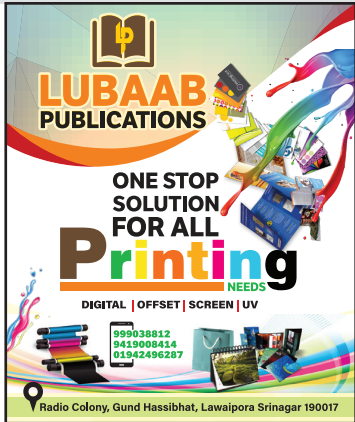


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A SIGH OF RELIEF: Receding Waters End Uneasy Calm in J&K

Weather improves, water levels recede at most places; MeT forecasts intermittent rains till Sept 6

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR/JAMMU, AUG 28: After an uneasy calm over the flood threat for the last two days across Jammu & Kashmir, the situation has eased in both regions on Thursday, as the water levels in almost all rivers and streams have receded to a large extent, settling below the alert mark at most places.

People in Jammu as well as in Kashmir, especially those living close to water bodies, had sleepless nights over the last two days, fearing a 2014-like situation when the whole valley flooded, causing extensive losses across J&K.

According to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), after receiving the highest-ever 380 mm of rainfall in 24 hours until yesterday morning, Jammu has shown improvement in weather conditions, with only 5.6 mm of rainfall

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Vehicles wade through a severely waterlogged road following heavy rainfall, in Srinagar

Will review, understand what changed post 2014-floods: CM Omar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said he would personally review the measures taken post-2014 floods in Kashmir.

Talking to the reporters here the Chief Minister, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that the situation was quite grim after two days of rainfall in Jammu and Kashmir. "In case there would have been more rain for two more days, we could have



faced a difficult situation in both Jammu as well as in Kashmir. Back in 2014, the flood situation emerged after six days of rainfall but today, only two days of rain led to the flood-like situation," he said.

He added that with the grace of the Almighty, the situation has improved and water has receded and the flood threat at present is over. "But, we need to

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Water level in Jhelum recedes, no flood threat: I&FC Chief Engineer

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: The water level in River Jhelum has started receding, bringing much-needed relief to Kashmir after days of incessant rainfall, the Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) Department said on Thursday. Chief Engineer, I&FC Kashmir, Er

Showkat Hussain, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the water level has dropped by more than seven feet at Sangam and by over 1.5 feet at Ram Munshi Bagh.

"Our embankments are strong, the manpower is fully alert, and all 14 established flood zonal committees

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Next 15 days crucial, mobile connectivity to be restored fully soon: Div Com

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Thursday reassured residents that the flood-like situation is under control, but cautioned that the next 10–15 days remain crucial as the monsoon season continues in the Valley. He appealed to the people to strictly fol-

low weather advisories and maintain cooperation with the administration.

Addressing the media at his office chamber, Div Com Anshul Garg said the Jhelum and its tributaries are being closely monitored, with teams on high alert round the clock. "I would like to congratulate the people for handling the situation with calmness and

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School in Kashmir to reopen today

Jammu division schools to remain closed till Aug-30

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: Schools in Kashmir division are all set to re-open tomorrow following the closure of two days.

A top official informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), "We have

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Plan prepared post-2014 floods not followed: CM's Advisor

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani on Thursday said that the flood mitigation plan prepared post 2014-floods in Jammu and Kashmir has not been followed.

Talking to the media persons, Advisor to CM, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that a flood mitigation plan was prepared

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Will come up with permanent solution for flood crisis in valley: Govt

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: The government on Thursday said the situation is under control in Jammu & Kashmir and that it will come up with a permanent solution to end the flood crisis in Kashmir.

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PDD restores over 75% electricity in Jammu

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: The Power Development Department (PDD) Thursday said that it has restored over 75 percent electricity in the affected areas of Jammu following the floods and landslides triggered by record-breaking heavy rains in the region.

The department however said that there was no damage reported from the Kashmir division. Principal Secretary PDD, H Rajesh

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CM Omar Abdullah Reviews Preparations For Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW)

CM Calls For Hassle-Free Facilities For Devotees



■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a high-level meeting at Hazratbal Shrine to review the arrangements being put in place for the forthcoming Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) being celebrated during Rabi al-Awwal, the third month of Islamic lunar calendar.

Describing the occasion as one of the most important events in the Muslim religious

calendar, the Chief Minister stressed the need to make every possible effort to ensure the celebrations are conducted smoothly and devotees face no inconvenience.

Reviewing the arrangements, the Chief Minister highlighted traffic management and facilitation of devotees as the foremost priorities.

He underlined the need for proper parking arrangements, adherence to designated

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Pahalgam Attack Terrorists targeted Baisaran due to high tourist footfall: NIA

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, AUG 28: Terrorists chose the picturesque Baisaran meadow as the target for the dastardly attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam due to its high tourists presence and relative isolation, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said on Thursday.

"Three terrorists" were directly involved in the brutal terror attack in which 26 people were killed in cold blood on April 22, NIA officials said.

The target was also chosen considering the "response time" from the secu-

urity agencies, said a spokesman for the NIA, which is probing the case.

The terrorists chose Baisaran as the target due to its "high tourist presence", "relative isolation" and after considering that the "response (from the security agencies) would take time", he said.

In the targeted attack, terrorists killed male tourists milling around eateries, taking pony rides or just picnicking with their families, including young children and parents, in the meadow near Pahalgam touted as 'Mini Switzerland' for its serene beauty.

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Infiltration bid foiled in Gurez, 2 terrorists killed

■ HT News Network

GUREZ, AUG 28: Army on Thursday said that it foiled an infiltration bid by killing two terrorists along Line of Control (LoC) in North Kashmir's Gurez sector in Bandipora District.

The Army's Chinari Corps in a post on X, said that based on intelligence provided by JKP regarding likely infiltration attempt, a joint operation was launched by Indian Army and @JmuKmrPolice in Gurez Sector. "Alert troops spotted suspicious activity and challenged, which resulted in terrorists opening

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CS Reviews Fuel Supply in J&K's Remote Areas

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, AUG 28: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, chaired a high-level meeting today to review the availability and distribution of petroleum products in the remote and far-flung areas of Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary of Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs, Saurabh Bhagat, Deputy Commissioners of Ramban, Udhampur, Rajouri, Poonch, Kishtwar, Controller of Legal Metrology, Director FCS&CA Kashmir/ Jammu, Director Finance FCS&CA, Special

Secretary FCS&CA, SSP Traffic, State Level Coordinator for Oil companies, representatives from Hindustan Petroleum, Indian Oil Corporation and Bharat Petroleum.

The meeting focused on addressing the challenges posed by geographical barriers, difficult terrain, and logistical difficulties in ensuring the timely and uninterrupted supply of petroleum products to remote regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

During this meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized on the need to streamline the fuel supply chain to ensure timely delivery to remote areas. He stressed on the impor-

ance of inter-departmental coordination to create a more efficient delivery system capable of meeting the demands of far-flung areas.

While reviewing logistics and infrastructure improvements, the Chief Secretary stressed on strengthening fuel distribution networks, including the possibility of establishing additional supply points in regions with high demand for petroleum products. He also called upon the officers to explore alternative solutions for remote areas like introducing mobile fuel

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Rana directs urgent restoration of canals across Jammu division

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana today chaired a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar to review the canal restoration strategy across Jammu Division.

Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti, Shaleen Kabra, Chief Engineer Irrigation & Flood Control Jammu, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers and other senior officials, attended the meeting through virtual mode.

The meeting focused on assessing the current condition of canal infrastructure, identifying breach and vulnerable points and formulating a phased action plan for urgent restoration and long-



term strengthening of canal embankments.

While addressing the officers, the Minister emphasized the need

for swift and coordinated efforts to restore the damaged canal networks, particularly in the aftermath of recent floods.

He directed that all breaches and weak spots be addressed on priority to safeguard critical irrigation infrastructure.

"We must act swiftly to protect our vital water resources infrastructure. Field staff must remain alert and responsive, ensuring that on-ground issues are addressed without delay", the Minister said while cautioning that under no circumstances should vigilance be compromised.

Rana sought detailed reports on the restoration works to be undertaken and instructed officers to ensure on-site resolution of issues.

He also stressed the importance of inter-departmental coordination for effective implementation of protection measures.

Assuring full government support, the Minister stated that adequate resources and manpower would be made available for the timely execution of all necessary works.

Javed Rana Releases Two Urdu Publications

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment, and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today released two significant Urdu publications, 'Hamari Duniya' and 'Shaayari Karne Ka Aasaan Tareeqa' at an impressive function held at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar.

The event was attended by eminent writers, poets, academicians, and cultural enthusiasts who hailed the initiative as a meaningful contribution to the promotion of Urdu literature in Jammu and Kashmir.

About the Publications
Hamari Duniya (Our World), a collection of short stories co-authored by Dr. Atiq-ur-Rehman and noted writer Nazim Poonchi, provides a thought-provoking reflection on contemporary social realities. Through its nuanced narratives, the anthology explores human emotions, societal com-

plexities, and moral dilemmas, encouraging readers to introspect on issues that resonate with everyday life.

The second book, Shaayari Karne Ka Aasaan Tareeqa (An Easy Way to Write Poetry) by Nazim Poonchi, has been designed as a practical guide for young and aspiring poets. It simplifies the technicalities of Urdu poetry, covering aspects of rhyme, rhythm, metre, and creative expression. By blending theory with practice, the book seeks to nurture a new generation of poets and keep alive the age-old tradition of Urdu shaayari.

Minister's Remarks

In his address, Javed Rana congratulated the authors for their dedication and contribution to the world of Urdu literature. He said that such publications are not only a source of knowledge and creativity but also serve as cultural bridges connecting the younger generation with their linguistic and literary heritage.

Inclement Weather: DC Bandipora conducts extensive tour of Sumbal sub-division

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BANDIPORA, AUG 28: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Thursday conducted an extensive tour of Sumbal sub-division to assess the situation arising out of inclement weather conditions and to take stock of essential services in the area.

During the visit, DC inspected Community Health Centre Sumbal, Asham area, Hajin town, Municipal Committee Hajin office and Naninara Bridge, to review preparedness measures and ensure timely response to any exigency.

She also interacted with officials to assess ground-level issues and directed the concerned departments to remain alert for quick redressal of public grievances.

At Community Health Centre, Sumbal, she inspected patient care facilities, interacted with medical staff, and emphasized the importance of maintaining emergency preparedness to deal with any exigency. In the Hajin area, DC took stock of civic amenities and directed officers to remain vigilant in view of possible disruptions due to heavy rains and related conditions.

DC reiterated that the district administration is fully committed to ensuring uninterrupted services, better preparedness, and safety of the people during inclement weather conditions.

During the field visit, DC was accompanied by Sub-Divisional Magistrate Sumbal, officers from I&FC department, Mechanical Irrigation, and other concerned departments.

Aadi KarmaYogi Abhiyan: One-Day Workshop on Vision Plan for Tribal Villages Held at Bandipora

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BANDIPORA, AUG 28: The District Administration Bandipora on Thursday organised a one-day workshop on the Vision Plan for Tribal Villages under Aadi KarmaYogi Abhiyan at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Bandipora. The initiative marks a significant step towards designing a comprehensive roadmap for the holistic development of tribal villages in the district through community participation, local resource mobilisation, and convergence of government schemes.

The workshop brought together senior district officers, tribal leaders, nominated tribal volunteers, and representatives of various departments to deliberate on development priorities and strategies for tribal empowerment.

Vision for Holistic Development

During the workshop, it was highlighted that the Vision Plan for Tribal Villages will be drafted after detailed surveys, demographic profiling, consultations with Gram Sabhas, and active involvement of tribal elders. The plan will serve as a guiding framework for channelising resources towards:

- Infrastructure development: roads, power, drinking water, sanitation, and housing.
- Social sectors: health, education, digital literacy, skill development.
- Economic empowerment: agriculture, horticulture, livestock, fisheries, eco-tourism, and forest-based products.
- Cultural preservation: documentation of indigenous skills, crafts, folk traditions, and tribal wisdom.

The roadmap also aims to address short-term needs like basic amenities, mid-term goals like sustainable livelihoods, and long-term objectives like making tribal villages self-reliant, digitally connected, and model communities of inclusive growth.

Focus on Vulnerable Groups & Livelihoods

Special emphasis was laid on identifying vulnerable tribal groups, landless families, and women-headed households so that welfare schemes reach them on priority. Participants discussed ways to strengthen income-generating activities such as:

- Agro-based enterprises and horticulture expansion.
- Livestock rearing and dairy development.
- Promotion of inland fisheries in Bandipora's water-rich ecosystem.
- Training in traditional handicrafts and wool-based products.
- Harnessing eco-tourism potential in tribal belts through homestays, trekking routes, and cultural tourism.

Voices at the Workshop

Speaking on the occasion, District Programme Officer ICDS, Yaar Ali Khan, underscored the importance of mapping infrastructure requirements such as roads, electricity, water supply, digital connectivity, health, and educational institutions. He said sustainable income generation in agriculture, fisheries, livestock, handicrafts, eco-tourism, and forest-based livelihoods must go hand in hand with social empowerment.

He appreciated the efforts of all stakeholders in drafting the vision plan and reiterated the administration's commitment to building self-reliant, digitally connected, and socially empowered tribal villages.

Participants, including tribal volunteers and community representatives, welcomed the initiative, noting that such programmes provide a platform for the tribal population to share their needs and aspirations directly with the administration. They stressed the need to strengthen community institutions like Gram Sabhas, cooperatives, and self-help groups for sustainable development.

Officials Present

The workshop was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Bandipora, Deputy CEO Bandipora, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Bandipora, District Sheep Husbandry Officer (DSHO), Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO), Chief Animal Husbandry Officer (CAHO), and nominated tribal volunteers.

The workshop concluded with a pledge to work in mission mode under the Aadi KarmaYogi Abhiyan to ensure that the vision plan is not just a document but a living roadmap implemented with people's participation and administrative commitment.

DC Ramban Reviews Restoration of Roads & Essential Services, Stresses on Immediate Measures

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

RAMBAN, AUG 28: Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, today convened an emergency meeting of officers from departments concerned with road infrastructure and essential services to review the progress of restoration works affected by recent heavy rains, landslides, road sinking, and flash floods across the district.

The meeting was attended by SSP Arun Gupta, ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak, ACR Showkat Hayat Mattoo, PD NHAI Shubam Yadav, CO Transit Camp, officers from BEACON, Executive Engineers and Engineers of PWD, PMGSY, Jal Shakti, JPDCL, Tehsildars, and other concerned officers.

A major focus was the Karoal-Maitra-Gool Road, where a vital stretch between Kala Pani and Batti was washed away, cutting off connectivity to Sub-Division Gool and various areas of Tehsil Ramban, while also hampering critical projects such as the Railway Project and Sawalkote Hydropower Project.

Keeping in view the strategic importance of this road, the Deputy Commissioner directed BEACON, NHAI, and Army authorities to explore all possibilities for immediate restoration of traffic movement. He emphasized the need for both short-term and long-term solutions, suggesting the erection of a temporary Bailey/suspension bridge while simultaneously initiating work on a permanent structure to



ensure reliable connectivity.

The DC also reviewed the status of other link roads across the district, instructing PWD, PMGSY, and BEACON to intensify restoration works by deploying adequate manpower and machinery to make all routes traffic-worthy at the earliest. The officers of executing departments assured that all the roads of their respective departments would be restored for vehicular traffic within one day.

In addition, he assessed the progress on the restoration of essential services and supplies. The concerned departments, including JPDCL, Jal Shakti, FCS&CA, and other line departments, were directed to restore electricity, water supply, and ration distribution in affected areas without delay. The officers informed that restoration works are being carried out on a war footing and all essential services are expected to be fully restored by tomorrow.

Satish Sharma visits flood-affected areas of Chamb constituency

Directs comprehensive relief, rehabilitation measures

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, AUG 28: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, today undertook an extensive tour of the flood-affected areas of Chamb Constituency to assess the ground situation and monitor the on-going relief operations.

Accompanied by senior officers of the district administration, Satish Sharma visited several inundated villages where flood waters have caused damage to residential houses, standing crops and local infrastructure. He interacted with affected families, listened to their grievances, and assured them that the Government stands firmly with them in this hour of crisis.

The Minister directed the concerned officials to ensure immediate rehabilitation of displaced families, including provision of temporary shelters, medical facilities, clean drinking water, and sanitation. He further instructed for comprehensive damage assessment so that timely compensation can be provided to those who have suffered losses to life, property



and livelihood.

Highlighting the importance of uninterrupted public services, Satish Sharma issued strict directions for maintaining adequate and continuous supply of essential commodities, including food grains, LPG, medicines and other necessities in the affected areas. He emphasized that special care must be taken to ensure that no household, particularly vulnerable sections such as elderly, women and children are left unattended.

The Minister also called upon the officers of PWD, PHE, Power, and Rural Development to work in close coordination to restore road connectiv-

ity, repair damaged infrastructure, and ensure power and water supply at the earliest. He asked the Health department to establish mobile health units in the worst-hit villages to provide timely medical aid and prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases.

Interacting with the media on the sidelines of the visit, Satish Sharma said, "The Government is fully committed to ensuring swift relief and rehabilitation for all those affected by these floods. Every possible step will be taken to restore normalcy, and we will continue to monitor the situation closely until complete rehabilitation is achieved."

DC Baramulla Chairs DLIC Meeting, Sanctions 514 New Cases under Mission YUVA

1141 Cases Approved in Baramulla District So Far under the Initiative

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BARAMULLA, AUG 28: In a significant step towards youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, and self-employment, the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) Baramulla, chaired by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Minga Sherpa, today sanctioned 514 new cases under the Mission YUVA initiative.

Out of the newly approved cases, 510 belong to the Nano Category while 04 fall under the MSME category. With these fresh approvals, the cumulative number of cases sanctioned in Baramulla district has reached 1141, marking steady progress in extending financial and institutional support to young entrepreneurs.

Mission YUVA – Empowering

Youth Through Self-Reliance

Mission YUVA is a flagship initiative aimed at enabling youth to become job creators instead of job seekers by facilitating them with financial assistance, technical handholding, and entrepreneurial guidance. The programme covers a broad spectrum of activities including micro and small businesses, service units, agricultural entrepreneurship, handicrafts, and other innovative livelihood ventures.

DC's Directions

While reviewing the progress, DC Baramulla Minga Sherpa appreciated the efforts of the Skill Development and Business Development Units (SBDUs) for their rigorous work in case verification and project facilitation. He stressed

that the district administration is fully committed to ensuring that applicants receive timely financial assistance, skill development support, and continuous guidance throughout their entrepreneurial journey.

The DC directed the concerned officers to:

- Expedite application processing and DPR preparation to avoid unnecessary delays.
- Ensure transparent and fair selection of beneficiaries.
- Provide capacity-building training and financial literacy sessions for the sanctioned applicants.
- Maintain continuous monitoring and mentorship support to ensure sustainability of ventures.

He said, "Mission YUVA is not just a scheme, it is a movement to empower our young generation with opportunities of growth, dignity, and self-reliance. Baramulla has immense talent and potential, and our collective efforts will ensure that every sanctioned case transforms into a success story."

Stakeholder Participation

The meeting witnessed active participation of all line departments and financial institutions. Among those present were the Assistant Director Employment Baramulla, District Social Welfare Officer, Lead District Manager, Cluster Head J&K Bank, District General Manager NABARD, Nodal Officer JKEDI, and Functional Manager DIC.

The representatives assured

their cooperation in providing financial linkages, skill support, and business mentorship to the beneficiaries.

Future Outlook

With 1141 cases already sanctioned, the district administration is planning to hold awareness camps at block and panchayat levels to reach out to more aspiring youth. Special focus will be given to women entrepreneurs, marginalized groups, and rural youth to ensure inclusivity under the programme.

The DC reaffirmed that Baramulla district will continue to work in mission mode to expand the reach of Mission YUVA so that every youth with entrepreneurial aspirations gets an opportunity to fulfill their dreams.





HT EDITORIAL

Deteriorating Teacher-Student Relation

Teachers (Ustaad, Murshed, Mu'allim) have traditionally enjoyed the highest respect in kashmir, often placed next to parents in terms of reverence. However, recent developments indicate a worrying decline in this relationship. A disturbing incident in which a student allegedly attempted to assault a teacher has shocked the academic community and raised pressing questions about social degradation.

We in Kashmir have endured decades of conflict and unrest, which has inevitably shaped the psyche of its younger generations. Exposure to violence, uncertainty, and disillusionment has fostered aggression and weakened traditional respect for authority figures, including teachers.

Moreover the absence of value-based education, coupled with declining influence of religious and cultural ethics, has left a vacuum in moral grounding. This has contributed to rising intolerance, indiscipline, and aggression among youth.

Also the all important Social media has altered behavioral patterns, often glamorizing defiance, ridicule of elders, and irreverence towards traditional authority. Teachers find themselves competing with smartphones and online distractions, which dilutes their role as guides.

In earlier times, parents reinforced the authority of teachers. Today, parents often side with children against teachers, challenging their authority in public or private forums. This directly undermines teachers in the eyes of students.

The rise of aggression as a mode of expression among youth. This single act is symbolic of a generational shift where anger, frustration, and a lack of guidance have replaced humility, patience, and reverence.

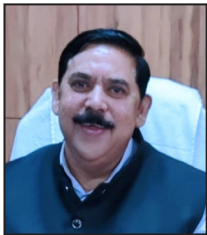
The assault on a teacher by a student is not an isolated disciplinary breach but a mirror reflecting the social degradation afflicting Kashmiri society. It underscores the erosion of moral values, the impact of conflict, the influence of consumerist and digital cultures, and the weakening of traditional respect structures.

Sooner the better sense prevails in restoring this relationship. It is not merely an educational challenge but a societal necessity for rebuilding harmony, respect, and hope in the Valley.

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National Sports Day 2025:

How NEP 2020 is Rewriting India's Sporting Future



■ Prof. Dinesh Chandra Rai

On 29th August, as India celebrates National Sports Day in honor of the wizard of hockey, Major Dhyan Chand, we look to the past with reverence for his unmatched skill and incredible legacy. A man whose stick seemed to move with a mind of its own, Dhyan Chand's genius was in making the impossible look effortless. He led India to three consecutive Olympic gold medals in an era when the nation was carving out its identity on the world stage. Yet, this year feels different. With the launch of a new, three-day national movement from August 29th to 31st, the celebration is not just about a day but about a sustained commitment. Under the rallying cry, "Har Gali, Har Maidan, Khele Saara Hindustan," this year's tribute looks not just at past glories but at the dawn of a new era.

For decades, we've seen sports in our schools as an extra-curricular activity—a nice-to-have, something you do after your "real" studies are done. This mindset created a silent barrier, convincing countless students and parents that the path to success lay only in textbooks. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 came to tear down that wall. It's the most significant shift in our education system in a generation, and for sports, it's a genuine game-changer. The policy has transformed physical education from an elective subject to an essential, credit-bearing part of the curriculum. This profound declaration that a student's performance on the field is as valuable as their score on a math test is now further cemented by the new National Sports Policy (NSP) 2025, which fully aligns with

NEP's vision of sports integration. The new policy specifically mandates that schools dedicate fixed hours for sports activities and a physical fitness assessment as part of a student's annual report card, making physical literacy a priority from a young age.

This institutional push is breathing life into Prime Minister Narendra Modi's simple but powerful message: "Jo khelega wo khilega" (One who plays, flourishes). This isn't just a catchy phrase; it's a philosophy now built into our educational framework. It recognizes that playing isn't just about winning medals; it's about developing character, learning teamwork, building resilience, and unlocking one's full potential. The positive results of this new approach are already visible. Post-NEP, schools across the country are prioritizing sports infrastructure and trained coaches because they know it directly contributes to a student's academic profile. Giving students an "hour on the sports field" ("ek ghanta khel maidan me"), the core theme of this year's event, is no longer just a suggestion; it's an educational imperative that cultivates both a healthy body and a sharp mind.

The true magic of this change, however, goes beyond the policy documents. It's in the quiet moments on the ground. It's in a young girl from a small village realizing her speed can earn her academic credit, not just a temporary thrill. It's in a shy boy finding his voice as a leader on the basketball court. These are the victories that never make the headlines but are crucial for building a more confident and robust society. Sports, when woven into the academic fabric, become a powerful tool for social mobility and mental well-being. They teach us to handle loss with grace, to celebrate victory with humility, and to understand that a team's strength lies in its diversity. We are now seeing a new generation of athletes, supported by initiatives like Khelo India, who are balancing their academic

“The true magic of this change, however, goes beyond the policy documents. It's in the quiet moments on the ground. It's in a young girl from a small village realizing her speed can earn her academic credit, not just a temporary thrill. It's in a shy boy finding his voice as a leader on the basketball court. These are the victories that never make the headlines but are crucial for building a more confident and robust society

pursuits with a demanding sports schedule, proving that the two are not mutually exclusive.

This year's extended celebrations are a call to every Indian, young and old, to re-engage with play. Day one, August 29th, is for tributes to Major Dhyan Chand and the Fit India pledge. Day two, August 30th, will be filled with sports debates and competitions in both modern and indigenous games, celebrating our roots. The event will conclude on August 31st with a nationwide "Fit India Sundays on Cycle" drive, making fitness a

daily habit. This national movement is a living embodiment of the new policies, moving the conversation from a ministry's meeting room to every school and every home.

While the NEP and NSP have set the foundation, our work is far from over. To truly realize this vision, we must move forward with a few key suggestions. First, we need a national-level program to train and certify physical education teachers and coaches, making sure they are equipped with modern teaching techniques and are able to identify and mentor talent. Second, we must integrate our rich heritage of traditional Indian games like kho-kho, kabaddi, and gillidanda into the school curriculum, celebrating our cultural roots while promoting fitness. Finally, we should encourage more public-private partnerships to build and maintain community sports facilities, making playgrounds accessible to every child, regardless of their background. Parental support and community involvement are vital to create an ecosystem where sports are seen as a path to a fulfilling career and a healthy life.

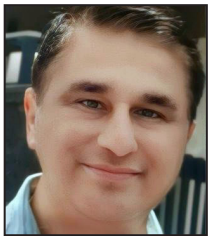
The NEP 2020 isn't just a document; it is a promise. It promises a future where a child's mind is sharpened by academic rigor, and their character is shaped on the playing field. This National Sports Day, we celebrate not just the legacy of a legend but the beginning of a truly golden age for sports in India.

About the author

Prof. Dinesh Chandra Rai, Vice Chancellor of BRA Bihar University, is a seasoned academician and dedicated sports enthusiast. He led the Sports Council at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, for years, promoting a vibrant sports culture. His passion for integrating sports with education inspires students and athletes, aligning with the NEP 2020.

The author is a Vice Chancellor, BRA Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar

The Digital Trap and Youth Aggression



■ Munish Bhatia

The future of a society lies in its youth. If the youth are empowered, aware, and responsible, then no nation can be stopped from achieving progress and prosperity. However, if this same energy is misguided, the youth can also become a challenge for the society and the nation. Unfortunately, today we are living in a time where, despite unprecedented advancements in science and technology, human values, sensitivity, and ethics are gradually weakening. The most direct and concerning effect of this is the growing violent tendencies among the youth.

In recent years, several incidents have shaken us to the core. Sometimes a knife is found in a school tiffin box, sometimes a minor argument leads to a fatal attack, and at times, even teachers are brutally murdered. The recent incident of a young teacher's murder in Haryana has left society in deep contemplation. These incidents are not just crime news; they are a sign that our youth are at a dangerous crossroads.

Today's youth are surrounded by a digital world. Smartphones and the internet have become an integral part of their daily lives. Online games, which present violence and aggression as thrilling and entertaining, have a profound impact on the psychology of young people. A major reason for the increasing violence among the youth is the easy availability of violent and obscene content on digital platforms and gaming apps. The government has taken steps in this direction from time to time. Several mobile games and apps that promoted excessive violence, intoxication, or antisocial activities have been banned. Recently, some online games were banned on the grounds that they were adversely affecting the mental health of children and adolescents and contained content that incited suicidal tendencies.

However, a ban alone is not a permanent solution. The government needs to formulate strict guidelines and an effective monitoring system for digital platforms to ensure that only safe and positive content is available to the youth. In addition to strengthening the cyber regulatory framework, attention must also be paid to digital literacy, so that both parents and children can understand what content is safe and what is harmful. Sometimes, children and adolescents become so attached to the characters in these games that they start behaving in the same way in real life. When virtual violence becomes a habit, sensitivity and compassion slowly begin to fade. Furthermore, the uncontrolled availability of obscene and violent content on the internet has made the situation even more serious. It would not be wrong to say that while the digital age has opened up a world of knowledge and opportunities, it has also made the path to violence and moral decay easier.

A significant reason for the violent behaviour of youth is the lack of a proper family environment. In today's fast-paced life, parents are unable to give enough time to their children. In the hustle of a busy work life and the pursuit of material comforts, children's emotional needs are left behind. When children are emotionally distant from their parents, they are deprived of a guide who can help them distinguish right from wrong. Earlier, the family environment used to teach children ethics, patience, and tolerance. In joint family systems, children learned life values from their grandparents and elders. But now, as families are becoming smaller and busier, children, grappling with their loneliness and insecurity, gravitate towards bad company or wrong paths. This loneliness often motivates them to resort to violence.

Today's society has made success the ultimate benchmark. Every parent wants their child to be at the forefront in school, college, job, or business. This competitive race is putting unnatural pressure on the youth. As a result, young people have become impatient. They want immediate results, they start adopting shortcuts, and they are filled with disappointment when they fail. This frustration gradually takes the form of aggression and violent tendencies. This situation forces us to think about whether we only want to make our children successful, or if we also want to

make them sensitive and responsible human beings.

It would be wrong to assume that this problem can be solved by law and order alone. The police and courts can stop crime, but the roots of crime grow where family, society, and education become weak. Therefore, it is essential that every section of society comes together to face this challenge. Parents should communicate with their children, be their friends, and monitor their online behaviour. Children must be taught that everything in the digital world cannot be blindly trusted. Educational institutions also have a great responsibility. Schools and colleges should not only be centres of study but should also focus on moral education, life skills, and mental health. Students should be engaged in creative activities like sports, art, and literature so that their energy is channelled in a positive direction. A major reason for the increasing violence among youth is the neglect of mental health. In society, depression, anxiety, or stress are still considered a weakness. The truth is that mental imbalance is often the root cause of violent tendencies. Young people must be assured that seeking help for a mental problem is not a sign of weakness but an act of courage. Counselling services should be available in schools and universities so that youth can express their stress and frustration and get proper guidance. If their psychological problems are understood and addressed in time, violent incidents can be largely prevented.

The media and entertainment world also deeply influence the thinking of youth. When violence is repeatedly glorified in movies and TV shows, it sends the message that power and aggression are the only solutions in life. This trend is dangerous. The media should keep social responsibility in mind while presenting entertainment and news. Content that promotes sensitivity, compassion, and ethics in society should be encouraged. It is true that the youth are full of energy and enthusiasm. If this energy is given a positive direction, the same youth can become the greatest strength of society and the nation. The talent of our youth is unique in every field—science, technology, sports, art, and literature. The need is for us to provide them with the right opportunities and the right environment.

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Literary Women Getting Lost In The Era Of Semi-Nude Mujras

The voice of books has been lost somewhere in the glitz and glamour of social media



■ Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

This is the era of Instagram and digital media. Attraction and spectacle sell the most here. But to save the soul of society, it is important that women return to literature again. The noise of Instagram will subside after some time,

But the words of literature will remain immortal. Women who read literature are never lost, they remain alive in the pages of every book that one opens with all their heart.

In today's time when there is a smartphone in every hand and hunger for likes and followers in every mind, the existence of women who read literature and books is being left behind. This is the era of platforms like Instagram reels, TikTok and digital entertainment. Here, images of semi-nude women performing mujra reach millions of people in seconds, but the voice of women reading serious literature, poetry or criticism seems to be suppressed somewhere. This is not only a social irony but also a cultural crisis.

For centuries, women have been watering the soul of society with sensitivity and compassion through literature. Writers like Mahadevi Varma, Amrita Pritam, Krishna Sobti, Maitreyi Pushpa not only created literature but were also symbols of women's identity and society's consciousness. But today's time is more busy in making "quotes" from them

and decorating them on Instagram stories than reading them.

A large part of today's generation is engrossed in visual content. The quick consumption of videos and pictures has pushed back the slow, deep and introspective world of books. Women, who once sought solace in books, are now being forced to create a glamorized identity on social media. There is no doubt that social media gives women a platform, but this platform often gives more importance to their bodies, not their ideas. This is the reason why a dance or semi-nude act on Instagram gets millions of likes, but a literary analysis by a woman does not even reach hundreds.

Women who read and wrote literature used to leave a deep impact on society. They used to challenge the system through their writings, create new definitions of relationships and prepare new grounds for gender equality. But today, priorities have changed. Modern women often join the race of social media to prove themselves. Here beauty and attraction sell more, thoughts and feelings less. It is ironic that the same literature that gave voice to women is now waiting for their voice.

Mahadevi Varma's poems were such a symbol of a woman's compassion, pain and beauty that the soul would tremble after reading them. She used to write - "Main neer bhari dukh ki badli..." The soul of a woman spoke in her poems, but today the same soul is getting suppressed in the noise of Instagram filters and background music. Where earlier women used to tell the society "listen to my voice", today they are forced to say "like my dance." This is the biggest cultural degradation.

However, it would not be entirely fair to say that women who read literature

Women who read and wrote literature used to leave a deep impact on society. They used to challenge the system through their writings, create new definitions of relationships and prepare new grounds for gender equality. But today, priorities have changed. Modern women often join the race of social media to prove themselves. Here beauty and attraction sell more, thoughts and feelings less. It is ironic that the same literature that gave voice to women is now waiting for their voice

have disappeared. They still exist, but their scope has become limited. Women are still reading, writing and discussing literature in libraries, universities and small literary forums. The only difference is that their voice is not as loud as that of the glamorous content of social media. Actually, the problem is also with the platform. Instagram's algorithm itself gives priority to entertainment and glitz. Serious literature or long studies do not

become "trending" there.

Reading literature means looking within yourself, understanding the pain of others, and feeling the soul deeply. When society is away from literature, it also loses its sensitivity. The compassion and tenderness of women keep the society balanced. But when these women are limited to only body show and ignore the depth of the soul, then the hope of society becomes

ing sensitive also decreases.

To overcome this situation, it is important that the family and the education system instill a love for books. Children, especially girls, must develop the habit of reading books at home and in schools. Writers and publishers should present literature in an attractive form on social media. The government and society should give more platforms to women who read and write literature, so that their voices are not suppressed. Women should form literary groups and book clubs among themselves, which inspire each other.

History is a witness that whenever society plunged into darkness, literature showed the way. And the role of women in that literature has always been decisive. Be it Meera, Mahadevi or contemporary women—they decided the direction of society with their words. Even today, if women embrace books, the coming generation will not just get "followers" and "likes" but will also get a deeper understanding of life.

Today's conclusion is that this is the era of Instagram and digital media. Here, attraction and spectacle sell the most. But to save the soul of the society, it is necessary that women return to literature again. Because the noise of Instagram will stop after some time, but the words of literature will remain immortal. Women who read literature are never lost—they only become blurred due to the negligence of society. Whenever a book is opened, they will come alive again.

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PARENTING: THE FIRST CLASSROOM



■ Mool Raj

In today's fast-moving world, where technology and social change constantly reshape how we live, the role of parents in shaping a child's future has never been more critical. Before teachers, peers, or even society begin to leave their mark, it is the parents who lay the first—and often most enduring—foundation of a child's identity. They are not just caregivers, but role models, emotional anchors, and moral guides. Every interaction, every word, and every moment shared carries the potential to shape how a child sees themselves and their place in the world.

From the very beginning, children observe and absorb the behavior of their parents. They don't just listen to what is said—they watch how problems are solved, how conflicts are managed, how love is expressed, and how stress is handled. When parents demonstrate patience, kindness, honesty, and respect, those qualities are naturally mirrored by their children. This silent modeling becomes one of the most powerful forms of teaching, shaping values far more deeply than lectures or punishments ever could.

In the early years, the family environment becomes the lens through which children interpret everything. A stable, supportive home offers security and builds confidence, giving children the courage to explore, learn, and grow. The foundation laid in these formative years influences not just academic performance but emotional wellbeing, decision-making, and social interaction. Parents who are present, engaged, and encouraging help children develop resilience—a crucial trait in navigating life's inevitable challenges. Children are not born knowing the difference between right and wrong. They learn it gradually, from the consistency and fairness of their parents. Clear rules, explained with love and reason, provide a framework for understanding consequences, responsibility, and ethical behavior. These everyday lessons, taught through example and reinforced with care, quietly shape the moral compass a child will carry into adulthood.

Equally important is emotional development. When parents create a space where children feel heard and understood, it teaches them how to process emotions in

a healthy way. A child who knows it's okay to be sad, frustrated, or afraid—but also knows they're not alone—grows into an adult who can manage complex emotions without being overwhelmed by them. Simple acts like listening attentively, comforting during distress, or celebrating small achievements can make a lasting impact on a child's emotional health. Every child carries unique talents, curiosities, and dreams waiting to be discovered. Parents play a vital role in helping uncover and nurture these gifts—whether it's a love for drawing, an aptitude for science, a knack for storytelling, or a passion for sports. When parents support and encourage these interests, they send a powerful message: your ideas matter, your efforts are valued. That message builds self-esteem and motivation, sparking a lifelong love of learning and personal growth.

Children thrive when they feel safe—emotionally, physically, and psychologically. That sense of safety comes not just from protection, but from consistent routines, affectionate support, and the freedom to make mistakes without fear of judgment. It is in this space of unconditional acceptance that children begin to take healthy risks, step outside their comfort zones, and build the independence necessary for adulthood.

Beyond love and guidance, parents also teach essential life skills—often through the simplest daily routines. Involving children in cooking, cleaning, budgeting, or planning their time not only makes them more capable but also instills a sense of responsibility. These are the building blocks of independence, equipping children with the tools they'll need to navigate the world on their own.

Perhaps one of the most profound, yet often overlooked, influences parents have is on how their children relate to others. The way love is shown, arguments are resolved, and emotions are handled within the home becomes a blueprint for how children approach relationships outside it. A child who grows up feeling respected and supported is more likely to seek—and offer—that same respect and empathy in their own friendships, partnerships, and communities. Parenting is not about being perfect. It's about being present. It's about showing up—not just physically, but emotionally, day after day, through triumphs and setbacks. The bond between parent and child, built over time through trust, love, and consistency, forms the invisible scaffolding on which the future is built. In a world full of distractions, that connection remains one of the most powerful forces in shaping not just a child's destiny, but the future of society itself.

The author is a regular columnist and freelance writer

Sources In Journalism Can Be Great Teachers



■ Vijay Garg

In the world of journalism, sources are not just providers of information; they are often invaluable teachers. This is a fundamental concept for journalists, from seasoned professionals to students just starting out. Here's a breakdown of why and how sources serve as great teachers:

Subject Matter Experts: Sources are often experts in their fields. A journalist covering a new scientific discovery will speak with a scientist, a political reporter will interview a politician or policy expert, and a business writer will consult with economists or company executives. Through these interviews, journalists gain a deep understanding of complex topics, allowing them to translate that knowledge into accessible and accurate stories for the public. The source teaches the journalist the "what" and the "why" of the story.

Providing Context and Nuance: Beyond the basic facts, good sources provide context and nuance. They can explain the historical background of a situation, the motivations of different players, and the potential consequences of an event. This prevents a journalist from simply reporting on a surface-level event and instead allows them to create a more comprehensive, meaningful, and well-rounded story. They help the

journalist understand the bigger picture and the subtleties of an issue.

Ethical and Professional Lessons: The relationship between a journalist and a source is built on trust and ethical considerations. A journalist learns from sources about the importance of being accurate, fair, and transparent. They learn how to handle sensitive information, protect anonymous sources when necessary, and navigate potential conflicts of interest. These interactions are practical lessons in journalistic ethics and professionalism.

Expanding Worldview: Journalists are constantly meeting people from all walks of life. Each new source provides a different perspective on the world. A journalist might interview a CEO one day and an activist from a grassroots organization the next. These diverse interactions broaden a journalist's worldview, challenge their own assumptions, and foster a more empathetic and balanced approach to storytelling.

Teaching the Art of Interviewing: The process of interviewing a source is a skill in itself. Sources can "teach" a journalist how to be a better interviewer by responding to different types of questions. A journalist learns how to listen actively, follow up on a detail, and ask questions that encourage the source to provide thoughtful, detailed answers.

In essence, a journalist's career is a continuous education, with sources serving as their most frequent and valuable teachers. The knowledge, context, and ethical insights gained from these interactions are what elevate journalism from a simple relay of facts to a crucial and insightful public service.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

The Neuroscience of Brain Freeze



■ Surinderpal Singh

Brain freeze or cold stimulus headache is medically termed as sphenopalatine ganglioneuralgia, is a short-lasting but intense headache that occurs when some cold eatables such as ice cream or a chilled beverage, comes into sudden contact with the roof of the mouth or the back of the throat. Despite being harmless and self-limiting brain freeze has attracted the attention of the neuroscientists, the doctors and ordinary people alike due to its unique mechanism and surprising intensity. Understanding the physiology behind this common experience provides insights not only into the headache disorders but also into how the brain perceives and processes the pain.

Mechanism Behind Brain Freeze

➤ Sudden Temperature Changes in the Mouth

When an extremely cold substance touches the palate (roof of the mouth), the blood vessels in this region rapidly constrict and then dilate. This abrupt vascular response is believed to trigger the pain.

➤ Involvement of the Trigeminal Nerve

The trigeminal nerve, a cranial nerve responsible for sensation in the face and head, transmits these pain signals to the brain. Since the nerve covers both the mouth and the forehead, the brain misinterprets the origin of pain—creating the illusion that the forehead is epicenter of the pain. This phenomenon is known as referred pain.

➤ Increased Blood Flow and Intracranial Pressure

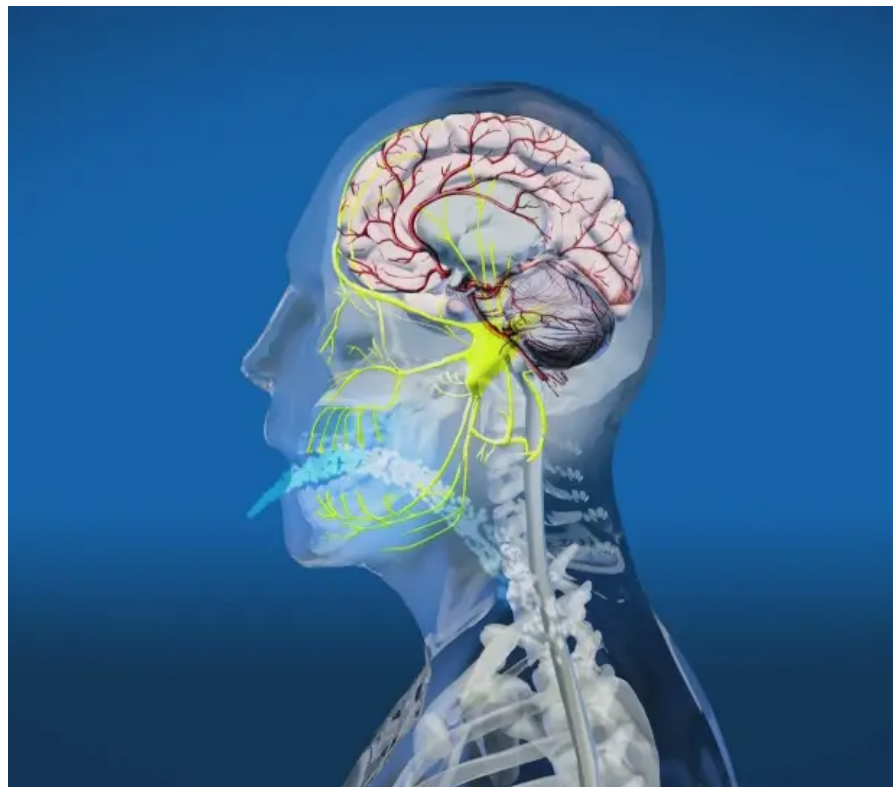
The dilation of blood vessels increases blood flow, temporarily altering intracranial pressure. This is similar to what occurs in migraine attacks. This fact explains that why people prone to migraines often report brain freeze more frequently.

➤ Sphenopalatine Ganglion Involvement

The sphenopalatine ganglion, a nerve cluster behind the nose, plays a crucial role in relaying pain sensations. Its sudden stimulation by cold leads to the sharp, stabbing sensation associated with brain freeze.

Factors Responsible for Brain Freeze

- Temperature of Ingested Substance



The colder the food or drink, the higher the likelihood of triggering the brain freeze. Items like ice cream, frozen food items and iced beverages are classic culprits for the sudden pain attacks.

➤ Speed of Consumption

Drinking or eating cold items rapidly exposes the palate and throat to sudden temperature changes thereby increasing the risk of the brain freeze.

➤ Surface Area Contact

When a large volume of cold material touches the palate at once it exaggerates vascular and nerve responses. This would instantly trigger the brain freeze.

➤ Individual Sensitivity

People vary in their susceptibility and sensitivity. Those with migraine disorders are often more prone to brain freeze suggesting shared pathways between the two conditions.

➤ Environmental Temperature

Paradoxically, consuming extremely cold foods in hot weather may make brain freeze more likely because blood vessels are already dilated from heat, making the constriction-dilation response more dramatic.

What Exaggerates Brain Freeze?

- **Larger Gulp Sizes:** Swallowing big sips of ice-cold beverages delivers a stronger stimulus to the palate.
- **Holding Cold Foods Against the Palate:** Allowing ice cream or ice cubes to rest on the roof of the mouth increases nerve stimulation.
- **Dehydration:** Reduced blood

flow regulation may exaggerate vascular changes making pain sharper.

- **Migraine Predisposition:** As mentioned, migraine sufferers often experience stronger and longer-lasting brain freezes.
- **High Sensory Sensitivity:** Some individuals have lower pain thresholds or more reactive trigeminal nerves, exaggerating the response.

Clinical Significance

Though benign, brain freeze is more than just a curiosity. Scientists studying it have drawn parallels to vascular headaches and migraine research, providing a simple model for understanding sudden-onset headache mechanisms. This could potentially contribute to better treatments for more severe headache disorders.

Brain freeze may last only for few seconds but its intensity and universality had made it an important subject of scientific curiosity. At its core, the phenomenon reflects the delicate interplay between vascular responses, cranial nerve signaling and the brain's interpretation of pain. Factors such as rapid consumption of cold foods, migraine susceptibility and environmental conditions can all exaggerate the experience. While brain freeze is harmless, this fleeting pain serves as a window into the brain's complex pain pathways, reminding us of how finely tuned yet sometimes "confused" our nervous system can be.

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Mental Health Screening – A Must Do for Youth



■ Imran Raina

Our young generation is carrying a burden heavier than ever before. Academic stress, career pressure, social media comparisons, peer expectations, and family responsibilities are quietly eating away at their peace of mind. Yet, when it comes to mental health, silence and stigma still rule. This silence is dangerous. It is time to say it loud and clear: mental health screening for youth is a must, not a choice. In today's fast-changing world, the youth are facing pressures like never before. Academic competition, the race for jobs, constant exposure to social media, and family or peer expectations often combine to create a heavy burden on young minds. Unfortunately, mental health is still surrounded by stigma and silence, especially in countries like India, where discussing one's emotional struggles is often seen as a weakness. This is precisely why mental health screening for youth has become not just important, but essential.

Adolescence and early adulthood are formative years. During this phase, the brain is still developing, identities are being shaped, and future life paths are being chosen. If mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, substance use, or suicidal tendencies go unnoticed at this stage, they can derail a young person's education, relationships, and career.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in seven adolescents (aged 10–19) experience a mental disorder. Depression, anxiety, and behavioral problems are among the leading causes of illness and disability in young people. Yet, most of these conditions go undiagnosed and untreated. This gap highlights the urgency of regular mental health screenings.

There must be mental screening for our youth. Mental health screening is a simple process that uses questionnaires, interviews, or digital tools to identify early signs of psychological distress. Just as schools and colleges organize health check-ups for eyesight, dental care, or nutrition, mental health screening ensures that hidden emotional struggles are also brought to light. Importantly, screening does not label anyone; it simply acts as an early warning system, helping youth access support before a problem worsens.

Many young people today silently fight battles that others cannot see. A student who always appears cheerful may be experiencing panic attacks. Another may be excelling academically while secretly struggling with depression. Some may resort to substance use, gaming addiction, or even self-harm to cope with stress. Without screening and open discussions, these struggles often remain hidden until a crisis occurs.

Social media has added a new layer of complexity. Constant comparison, cyber bullying, and the pressure to maintain a "perfect life" online have been linked to increasing

cases of anxiety and low self-esteem among teenagers. Regular screening can help identify such risks early and provide counseling or peer-support options.

There are various benefits of Mental Health Screening. Catching problems like anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts in the early stages can prevent long-term consequences. Also With proper guidance, counseling, or therapy, young people can learn coping skills before issues escalate. Making screening routine normalizes conversations about mental health, encouraging students to open up without fear. When schools and colleges prioritize mental health, the overall environment becomes supportive and inclusive.

Educational institutions play a central role in shaping the mental well-being of youth. Mandatory annual mental health screenings, conducted confidentially by trained psychologists or counselors, should be integrated into school health programs. Workshops, peer-support groups, and awareness campaigns can further strengthen this initiative.

Parents also need to be sensitized. Often, when signs of distress such as irritability, withdrawal, or declining grades appear, they are dismissed as "normal teenage behavior." With screening reports in hand, parents can better understand their children's struggles and support them with compassion rather than criticism.

Despite its benefits, mental health screening still faces resistance. Stigma, lack of awareness, and shortage of trained professionals are major hurdles. Many fear that being identified as having a mental health condition could affect a student's reputation or future opportunities. To overcome these barriers, it is vital that screenings are conducted confidentially, results are handled sensitively, and awareness campaigns educate communities that mental health is just as important as physical health.

Technology can also be a game-changer. Mobile applications and online screening tools can provide accessible, private, and user-friendly ways for young people to check their mental well-being. In rural and remote areas where professionals may not be available, digital platforms can bridge the gap.

Mental health screening for youth is not a luxury; it is a necessity. Just as society would never ignore a child suffering from a high fever or chronic pain, it should not turn away from the silent pain of stress, anxiety, or depression. Policy makers, educators, parents, and community leaders must come together to institutionalize regular screenings and follow them up with accessible mental health services.

The youth are the backbone of the nation, its dreamers and doers. Protecting their mental well-being is not only an act of care for individuals but also an investment in the future. By making mental health screening a must-do for youth, we ensure that they are not just surviving but thriving – ready to take on the challenges of life with resilience, confidence, and hope.

Now the choice is ours: ignore the warning signs and lose our young talent, or act now and give them the care they deserve.

The Writer is a Teacher hailing from Kangan Ganderbal. He is a Regular Contributor to The Headlines Today)

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Div Com Jammu reviews restoration of essential services, road network in rain affected areas

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, AUG 28: Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, reviewed the status of restoration of essential services including Powers supply, water supply, road connectivity, mobile network and movement of traffic affected by recent incessant rains.

The meeting was attended by Managing Director JPDCL, IGP traffic, Commissioner JMC, Deputy Commissioners and SSPs, Chief engineers of PDD, PWD, PHE, Director Food and Civil Supplies, Heads and officials of BRO, NHAI, NHIDCL, Indian Oil Corporation and mobile service providers.

The Divisional Commissioner took stock of the areas that suffered damages to infrastructure and disruption of essential services in each district.

The Regional Officer NHAI apprised the Div Com that restoration work of the severely affected portion of NH44 at Samroli in



Udhampur shall be completed by tomorrow evening. The Div Com directed him to augment the men and machinery.

The officials of PWD, PDD and PHE were also directed to closely monitor the restoration works of their respective departments for speedy resumption of services.

He asked the PHE department to take sampling of water in the waterlogged and flood affected water supply schemes before

declaring these safe for use.

The Deputy Commissioners were directed to facilitate and support the men and field staff on the ground, especially designated to restore essential services in Towns and remote and hilly areas.

The SSP traffic rural apprised the Divisional Commissioner about the regulation plan for movement of traffic and trucks carrying essential supplies from Lakhampur to Kashmir via Mughal road.

Directions were also issued for immediate distribution of adequate relief material to people of all affected areas.

He also took stock of the availability of ration supply and essential commodities in all districts and directed the concerned District Administrations to conduct the damage assessment of movable/immovable property, livestock, crops and land in their respective districts.

Dar Family of Suchipora and BLO President Ab Hamid Bereaved Daughter of Gh Hassan Dar passed away. Laid to rest in Kreeri

Several socio- political and religious organizations express condolence and sympathies

■ Aashiq Hussain

KREERI, AUG 28: Daughter of Gh Hassan Dar and sister in law of BLO President Ab Hamid Naseema Bano who died Wednesday Evening SKIMS Srinagar was laid to rest at her ancestral graveyard in Muradabad Kreeri on Wednesday morning.

His funeral prayers were held at Suchipora Kreeri in which A large number of people from different organizations attended the funeral prayers and paid a rich tributes.

The deceased had been suffering from illness for the past few months.

Various religious, social, political organisations have condoled with the bereaved family. Former BDC chair-

man and BJP Senior Leader GM Sofi, Chairman JKCWF Syed Shahmeem Ahmad, Senior NC leader Yaqoob wani, JK News Network (JKNN) and Headlines Today management and various Journalists express its sympathies and solidarity with the bereaved family especially with BLO President Ab Hamid Ahmad. Senior NC Leader Mohd Yaqoob Wani expressed has expressed deep shock and grief over demise of Daughter of Gh Hassan Dar and Sister in law of Ab Hamid In a condolence message Senior NC Leader Mohd Yaqoob express heartfelt sympathies with the bereaved family especially with BLO President Ab Hamid and pray for peace to the departed soul.

DIG Udhampur-Reasi, DC inspect restoration work on landslide hit road stretches on NH-44

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, AUG 28: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police Udhampur-Reasi Range Sarah Rizvi, along with Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai, SSP Traffic, Additional SP today conducted an extensive inspection of the restoration work from Jakhani to Chenani stretch of National Highway-44 which was severely affected due to recent heavy rains.

The DC took a detailed stock of the clearance operations being executed by the concerned agencies on a war-footing basis. She directed the teams on ground to ensure speedy debris clearance and adopt all possible measures



to restore vehicular movement at the earliest. While reviewing the pace of work, the DC Udhampur emphasized that restoring

safe and smooth connectivity is the top priority of the district administration. She urged the field functionaries to maintain

close coordination and deploy adequate men and machinery for uninterrupted operations.

DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range

Sara Rizvi also reviewed the arrangements to ensure safety and security of commuters during the clearance process. She stressed effective regulation of traffic and circulation of necessary advisories to avoid any inconvenience to the public.

The executing agency informed that if the weather conditions remain clear, connectivity on the Udhampur-Chenani stretch of NH-44 is expected to be restored by this evening.

The district administration has appealed to the general public to avoid unnecessary travel until full restoration is completed and follow traffic advisories issued from time to time.

از نسبت ما کام
مضون کاغذات برودخواست عاشق تین آہنگر ولد عبدالغنی آہنگر ساکن ما کام تحصیل
ہندواڑہ، نہایت حصول لیبر ڈپنڈنٹ میر فکیت
اشتہار بغرض آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل/سائلہ عاشق جین آہنگر ولد عبدالغنی آہنگر کی
درخواست نہایت حصول لیبر ڈپنڈنٹ میر فکیت دفتر حذا میں زیر کاوائی ہے سائل/سائلہ کا
والد عبدالغنی آہنگر پیشہ سے مزدوری کرتا ہے اور پسماندگان ڈپنڈنٹ کے ذیل میں نام
پسماندگان کے اہل خانہ عمر پیشہ رشتہ 1 سایہ بیگم زوجہ عبدالغنی آہنگر عمر 50 پیشہ
گھر بیگم رشتہ زوجہ 2 جادی غنی ولد عبدالغنی آہنگر عمر 21 پیشہ زیر تعلیم پسر 3
عاشق تین سہن پسر عمر 20 پیشہ زیر تعلیم پسر اگر کسی بھی شخص یا اشخاص کو اس سرٹیفکیٹ کو
اجراء کرنے میں کوئی بھی مذہر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر دفتر حذا میں پیش
کریں مبعاد ختم ہونے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا
محکمہ صدر نائب تحصیلدار ما کام

DC Reasi conducts tour of rain, landslide-affected areas; Chairs meeting to review restoration measures

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

REASI, AUG 28: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik conducted an extensive tour of rain and landslide-affected areas today to assess damages and oversee relief measures.

Accompanied by officers from line departments, the DC inspected the water supply lines damaged by a landslide at Sulla Road near IRP Chowk. She directed the Jal Shakti Department to immediately repair all damaged pipelines and ensure uninterrupted water supply to the public. The DC then reviewed the restoration work on the PMGSY Kheral-Jeri Road, where a landslide had disrupted connectivity. She instructed the XEN PWD to use JCB machines to create motorable passages to avoid traffic congestion.

While listening to public grievances regarding the washing away of Gupta Ganga Road at Kasi Parta due to flash floods, the DC directed the XEN PWD to construct a temporary crate wall and other immediate measures for restoring connectivity and to explore possibilities for an alternate road until permanent repairs are completed. Continuing the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected damaged and sinking spots on the Reasi-Katra Road near Dera Baba Road. She directed officials to ensure road safety by placing gunny bags and drums near the damaged portions to prevent mishaps and emphasized the use of quality material in repair works for durability.

On her return, DC Nidhi Malik also inspected the PWD quarters in Reasi, where sinking land has posed a threat to the structures. She directed the XEN to work out a solution to ensure safety. The PDD department



was instructed to explore the shifting of an electric substation to a safer location. She also inspected the DC Office road, where cracks had developed and ordered its immediate repair. The DC further directed the PDD department to ensure timely repair of damaged electricity lines and provide adequate power supply for public convenience.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner chaired a review meeting attended by SDMs, XENs of PWD, PMGSY, JJM, besides officers of other concerned departments.

During the meeting, SDMs briefed the Deputy Commissioner about the ground situation in their respective jurisdictions, informing that several roads were blocked due to landslides. Machinery has already been deployed to expedite clearance works.

The DC directed SDMs to ensure that damaged roads are restored at the earliest and alternate routes are made available to maintain uninter-

rupted connectivity.

Giving a departmental update, the XEN of PWD and PMGSY stated that most roads have been partially restored and made motorable, while the remaining stretches will be cleared soon. The DC instructed PWD and PMGSY to continue restoration work on a war footing, while directing the PDD and PHE departments to ensure adequate electricity and water supply for the public.

Taking stock of the Katra-Reasi Road landslide, the DC directed SDM Katra to ensure proper diversion of vehicles through the Banganga Road for public convenience she also instructed SDM Mahore and SDM Dharmari to remain extra vigilant due to the higher vulnerability of their hilly subdivisions. The meeting was attended by ADC Rakesh Kumar, ACR Nitin Verma, Tehsildar Reasi, XENs of PWD and PMGSY, among other officers. SDMs from various subdivisions joined virtually.

Motorcyclist Killed in Hit-and-Run Case in Srinagar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 28: A 40-year-old man was killed in an alleged hit-and-run incident near the old bus stand at Batamaloo on Thursday.

Officials said the man, riding a motorcycle bearing

registration number JK01 AD 7021, was allegedly hit by an unknown vehicle which fled from the spot immediately after the accident. The victim sustained serious head injuries and was found lying on the road.

A passerby, rushed the injured motorcyclist to SMHS Hospital. However, doctors there declared him brought dead. The victim was later on identified as Farooq Ahmad, a resident of Nowgam Srinagar.

Police have taken cognizance of the incident and a case has been registered. Efforts are underway to trace the absconding auto driver.

Office of the Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Baramulla

NOTICE INVITING E- TENDERS

NIT No: E-NIT No. 07/EE/PMGSY/Bla-e-Tendering of 2025-26 | Dated: 25-08-2025.

Fer and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Baramulla invites e-tender on Percentage Basis for the following works from the eligible & approved contractors of J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways MES and other States/Central Government.

S.No	Name of work with Package No.	Advt. Cost incl GST	T.D Cost	E/M Bid Security	Time	Class
1	Restoration of road from L029- Chatoosa to Tangmulla, Package No. JK03-212	14.93	600/-	29860/-	60 Days	B, C & D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
2	Restoration of road from Dudbugh to Checki Dudbugh, Package No. JK03-91	9.65	600/-	19300/-	60 Days	C & D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
3	Restoration of road from Bohru Mandir to Hajibal, Package No. JK03-47	14.85	800/-	29700/-	60 Days	B, C & D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
4	Restoration of road from L049- Shiva Kharma, Package No. JK03-240	21.12	800/-	42240/-	60 Days	B & C class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
5	Restoration of road from L056- Pachar to Masjid Angan, Package No. JK03-263	3.31	200/-	6620/-	60 Days	& D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
6	Restoration of road from Khadiniyar to Brannar, Package No. JK03-264	6.45	300/-	12900/-	60 Days	C & D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
7	Restoration of road from Lisser to Satrina, Package No. JK03-2008	3.53	200/-	7060/-	60 Days	D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
8	Restoration of road from L028- Hatchipora to Chatoosa Package No. JK03-220	20.82	800/-	41640/-	60 Days	B & C class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
9	Restoration of road from Kakathal to Branner, Package No. JK03-262	12.3	600/-	24600/-	60 Days	B, C & D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments
10	Restoration of road from- Kohlina to Rangwar, Package No. JK03-261	9.82	600/-	19640/-	60 Days	C & D class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD / Railways and other state Governments

Tender Call: 1st

Time and Date of opening of Tenders online Technical Bid: 04-09-2025 at 11:00 AM

Position of A.A: Accorded

Position of T.S: Accorded

Major Head of Account: - M.H-5054, Sub Head: 2181.

The important dates and time are as under:

1.	Date of issue of tender notice	25-08-2025
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	26-08-2025 at 02.30 PM
3.	Bid submission start date	26-08-2025 at 02.30 PM
4.	Bid submission end date	03-09-2025 upto 04.30 PM
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	04-09-2025 11.00 AM

Cost of Bid Form (non-refundable) should be submitted only in form of e-challan/treasury challan/receipt favouring Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Baramulla by crediting the requisite charges to MH 0059(Revenue).

All other terms and conditions shall be same as published in the NIT No. 07/EE/PMGSY/Bla/e-Tendering of 2025-26, Dated: 25.08.2025.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer
PMGSY Division Baramulla**

DIPK: 5598/25 | Dated: 28-08-2025

Secretary RDD reviews progress of SBM-G across J&K

Also discuss roadmap for rollout of SBM 3.0

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, AUG28: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad today chaired a high-level meeting to assess the progress of Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by DG Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; Directors RDD Kashmir and Jammu, Shabir Hussain Bhat and Shehnaz Akhtar; Director Panchayati Raj, Sham Lal; Deputy Secretary, Tahir Ahmad Magray; Superintending Engineers REW Kashmir and Jammu; ACDs, ACPs, BDOs, and Executive Engineers REW, among others.

The meeting reviewed key issues including the status of AIP 2025-26, functionality of SBM-G assets, transition of non-ODF+ villages to ODF+ model villages, IHHL construction gaps and pending citizen applications, progress under GOBARdhan, and preparations for Swachh Survekshan Grameen (SSG) 2025 and the rollout of SBM-G 3.0.

Reviewing the pace of tendering and allocation of sanitation infrastructure-community sanitary complexes, compost pits, soak pits, segregation sheds, and waste management unit, the Secretary stressed on expediting completion and operationalization of assets to deliver tangible benefits to rural households, especially in districts with low completion rates.



holds, especially in districts with low completion rates.

He emphasized on strict documentation, transparency and daily monitoring of progress at the district level, underscoring that timely execution of sanitation projects is vital to achieving SBM-G objectives.

The Secretary also called for swift closure of IHHL gaps and disposal of pending citizen applications to ensure fair access to sanitation facilities for all

eligible households. On GOBARdhan scheme, the Secretary directed officials to address feasibility challenges to fast-track biogas initiatives.

Regarding SSG 2025, he instructed strengthening of documentation and evidence uploading for digital verification, ensuring assets are accurately mapped and reported as per national standards.

Outlining contours of SBM-G 3.0, the Secretary urged adoption of cluster-based waste management innovative technologies like waste-to-energy and biochar, and PPP models for plastic recycling. He highlighted the need for sustainable funding mechanisms and resilient systems suited to J&K's terrain and climate.

He reiterated the importance of convergence with MGNREGA, along with technology-driven monitoring and improved implementation, to make rural sanitation sustainable, equitable, and future-ready. He also underlined the need for capacity building and technical handholding for effective management of assets such as stabilization ponds and plastic waste units.

During the meeting, DG Rural Sanitation presented a detailed progress report and challenges under SBM-G, covering assets including community sanitary complexes, plastic waste management units, greywater systems, DEWATS, soak pits, and GOBARdhan plants across the UT.

DC Reviews Flood Relief, Restoration Measures in Jammu City

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, AUG28: Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Dr. Rakesh Minhas, today conducted an extensive tour of the flood-affected areas of Jammu city to take stock of the situation and review the ongoing relief, rehabilitation, and restoration measures being carried out by the district administration.

The Deputy Commissioner visited Greater Kailash, Jogi Gate, and Gujjar Nagar localities—some of the worst-affected areas—and interacted with residents to assess their immediate needs.

Power and Basic Amenities

At Greater Kailash, Dr. Minhas inspected the power receiving station, which had suffered extensive damage due to flooding. He directed engineers of the Power Development Department to immediately restore power supply and take preventive measures to safeguard critical infrastructure in the future. He informed that while power supply has already been restored in most of Jammu city, the Greater Kailash area will also be restored by this evening.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the restoration of drinking water supply, which had been disrupted due to damage in pipelines and pumping stations. He assured residents that water supply will be back to normal by tomorrow in a phased manner.

Relief Operations in Full Swing

While addressing residents at Jogi Gate, Dr. Minhas emphasized that the administration has prioritized the removal of muck and debris from houses and roads. "For this purpose, 40 JCB machines have been deployed, and the process is being coordinated by Tehsildars and BDOs to ensure swift clearance," he said.

Highlighting the administration's commitment to food security during the crisis, the DC stated, "Nobody should go hungry in this situation." He informed that the district administration has already distributed 10,000 food packets in the affected areas, along with dry ration kits, and more supplies are being mobilized.

He also directed the health department to ensure availability of medicines and mobile medical teams in flood-hit areas, with special focus on preventing the spread of waterborne diseases.

DC Kathua chairs meeting to review post-rainfall situation; Stresses timely restoration of affected roads, services

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KATHUA, AUG28: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting of concerned departments to review the situation arising in the aftermath of incessant rains and flash floods across the district.

During the meeting, the DC directed the departments of PWD, PDD and PHE to ensure early restoration of road connectivity, power supply and water services in the affected areas. He instructed that all temporary restoration works be executed strictly under

SDRF norms and guidelines.

The DC also directed the PHE Department to provide water supply through tanker services in the affected areas until the pipelines are restored. The XEN PHE apprised the meeting about the status of drinking water supply and the arrangements being made to resume full-fledged services at the earliest.

The DC asked the Chief Education Officer to make a detailed assessment of damages to school infrastructure and prepare a plan for repairs within the Rs 2 lakh ceiling under SDRF guidelines for quick restoration.

The ADC Billawar and SDM Hiranagar joined the meeting through virtual mode. They informed the chair about the situation in their respective jurisdictions. The DC asked for systematic on-ground assessment of damages by stakeholder departments to prepare a comprehensive plan for permanent restoration.

While reviewing the road connectivity scenario, the DC directed for the restoration of the Basohli-Mahanpur on war footing, with inputs from the Geological Survey of India for devising a permanent solution to frequent damages. He

assured that funds for major restoration works will be projected to the government for timely release.

The DC stressed close inter-departmental coordination and optimum use of men and machinery to mitigate the hardships being faced by the people affected by incessant rains and flash floods.

Regarding the damage caused to the District AYUSH and JPDCL office buildings due to flash floods in Sahar Khad, the DC directed SE PWD to undertake timely protection works along the structures to prevent further damage.

The meeting was informed that

over 30 roads, including Katli Road, Dilwan Road, Kumri Kathera Road and several roads in Bani areas, have been marred by flash floods and landslides.

The DC asked the field officers to remain stationed in affected areas to oversee restoration works and maintain constant communication with the District Administration for quick response and support.

ADDC Kathua Surinder Mohan, ADC Kathua Vishavjeet Singh, CPO Kathua Ranjit Thakur, CEO Kathua and other concerned officers were also present.

Public Urged to Use Water Judiciously Amid Supply Disruption

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, AUG 28: Continuous adverse weather conditions have caused widespread damage to the infrastructure of the Jal Shakti (PHE) Department in Jammu, leading to major disruptions in water supply across several areas. The situation has been further compounded by damage to the power supply network, which has affected the functioning of pumping stations and water treatment plants.

Chief Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Department Jammu, Er. Mohammad Hanief, informed that water supply in a number of localities is likely to remain affected until restoration work is completed. He appealed to the public to bear with the temporary inconvenience and to make judicious use of available water, prioritizing it strictly for drinking and cooking

purposes.

Restoration Work in Full Swing

The Chief Engineer stated that field teams and engineers of the department are working round-the-clock despite challenging conditions to restore the disrupted water supply infrastructure. He added that temporary arrangements are also being made in some severely affected pockets to minimize hardship to the public.

"Our teams are on the ground carrying out repair and replacement of damaged pipelines, pumping machinery, and electrical components. We are committed to restoring normal water supply at the earliest possible time," he said.

Appeal for Public Cooperation
The department has urged citizens to:

- Avoid wastage of water such as washing cars, gardening, or other

non-essential uses.

- Store water carefully and ensure there is no leakage from household tanks.

- Report burst pipelines or leakages immediately to the nearest Jal Shakti office for prompt action.

The Chief Engineer reiterated that while the department is making all-out efforts to complete restoration, public cooperation is essential to manage available resources during the disruption period.

Government's Commitment

He further assured that the Jal Shakti Department is closely monitoring the situation and that adequate manpower and machinery have been deployed to expedite repairs. "Normal supply will be restored at the earliest possible time. We request citizens to remain patient and support the department in this difficult phase," he added.

Director Agriculture Jammu Holds Meeting with Insurance Companies Regarding Crop Loss

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, AUG 28: Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta, today convened a crucial meeting with the State Heads of Insurance Companies to address the issue of crop loss and damage caused by incessant rains and landslides and to ensure timely redressal under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMF-BY).

The meeting, held at the Directorate of Agriculture, Krishi Bhawan, Talab Tillo, was attended by State Head Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Sonu Kashyap, State Head Reliance General Insurance Mahavir Singh, Nodal Officer PMFBY (DAJ) Anirudh Bhat, besides senior departmental officers, representatives of insurance companies, and staff members.

Focus on Timely Redressal

The primary agenda of the meeting was to review the registration of crop loss intimations following the recent spell of heavy rains and landslides that have caused considerable damage to standing crops across multiple districts of Jammu division.

Director Agriculture impressed upon all officers and field functionaries to mobilize farmers at the grassroots level and ensure that every affected farmer registers their crop loss intimation. He highlighted the two key helpline facilities available under PMFBY:

- Toll-Free Number: 14447
- WhatsApp Number: 7065514447

By promptly reporting losses, farmers can become eligible for timely compensation under the scheme, thereby safeguarding their livelihoods.

Field-Level Coordination

The Director Agriculture directed insurance companies to deploy their field staff immediately to affected areas, work in close coordination with Agriculture Extension Officers and Panchayat-level workers, and actively participate in the on-ground assessment of crop damage.

He said that awareness campaigns must be intensified at the Panchayat and block levels to ensure that farmers are not left unaware of the procedures for reporting crop damage and claiming insurance benefits.

Empathy with Farmers

Expressing concern for the affected farmers, Anil Gupta said:

"The recent heavy rains and landslides have caused immense hardship to our farming community. Many farmers have suffered serious losses to their standing crops. The Department of Agriculture is fully committed to standing shoulder to shoulder with them during this crisis. I strongly appeal to all farmers to immediately register their crop losses under PMFBY. Timely registration will help us process claims quickly and ensure that compensation reaches you without delay."

Insurance Companies' Commitment

The representatives of Bajaj Allianz and Reliance General Insurance assured full cooperation and on-ground support to the farming community.

Social Welfare Department Rajouri Organizes Senior Citizen Wellness Camp at Sunderbani

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SUNDERBANI, AUG 28: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma, the Social Welfare Department Rajouri, in collaboration with Brahma Kumaris NGO and the AYUSH Department, today organized a special Wellness Camp for Senior Citizens at PWD Dak Bunglow, Sunderbani.

The camp was coordinated by Tehsil Social Welfare Officer (TSWO) Rahul Puri, under the guidance of District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Abdul Raheem and the overall supervision of the Deputy Commissioner Rajouri.

Focus on Emotional and Social Well-being

The programme commenced with a heartwarming counselling session conducted by the Brahma Kumaris team, which highlighted the importance of emotional wellness, mental peace, and social connectedness in the lives of senior citizens. The session included interactive discussions on positive thinking, strategies to overcome loneliness, and adopting a healthy lifestyle for graceful ageing.



Speakers also sensitized the participants about their legal rights and informed them about various government schemes and welfare initiatives available for the elderly, including social security pensions, health insurance coverage, and support services under the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojna.

On-the-Spot Services for Senior Citizens

The camp provided multiple on-the-spot facilities to benefit participants, such as:

- Sanctioning of pending Old Age Pension cases
- Immediate redressal of pension-related grievances
- Assistance regarding arrears of pensions
- Guidance on application procedures for welfare schemes

This initiative ensured that elderly citizens not only received counselling and medical support but also direct administrative assistance under one roof.

Health and Wellness Compo-

nent

As part of the medical outreach, Dr. Manish and his team from the AYUSH Department conducted a detailed health check-up drive, covering vital parameters such as blood pressure, sugar levels, and general wellness screening. The medical team also distributed free AYUSH medicines and dietary supplements to all participants, while offering guidance on holistic health practices like yoga, meditation, and balanced

nutrition.

Strong Community Participation

The camp, organized under the framework of the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojna (AVYAY), witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 150 senior citizens drawn from different areas of Sunderbani. The event reflected the government's strong commitment to improving the overall well-being, dignity, and quality of life of the elderly population in Rajouri district.

Voices of Appreciation

Participants expressed gratitude to the district administration for organizing such a meaningful initiative and demanded that similar camps be held regularly in other tehsils of the district. They appreciated the multi-departmental approach that combined emotional support, health services, and administrative facilitation under a single platform.

DSWO Abdul Raheem, while interacting with the senior citizens, assured them that the department will continue to prioritize the needs of the elderly and make welfare services accessible at their doorstep.



PM Jan Dhan Yojana's 11 years: Over 56 cr accounts opened, deposits cross Rs 2.68 lakh cr

United News of India

NEW DELHI, AUG 28: The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), the world's largest financial inclusion programme, has completed 11 years, marking what the government described as a "transformative impact" on India's financial landscape.

Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 28, 2014, PMJDY has opened over 56.16 crore bank accounts, with deposits now standing at Rs2.68 lakh crore, the Finance Ministry said today. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the scheme has been central to bringing the poor and marginalised into the formal financial system. "Financial inclusion is a key driver of economic growth and development. Universal access to bank accounts enables

the poor and marginalised to participate fully in the formal economy and benefit from its opportunities," Sitharaman said in her message.

She added that more than 38 crore free RuPay cards have been issued under PMJDY, significantly boosting digital transactions. "It is noteworthy that 67% of accounts are in rural or semi-urban areas, and 56% are owned by women, indicating how underprivileged individuals living in far-flung areas have been brought into the formal financial sector," she said. Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary described the scheme as a landmark global model.

"PMJDY has been one of the most successful financial inclusion initiatives not only in the country but in the whole world. The Jan Dhan Yojana is about dignity, empowerment and



opportunity," Chaudhary said.

He highlighted the government's ongoing saturation campaign, under which financial services camps are being held in all 2.7 lakh gram panchayats

till September 30. These camps facilitate opening of new accounts, enrolment under insurance and pension schemes, re-KYC, and updating nominations.

"Our effort is to bring financial services to the doorstep of the common man," Chaudhary added. As of August 13, 2025, the number of Jan Dhan accounts has touched 56.16 crore, of

which 55.7% belong to women and 66.7% are in rural and semi-urban areas. The deposits under these accounts stand at Rs2.67 lakh crore, nearly twelve times higher than in 2015, while the average deposit per account has risen to Rs4,768, an increase of 3.7 times over the last decade.

Alongside, 38.68 crore RuPay cards have been issued, providing account holders with access to digital transactions and financial security.

The Finance Ministry noted that digital payments have surged with the spread of PMJDY accounts, RuPay cards, and mobile-based systems such as UPI. The total number of digital transactions rose from 2,338 crore in FY 2018-19 to 22,198 crore in FY 2024-25, while UPI transactions alone jumped from 535 crore to 18,587 crore in the same period.

PMJDY accounts also serve as the backbone of the Jan-Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity, enabling direct benefit transfers (DBT) without leakages. In FY 2024-25 alone, Rs 6.9 lakh crore was transferred directly into beneficiary accounts under various schemes.

Over the years, the scheme has extended access to micro-insurance, pension coverage, overdraft facilities up to Rs10,000, and accident insurance cover of Rs2 lakh, apart from promoting savings habits among millions.

As the initiative enters its 12th year, the Finance Ministry said PMJDY has emerged as a "game changer for financial inclusion in the country," ensuring that "no citizen is left behind in the journey towards financial independence." UNI

Bengal CM to address TMC student wing's foundation day

United News of India

KOLKATA, AUG 28: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today urged students, youth, and party workers to intensify the struggle for empowerment and development in the state, as the Trinamool Congress Chhatra Parishad (TMCP) marks its foundation day.

Mamata Banerjee Rallies Youth on TMCP Foundation Day; Exams Spark Tension with Calcutta University.

In a message marking the historic foundation day of the Trinamool Congress Chhatra Parishad (TMCP), Banerjee, the supremo of Trinamool Congress greeted both new and veteran TMCP members, appealed them to stand firm in their fight for the honour, dignity, and progress of Bengal. She described the student wing as an inseparable part of the party and urged students to uphold integrity, saying, "Never compromise with wrongdoing. Always keep your head held high."

Reaffirming her support, the Chief Minister said she stands with the youth in their ongoing efforts for the welfare of the state.

A massive rally is set to take place today at Mayo Road in Esplanade, with Mamata Banerjee and TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee slated to address the gathering. Thousands of students from across the state are expected to attend.

In a separate message, Abhishek Banerjee said, "We acknowledge the enduring role of Bengal's youth in leading movements for change, progress and social justice." He said the TMCP has remained a platform that empowers young minds to raise their voices, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a brighter tomorrow.

"I convey my sincere gratitude to every member for their steadfast commitment and urge all to carry forward this legacy with renewed resolve and dedication," Joy Bangla, the TMC general secretary said. He also paid tribute to the courage, conviction, and commitment of Bengal's youth, who have consistently been at the forefront of transformative change.

However, celebrations were marred by discontent after Calcutta University declined the TMCP's request to reschedule today's semester exams. The TMCP student wing had appealed the varsity authorities for the postponement of the fourth-semester B.Com and B.A. LLB examinations, which are scheduled between 2 pm and 5 pm overlapping with the rally.

The varsity authorities requested the city Police Commissioner and the Director General of Police and Inspector General of police to ensure safety and security for the students appearing for examinations. UNI

UP mourns loss of 11 lives in Vaishno Devi landslide; govt offers Rs 4 lakh relief

United News of India

LUCKNOW, AUG 28: A landslide along the sacred Vaishno Devi shrine route turned a pilgrimage of faith into a nightmare, killing 11 pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh and injuring several others.

The tragedy, which struck on August 26 amid heavy rains and flooding, has devastated families in Baghpat, Muzaffarnagar, Bareilly, Agra, and Lucknow.

Relief Commissioner Bhanu Chandra Goswami confirmed the deaths and announced that the bereaved families would receive Rs 4 lakh each from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

He said the Uttar Pradesh government is coordinating with the Jammu & Kashmir administration, though the complete list of victims is still being finalized.

Among the dead is 24-year-old

Chandni from Baghpat, who had been married just four months ago. She and her husband, Mayank, were on their first trip to Vaishno Devi. While Chandni perished, Mayank was critically injured and undergoing treatment in Jammu.

Chandni's sister Neera also lost her life. The tragedy also claimed 21-year-old cricketer Kartik Kashyap from Muzaffarnagar, remembered by many as a budding talent. His parents, sister, and cousin were injured in the disaster.

In Bareilly, another victim named Neera died, while Anant (6) and Dipesh, sons of Ajay Kumar from Muzaffarnagar, were also among the casualties. A young woman, Anjali, was confirmed dead, though her native place could not be traced.

One of the worst-hit families



was from Agra, where three members died and one remains missing.

Deepak, a resident of Agra, had set out with nine relatives for his daughter Angel's munda ceremony and Vaishno Devi darshan. The family boarded a train on

August 24, only to be caught in a deadly landslide two days later.

Deepak's mother Sunita (50), sister-in-law Bhavana (11), and two-year-old daughter Angel lost their lives. His father, Arjun Singh, remains missing, while his wife Mona's leg had to be amputated

and her condition is reported to be critical.

Deepak's younger daughter Sejal, sister Jasmine, and brother-in-law Mohit were injured but are stable.

All the injured are being treated in Katra, Jammu.

In total, seven people injured in the disaster are under treatment, including Sangeeta, Umang, Kamlesh, Vaishnavi, Poorvi, Goran (Lucknow), and Mayank (Lucknow). Doctors say their conditions are being closely monitored.

The Vaishno Devi landslide has again underlined the dangers of monsoon travel along the shrine's treacherous mountain routes. But beyond the statistics, it has left behind stories of heartbreak and resilience, as survivors fight for life and grieving families cling to memories of their loved ones. UNI

Israel launches fresh strikes on Yemen's capital

United News of India

SANAA, AUG. 28: Israel launched airstrikes on Yemen's capital Sanaa on Thursday afternoon, Houthi-run al-Masirah TV reported, as local residents heard a series of explosions.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz confirmed the airstrikes in a statement, while Israel's state-owned Kan TV news reported that the airstrikes were aimed at Houthi leaders, without disclosing their identity.

The strikes came a few hours after the Israeli military said it intercepted two drones fired from Yemen.

The first drone entered Israeli airspace at noon, triggered air raid sirens, and was then intercepted by Israeli air force over communities near Gaza, while the second, fired less than two hours later, was intercepted before crossing into Israeli territory, the military said in a statement.

No human casualties or material damage have been reported from the two drone launches. There was no immediate comment from Yemen's Houthi group regarding the incidents.

The Houthis, who control much



of northern Yemen, have carried out drone and missile attacks on Israel since November 2023 in what they describe as solidarity with Palestinians during the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Most of the projectiles have

been intercepted by Israeli defenses.

Israel has responded with strikes on Houthi-held areas, targeting airports, power stations, and ports in Yemen's capital Sanaa and the city of Hodeidah. UNI

Calcutta HC bars grants to puja committees without audit reports

United News of India

KOLKATA, AUG 28: The Calcutta High Court today ruled that Durga Puja committees which fail to submit utilisation certificates of previous state grants will not be entitled to fresh honorariums this year.

The division bench of Justice Sujoy Pal and Justice Smita Das De said only those committees that filed expense statements within the stipulated time, in line with earlier court directives, will receive the one-time state honorarium of Rs 1.1 lakh.

The judges also ordered the state government to submit a detailed report on utilisation certificates within a month after the puja holidays.

During the hearing, Advocate General Kishore Dutta informed the court that out of 41,795 puja committees across West Bengal, only three, all based in Siliguri, had not furnished their accounts.

The matter stems from a public interest litigation filed by activist Saurav Dutta, who alleged misuse of taxpayer money in the government's puja funding scheme.

His counsel, senior advocate Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya, argued that state resources meant for development were being diverted to festival grants.

The government, however, has defended the initiative, saying the funds are used for public welfare campaigns like Safe Drive Save Life and for managing pujas under Covid-era restrictions.

On Monday, the bench had sought clarity on whether committees that ignored last year's directives had still received grants.

"How many committees have not filed the certificates? Despite that, are they still receiving funds?" the judges had asked.

The ruling comes as Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced the state's largest-ever puja support package — Rs 1.1 lakh for each of nearly 43,000 organisers, at a cost exceeding Rs 450 crore.

In addition, puja committees will enjoy an 80% concession on electricity bills, to be borne by CESC and the State Electricity Distribution Board.

Since its inception in 2018, the grant has seen a steep climb — from Rs 10,000 with a 25% power rebate, to 85,000 in 2024, and now the record Rs 1.1 lakh in 2025, surpassing Banerjee's earlier promise of Rs 1 lakh. UNI

Charlie Hunnam to portray Ed Gein in new season of 'Monster'

United News of India

LOS ANGELES, AUG 28: Charlie Hunnam steps into the skin-crawling role of Ed Gein in the forthcoming third season of "Monster", the acclaimed anthology by Ryan Murphy and Ian Brennan.

Subtitled "The Ed Gein Story", the series will debut globally on October 3, with all episodes dropping simultaneously, reports The Hollywood Reporter.

Promoted by the streamer as its "most harrowing season yet", the series delves into the unsettling duality of Gein's existence, an ostensibly mild-mannered recluse who concealed a gro-

tesque obsession within the decaying confines of his family farm.

His macabre legacy later led to the creation of some of Hollywood's most enduring fictional villains, from Norman Bates in "Psycho" to Leatherface in "The Texas Chain Saw Massacre" and Buffalo Bill in "The Silence of the Lambs".

Monster: The Ed Gein Story tells the tale of how one simple man in Plainfield, Wisconsin, became "history's most singular ghoul," says the streamer, revealing to the world "the most horrific truth of all — that monsters aren't born, they're made ... by us."

Says the official logline: "Serial killer. Grave robber. Psycho. In the frozen fields of 1950s rural Wisconsin, a friendly, mild-mannered recluse named Eddie Gein lived quietly on a decaying farm — hiding a house of horrors so gruesome it would redefine the American nightmare."

"Driven by isolation, psychosis, and an all-consuming obsession with his mother, Gein's perverse crimes birthed a new kind of monster that would haunt Hollywood for decades. Gein's macabre legacy gave birth to fictional monsters born in his image and ignited a cultural obsession with the criminally deviant. Ed Gein didn't just influence a genre — he



became the blueprint for modern horror," it says.

Gein, the serial murderer and

body snatcher often referred to as "the Butcher of Plainfield," gained notoriety in the 1950s for his horrific crimes.

The cast for Monster: The Ed Gein Story also includes Tom Hollander, Laurie Metcalf and Suzanna Son, with Vicky Krieps, Olivia Williams, Lesley Manville, Joey Pollari, Charlie Hall, Tyler Jacob Moore, Mimi Kennedy, Will Brill and Robin Weigert.

Executive producers include co-creators Murphy and Brennan, along with Max Winkler, Eric Kovton, Scott Robertson, Nissa Diederich, Louise Shore, Carl Franklin and Hunnam. Brennan and Max Winkler are directors on the series. UNI NST SSP



Ashwin at the IPL - A pioneer and a trendsetter

■ ESPNcricinfo

NEW DELHI: Less than a year after leaving international cricket, R Ashwin has called time on his IPL career. But he isn't done as a player yet. At 38, Ashwin has said that life "as an explorer of the game around various leagues begins" from this point on. In 16 seasons of the IPL - he started in 2009 and missed 2017 with an injury - Ashwin picked up 187 wickets, the fifth-most of any bowler. Here, we take a look at what else he made news for at the IPL.

Ashwin made his debut for his home IPL team Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in 2009, in their first game of the season against Mumbai Indians in Cape Town. But the debut was rather unmemorable as Ashwin, rumoured to have been brought on board primarily as a net bowler, didn't get a chance to bowl after MS Dhoni's CSK opted to field, and was not required to bat as CSK lost with seven wickets down.

With the team management preferring Muthiah Muralidaran as their main spinner, Ashwin played just one other match that season. But it was a sign of things to come both from Ashwin and CSK, as he returned 2 for 13 in a low-scoring, spin-dominated win over Kings XI Punjab.

You might score 205 in a T20 game, but if Chris Gayle is in the opposition, and enjoying one of the greatest seasons of any IPL batter, it can quickly seem like too few. Enter Ashwin, with the new ball, in the first over of Royal Challengers Bangalore's chase in the IPL 2011 final. Never one to not think each of his deliveries through - with respect to the batter in front of him - Ashwin started with flight and big turn with his first two balls, and then pushed

up his pace with his third, and got the ball to skid on. Attempting to cut, Gayle nicked, and Dhoni did the rest.

"The plan was [...] that I'd spin a few past him and then slip in an arm ball to get him out lbw or bowled," Ashwin later said. "But [...] it spun and bounced and I think Gayle was a little late for his shot."

Ashwin ended the tournament as CSK's highest wicket-taker, with 20 strikes.

It was also one of the initial acts of Ashwin the new-ball bowler. No spinner has bowled as much in the powerplay in the IPL. Ashwin leads with 1252 balls in the first six overs. Sunil Narine, second on the list, has bowled 918. Only three others - Harbhajan Singh, Axar Patel and Krunal Pandya - have crossed 450. That's a fairly dramatic difference.

Throughout his career, Ashwin has been unafraid to experiment. Turning the ball right and left, experimenting with speeds and lines and lengths, wide of the crease and close to the stumps, the pause at the point of delivery, carrom balls, reverse carrom balls - you name it and he's done it. He's even bowled leg-spin, which, really, offspinners are not meant to do. Not just the odd legbreak, mind you, but the legspinner's full repertoire.

It was in 2015 that he started trying to get it right, and by 2017, he had what he needed. And in IPL 2018, his first season with Kings XI Punjab (now Punjab Kings), it was on show at the IPL too.

He made things tough for the spirit-of-cricket obsessives on more occasion than one. Take Mankading - formally "run out backing up". He wasn't the first to do it, but he ended up making himself an ambassador for the dismissal, which is legal but frowned upon by many.



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After career of 'more lows than highs', Jagadeesan hopes to build on recent gains

■ Deivarayan Muthu

OVAL: Tamil Nadu wicketkeeper-batter N Jagadeesan frames his various jerseys and puts them up on the wall at his home in Coim-

batore. His father CJ Narayan, who played cricket for Tata Electric in Mumbai before the family moved to Coimbatore, had left a frame empty for years, reserving it for his son's India jersey. Last month, Jagadeesan fulfilled his father's and his own dream by being part of India's famous Test win at The Oval, though as a reserve player.

"The India jersey is now going into the frame, and I hope that I keep getting a lot more," Jagadeesan tells ESPNcricinfo. "To be part of a match that was so intense and thrilling made it even more special. For us to go and win the game from a situation where a lot [of people] might not have expected us to, it was really special. It was definitely a moment that gave me goosebumps."

Jagadeesan's maiden India call-up was reward for his prolific run over the past two Ranji Trophy

seasons. During the period, he had racked up 1490 runs in 26 innings at an average of nearly 65. Only Karun Nair has scored more runs (1553) than Jagadeesan across the previous two Ranji seasons, with the benefit of more innings (33), among batters from the Elite Group.

Jagadeesan has been on the fringes of India A and part of the wider pool of targeted players short-listed by the BCCI's Centre of Excellence over the past 12 months.

"Definitely, it [being part of the team management's plans] gives you a lot of confidence because you taste success at the next level," he says. "I mean, even playing for my Under-13 district team in Coimbatore, that was also a taste of success, right? Likewise, every time you taste success one step higher, it always gives you a lot of confidence and it also makes you feel grateful to be

presented with that opportunity. In a country where there are a billion people, only a few thousands max get to do what I'm doing right now."

Jagadeesan had made an immediate impression on first-class debut, as a 20-year-old, scoring an unbeaten 123 off 204 balls from No. 7 against Madhya Pradesh in Cuttack back in 2016. The journey towards the top, though, has been a long and winding one. Despite scoring runs, there have been periods where Jagadeesan, now 29, has had to face the "axe".

After starting as an understudy to Dinesh Karthik, Jagadeesan is now stepping into Karthik's shoes. He has the gears to bat in different positions like his predecessor and is one of the senior figures in the Tamil Nadu set-up along with captain R Sai Kishore.

ESPNcricinfo

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