulture officer also sensitized farmers about various centrally sponsored schemes and shared information on new opportunities and benefits available for rural entrepreneurs especially under HADP and JKCIP.

They also advised the farmers to register themselves on JKCIP portal.

Other dignitaries present were DDC member Kulgam, scientists of the Kendra, besides the event witnessed huge participation of locals, including farmers, entrepreneurs, FPOs representatives from agriculture and allied departments.

## BJP holds organizational meeting of District Budgam in Srinagar, focuses to strengthen grassroots network

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUG 19: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, held a meeting of party's organizational district Budgam, chaired by Ashok Koul, BJP General Secretary (Organization) for Jammu & Kashmir, at Church Lane, Srinagar, J&K BJP General Secretary Anwar Khan, Secretary Mudasir Wani, and District President Budgam Ghazi Rahullah along with his entire district team participated in the meeting.

The focus of the meeting was to strengthen the party's grassroots structure, review ongoing activities, address local challenges, and chalk out future strategies for deeper public connect and effective implementation of party programmes in Budgam District.

Addressing the meeting, Ashok



Koul underlined the significance of organizational unity and efficient coordination among district functionaries. He emphasized that BJP's strength lies in its disciplined cadre and close contact with the common people. "Our responsibility

is to ensure that every household feels the presence of the party through service and transparency. The Budgam unit has been working hard, but greater synergy and outreach will help us achieve long-term goals. We are committed to

the development and empowerment of the people of Jammu & Kashmir," he said. Speaking on the occasion, Anwar Khan highlighted the need to expand BJP's reach across every village of Budgam. He urged the workers to remain accessible to the people and ensure that welfare schemes launched by the government reach the deserving at the grassroots level.

Mudasir Wani stressed on enhancing operational efficiency and adopting innovative methods to connect with youth and marginalized sections to ensure inclusive growth and provide a platform for every citizen's participation.

Ghazi Rahullah reaffirmed the district team's resolve to work tirelessly for strengthening the party in Budgam. He assured that every challenge would be met with collective effort and commitment.

## DC Kupwara reviews implementation of VVP for development in border villages

■ HT News Desk

KUPWARA, AUG 19: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse today convened a meeting of Nodal Officers designated for effective implementation of Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP), a Central Sector Scheme aimed at improving the basic infrastructure in villages abutting international land borders. It was informed that the objective of Vibrant Villages Programme is to ensure development of basic infrastructure including road connectivity, electricity, water, telecom, television, health and education in identified villages located near international borders.

To ensure implementation of the VVP in the district, 16 villages have been identified by the District Administration which shall be covered under the programme which include Teetwal, Amroohi, Gundi Gujran, Jabdi, Hajitara, Seemari, Keran, Alachi Zeb, Machil, Hard Ring, Poshpora, Kunan, Trehgam, Nawagabra, Dardpora and Rawathpora.



Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of the Vibrant Village Programme for district Kupwara and enjoined upon the officers to work in a mission mode to achieve better results on the ground. He directed the departments to work with convergence to ensure development of all the amenities in these identified border villages. ACD Kupwara, CPO, SDM Karnah, Executive Engineers of R&B, PHE, KPDC, I&FC; Officers from Agriculture, RDD and other concerned were present on the occasion.



# Sakeena Itoo visits Govt. Hospital Gandhinagar Jammu, assesses medical care facilities

Also reviews healthcare facilities at GB Pant Hospital Jammu

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, AUG 19:** Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Government Hospital Gandhi Nagar to assess the medical care facilities available for the public there.

The Minister was accompanied by MLA Bahu Constituency, Vikram Randhawa; Director Health Services, Jammu, Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar; Director AYUSH, Dr. Nuzhat Bashir Shah; Chief Medical Officer and other senior officers of the health department.

During the visit, the Minister held detailed inspection of the hospital and visited Emergency Wing, Inpatient Department (IPD) Block, General wards,

Blood Bank and other sections of the hospital.

On the occasion, the Minister also interacted with the on duty doctors and other medical staff to gain first-hand feedback about the availability of medicines, diagnostic support and overall patient care available at the hospital.

During the interaction, the Minister emphasized on the importance of strengthening healthcare infrastructure and ensuring timely medical attention to those in need. She urged the hospital administration to focus on cleanliness, patient comfort and effective healthcare services.

During the visit, Medical Superintendent of the hospital, Dr. Narinder Singh Bhatial,



apprised the Minister of the current functioning and overall performance of the hospital.

The Minister, on the occasion, also interacted with patients, their attendants and general public to gather feedback from them about the services being provided at the hospital. She assured the public that the medical infrastructure will be upgraded at the hospital as per the needs of common people.

During the visit, MLA, Vikram Randhawa also raised concerns regarding the under-utilized 200-bedded Maternal and Child Health (MCH) block with the Minister.

Responding to this, the Health Minister instructed the Director Health Services, Jam-

mu, to submit a formal proposal for optimal utilization of the MCH building.

Earlier, Sakeena Itoo also visited the GB Pant Hospital Jammu and reviewed the healthcare care facilities available at the facility. She took note of various concerns highlighted by staff as well as patients and general public at the hospital. She assured them that issues will be addressed promptly.

The Minister reiterated the commitment of Government towards improving the healthcare services across Jammu & Kashmir. She highlighted that accessible and affordable healthcare is the right of every citizen and Government is committed to fulfil the healthcare needs of general public.

## Srinagar Police Attach ₹1 Cr Property of Cross-Border Terrorist

■ Mohammad Hanif Khan

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** In a major step towards dismantling terror networks and their support structures, Srinagar Police has attached orchard land measuring 3 kanals and 18 marlas, valued at approximately ₹1 crore, belonging to designated terrorist "Asif Maqbool Dar", son of Mohd. Maqbool Dar, who is presently operating from across the border. The property is located at Bandi Payeen, District Baramulla.

This action has been taken in connection with FIR No. 107/2020, registered at Police Station Parimpora, under Sections 124A, 153A, 295A IPC and Sections 13, 18 & 38 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act - UAPA. Proceedings were initiated under Section 25 of the UAPA, which empowers authorities to attach property used or intended to be used for terrorist activities. The attachment was carried out in the presence of the concerned Executive Magistrate.

Although the property is formally held in the name of his father, Mohd. Maqbool Dar (resident of Bandi Payeen, Baramulla / presently residing at HIG Colony, Bemina), investigations have established that Asif Maqbool Dar is an active stakeholder. He has been involved in facilitating terrorism, spreading anti-national propaganda, and inciting disaffection against the Government through various social media platforms for several years.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, has already designated Asif Maqbool Dar as a terrorist. The attachment of his property is part of a larger and ongoing strategy aimed at disrupting the financial, logistical, and operational ecosystem of terror networks and their cross-border sponsors.

This decisive action by Srinagar Police is intended to send a clear and strong message: those engaged in anti-national and terror-related activities will face strict legal consequences, including forfeiture of their assets.

Srinagar Police reiterates its unwavering commitment to upholding the rule of law, protecting the peace and security of the region, and ensuring that no individual or network is allowed to threaten the safety and sovereignty of Srinagar City or the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

## Ehsaas Foundation Organises Free Tea Stall on Eve of Hazrat Sultan Arfeen (RA) Urs

■ HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** On the auspicious eve of the Urs of Hazrat Sultan Arfeen (RA), the Srinagar-based NGO Ehsaas Foundation set up a free tea stall for devotees and visitors, serving with warmth and devotion.

The initiative aimed not only to provide refreshment but also to spread the true spirit of love, peace, brotherhood, and unity among the people.

Abida Rashid, General Secretary of Ehsaas Foundation, in her message on the occasion, said,



"The Urs of Hazrat Sultan Arfeen (RA) reminds us of the timeless values of compassion, service, and harmony. Through small efforts like this free tea stall, we wish to carry forward his message of love, peace, and unity, which are much needed in today's times." Thousands of devotees thronged the shrine to pay their respects, and the gesture by the Foundation was widely appreciated.

The atmosphere was overall marked by prayers, remembrance, and a strong sense of communal togetherness.

## Dr. Abhijeet slams CM Omar's insensitivity over Kishtwar, Kathua tragedy

■ HT News Desk

**JAMMU, AUG 19:** Dr. Abhijeet Singh Jasrotia, Spokesperson J&K BJP, accompanied by Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Media Incharge J&K BJP, today addressed a press conference at the party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

While speaking to the media, Dr. Abhijeet Jasrotia strongly condemned the casual and irresponsible attitude of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and his government in handling the heart-wrenching tragedy caused by the recent cloudburst in Kishtwar, which has claimed more than 60 lives and left many missing.

"At a time when the entire region is mourning the loss of lives and standing in solidarity with the aggrieved families, the Chief Minister seems completely disconnected from the suffering of the people. Instead of taking enough measures as CM to provide immediate relief and instill confidence among the victims, Omar Abdullah was busy listening to songs and carrying forward his political gimmicks through a so-called 'signature campaign'," Dr. Jasrotia said.

He added that this reflects the height of insensitivity and immaturity in



governance. "When people are struggling to rebuild their shattered lives, the Chief Minister is more concerned about political optics than human suffering. Even during his visit to Chishoti, the epicenter of the cloudburst, he was reportedly enjoying music, and shockingly, he has not even bothered to visit Kathua where people are equally facing the brunt of the disaster," he said.

Dr. Jasrotia further stressed that except for the disciplined forces led by the Indian Army and J&K Police, along with BJP leaders, no one from the government has been visibly active on the ground. He praised the tireless

efforts of J&K BJP President Sat Sharma, who promptly visited the affected areas, met victims, and conveyed urgent requirements to the administration. He also appreciated Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, who has been continuously leading relief operations in Kishtwar since the very first day of the tragedy.

"BJP leaders are on the ground, shoulder to shoulder with the people, while the NC-led government remains absent and indifferent. This apathy of the Chief Minister is not only obnoxious but also exposes the sheer lack of accountability in the present regime," Dr. Jasrotia concluded.

## Dragon Boats Set to Create Waves in Dal Lake

■ Farooq Rather

**SRINAGAR, AUG 19:** The Jammu and Kashmir Dragon Boat Association received a boost ahead of the Khelo India Water Sports Festival, with the Delhi Dragon Boat Association providing three dragon boats, of latest model, for the Khelo India Water Sports Festival at Dal Lake in Srinagar Kashmir from August 21 to 23. The festival is being organised by the J&K Sports Council.

Farooq Ahmad Bhat from J&K has served as Race Official at the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou China and coached Indian Team. J&K has already produced six international players, including two gold medalists Zahoor Ahmad Latoo and Zain Ul Aabidin at the IDBF World Championship in Thailand 2023.

J&K Dragon Boat Association President Mohammed Syed Punoo, IPS (Retd.) and Vice President Aamir Ali expressed hope that the introduction of Dragon Boat events would inspire youth, nurture fresh talent and strengthen J&K's presence in the sport. Dragon Boat Sports event is a separate sport and championships are being conducted under International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) globally.

The Dragon Boat Sports event has been inducted in Asian Games, Asian Beach Games by the Olympic Council of Asia under the Asian Dragon Boat Federation, a continental Federation of International Dragon Boat Federation.

Dragon Boat race is a fast and exciting flat water human powered watercraft sport which is performed on a long boat with a dragon face at the head. The boat accommodates 12 players, who paddle on the beat of a drum over predefined distances.

## LG Kavinder Gupta meets Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in Delhi; discusses key development projects

■ HT News Desk

**NEW DELHI, AUG 19** The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, today met the Hon'ble Union Minister of Power and Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs, Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, in New Delhi and held a detailed discussion on major developmental projects of UT Ladakh.

The Lt Governor apprised the Union Minister about two landmark 24x7 water supply projects for Leh and Kargil towns, costing Rs 334.72 crore and Rs 373.17 crore respectively, which have been approved by the State High Powered Steering Committee (SHP-

SC) of UT Ladakh and subsequently cleared by the 12th Apex Committee under AMRUT 2.0 held on April 17, 2025. He highlighted that the projects have been included in the State Water Action Plan (SWAP) with a committed Central Assistance of Rs 62 crore (Rs 31 crore per project), while the UT Administration will manage the balance funding.

The Lt Governor underlined that Ladakh is witnessing a drastic depletion of groundwater, creating a huge hue and cry among the people and leaving the future generations vulnerable to a water crisis. He stressed that this grave issue needs to be addressed

as a priority, and the sanctioned water supply projects are a decisive step towards ensuring water security and sustainability in the region.

The Lt Governor further briefed that as per the Apex Committee's decisions, the total allocation of Central Assistance for Ladakh under AMRUT 2.0 stands at Rs 128 crore, in a 90:10 funding ratio. Of this, Rs 58.5 crore has already been released as the first tranche and Rs 69.5 crore as the second tranche to support these projects.

The Lt Governor also briefed the Hon'ble Union Minister about the demand for an Urban Housing project under PMAY-U

2.0 in the Union Territory of Ladakh, emphasising the need to strengthen housing infrastructure to meet the growing requirements of Leh and Kargil towns.

In addition, the Lt Governor also raised issues pertaining to the MNRE Project at Pang-Kharnak and other ongoing initiatives under the Ministry of Power in Ladakh, seeking continued assistance and intervention to expedite their completion. He stressed that these projects are closely aligned with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of making Ladakh a carbon-neutral region and sustainable energy producer, thereby supporting the

ecologically fragile region while meeting its developmental aspirations.

The Union Minister appreciated the efforts of the UT Administration in prioritising critical urban and power sector projects and assured the full support of the Government of India in addressing Ladakh's unique developmental challenges.

The Lt Governor reaffirmed that the UT Administration will make all efforts to ensure the speedy and successful execution of the sanctioned projects, in line with the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister for sustainable and inclusive development in Ladakh.

## Central University of Jammu Holds Patriotic Letter-Writing Event under Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign

■ HT News Desk

**JAMMU, AUG 19:** The Department of National Security Studies and Office of the Dean Students' Welfare, Central University of Jammu, under the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sanjeev Jain, organized a special event under the Government of India's Har Ghar Tiranga campaign to foster patriotism and connect students with the nation's protectors.

As part of the programme, students wrote heartfelt letters to the Jawans of the Armed Forces and Police Personnel, expressing their deep gratitude, respect, and appreciation for their selfless service and dedication to safeguarding the nation. The initiative aimed to instill national pride, acknowledge the sacrifices of security forces, and strengthen the emotional bond between citizens and those who guard the country's frontiers and maintain law and order.

Event coordinator Dr. Neeta Rani, Head, Department of National Security



Studies encouraged students to reflect on the role of the armed forces and police in upholding peace and security, inspiring them to contribute positively to nation-building. The letters will be forwarded to defence units and police departments as a token of respect. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation and served as a reminder of the importance of unity, respect, and national spirit envisioned under the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign.



# Commissioner State Taxes chairs review meeting with STOs of Jammu Division

## Directs for boosting tax revenue, curbing tax evasions

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, AUGUST 19:** Commissioner State Taxes, Jammu and Kashmir, P.K. Bhat today chaired a comprehensive review meeting with State Tax Officers (STOs) of the Jammu Division today here as a precursor to second quarter of the financial year 2025-26.

The meeting, held at the Excise and Taxation Complex here, focused on assessing departmental performance, addressing challenges and discussed strategies for enhanced revenue collection and tax compliance.

The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioner, State Taxes Administration & Enforcement, Jammu, Namrita

Dogra along with State Tax Officers from all circles of the Jammu division. The outer circle officers joined the meeting through virtual mode.

Commissioner Bhat, during the meeting, emphasized on the critical role of the State Taxes department in strengthening financial discipline and boosting revenue to meet the fiscal targets for 2025-26. He directed officers to aim for a significant revenue hike by adopting proactive measures and leveraging technology to curb tax evasion.

“Our goal is to ensure robust tax compliance while fostering a business-friendly environment. We must utilize every tool at our disposal to achieve these objectives,” he stated.



Bhat also highlighted the need to crack down on dormant dealers, ensure timely filing of returns

and monitor Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) payments.

He instructed officers to intensify field inspections, particularly in cash-heavy sectors like banquet halls, catering services, and retail, to ensure compliance with GST regulations.

The Commissioner stressed the importance of scrutinizing E-Way Bills to prevent revenue leakage and urged officers to harness GST Prime and BIU for real-time data analysis and monitoring of high-risk sectors, including cement, iron, and mobile industries, where tax violations are more likely to occur.

During meeting, key discussions also centred around optimizing the use of technological tools such as GST Prime, E-Way

Bills, and Business Intelligence Unit (BIU) to identify and address tax defaulters effectively.

Additional Commissioner, Jammu Namrita Dogra presented a detailed circle-wise performance analysis, identifying areas for improvement and outlining actionable strategies for the remaining quarters.

The session concluded with a renewed commitment from the officers to implement the Commissioner's directives with vigour and dedication. The department reaffirmed its resolve to strengthen tax administration, enhance revenue collection, and create deterrence among tax defaulters through technology-driven enforcement and strategic oversight.

## DC Poonch reviews progress of Land Acquisition for Government Projects

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**POONCH, AUGUST 19:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to review the progress of land acquisition for major developmental projects, including NH-144A and the Rajouri–Thanamandi–Surankote (RTS) road.

During the meeting, the DC inquired about the status of land acquisition, compensation disbursed, pending cases and liabilities towards the concerned departments. A detailed discussion was held, wherein officers briefed the Deputy Commissioner about the present status of land acquisition and the steps taken to address issues.

The DC directed officers to expedite the process and ensure timely resolution of bottlenecks so that these vital developmental works are completed within stipulated timelines. He emphasized strict adherence to timelines for disbursement of land compensation in favour of affected landowners, while also stressing the importance of close inter-departmental coordination for smooth execution.

The Deputy Commissioner also took stock of issues raised by the executing agencies, including CS Construction Company Ltd. and Patel Engineering Pvt. Ltd., and assured necessary support from the administration. Reviewing the Parnaie Hydel Project, the DC laid special emphasis on ensuring adequate safety and security measures for the workers engaged in the project.

The meeting was attended by SSP Shafket Hussain Bhat, ADC Tahir Mustafa Malik, ACR Mohd. Sayeed, SDMs of Surankote and Mendhar, Collector Land Acquisition (Defence), SE PWD and Hydraulic, Xen PWD (R&B), Xen JPDCL and Transmission, Officer Commanding 79 RCC and 58 RCC, District Mineral Officer, Project Managers of CS Construction Company Ltd. and Patel Engineering Pvt. Ltd., besides other concerned officers.

## DC issues guidelines to ensure safe conduct of Kailash Yatra 2025

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**DODA, AUGUST 19:** Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh today rolled out advisories for the annual Kailash Yatra 2025, emphasizing that safety and security of devotees have been flagged as the topmost priority.

Speaking to the media persons here, he gave details about the arrangements made for the annual Yatra scheduled to be held from August 20 to August 22. “In view of the unfortunate cloud-burst incidents at Padder and Kathua and the prevailing inclem-

ent weather conditions, precautionary restrictions have been imposed to ensure a safe pilgrimage,” the DC informed.

The DC informed that women and children will not be permitted to participate this year owing to safety concerns. He further clarified that pilgrims shall not be allowed to travel through the Chattergala route, as the stretch is vulnerable due to wild streams and unsafe terrain. “Instead, the Yatra will be conducted strictly through the traditional routes—Sungli, Nalthi, and Drafda (Bhalla)—where the

District Administration has deployed officials at all important locations to assist and guide the yatrīs,” he said and added that the holy mace (Charri Mubarak) will move along with the designated pilgrims as part of a symbolic Yatra, ensuring smooth conduct of essential rituals and religious ceremonies.

The Deputy Commissioner informed that every pilgrim has to carry a valid identity card issued by the District Administration for proper verification. “A comprehensive deployment plan has been prepared for stationing

of staff at multiple points along the Yatra route to ensure smooth movement, provision of medical facilities, prompt disaster response, drinking water, shelter, communication, and security,” he informed further. He added that three rounds of meetings have already been conducted with all stakeholders to finalize the arrangements, and it was unanimously decided to allow only the Charri Mubarak with the identified group of yatrīs for the symbolic conduct of the Yatra this year.

Reiterating the importance

of vigilance and cooperation, the DC appealed to devotees and the general public to strictly follow the advisories issued by the administration. He emphasized that these directions are not only precautionary but also essential to prevent any untoward incidents. He assured that the District Administration, in close coordination with police, health, and disaster management teams, is fully committed to ensuring that the Kailash Yatra 2025 is conducted in a safe, smooth, and spiritually fulfilling manner.

## DC Samba inspects development works, engages with community volunteers at Gurha Slathia

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SAMBA, AUGUST 19:** Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan visited Gurha Slathia today where she reviewed the progress of up-gradation at a local school and Auditorium. She assessed the pace of progress on the projects and directed the executing agencies to adhere to quality standards and timeline set for the completion of the projects to ensure early benefit to the local students and residents.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner also interacted with Radha Swami Satsang volunteers. She appreciated their role in promoting social harmony, community service and welfare initiatives in the region, and encouraged further collaboration with the district administration in public-oriented programmes.



The interaction was attended by Coordinator Pradeep Agrawal and Area Secretary Dr. Subash Sharma, along with ADC, SDM Vijaypur, Tehsildar, and other officers who briefed the DC on developmental activities in the area.

Later, the DC visited the Radha Swami Ashram, where she lauded the organization's philanthropic efforts and assured administrative support for activities that uplift communities. She stressed that development

projects coupled with community participation form the backbone of responsive governance. She also highlighted the importance of citizen engagement in sustaining the pace of progress across the district.

The Deputy Commissioner reaffirmed the administration's commitment to inclusive growth and service delivery, ensuring that the benefits of development reach every section of society.

## Director AHD Jammu Inaugurates Introduction cum Orientation Training Programme for Newly Recruited VASs

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, AUGUST 19:** A ten-day Introduction cum Orientation Training Programme for newly recruited Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VASSs) was today formally inaugurated by Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Director Animal Husbandry Jammu, at the Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Talab Tillo.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Gupta warmly welcomed the new recruits and wished them a successful and fulfilling career in the department. He highlighted the pivotal role of the Animal Husbandry Department in supporting the socio-economic development of farmers, enhancing livestock productivity, and ensuring the steady availability of milk, eggs, and mutton to meet local demands.

Emphasizing the importance of professionalism, Dr. Gupta advised the recruits that punctuality, discipline, dedication, hard work, and sincerity are the cornerstones of success in any career. He encouraged them to fully utilize the orientation programme to gain comprehensive knowledge of the department's facilities, infrastructure, and operational mechanisms.

Programme Coordinator Dr. Mohit Koul briefed participants about the schedule, including planned visits to various departmental institutions over the ten days. He underscored the importance of the programme in familiarizing new recruits with the practical aspects, challenges, and responsibilities of their roles as Veterinary Assistant Surgeons.

Earlier, Dr. Sandeep Kumar, VAS Extension and Publicity Wing (AHD), provided a detailed overview of ongoing departmental schemes, including livestock development initiatives, fodder promotion programmes, and disease control measures. He highlighted how familiarity with these schemes would enable the new officers to contribute more effectively to community outreach, farmer assistance, and overall livestock productivity enhancement.

The training programme also aims to develop professional competencies, enhance technical knowledge, and instill a strong sense of responsibility among new VASSs to ensure the department's objectives are achieved efficiently and effectively. Participants will engage in hands-on training, field visits, and interactive sessions throughout the duration of the programme, equipping them with the tools necessary to address challenges in animal health and husbandry management.

The inauguration was attended by senior officials, faculty of the department, and other dignitaries, reflecting the department's commitment to nurturing skilled and competent veterinary professionals for the benefit of the farming community.

## DC Ramban Reviews Implementation of Employment and Beneficiary-Oriented Schemes

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**RAMBAN, AUGUST 19:** Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting with district officers to evaluate the implementation and coverage of various employment and Beneficiary-Oriented Schemes across the district.

The meeting was attended by CPO Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather, ACD Mohammad Ashfaq, GM DIC Ravinder Anand, along with officers from Health, Education, Labour, Employment, Social Welfare, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, ICDS, JPDCL, EDI, Municipal Council, and other key departments.

During the session, the DC emphasized the need for efficient, transparent, and citizen-centric delivery of schemes including PMAY-G, PMAY-U, MGNREGA, HADP, Mission YUVA, ABHA ID, PM Surya Ghar – Muft Bijli Yojna, scholarships, pensions, ICDS, Social Welfare Schemes, Agriculture and Horticulture programs, Livestock Development initiatives, Rural Livelihoods Mission, skill



development and self-employment initiatives. He directed departments to work in mission mode to ensure timely benefits reach

all eligible beneficiaries, particularly in remote and underserved areas.

The DC instructed the Chief Education Officer to ensure 100% enrolment in schools through a focused awareness campaign and real-time tracking via the UDISE system. He also urged officers to organize joint outreach programmes with local panchayats and community leaders to educate citizens about the benefits and eligibility criteria of different schemes.

Special focus was laid on the implementation of self-employment initiatives and skill development programmes. The DC directed the Employment and Labour Departments to map unemployed youth, provide training opportunities, and facilitate linkages with financial institutions for loans and support under schemes like Mission YUVA.

The meeting also highlighted the importance of interdepartmental coordination for effective monitoring, grievance redressal, and seamless execution of schemes. Officers were asked to identify bottlenecks, reduce delays in fund

disbursement, and report weekly progress to ensure transparency and accountability.

DC Mohammad Alyas Khan further instructed the departments to launch mobile awareness units, door-to-door campaigns, and local information kiosks to ensure that every resident is informed about available welfare measures. He stressed that such proactive measures would increase coverage, build public trust, and ensure inclusive development.

In concluding remarks, the DC appreciated officers for their ongoing efforts and reiterated that sustained field monitoring, community engagement, and rapid grievance redressal are key to making welfare schemes successful. He reaffirmed the administration's commitment to empowering citizens, reducing disparities, and improving the overall socio-economic status of Ramban district.

The meeting concluded with a collective pledge by all departments to accelerate service delivery, strengthen public outreach, and ensure that the benefits of government schemes touch every eligible beneficiary in the district.



## HT EDITORIAL

### Expose the rot behind supply of rotten meat, chicken

Over the past couple of weeks the Food Safety Department has launched a crackdown against the people involved in the trade of rotten and sub-standard meat and chicken across the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The department seized hundreds and hundreds of rotten meat and chicken from the different parts of Kashmir and Jammu divisions of the union territory. In most of the cases the culprits had dumped the rotten meat and chicken at different locations.

The move has been welcomed by one and all and people in general demand that stern punishment should be meted out to the people involved in this dirty trade. It is important that the concerned department holds a comprehensive and thorough probe in the matter so that the truth comes to the fore. This would expose the people who are involved in the supply of rotten meat and trade and its usage later on. Since the meat has been used by many restaurants it is imperative that these people are also accountable for their actions.

It is important that the supply chain of rotten meat and chicken is established and for the same the law enforcing agencies have to go deep into the matter. There should not be any compromise in this regard and it should be ensured that action is taken against the culprits irrespective of the position being held by these people in the society. At times it has been observed that the probe agencies come under an influence and as such the guilty manage to run away Scott free.

Since the issue pertains to the health of the common masses it is important that the probe is taken to its logical conclusion. If the culprits manage to run away this time then they will continue to take the law in their own hands and persist with their policy of putting the people in trouble. In the past such things have happened but this time around it should not happen as in such a case the health of the masses is compromised.

Since each and every person is concerned about their own health and health of others the primary aim of the Food Safety Department and law enforcing agencies should be to ensure that there is no compromise on the all important aspect of health. In this regard one can expect that the masses will extend their support to the probe being carried out. In such a manner the masses will benefit at the end of the day.

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# Kashmir Valley Where When Taps Run, Conscience Runs Dry



■ Akram Siddiqui

While buying a chicken from a vendor in one of the city's busy markets, what caught my sight was truly distressing. A drinking water tap inside his shop was running in total neglect. Despite repeated reminders to close it, he was audacious enough to retort—"hai mahazz sann, yeh haz chu kaarie youthie... aabyee cha haz kini baiye kenh" ("Oh sir, don't pay heed to this minute matter, it is a trivial thing... it is mere water, not life").

Astounded, I looked at his ignorance, or perhaps arrogance—and then found myself compelled to explain what he was so recklessly trifling with. That singular encounter was not just a private irritation; it was a mirror held to the face of our society, reflecting the scale of neglect with which we treat water. And it was with that echo still ringing in my ears that this verse from the Holy Qur'an returned to me:

"Wa ja'alna mina al-ma'i kulla shay'in hayy..."

"And We made from water every living thing." — Surah Al-Anbiya (21:30)

Water, sacred, sustaining, and bestowed upon humankind as a mercy. This verse is not just a poetic affirmation of life's source but a solemn reminder of our accountability towards this precious gift. And yet, in the Vale of Kashmir, once revered as the land of shimmering springs, whispering brooks, and tranquil lakes, our collective conscience appears to have dried faster than the streams we have strangled with negligence.

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#### The Land Where Springs Once Sang

There was a time when Kashmir was known for its pristine hydrology. Crystal-clear springs gushed forth at every turn, feeding irrigation channels, domestic use, and drinking water reservoirs without fail. From the mountain-fed Jhelum to the village brooks that children danced in, water was part of the very rhythm of life here. Today, that rhythm stumbles. What was once symphonic is now a dirge, one written by the hand of reckless modernization and sheer civic apathy.

It is not that water has left us instead we have driven it away, disrespected its presence, and desecrated its purity. The very veins that nourished our soil have been land-



filled to make way for shopping complexes, cement structures, and a built environment that neither reflects ecological foresight nor community conscience.

#### A Society Dripping in Apathy

In every corner of urban and rural Kashmir, a silent abuse unfolds each day. Water taps gush freely from dawn to dusk in chicken markets where vendors, unbothered and unremorseful, keep the flow unchecked. They scrub their shops, rinse cages, and hose down entrails with gallons upon gallons, never pausing to wonder who foots the bill or how deep the damage runs.

But the finger cannot rest solely on the vendors. Equally complicit are the customers who stand idly by, never once suggesting that the tap be closed, even briefly. The waste is communal. So too must be the guilt.

In government hospitals, offices, and even public lavatories, water is left to run wild. A quick visit ends, and the tap remains open, forgotten, as if water were limitless, valueless. One is forced to ask: When did we as a people become so casual about such a critical resource?

Worse yet is the case of a water connection at a local crossroads, gushing unchecked, day after day, year after year. Not a single neighbour has thought it worthwhile to invest in a ten-rupee plastic stopcock to end the hemorrhage. Even officials of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) department walk past it with glazed disinterest, their eyes neither seeing nor their hearts moved.

#### The High Cost of Carelessness

Here's what makes the carelessness more grave: it is expensive, both in rupees and resources.

According to official reports, approximately 740 million litres of water are treated daily across Jammu and Kashmir to meet the needs of domestic and institutional consumption. In Srinagar city alone, filtration plants at Rangil, Nishat, and Alasteng process over 180–200 MLD (million litres per day).

The cost of filtering one litre of water ranges between ₹1.5 to ₹2, including sourcing, pumping, treatment, and distribution. At this modest estimate, J&K is spending over

₹14–15 crore every single day on water filtration and supply.

That's not abstract money, it's public money. Taxpayer money. Our money. Funds that could have built better hospitals, equipped schools, or supported the marginalized are instead being funneled into a system that we sabotage with our own hands.

And then we wonder why there's water scarcity in summers. Why entire neighborhoods receive water on alternate days. Why water-borne diseases still rise in 21st-century Kashmir. We are drawing a bonfire of our own hard-earned earnings, and all for the sin of not turning off a tap.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, once shared a telling anecdote from his visit to Israel. During the formative years of the nation, he noticed a young schoolboy—perhaps no older than ten—holding a tap closed with his bare hand to prevent water from spilling. Surprised, Nehru asked, "Why aren't you in school? You'll be late."

The child's reply was poignant: "This is not just water, sir. This is our nation's resource. I cannot let it flow wastefully until the agency fixes it."

What an incredible sense of civic responsibility, blooming in a child's heart. What level of national character is forged when water is treated as a moral concern, not just a physical one?

When, then, will Kashmir learn from that child? When will we recognize that our springs, our taps, and our rainfall are bounties to be preserved, not plundered?

#### The Institutional Neglect

The law stands watch, but only in theory. The laws regulating water use, illegal encroachments on water bodies, and penalties for misuse exist on paper. But enforcement is either weak or absent.

Encroachments Continue Along Wetlands And Lake Fronts.

Dal Lake, once the pride of the Valley, is a ghost of its former self, shrinking under weed infestations, houseboat effluents, and the garbage of a city that has long turned its back.

Meanwhile, filtration plants cry for upgrades. Leaky supply lines waste over 30% of treated water before it

even reaches households. And yet, when one looks for accountability, none is found, not in bureaucracy, not in policy, not in people.

#### What Needs To Be Done

The problem is immense but not irreversible. If Israel, a desert nation, can achieve water surplus through technology, legislation, and public awareness, why can't Kashmir, a land endowed with glaciers and rainfall?

Here are a few urgent actions that could make a difference:

- Strict Water Audit:** Every urban centre must conduct annual water audits to monitor losses, misuse, and recovery efficiency.
- Penalty for Wastage:** Fine users, commercial or residential, who leave taps running, especially in public places. Install automatic shut-off taps in markets, hospitals, and schools.
- Rainwater Harvesting:** Mandate harvesting in all new buildings, especially in urban areas where ground-water is drying up fast.
- Repair Leakages:** Plug every leak in our supply network. Introduce smart water metering and AI-based monitoring to reduce non-revenue water loss.
- Public Awareness Drives:** Launch campaigns through mosques, schools, and media to awaken people to the religious, ethical, and environmental importance of water conservation.
- Revive Springs and Brooks:** Protect and restore traditional water bodies that are being filled in for construction. These are heritage hydrological assets, not wastelands.

#### A Cultural Awakening

In our folklore, water was venerated. Poets wrote of "pani darvaaze", spring-fed courtyards. Old folk spoke of how the land would curse a man who let water waste without cause. We must revive that reverence, not as nostalgia, but as necessity.

Kashmir's culture has always been one of hospitality. "Zara zara hai meri Kashmir ka mehmaan-nawaz... rah chalte pathron ne de diya pani hamen", even stones gave us water on our journey, they say. But that generosity is being trampled upon.

If stones once gave water, are we more heartless than rock that we let it drain without a thought?

#### A Final Reflection

The crisis in Kashmir is not just a water crisis. It is a crisis of consciousness.

We don't need another masterplan or another budget, we need introspection. The smallest act—a hand turning a tap off, can ripple into cultural transformation. And it is from these small acts that large change begins.

Let us not wait for droughts to scare us into action, nor for governments to awaken when the pipes run dry. Let us learn from that child, who held a nation's future with just two hands and a conscience.

Because every drop counts.

Because every tap matters.

Because from water, we are made, and to water, we owe our gratitude.

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## Why One Cannot Avoid Whiteswan?

“An initiative to ensure transparency and avoid fabrication of truth”



■ Sidharth P K

In the realm of media and its enterprise, whiteswan stages a trend with a new initiative that has found echo for itself in the world of media. It is a new voice in the world of journalism that adds value to every aspect of realistic portrayal. Whiteswan was introduced to the world by his good-will Mr. Sibi, who

hails from the background of Kerala. It was his charisma that showed what whiteswan is today, as standing point in realism.

The channel is a production hub that brings out stories, interviews, news- items in a possible way. The establishment tells the ability to redefine media to use it as a medium to express and communicate with the

society at large.

The news is the right of a democratic individual to know and the media plays a key role in the process. Whiteswan ensures the way to make input as a realm of output in the well-to do world of independent media venture.

(Columnist Kochi)



# From a Burned Diary to Millions of Hearts: How Nayeem Mir is Using Storytelling to Heal Kashmir



■ Ubaid Mehdi

In the early morning of Baramulla, before the sun had climbed over the Pir Panjal, Nayeem Mir opened the window of his bedroom. Outside, the streets were still, the air cool, and silence hung in the air like a companion, lingered in his mind like a distant memory.

"This," he says, gesturing toward the water, "is where I learned everything about life, the pain, the beauty, the silence. And it's the same place I'm trying to heal, one story at a time."

It's an ambitious mission for a 24-year-old from a small village dardpora in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. But then again, nothing about Nayeem's journey has been small.

## The Back-Bencher with Big Dreams

Growing up in a modest household, Nayeem never imagined himself a public figure. "I was always the quiet back-bencher. Depression, anxiety, bullying they were just... part of my school life," he says, his voice steady but his eyes betraying old wounds.

At just 13, he found an outlet in writing Urdu poetry under the pen name Afaan. His diary bore a title that seemed to sum up his adolescence: Mein Tanha ("I Am Alone").

"I would write for hours. It was the only place where I could be completely honest," he recalls. But he also felt confined. "One day, I told a friend this place will kill my dreams. I wanted something bigger. I wanted to see myself in a different world."

He chuckles when he admits that the first piece he ever published wasn't a poem or a short film, but a hand-written note slipped under his cousin's door, asking if she liked the song he had recorded. "It was awkward," he says, "but I guess I've always needed feedback to keep going."

## From Rap Beats to Film Frames

In 2019, he experimented with rap music, uploading his first song to YouTube under the name Axstar. "People laughed. Friends mocked me. I didn't care, I just had

a broken phone and a dream."

The real turning point came in 2020, when he enrolled in a Multimedia and Mass Communication programme. His early projects soon caught attention.

His short film Schizophrenia – The Misunderstood, tackling mental health stigma, won first place at Sarhad's 1st J&K International Film Festival. "That film wasn't just for the audience; it was for the 13-year-old me who needed someone to say mental illness is real and it matters."

Next came When It's Too Late Kashmir's first post-apocalyptic short film, shot in public locations with special permissions. "We wanted to prove we could tell world-class stories right here, without leaving home."

By 2023, Nayeem had invested all his savings about ₹20,000 into a new project, Come Home. Around the same time, he was also working on a documentary about child labor in Kashmir. It was during this phase that he met Anzar Bashir, who would go on to become his closest collaborator. "We just clicked," Nayeem recalls. "Same vision, same hunger."

## The Laptop Crash That Broke Him

"One morning, my laptop just wouldn't start. Three years of my life gone in seconds," he says. He tried everything: local technicians, online forums, even dubious offers from strangers. "I got scammed in the process. It felt like my entire journey had burned to ashes again."

He credits Anzar with pulling him back from despair. "Bro, let's begin again. Nothing's broken yet," he told me. That one sentence it saved me."

At this point in our conversation, he pulls out his phone to show me a photograph not of the crashed laptop, but of an old sketchbook filled with charcoal drawings. "Not many people know this," he says, "but before cameras and poetry, I used to draw. That's how I first learned to tell stories with shapes and shadows."

## Life's Next Curveball

Just as he was regaining momentum, another blow came his grandmother was diagnosed with cancer. "Work didn't matter then. Family came first," he says. Months were spent in hospital corridors, balancing caregiving with scraps of creative work.

Somewhere in those long nights, he discovered another habit: reading travel blogs. "I've never been outside Kashmir," he admits, "but I've visited a hundred cities in my head. Someday, I'll find in Istan-



bul, and I'll walk the streets I've read about."

By mid-2024, with his grandmother stable, he and Anzar returned to work freelancing weddings, ads, and small video projects until they had saved enough to buy their first camera. "No studio, just my tiny bedroom," Nayeem says with a smile. "But we had the fire.

## The Instagram Leap

On 15 February 2025, they posted their first Instagram reel. "A month later, Ramadan came. We decided 30 reels in 30 days. It was exhausting... but life-changing."

The audience responded instantly. They hit 10,000 followers in the first month, and on August 11, their page had grown to 74,000 followers.

"The numbers weren't the point," Nayeem says. "The messages were people saying our videos gave them hope to keep living. That's when you realise this is not content, it's connection."

Some of those messages came from people in villages Nayeem had never vis-

ited but one, he says, came from someone in his own school. "They said they remembered me as the boy who never spoke in class. And now I'm the one speaking to thousands. Life's funny like that."

## Three Series, One Purpose

Their Instagram presence is now anchored by three signature series:

Rooh – "For the ones who feel invisible."

Aayina – "To hold a mirror to society's problems."

K-Town Tales – "A first-of-its-kind journey into Kashmir's untold stories."

Each series combines cinematic visuals with storytelling that blends local culture, personal emotion, and social reflection.

What's striking is how often Nayeem weaves in details from his own life a real shop sign from his neighbourhood, a childhood game played in the alleys of Dardapora, even the smell of kangri charcoal on winter mornings. "If I can't make you feel Kashmir, I haven't done my job," he says.

## Beyond the Screen

Nayeem's work has made him more than a filmmaker it's made him a lifeline for strangers. "I've had people tell me our videos stopped them from ending their life. You don't forget that," he says, his voice softening.

And though few know it, he has his own ritual before filming: he listens to an old Kashmiri lullaby his grandmother used to sing. "It reminds me why I tell stories to protect memories before they vanish."

"My aim is to ensure Kashmir is remembered globally for its beauty, remarkable people, cultural legacy, rich heritage, and incredible stories. As an artist, I always try to encourage positive change in society, evolve the mentality of people, and build hope for a bright future," he emphasized.

For him, the ultimate goal is to change how Kashmir is seen both from within and from the outside. "I want the world to remember Kashmir for its beauty, its culture, its people. Not just the headlines."

## The Will to Begin Again

Looking out toward the distant Jhelum, Nayeem reflects on the arc of his journey from a lonely teenager filling a diary in Urdu verse, to a YouTube rapper, to an award-winning filmmaker with a fast-growing digital audience.

"From a burned diary to a broken laptop to reaching millions the journey's been rough," he says. "But I've learned one thing: Life can erase your work, but it can't erase your will to start again."

Beside him, Anzar grins. "And maybe it can't erase two stubborn dreamers either."

"My content refreshes the memories of those who left Kashmir years ago, and even people from the valley tell me they have learned something new about their own homeland," he shares with a quiet smile.

For Nayeem, these messages are the true measure of success proof that his stories are not just being watched, but are touching lives, reviving connections, and keeping the soul of Kashmir alive.

And that is the real message: no matter how much loneliness, loss, or broken beginnings you face, you still carry the power to create light for others. Your story, your voice, your art whatever form it takes can touch lives, revive connections, and bring hope where it's needed most. If Nayeem's journey proves anything, it's this: you are never too small, too broken, or too late to begin again and in choosing to rise, you may become the voice of hope someone else is waiting for.

## The Indian Army and the Pir Panjal:

# A Brotherhood Beyond Bullets Proactive Humanitarian Outreach Transforms Lives in Poonch–Rajouri Belt



■ By MS Nazki

Amidst the rugged heights of the Pir Panjal range, where winding trails kiss the clouds and isolation often stifles opportunity, a quiet revolution is unfolding – not at the hands of politicians or policy architects, but through the tireless commitment of the Indian Army. Once perceived merely as a bulwark of security and counter-insurgency, the Army has, over time, emerged as a steadfast beacon of hope, resilience, and empowerment for countless communities in this remote frontier.

From delivering emergency medical care in far-flung dhoks, enabling access to education in neglected border villages, constructing bridges in flood-ravaged hamlets, to providing blankets and life-saving medicines in bone-chilling winters – the Indian Army has woven itself into the daily fabric of life for thousands across Pir Panjal.

Stretching across Poonch, Rajouri, and adjoining districts of Jammu and Kashmir, this mountainous expanse has long been shadowed by conflict.

Cross-border shelling, harsh weather, meagre infrastructure, and daunting topography have kept vast areas underserved and vulnerable. Yet, amid these challenges, the Indian Army has donned a remarkable dual mantle – defending the nation's sovereignty while extending a compassionate hand to uplift its people.

Through initiatives like Operation Sadbhavana, medical camps, vocational training, sports meets, educational tours, and critical infrastructure works, the Army has deepened its people-first approach.

Healthcare has emerged as one of the Army's most visible and life-saving interventions. In villages where Primary Health Centres lie over 15 km away and roads often become impassable, Army Medical Patrols are nothing short of lifelines. Just last month, an Army medical team trekked over 30 km on foot to reach remote Bakarwal settlements in Surankote's upper reaches – treating over 200 people for ailments ranging from respiratory infections to malnutrition.

Today, Mobile Medical Units, stocked with essential drugs and diagnostic tools, are a common sight even in high-altitude hamlets like Dhoop Gali and Mendhar. In medical emergencies, Army helipads routinely enable life-saving evacuations to district hospitals.

Recognising that ignorance can fuel unrest as much as insurgency, the Army



runs Army Goodwill Schools across Rajouri and Poonch. These institutions deliver quality education while nurturing discipline, national pride, and ambition among border youth. With a focus on English, science, and technology, they have become cradles of hope for first-generation learners – like Nasir Ahmed of Thanamandi, who recently cleared the NEET exam. Educational tours to cities like Delhi and Mumbai expose these children to a world of possibility far beyond their hills.

Where the state machinery often falters, the Army fills critical gaps – building culverts, footbridges, toilets, and community halls. During the 2023 monsoon floods, Army engineers restored damaged roads in Thanamandi and Bafliaz within 48 hours, reconnecting marooned villages to relief supplies. Bridges built over rivulets in Sabjian, Keri, and Balakote have not only cut daily travel but unlocked new markets for local farmers and craftsmen. In villages off the power grid, solar lights installed with Army help have literally brought hope into homes.

With a sharp focus on inclusion, the Army has championed vocational training for women and youth in tailoring, computers, and handicrafts at centres in Balnoi, Manjakote, and Saujian. Joint workshops with civil authorities on hygiene, menstrual health, and financial literacy are empowering women, especially in Gujjar-Bakarwal clusters. Sports

tournaments, talent hunts, and recruitment drives help steer local youth away from drugs and extremism.

Less visible, yet equally vital, is the Army's battle against misinformation. In an age when rumours can ignite unrest overnight, Army units work closely with community elders, religious heads, and youth clubs to promote truth, harmony, and mutual respect. Civil liaison officers play a crucial role in defusing rumours and clarifying facts.

What truly binds the Army to the Pir Panjal, however, is an unspoken bond of trust. Soldiers break bread with nomads, join village fairs, and help plough fields or carry firewood through harsh winters. When a teenage girl named Shabana fell into a well in Saujian this February, it was soldiers from the nearest Army post who rescued her within minutes and revived her on-site.

Such moments echo across hundreds of villages here – a trust that outshines politics and propaganda alike.

While the Army's humanitarian spirit remains unwavering, the ultimate answer lies in robust civil governance, stronger infrastructure, and meaningful local participation. Yet when nature's fury strikes, when terror lurks, or when the roads are buried under snow, it is the Indian Army that people look to first – a guardian that binds courage with compassion.

In the Pir Panjal, the Army is far more than a force – it is family.



# Hypothyroidism: The Silent Slowdown of the Body



■ By Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo

Hypothyroidism often called the “silent slowdown” of the body—a condition that creeps in quietly, sometimes over years, affecting energy, weight, mood, and overall well-being. Hypothyroidism, or underactive thyroid disease, is surprisingly common, yet it often goes unrecognized because its symptoms can be subtle, nonspecific, and easily mistaken for stress or aging.

At the heart of the condition is the thyroid gland, a small, butterfly-shaped organ located at the base of the neck. Despite its size, it has a big job: producing hormones—thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3)—that regulate metabolism, growth, temperature, heart rate, and brain function. When the thyroid doesn't make enough of these hormones, the body's processes slow down, leading to a cascade of symptoms that can affect nearly every organ system.

## Recognizing the Symptoms

One of the challenges in diagnosing hypothyroidism is that its signs are often subtle at first. Fatigue that doesn't improve with rest, gradual weight gain despite no change in diet, dry skin, thinning hair, and a feeling of being unusually cold can all be early indicators. Constipation, puffiness around the face, and swelling in the hands or feet are also common.

Mood changes are another hallmark—many people experience low mood, slowed thinking, or memory problems. In women, menstrual irregularities and fertility issues can arise. The neck may develop a swelling known as a goitre, especially if the thyroid gland is inflamed or enlarged. Because these symptoms can overlap with other conditions, it's easy for hypothyroidism to be misat-



tributed to depression, menopause, or simply “getting older.”

## Causes

The most common cause of hypothyroidism in developed countries is an autoimmune condition called Hashimoto's thyroiditis. In this disorder, the immune system mistakenly attacks the thyroid gland, slowly damaging its ability to produce hormones.

In parts of the world where iodine deficiency is still prevalent, lack of iodine in the diet remains a leading cause. Iodine is a key ingredient in thyroid hormone production, and without enough of it, the gland can't keep up with the body's needs.

Other causes include surgical removal of the thyroid (often done for thyroid cancer or large goiters), radiation therapy to the neck, certain medications like lithium or amiodarone, and, more rarely, pituitary gland problems that prevent the release of thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH). Some people develop hypothyroidism temporarily after pregnancy in a condition called postpartum thyroiditis.

## Diagnosis: A Simple Blood Test

Because symptoms are vague, the only way to definitively diagnose hypothyroidism

is through a blood test. Doctors measure TSH, the hormone produced by the pituitary gland that signals the thyroid to work, along with free T4, the main hormone made by the thyroid. In hypothyroidism, TSH is usually elevated as the body tries to stimulate the underactive gland, while T4 is low.

Sometimes, TSH may be mildly raised while T4 remains normal—a situation called subclinical hypothyroidism. In such cases, doctors weigh the pros and cons of starting treatment immediately versus monitoring, depending on symptoms, age, and risk factors.

## Treatment: Simple and Effective

The good news is that hypothyroidism is straightforward to treat. The standard therapy is a daily tablet of levothyroxine—a synthetic form of T4—that restores hormone levels to normal. The dose is personalized based on body weight, age, and other health conditions.

Patients need regular blood tests, especially in the first few months, to fine-tune the dose. Once stabilized, most people only require annual monitoring. Levothyroxine should be taken on an empty stomach, ideally in the morning, with water, and separate

from calcium or iron supplements, which can interfere with absorption.

With proper treatment, symptoms usually improve within weeks, and most people can expect a full return to health. However, skipping doses or stopping treatment without medical advice can lead to a return of symptoms and, in severe cases, dangerous complications.

## The Risks of Leaving it Untreated

If left untreated, hypothyroidism can progress and cause serious health issues. Long-term low thyroid hormone levels can lead to heart problems such as slow heart rate, high cholesterol, and heart failure. Severe hypothyroidism can cause swelling, anaemia, nerve damage, and infertility.

In rare, extreme cases, a life-threatening condition called myxoedema coma can develop, marked by profound hypothermia, slowed breathing, and unconsciousness. This is a medical emergency requiring immediate hospitalization.

Hypothyroidism in pregnant women is particularly concerning, as it can increase the risk of miscarriage, premature birth, and developmental problems in the baby. That's why thyroid screening is often recommend-

ed during pregnancy in high-risk individuals.

## Living Well with Hypothyroidism

While medication is the cornerstone of treatment, lifestyle choices can help support overall health. A balanced diet containing adequate iodine—found in iodized salt, dairy, seafood, and eggs—is important, although most people in iodine-sufficient countries get enough from their diet. Other nutrients like selenium (in Brazil nuts, fish, and eggs) and zinc (in meat, legumes, and nuts) also support thyroid health.

Regular exercise helps boost energy, maintain a healthy weight, and improve mood, all of which can be affected by hypothyroidism. Sleep, stress management, and regular medical check-ups are equally important in maintaining stability.

Patients should also be aware of factors that can affect thyroid hormone levels, such as changes in other medications, significant weight changes, or new illnesses. Open communication with healthcare providers ensures timely adjustments to treatment.

## Raising Awareness

One of the biggest challenges with hypothyroidism is that it hides in plain sight. People often attribute their fatigue or weight changes to a busy lifestyle, stress, or age. Public awareness campaigns, routine screening in high-risk groups, and health education can help more people get diagnosed earlier.

## Conclusion

Hypothyroidism is a common and treatable condition, but its subtle onset means many live with it unknowingly. By understanding the symptoms, seeking timely diagnosis, and following a consistent treatment plan, people can reclaim their energy, restore their health, and prevent long-term complications. The thyroid may be small, but its role in the body is immense—keeping it healthy is essential for overall well-being.

**Noted physician and columnist**  
Fellow, Royal Society for Public Health (FRSPH), UK

Fellow, International Diabetes Federation (IDF Fellow, Belgium)  
Member, Endocrine Society (USA)  
Nominee, Early Career Director (Board of Directors)-Endocrine Society (USA)  
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## From Kashmir to the World Stage: Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo's Nomination to the US Endocrine Society Board



In a development that has brought immense pride to Kashmir's medical community, Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo, a young medico and academic, has been nominated as Early Career Director on the Board of Directors of the Endocrine Society, USA. The nomination places him among an elite group of global leaders shaping the future of the science of hormones and metabolism.

The Endocrine Society, founded over a century ago, is the world's largest and most influential body in hormone science, with more than 18,000 members across 120 countries. Its Board of Directors plays a pivotal role in guiding the Society's international policies, education programs, and research priorities. For a Kashmiri doctor to be nominated for such a position is both historic and inspirational.

Dr. Tasaduk's path to this achievement has been marked by resilience, dedication, and academic distinction. Having trained in medicine, he soon established himself not only as a clinician but also as a thinker

committed to public health advocacy and global collaboration. His induction as a Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health (FRSPH), UK, a Fellow of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF Fellow, Belgium) and his association with the European Society of Endocrinology reflect his international outlook and his drive to contribute beyond borders.

The position of Early Career Director is specifically designed to bring the voices of young endocrinologists to the Society's leadership table. If elected, Dr. Tasaduk will take office in June 2026, providing mentorship, shaping global strategies, and advocating for innovation in patient care. His vision emphasizes building international networks, supporting early-career physicians, and aligning endocrine science with pressing global health challenges such as diabetes, obesity, and thyroid disorders.

Dr. Tasaduk himself expressed deep humility and purpose upon receiving the news: "It is a profound honor to be nominated by the Endocrine

Society. This is not just about me—it is about representing the aspirations of young doctors worldwide. I hope my journey inspires others in Kashmir and beyond to dream big and pursue international excellence in healthcare."

Beyond the personal achievement, this nomination symbolizes something larger. For Kashmir, it is a reminder of

the talent and potential its youth hold, and for India, it highlights the growing contribution of South Asian professionals to global health leadership. As Dr. Tasaduk prepares for this new chapter, his story stands as a beacon of hope, showing how determination, vision, and service can take a doctor from the Valley to the world's most respected platforms in medicine.

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CBC-27104/12/000/2526

## Public Notice

It is hereby notified that I, Suheela Jan D/o Ab. Hamid, resident of Khull Chohar, Tehsil Shangus, District Anantnag, had passed 9th Class Examination (Session: 2009) from Government Higher Secondary School Hardutooru.

My original 9th Class Certificate has been lost and could not be traced despite best efforts.

Therefore, I am applying for the issuance of a duplicate certificate.

If anybody has any objection/claim in this regard, he/she may kindly inform the Principal, Government Higher Secondary School Hardutooru, District Anantnag.

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

Subject: Application of BASHIR AHMAD GANIE S/O ABDUL KHALIQ GANIE R/O DANDMOH for the issuance of LEGAL HEIR certificate

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above in this context a report sought from patwari halqa concerned and the Death certificate issued by the competent authority reveals that ABDUL REHAM GANIE S/O AB KHALIQ GANIE has passed away on 28/4/1998 .The report of the patwari further depicts that the deceased has left behind following dependent as tabulated below

- 1.... BASHIR AHMAD 55 years Brother chokedar
- 2....AB RADHID 60 years brother labour
- 3... Mst HAJRA 40 years // H/WIFE
4. ....RAJA BEGUM 35 years //

The applicant has applied for Issuance of Legal heir certificate in favour of Self

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

## Public Notice

It is hereby notified that i have lost my 9th pass discharge certificate of Govt Girls Higher Secondary School Handwara, exam roll no, 58 r/o Handwara, now i have applied for the duplicate certificate.If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of Govt Girls Higher Secondary school Handwara within a period of 07 days after that no objection will be accepted.

NAME: SHAHEENA AKHTER  
ROLL NO:58

D/O MANZOOR AHMAD MIR

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## Public Notice

I have lost my 9th pass certificate session 1990.Now i am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact Principal Govt Hr Sec School Wagoora within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

MUMTAZA BANO D/O MOHD AKBAR AHANGER  
R/O DARWA WAGOOR

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

Subject: Application for issuance of RBA certificate applicant MOHD YOUSUF SHEIKH S/O. AB GANI SHEIKH SHEIKH R/O SHEIKHPORA Tehsil KREERI in favour of daughter AYAT YOUSUF 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 SHEIKHPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the SHEIKH community having annual income 400000// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1...MOHD YOUSUF SHEIKH head 57 years farmer
- 2..MUGLI BEGAM wife 56 years Housewife
- 3... AIJAZ AHMAD Son 33 years labour
- 4..RAFIQ AHMAD Son 31 years Labour
- 5 ...AYAT YOAUF daughter 24 years Student

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

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

Subject: Application for issuance of RBA certificate applicant MOHAMMAD SHABAN SHEIKH S/O. GHULAM RASOOL SHEIKH R/O SHEIKHPORA Tehsil KREERI in favour of Son's MOHD NADEEM ,SHOWKAT & WAHEED AHMAD R/O SHEIKHPORA 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 SHEIKHPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the SHEIKH community having annual income 701292// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1...MOHD SHABAN SHEIKH self 61 years retire employee
- 2..HALEEMA BEGAM wife 60 years Housewife
- 3...RIFAT AKHTER daughter 31 years H/W
- 4..MOHD NADEEM Son 29 years CSC centre
- 5 ....WAHEEDA BANO daughter in law 28 years H/W
- 6...SHOWKAT AHMAD son 28 years private employee
- 7.. WAHEED AHMAD son 26 student

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

## Public Notice

My Daughter's Date of Birth (DoB) wrongly mentioned in her Aadhar card as 04-03-2001 instead of 17-10-2001.Now i am applying for its correction if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact concerned Authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

FAYAZ AHMAD BUKHARI F/O IQRA FAYAZ  
R/O KREERI BARAMULLA

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

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

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of SAHIBA FAISAL S/O MOHAMMAD FAISAL R/O RAJA -KA- TAJPUR Tehsil CHANDPORA Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 25/04/2018 and event has been shown to be occurred at CHC KREERI for issuance of delay order .In this connection.

if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be 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 UMER AHMAD GANIE S/O ALI MOHAMMAD GANIE R/O KAKOTHAL Tehsil kreeri Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/03/2006 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

Subject: Application of GHULAM MOHD WANI S/O WALI MOHD WANI R/O KREERI for the issuance of LEGAL HEIR certificate

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above in this context a report sought from patwari halqa concerned and the Death certificate issued by the competent authority reveals that MOHD ASHRAF WANI S/O GH MOHD WANI R.O KREERI has passed away on 07/04/1998 .The report of the patwari further depicts that the deceased has left behind following dependent as tabulated below

- 1... GH MOHD WANI 85 years Father aged
- 2....SARA BEGUM 75 years Mother aged
- 3...FAROOQ AHMAD 48 years Brother shopkeeper
- 4...ASHIQ ABTAL 40 years Brother shopkeeper
- 5...NASEEMA AKHTER 44 years Sister housewife

The applicant has applied for Issuance of Legal heir certificate in favour of Self

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

### Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE POULTRY PROJECT OFFICER IPDP MATTAN

Subject: Auction of walnut fruits of 15 walnut trees for the Year 2025-2026.

This office has scheduled the auction of fruit of 15 walnut trees for year 2025-2026 on 27.08.2025.

In this context all the interested dealers of dry fruits and other concerned agencies are here by intimated to submit their CDR worth Rs: 5,000= (Rupees Five thousand only) under Government Account No:- 0039010200000402 by or before 25.08.2025 for participation in the auction. The auction bid will start from Rs:- 39182= as per expert opinion of Horticulture Development Anantnag.

The highest successful bid will be accepted by the committee of officers constituted by Joint Director Poultry cum LPP Haripar bath Srinagar and rest of CDR's will be returned back to the concerned bidders. The successful bidder thereafter will be wholly and solely responsible for walnut fruits till harvested in the current season.

The successful bidder has to remit the whole amount on same date under proper GR to this office. The committee has the right to accept or reject the auction on administrative grounds. If the auction fails due to any malafide on part of bidders, the CDR's of same shall be treated as forfeited.

Sd/-  
Poultry Project Officer,  
IPDP Mattan

DIPK: 5294/25 | Dated: 19-08-2025

### Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHEEP BREEDING FARM DAKSUM (Agri Sec.)

## Tender Notice

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir , Union Territory of India, This office invites sealed tenders affixed with revenue stamps Rs 2/= from the authorized contractors/firms for harvesting of perennial crop / Fodder including Drying, Binding, Stacking, Collecting, Loading, Dumping and fuel Charges . As such the interested contractors are requested to provide their rates on quotations per quintal along with CDR of Rs 4000/= pledged in favour of Deputy Director Sheep Breeding Farm Daksum within 05 days from the publication of this notice. The quotation will be opened by the committee on 23-08-2025 at 3:00 pm or the next feasible date. The rates quoted should be inclusive of all taxes (if applicable)

No: SBFD/Agri/2025-26/594-97

Dated: 19-08-2025

Sd/-  
Deputy Director  
Sheep Breeding Farm  
Daksum

DIPK: 5283/25 | Dated: 19-08-2025





# Satish Sharma announces Slew of activities on Eve of National Sports Day

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, AUGUST 19:** In line with the nationwide initiative to promote sports and physical fitness, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, IT, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, today announced a slew of programmes to mark National Sports Day on August 29 and Community Fitness Day on August 31 across Jammu & Kashmir.

The Minister made the announcement while participating in a virtual meeting convened by Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, which was attended by Sports Ministers from different States and Union Territories to finalize the framework for the celebrations across the country.

The meeting was also attended by Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Sarmad Hafeez; Secretary, J&K Sports



Council, Nuzhat Gul and other senior officers.

Satish Sharma informed that the week-long activities in Jammu & Kashmir will be aimed at spreading awareness about fitness, encouraging grassroots participation in sports, and inculcating the values of discipline, teamwork, and healthy living among citizens.

He said that schools, colleges, and community institutions during

morning assemblies will organise tributes to Major Dhyani Chand, fitness pledges, sports and recreational games, indigenous sports, yoga sessions, cycling events, and community walks.

"To ensure greater inclusivity and impact, a specified target of individuals per district has been set. Special attention will be given to youth engagement as well as fitness activities for

senior citizens under the Fit India Movement", the Minister maintained

Satish Sharma further highlighted that the celebrations will have a strong digital engagement component, with campaigns on social media platforms, promotional taglines, and fitness assessments through the Fit India Mobile App. He added that all activities and achievements will be docu-

mented, including medal tallies and photo galleries, and uploaded on the Fit India portal through institutional logins for record and transparency.

Reiterating the vision of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, the Minister said, "National Sports Day is not only a tribute to the legendary Major Dhyani Chand ji but also an occasion to reinforce the importance of sports and fitness in the lives of our people. We are committed to making this celebration a people's movement where every village, every youth, and every citizen actively participates. Sports and fitness must become a way of life for all."

The Minister urged institutions, communities, and citizens across Jammu & Kashmir to come forward and participate in the programmes, making the celebrations of National Sports Day 2025 and Community Fitness Day a grand success.

## MLA Udampur West inaugurates historic 3- day annual Sankri Devta Mela at Panchari

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**UDHAMPUR, AUGUST 19:** Member Legislative Assembly Udampur West Pawan Kumar Gupta today inaugurated the three-day annual historic Sankri Devta mela here at village Meer- Panchari.

The inauguration was held amid drum beats and festivity in the presence of DDC Member Jasvir Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh, Mela Officer (Tehsildar Panchari) Vipin Kumar and other officers.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Guest congratulated the people and emphasized that such melas showcase the region's rich cultural and religious heritage as well as play a vital role in strengthening brotherhood and communal harmony. He highlighted the importance of preserving traditional values and advocated for promoting the mela as an integral part of local culture.

He reiterated that such festivals bring together people of different faiths, communities and regions, fostering peace and unity in the society. The MLA also lauded the District Administration Udampur for making elaborate and foolproof arrangements for the successful conduct of the event.

He appreciated the enthusiastic participation of local students in cultural programs and rural sports, wishing them success in their future endeavors. He also highlighted the welfare schemes launched by the Government, encouraging people to avail themselves of these benefits for their socio-economic upliftment.



The MLA also inspected stalls set up by different departments to spread awareness about government-sponsored schemes. He urged officers to make sincere and dedicated efforts to inform the public about these initiatives aimed at rural development.

The DDC Member Panchari-Moungri expressed gratitude to the district administration for their support in organizing the mela.

Later, the MLA paid obeisance at the revered Sankri Devta Temple, praying for peace, prosperity and well-being of the district.

The District Administration had made elaborate arrangements for the smooth conduct of the mela including the provision of uninterrupted power supply, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, medical assistance, security measures and a Police Control Room.

Numerous temporary sweet shops, toy stalls and food corners set up by local as well as outside vendors emerged as the main attractions for the general public.

The J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages and Department of Youth Services and Sports also organized rural sports and cultural activities with the active participation of school students from the area, adding vibrancy to the celebrations.

## Director AHJD inaugurates Introduction cum Orientation Training Programme for newly recruited VASs

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, AUGUST 19:** A ten day long Orientation Training programme for newly recruited Veterinary Assistant Surgeons was today inaugurated by Director Animal Husbandry Jammu Dr. Sanjay Gupta here at Directorate of Animal Husbandry Talab Tillo.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Sanjay Gupta extended a very warm welcome to the new recruits and wished them a successful career in the department. He highlighted the contribution of the department of Animal Husbandry in fostering socio-economic upliftment among farmers besides augmenting

the availability of milk, eggs and mutton to meet the local requirement. He emphasized that punctuality, discipline, hard work and sincerity are key to success in any job. He further advised the new recruits to take advantage of the orientation training programme to get better know-how of the facilities and infrastructure of the department.

Programme Coordinator Dr. Mohit Koul informed the participants about the programme schedule and the institutions of the department they will be visiting in the next ten days. He underscored the need for an orientation training programme for making the newly recruited officers understand the nature.

## Annual Machail Yatra 2025: Pavitra Charri of Shree Chandi Maa Leaves for Machail Amid Devotional Fervor

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**KISHTWAR, AUGUST 19:** The sacred Pavitra Charri (Holy Mace) of Shree Chandi Mata today commenced its spiritual journey from Shri Gauri Shankar Mandir-Sarkoot, following a night halt, en route to the revered Machail Shrine in Paddar Block.

This year, in the wake of the cloudburst incident on 14th August, the procession of the Holy Mace was conducted in a simple and solemn manner, with only a limited convoy of vehicles and a few accompanying devotees, ensuring adherence to safety protocols while maintaining religious sanctity. Tight security arrangements were deployed by local police and administration to ensure smooth passage through hilly terrains and to prevent any untoward incidents during the journey.

The Yatra continues along its traditional route, making scheduled halts at Atholi, Massu, and Chasoti, allowing devotees to offer prayers and participate in rituals and bhajans at each stop. Local communities along the route actively contribute by organizing langars (community meals), medical aid, and resting arrangements for pilgrims, reflecting the deep-rooted spirit of service and devotion associated with the Machail Yatra.

The Pavitra Charri is expected to reach the sacred Machail Shrine on 22nd August, 2025, where elaborate rituals and offerings will be performed in honor of Shree Chandi Maa. Devotees from across the region, despite challenging weather conditions, are expected to participate, offering prayers and seeking blessings for health, prosperity, and protection.

## Enforcement Team Conducts Extensive Inspection of Medical Shops in Banihal

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**RAMBAN, AUGUST 19:** On the directives of the District Administration, a joint inspection team comprising the Drug Control Officer, Ramban, and Police authorities conducted a comprehensive survey of medical shops across Banihal to ensure strict compliance with drug regulations and curb misuse of psychotropic substances.

The inspection drive focused on verifying licenses, permits, and records of chemist shops, scrutinizing sales registers, and reviewing CCTV installations to ensure that medicines, particularly controlled drugs, are dispensed responsibly and legally. Special attention was given to detecting unauthorized medical establishments operating without valid registra-



tion or permission from relevant authorities.

Officials emphasized that such inspections are a part of broader efforts to prevent drug abuse, curb illicit trafficking, and maintain public health safety. The team also interacted with shopkeepers, reminding them about the legal obligations regarding storage, sale, and documentation of psychotropic drugs and other controlled substances.

The inspection revealed that all chemist shops visited were operating with valid licenses and proper documentation, and no unregistered medical establishments were detected. Sales records were found to be in proper order, and there was no evidence of diversion of psychotropic or controlled drugs.

The Drug Control Officer reiterated that inspections will continue regularly and intensified vigilance will be maintained to ensure compliance with the Drugs & Cosmetics Act and allied regulations. Officials urged shopkeepers to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to authorities immediately.

In addition to regulatory checks, the exercise also aimed to sensitize medical store staff about responsible dispensing practices, the dangers of psychotropic drug misuse, and the importance of maintaining accurate records for auditing purposes. The collaboration between Drug Control Department and Police authorities underscores the administration's commitment to ensuring a safe, responsible, and legally compliant pharmaceutical environment for the residents of Banihal and surrounding areas.

## Kathua: DLTFC Approves 45 JKREGP Cases, Empowering Local Youth

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**KATHUA, AUGUST 19:** The District Level Task Force Committee (DLTFC) convened here today to review loan applications under the J&K Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP), aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment among unemployed youth of the district.

The meeting was chaired by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Surinder Mohan at the DC Office complex, with active participation from key officials includ-

ing General Manager DIC Mushtaq Chaudhary, District Officer KVIB Surinder Paul Sharma, LDM SBI Kathua, Superintendent ITI Kathua, Cluster Head J&K Bank, and representatives from J&K Gramin Bank.

The Committee reviewed 71 applications submitted online by young aspirants seeking financial assistance to set up micro and small ventures across various sectors such as handicrafts, agriculture, poultry, food processing, and small-scale manufacturing under JKREGP, which is implemented by the J&K Khadi & Village Industries Board.

After meticulous scrutiny, 45 applications were approved, having met all eligibility criteria and completeness norms. Among the remaining applications, 24 applicants were absent, 1 application was rejected, and 1 application was deferred for consideration in the next meeting.

The ADDC emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship in promoting self-reliance and generating employment opportunities locally, urging all beneficiaries to utilize the sanctioned funds prudently to ensure sustainability and profitability of their ventures.

## Prominent Retired Officials and OBC Community Leaders Join BJP in Presence of Sat Sharma

■ HT News Desk

**JAMMU, AUG 19:** Dozens of eminent personalities, including retired government officials led by Ashok Kumar Pandey (Retd. Principal, GHSS) and Ashu Kumar Verma, formally joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, in a programme organized by the BJP OBC Morcha under the leadership of its President Brahamjyot.

The event witnessed the enthusiastic induction of over 50 supporters, ranging from young professionals to senior retired officers, representing various OBC communities across Jammu. The new members were welcomed with saffron scarves, loud slogans, and applause, reflecting widespread excitement and confidence in the party's ideology.

Sat Sharma, J&K BJP President, lauded the joining of these respected individuals, stating that it reinforces the BJP's commitment to inclusive growth, nationalism, and community empowerment. He emphasized that the OBC community forms the backbone of the region's socio-economic develop-



ment, and their support is a testament to the party's outreach and people-centric policies. He added, "Each new member strengthens our mission to achieve Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a strong, self-reliant India, where every community has equitable opportunities for growth and representation."

Addressing the gathering, Brahamjyot, BJP OBC Morcha President, stated that the overwhelming

response reflects the community's rejection of divisive politics. "Today's joining ceremony is not merely symbolic but historic, highlighting BJP as the voice of justice, empowerment, and grassroots development," he said.

The programme also featured remarks by senior leaders including State Vice President Rash Paul Verma, MLA Bishnah Dr. Rajeev Bhagat, BJP SC Morcha President & DDC Dharminder Kumar, Former

MLA Ashwani Sharma, District President Jammu Border Rinku Choudhary, and FC Bhagat, who encouraged the newcomers to actively participate in party activities, social welfare programs, and public outreach campaigns.

The new entrants expressed strong commitment to the party's objectives and pledged to promote development, social justice, and cultural pride in their respective communities. They highlighted

their readiness to work closely with local and district leadership to mobilize youth, strengthen community networks, and contribute to welfare initiatives.

The event also underscored BJP's focus on future initiatives for OBC communities in Jammu & Kashmir, including:

Skill development and vocational training programs to enhance employment opportunities for youth.

Entrepreneurship support schemes to empower local businesses and self-employment ventures.

Educational scholarships and mentorship initiatives to ensure equitable access to learning for OBC students.

Community welfare projects targeting health, sanitation, and livelihood enhancement.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge by the new members, reaffirming their dedication to BJP's vision of progress, unity, and prosperity, while committing to actively take the party's message of development, social justice, and national pride to every corner of Jammu & Kashmir.



# India's forerunner government schemes transforming country as 'Global Export Hub'

■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, AUG 19:** Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Jitin Prasada, today highlighted different initiatives taken by the government for driving exports as well as domestic manufacturing.

Stressing India's commitment to driving exports, Jitin Prasada informed the Lok Sabha in a written reply, "A major thrust has been placed on expanding market access through Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). Notably, India signed the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the United Kingdom on 24th July 2025, marking a significant milestone in bilateral trade relations. Negotiations for the India-European Union Free

Trade Agreement are ongoing with an aim to conclude by the end of the year."

The Minister also pointed towards the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for 14 key sectors, including Electronics, IT hardware, Pharmaceuticals, Bulk Drugs, High-Efficiency Solar PV Modules, Automobiles & Auto Components, White Goods, Telecom, and Network Products.

Minister Prasad also highlighted 'National Logistics Policy' and 'PM Gati Shakti' as forerunner schemes to drive the efficiency of the logistics sector.

For successfully implementing these schemes, a National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) was launched, aimed to transform India as a global manufacturing hub.



"The Government has taken measures to promote exports from the Districts as part of the Export Hubs Initiative. It includes identification of the products and services with export potential in all the districts of the country in consultation with all stakehold-

ers, including the states/UTs. An institutional mechanism has been set up in all States/UTs by forming the State Export Promotion Committee (SEPC) and District Export Promotion Committee (DEPC) at the district level," the Minister added.

Highlighting the results, the Minister stated, "Further, the PLI scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing has significantly impacted the Mobile manufacturing sector in India, particularly in transforming India from a net importer to a net exporter of mobile phones. The export of mobile phones has increased from Rs 1,500 cr in 2014-15 to more than Rs 2 lakh cr in 2024-25."

"Bharat is now the second-largest mobile manufacturing country in the world. In addition, the pharmaceuticals sector has witnessed cumulative sales of Rs 2.66 lakh cr, which includes exports of Rs 1.70 lakh cr achieved in the first three years of the scheme," the Minister added. UNI SAS SSP

## Wang Yi to travel to Pakistan today for Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue

■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, AUG 19:** China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, currently in India on a three-day official visit, will travel to Pakistan tomorrow after concluding his India tour, for talks with his Pakistani counterpart and Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar for "in-depth communication" on bilateral relations and international and regional issues of mutual interest.

Chinese Foreign Ministry today said that during the visit from August 20-22 Foreign Minister Wang Yi will meet Pakistani leaders and hold the sixth round of the China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue with Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson while describing China and Pakistan as "iron-clad friends and all-weather strategic cooperative partners," said the two sides will conduct "in-depth communication" to expand "practical cooperation."

This will be the Chinese Foreign Minister's second visit to Pakistan in three years and the latest high-level exchange between China and Pakistan following recent bilateral meetings and visits.

"China and Pakistan are ironclad friends and all-weather strategic cooperative partners. Solid strategic mutual trust and frequent high-level exchanges are distinctive features of bilateral ties," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said.

"China hopes to work with Pakistan through this visit to further deliver on the important common understandings between the leaders of the two countries, deepen strategic communication, expand practical cooperation in various areas, enhance coordination and cooperation in international and regional affairs, and accelerate the building of an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era."

The spokesperson said President Xi Jinping and Pakistani leaders have jointly provided strategic guidance for the growth of bilateral relations

Asked whether it was a challenge for China to have relations with both India and Pakistan at the same time, the spokesperson said both India and Pakistan are China's important neighbours and China is willing to conduct friendly cooperation with both countries.

"China is willing to conduct friendly cooperation with both countries. As for issues between them, we hope they will find proper solutions. China stands ready to play a constructive role in light of their will," the spokesperson added. UNI

## AAP alleges corruption in Delhi Govt's flag scheme

■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, AUG 19:** The principal opposition Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) today accused the Delhi government of corruption in a scheme entailing distribution of the national flag.

The Delhi BJP government is yet to issue an official response to these allegations.

The allegations were detailed by AAP MP Sanjay Singh at a press conference at the party headquarters. He claimed that a "Tiranga scam" had been uncovered, involving the distribution of "substandard" flags under the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign.

According to Singh, the Delhi government allocated 4 crore rupees to distribute 7 lakh national flags to households before Independence Day. The tender specified that each flag should be 900 mm by 1350 mm in size and come with a 6-foot pole.

However, Singh presented documents alleging that the flags supplied were significantly smaller, measuring 711 mm by 508 mm, and were accompanied by poles shortened to 4 feet. He further stated that the cost per set was approved at 60 rupees, but the company supplied flags that were worth only 15 rupees each.

A key point of contention raised by the AAP is the timing of the tender process. Singh claimed that while the flags were intended for distribution before August 15, the tender was not opened until August 16, a day after the national holiday. He alleged that the contract was awarded to Anirat Contracts Pvt Ltd without due process and in collusion with government officials.

Three companies — Anirat Contracts Pvt Ltd, Spesh for Business Solution Pvt Ltd, and Vinayak Product Company — were said to have participated in the tender.

Calling for a probe, Singh demanded the arrest and imprisonment of those responsible, stating that the scam was an insult to the sacrifice of India's freedom fighters.

Separately, senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia commented on the social media platform X, writing, "Politics on the Tiranga, business on the Tiranga, and now a scam on the Tiranga. Such scammers deserve to face sedition charges." UNI ATK SSP

## No change in India's position on Taiwan

■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, AUG 19:** India has conveyed to China that there is no change in New Delhi's position on Taiwan and that it will continue to maintain economic, technological and cultural ties with Taipei, sources said on Tuesday.

The clarification came after Beijing claimed that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had reaffirmed India's support for the "One-China" principle during his meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

Government sources clarified that India's position on Taiwan remains unchanged.

"There is no change in India's position on Taiwan. India stressed that like the rest of the world, India has a relationship with Taiwan that focuses on economic, technology and cultural ties. India intend to continue it," as per sources.

The development happened as Wang met with Jaishankar yesterday in New Delhi.

The Chinese readout of the talks stated that Jaishankar had conveyed



that "Taiwan is a part of China".

Government sources clarified, "there is no change in our position on Taiwan."

New Delhi had previously reaffirmed its adherence to the 'One-China' policy in joint statements with Beijing.

However, it stopped doing so after 2008 in response to China's practice of issuing 'stapled visas' to Indian citizens from Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and Arunachal Pradesh—an action seen as an assertion of Beijing's territorial claims over these regions.

## Cabinet clears Rs 8,307 cr Bhubaneswar Ring Road project under HAM

■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, AUG 19:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, today approved the construction of a 6-lane access-controlled Capital Region Ring Road (Bhubaneswar Bypass) in Odisha, spanning 110.875 km.

Addressing a press conference here, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the project will be executed under the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) with a total capital investment of Rs 8,307.74 crore.

He said currently, connectivity between Rameshwar to Tangi on the existing National Highway experiences significant congestion due to high traffic volumes, passing through highly urbanised cities Khordha, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

The Minister said upon completion, the bypass will play a pivotal role in regional economic growth, strengthening connectivity between major religious and economic centres and opening new avenues for trade and industrial development.

The project will also generate approximately 74.43 lakh person-



days of direct and 93.04 lakh person-days of indirect employment, and will open new avenues of growth, development and prosperity in surrounding

regions.

To address these challenges, the project is proposed to be developed as 6-Lane Access-Controlled Greenfield Highway. The project will provide significant benefit to Odisha and other eastern States by diverting heavy commercial traffic away from Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Khordha Cities.

This will enhance the efficiency of freight movement, reducing logistics cost and driving socio-economic growth in the region.

The project alignment integrates with three major National

Highways (NH-55, NH-57 and NH-655) and one State Highway (SH-65), providing seamless connectivity to key economic, social, and logistics nodes across Odisha.

Additionally, the upgraded corridor will enhance multimodal integration by connecting with 10 economic nodes, four social nodes and five logistic nodes, providing enhanced multimodality with one major railway station, one airport, one proposed Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP), and two major ports. It will facilitate faster movement of goods and passengers across the region. UNI RBE PRS

## US sets up Trump-Zelensky meeting for future trilateral talks with Russia

■ United News of India

**WASHINGTON, AUG 19:** US President Donald Trump has intensified his efforts to broker a peace between Russia and Ukraine to end their now three-year long war, hosting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and several key European leaders at the White House, before holding a lengthy phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The leaders from Europe included British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, Finnish President Alexander Stubb, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, as well as European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte.

Following the meeting, Trump held a 40-minute phone call with Putin to brief him on the discussions. Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said both sides agreed to set up a direct dialogue between Moscow and Kyiv and discussed raising it to a higher



level. Trump later announced that arrangements had begun for a meeting between Putin and Zelensky "at a location to be determined," to be followed by trilateral talks involving the US. "During the meeting we discussed security guarantees for Ukraine, which guarantees would be provided by the various European countries, in coordination with the United States," Trump wrote on Truth Social, adding that Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Special Envoy Steve Witkoff were leading coordination

efforts with Moscow and Kyiv, reports TASS.

Zelensky confirmed his readiness for direct talks with Putin and said all leaders present backed the initiative. He indicated that "sensitive issues, those related to territories and other things," would be raised at a trilateral session, though he did not insist on a ceasefire as a precondition. On the issue of security guarantees, Zelensky said a framework was expected within 7-10 days, covering arms supplies, allied commitments and defence industry sup-

port. Kyiv also proposed a \$90 billion US weapons package, including aircraft and air defence systems, to form part of the guarantees. Trump confirmed that "seven great leaders" were working on plans with US coordination.

The US President downplayed the "threat" of further Russian military aggression, stating it was "overrated" and dismissed the need for a ceasefire, noting that it was an unreliable and unsustainable move when ending conflicts which hardly ever lasts. Rather, he pushed for a comprehensive settlement that could involve territorial adjustments. He predicted clarity "in a week or two" on whether peace was achievable.

Europe expressed a more cautious stance though. While Macron welcomed the US involvement, he called for a four-party format including Europe, while Merz insisted a ceasefire was essential. Von der Leyen, Starmer, Meloni and Rutte all emphasised unity and sustained security commitments. UNI ANV SSP

## Russian FM Lavrov says Alaska talks reflect US' sincere desire to end war

■ United News of India

**MOSCOW, AUG 19:** Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov today praised Friday's Alaska summit and said it highlighted a genuine desire by the US to end the war with Ukraine, as noted by his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The Russian President has also praised the meeting and called it 'very constructive.'

"President Trump and his team, especially after the meeting in Alaska, began to take a much deeper approach to resolving this crisis, realising that it is necessary to eliminate the root causes, which we, (Russia) President Putin, have constantly talked about."

Lavrov remarked that the atmosphere for the talks in Anchorage was "very good," which was further reflected in the statements of both Putin and Trump.

He contrasted his praise for the Trump administration by admonishing Europe, which he accused of wanting to continue with the hostilities, amid their constant demands for a ceasefire - even though it was President Trump who ruled it out as an unsustainable measure post his meeting with Putin - and their calls for militarisation.



"It was clear that the head of the US and his team, firstly, sincerely wanted to achieve a result that would be long-term, sustainable, reliable, unlike the Europeans, who at that time were saying on every corner that only a ceasefire, and after that they would continue to supply weapons to Ukraine," Lavrov told the country's state media Rossiya 24 broadcaster.

The Russian FM claimed that the Kremlin has no desire for territorial conquest, but merely seeks to protect the interests of Russians, referring to Moscow's capture of the Ukrainian territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Sumy, and Mykolaiv - with Crimea taken in 2014. UNI ANV SSP





# Shafali's Form, Renuka's Return Key for India's WC Squad

■ **Shashank Kishore**

**NEW DELHI:** India enter their final stretch of World Cup preparations with a settled squad. They are buoyed by a tri-series win in Sri Lanka (also involving South Africa), and a series win in England. According to India captain Harmanpreet Kaur, their settled outfit is the biggest point of difference from the lead-up to previous campaigns.

On Tuesday, when the Neetu David-led selection committee meets to pick India's 15-member squad for the World Cup starting September 30, one of their toughest decisions could be around Shafali Verma's selection. Whether she is selected or not might be decisive to how India plan to balance consistency and explosive potential in the squad.

There are also tough selection calls to be made on key players coming back from injury. Here is a quick look at the questions the selection committee will need to take a call on:

Four of the top six (Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur, Jemimah Rodrigues and Richa Ghosh) are certainties. As things stand, Pratika Rawal has made a compelling case to open with Mandhana, having notched up 703 runs in 14 innings at 54.07, while striking at 88.

Similarly, Harleen Deol has added a touch of consistency to her game since her comeback from injury late last year. She struck a maiden ODI century against West Indies in December, and has been a regular in the ODI setup since. Occasionally, though, there have been question marks about her tendency to start slowly, even though there's no threat to her place in the squad.

With Yastika Bhatia likely to be the second wicketkeeper, the team management also has a reserve batter in the mix. This makes the call to select Shafali - or not - tricky, even though there are no doubts about her experience and track record at the international level. What she currently lacks, however, is form, which is evident from her recent returns for India A in Australia: scores of 52, 4, and 36 in three one-dayers, and 41, 3, and 3 in the T20s that preceded them.

During Pooja Vastrakar's absence from the side due to a long-standing stress injury, the team management found an able back-up in Amanjot Kaur.

The allrounder was used as the second seamer during the T20I leg of the England tour, which India won 3-2. In that series, apart from bowling her seam-ups and picking three wickets across 13 overs, she also struck an incredible, match-winning 63 not out to shore up a floundering innings.

However, the flaring up of a back injury during the ODI leg of the tour has raised some concerns. At the time, Harmanpreet termed her exclusion as rest, but it is understood that the team management has been concerned over her injury status and treated her with utmost caution.

While her scans are believed to have cleared her of a major issue, the selectors will need to assess if she can handle dual responsibilities, since India have been spin-heavy with their bowling attacks in recent times.

If Amanjot makes the cut, it is likely India may not need a third specialist seamer. In this case, someone like Arundhati Reddy could

miss out. The selector then might have to make a case for selecting either Shafali, or a genuine wrist spinner - which they've lacked lately - like Prema Rawat, who had a breakout India A tour in Australia.

There is no question over their other two allrounders, who are near certainties in the squad as well: Deepti Sharma and Radha Yadav, who impressed in England as well with her captaincy stint on the A tour of Australia. While Deepti offers bowling utility and finishing prowess, Radha is an outstanding fielder and has rediscovered herself as a left-arm spinner. Deepti Sharma celebrates with Radha Yadav after dismissing Tazmin Brits, India vs South Africa, 2nd women's T20I, Chennai, July 7, 2024

Much will depend on whether Renuka Singh, pace spearhead until recently, is fully fit after recovering from a stress fracture. If she isn't, Arundhati will be a straight shoe-in. But for now, indications are that Renuka is on the right track to make the cut, even though there is the risk of her being undercooked. She has not played any form of cricket since the WPL, and the Australia ODIs in the lead-up to the World Cup could be her final chance at getting into her groove.

Kranti Goud, the Madhya Pradesh pacer, has climbed through the selection ladder with her bristling energy and ability to hustle batters, as was seen during her match-winning 6 for 52 to seal the ODI series in England. Goud's excellent early initiation may put her ahead of Arundhati in the queue, especially if Amanjot is fit.

Espnricinfo

## SA20 not threatened by BBL's aim to be second-biggest league after IPL, says Smith



■ **Firdose Moonda**

**NEW DELHI:** The SA20 organisers believe they have established enough of a foothold not to be threatened by the BBL's aim to become the second-biggest league in the world after the IPL, according to commissioner Graeme Smith.

The SA20, which will begin its fourth season on Boxing Day this year and has IPL ownership across all six franchises, has the second-highest salary cap after the IPL of R41 million (US\$2.31 million). By that measure, it could be regarded as the next-best league in the global game and with a marquee auction scheduled for September 9, Smith explained they plan to stay that way.

"When we started we were built up against the ILT20 and Big Bash and we

set ourselves big ambitions upfront," Smith told ESPNcricinfo ahead of the closing of player registration for the auction. "In the southern hemisphere window we want to dominate and we want to be the biggest league outside the IPL. Three years in, we've set the standard. Every decision we make is around making sure that we uphold those standards. I expect there will be a top number of leagues that will elevate themselves in a calendar cycle and that will be the priority for players, investors and fans. Our ambitions are to remain right at the top of that alongside IPL."

Smith's comments come less than two weeks after CACEO Todd Greenberg told SEN radio that his board would "unashamedly" chase second spot by exploring

privatisation. "It's going to be very hard to chase the IPL, given the scale of cricket in India, but unashamedly, we want to run a league that comes second. And to do that we're going to need to make sure that player availability and player salaries are commensurate with everything else that goes on around the world, and there's one thing you need for that, you need money, you need investment. We'd be naive if we weren't asking ourselves these questions and making sure we've got an eye on what's next," Greenberg said.

The BBL's move to seek private investment will make it the last of the established leagues to look for funding outside of board structures.

Espnricinfo

## Kishan ruled out of Duleep Trophy opener, Akash Deep advised rest

■ **United News of India**

**ODISHA:** Ishan Kishan will miss East Zone's season-opening Duleep Trophy fixture as he is yet to fully recover from a minor injury he suffered in the UK during his stint at Nottinghamshire. He has been replaced by Odisha's Aashirwad Swain in East Zone's squad.

ESPNcricinfo understands Kishan required multiple stitches after falling off an e-bike, and it's due to this that he wasn't considered as a replacement for the injured Rishabh Pant ahead of the fifth and final Test

against England at The Oval. Subsequently, Tamil Nadu's N Jagadeesan was flown in as the back-up to Dhruv Jurel. Kishan's injury doesn't appear to be a serious one. The decision to keep him out is a precautionary measure since he's likely to be in the running for the India A squad that will play two four-day fixtures at home against Australia next month.

For now, Kishan will continue to recuperate and undergo a fitness assessment at BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru. In Kishan's absence, it's likely Jharkhand's Kumar Kushagra will be the first-



choice wicketkeeper.

Meanwhile, East Zone will also be without India fast bowler Akash Deep, who has been advised rest. Akash's nature of niggles or injury - if any - is unknown, and his fitness assessment has been set for a later date.

Akash was on the recent Test tour to England, where he missed the fourth Test in Manchester due to a back niggle. He subsequently returned for the decider, where he struck a maiden half-century after coming in as a nightwatcher in the second innings.

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