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National Emblem Only For Govt Functions: CM Omar

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, SEP 6: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday criticised the use of the national emblem on a renovation plaque by the Waqf Board at Srinagar's Hazratbal mosque, asserting that the symbol is meant for government functions and not religious institutions. Abdullah, who is touring the

flood-affected areas in south Kashmir, said the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board should apologise for the "mistake" that has hurt religious sentiments.

His comments follow a major controversy that erupted after the plaque bearing the Ashoka emblem was placed inside the revered Hazratbal shrine and vandalised by unidentified people shortly after prayers on Friday.

Police on Saturday registered a case on charges of breach of peace, rioting and criminal conspiracy against unidentified persons in connection with the incident.

"First, the question arises whether the national emblem should have been used on this stone or not. I have never seen an emblem being used in this way in any religious place," Abdullah told reporters while visiting flood-affected

areas here.

"Mosques, shrines, temples and gurdwaras are not government institutions. These are religious institutions and government emblems are not used in religious institutions," he said.

The controversy escalated when Waqf Board Chairperson Darakshan Andrabi called for legal action, including booking the "hooligans" ● Turn on Page 2



CM Omar Abdullah Visits Anantnag, Assures Relief & Flood Measures

■ HT News Desk

ANANTNAG, SEP 6: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today visited various flood-affected areas of Anantnag district to take stock of the damages caused by recent heavy rains and floods.

He interacted with the affected families and assured them that the Government stands firmly with them in these testing times, pledging all possible measures for their relief and rehabilitation.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Ittoo and Javed Ahmad Rana, Advisor to the CM Nasir Aslam Wani, and concerned MLAs of the district.

During his visit, Omar Abdullah inspected the flood-hit localities of Mehandi Kadal, Janglaat Mandi, Deva Colony, Ashajipora Bridge, and other areas of the district. Residents of Ganjiwara raised

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CM Omar Visits Kulgam, Reviews Flood Restoration

■ HT News Desk

KULGAM, SEP 06: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday reached Kulgam district to personally take stock of damages, restoration works, and the challenges faced by the people.

His visit, marked by interaction with affected families and on-ground review of damaged infrastructure, underscored the government's commitment to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the public in this testing time.

Accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Singh Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Ittoo and Javed Rana, Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, legislator Peerzada Feroz, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan, SSP Kulgam Sahil Sarangal, and other

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Flood threat eases after 60 hours in Kashmir

Jhelum level falls below flood declaration mark at Pampore
MeT predicts no significant weather activity till Sept 12

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEP 06: The flood threat in Kashmir eased after 60 hours as the water level in the Jhelum receded below the flood declaration mark on Saturday.

According to the details gathered by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jhelum level fell below flood declaration mark at Pampore and Ram Munshi Bagh stations this morning.

Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng informed that the Sangam station witnessed a fall below the flood declaration mark after the gap of 42 hours.

Notably, Kashmir witnessed flood-

like situation after heavy rainfall led to the rise in the water level in river Jhelum and other tributaries till September 4. However, some of the areas including Zoonipora, Shalina, Tailbal, Taigan and adjacent areas got submerged after the river water entered into the residential areas.

Water levels rise in Bandipora, Uri While the situation eased in Srinagar and southern parts of Kashmir, the Jhelum witnessed a rise in frontier town of Uri in North Kashmir's Baramulla district while the Wullar Lake also swelled in Bandipora District.

Keng informed that Wular Lake rose silently, "The rising rate has been extremely slow, at nearly 0.5 inches

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Jmu-Sgr Highway May Reopen in 2 Days: Dr Jitendra Singh

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, SEP 06: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, on Saturday said the restoration work of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway is going on at a war footing basis and it is expected to reopen within two days.

In a post on X, Dr Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News

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Water Supply Restored in 80% of Jammu City

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, SEP 06: After significant improvement in the water supply situation across Jammu city, private water tankers have been permitted to resume independent operations with immediate effect.

The services of private water tankers had earlier been placed under the regulatory control of the Jal Shakti Department, following directives issued by the Jal Shakti Minister, Javed Ahmed Rana, in response to a severe water shortage affecting several parts of the district.

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IAF Rescues 541, Airlifts 10,000 Kg Relief in Flood-Hit J&K, Punjab, Himachal

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEP 06: Officials said on Saturday the Indian Air Force (IAF) evacuated 541 people and airlifted over 10,000 kilograms of essential relief material across Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir in the aftermath of landslides and floods triggered

by heavy rains.

According to the details shared by officials with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) IAF helicopters conducted operations in the Bharmor-Chamba sector of Himachal Pradesh, the Kullu and Kishtwar sectors, and other affected areas in Jammu & Kashmir.

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Colours of faith: Children lead Eid-Milad rallies across Kashmir



■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEP 06: Streets of Kashmir on Saturday transformed into rivers of devotion as people of all ages, from small children to young adults and the elderly, including women, joined the Eid-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) rallies held across the Valley.

From the crowded markets of Srinagar to the quiet hamlets of North and South Kashmir,

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CM Omar Offers Magrib Prayers at Hazratbal on Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW)

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEP 06: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today joined the devotees at the revered Hazratbal Shrine here on the auspicious occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW). The Chief Minister offered Magrib Namaz (evening prayers) at the shrine, which houses the sacred Moy-e-Muqaddas (Holy Relic of Prophet Muhammad, PBUH). After the prayers, he was blessed with a glimpse of the Holy Relic, along-with the congregation

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Sitharaman Writes to State FMs, Thanks Them on GST Overhaul

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: In a gesture underscoring the spirit of cooperative federalism, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has written to finance ministers of all states, expressing gratitude for their support and active role in helping implement the landmark overhaul of the goods and services tax (GST) regime.

In an interview with PTI, Sitharaman said

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Pak Drone Spotted Over Samba, Search Launched

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, SEP 6: Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district went on high alert after a suspected Pakistani drone was sighted hovering over vital installations late Friday night, officials said on Saturday.

The drone was observed around 9:35 pm at an altitude of over 700 metres, moving from west to east over a military garrison in the Bari Brahmana area, they said.

An immediate alert was sounded and quick reaction teams of the Army were activated. Police were also informed, following which a joint search operation was launched in the area to rule out the possibility of any airdropping of weapons or narcotics.

Officials said searches were continuing on Saturday and security agencies remained on heightened alert in view of the incident.

In recent years, security agencies in Jammu and Kashmir have intercepted multiple Pakistani drones carrying arms, ammunition and contraband across the border, making such sightings a cause for serious concern.

In recent years, Jammu division has witnessed a series of drone-related incidents that have raised serious security concerns, with drones

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Operation Sindoor Showed India's Strike Power: Air Chief

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, SEP 06: Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh on Saturday said that through 'Operation Sindoor' Indian armed forces demonstrated their capability to deliver swift, precise and decisive blows to the enemy.

Addressing a passing out parade at Chennai the Air Chief Marshal, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Operation Sindoor stands as a shining testament to India's unparalleled prowess."

He said that "Operation Sindoor" showcased the exceptional coordination between three services, synergy and integration with the Armed forces and other agencies.

"As we look towards future, two things are certain — fast evolving character of warfare and the increasing relevance of military power."



Addressing the new recruits Singh said, "You, as the future of these forces must understand that defence forces have always been and will always be the first responder."

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Dr Jitendra Launches CU 'Campus Tank', Stresses Startup Economy

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh today said India's future growth will increasingly depend on building a "Startup linked economy" anchored in strong industry partnerships. He was speaking after launching the Chandigarh University "Campus Tank", which he described as the first-of-its-kind initiative in the region, aimed at connecting young entrepreneurs with industry and investors.

The Minister said, the government has created an enabling ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship, but sustaining StartUps requires early and substantial

engagement with industry. "This was mainly for industry linkage. The launch of Chandigarh University Campus Tank will give a push to Startup linked economy through industry linkage. We have prioritised the industry. This is Startup funding," he noted.

Underscoring the need to move beyond symbolic support, the Minister added: "We need to keep industry ahead to sustain. So we pushed for industry-linked Startup and a Startup linked economy. Start-up linked economy is also a good expression." He stressed that while ideas and research emerge from campuses, their long-term success depends on structured partnerships with industry that bring in financial backing, market exposure, and scale.

The Minister explained that India's

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SNOWTALES: J&K's First Homegrown OTT Platform Set to Redefine Storytelling

■ [Gulfam Barji](#)

SRINAGAR, SEP 6: A cultural milestone is about to unfold in Jammu & Kashmir. Snowtales, the region's first homegrown OTT platform, will be unveiled at a special event in Srinagar – a step that promises to take local stories, talent, and heritage to audiences across the world.

The vision behind Snowtales comes from two sons of the soil – Varun Sharma and Saajan Kerni – who share a dream of giving Jammu & Kashmir its rightful place on the global map of cinema and storytelling. Varun Sharma, a filmmaker and director with a deep-rooted journey in the world of cinema and television, has spent years crafting stories and



leading creative teams. His passion lies in giving fair opportunities to artists and telling authentic tales of the land he calls home.

Complementing him is Saajan Kerni, who brings a strong marketing and strategic background. With his expertise, Saajan ensures that Snowtales is not only about creating powerful content but also about reaching the right audiences, building partnerships, and crafting a sustainable platform for the region's creative economy.

"Snowtales is a dream that combines creativity and strategy. Together, we want to empower local talent, showcase our heritage, and make Jammu & Kashmir a hub of storytelling that the world cannot ignore," says the founding team.

JKAP-8th Battalion Holds Welfare, Board Meeting at Miran Sahib

■ [HT News Desk](#)

JAMMU, SEP 6: A welfare meeting alongwith establishment board meeting was held at Battalion Headquarters of JKAP-8th Battalion, Miran Sahib, Jammu, under the chairmanship of Sh. Suram Singh, JKPS(SSP), Commandant JKAP-8th Battalion, to examine transfer cases and welfare loan related cases of the menpower of unit.

During the proceedings, a total of 14 representations related to transfer cases were taken up, out of which 04 cases were found genuine and accordingly were forwarded to higher authorities for consideration. Similarly, 17 welfare loan related cases were considered; out of which in the 05 cases loan was sanctioned at the rate of Rs 50,000/- to each applicant & 05 cases were forwarded to higher authorities for consideration.

On the occasion, senior officers including Sh. Chandrjeet Singh-SSP (Dy. CO), Sh. Bhopinder Singh (Dy. SP), Sh. Om Parkash Chib (Dy. SP), Sh. Prabhu Dyal (Dy. SP), Insp. Javid Ahmad, (IC Estt), Insp. Parmmeet Singh (PTO), SI (M) Jankar Singh (IC Accts.) were also present.

Handwara Media Association (HMA) Elects New Office Bearers for 2025-26

■ [Dr. Ab Qayoom](#)

HANDWARA, SEP 6: The Handwara Media Association (HMA) on Saturday conducted its annual body elections for the term 2025-26, witnessing a spirited contest among the members. In a closely fought race, Aatif Qayoom was elected as President, securing 15 votes against Syed Kabeer Geelani, who polled 12 votes. For the post of Vice President, Syed Imtiyaz retained his position after defeating Shameem Bhat with the same margin of 15-12. Meanwhile, Aadil Akbar was unanimously elected as General Secretary, being declared unopposed. Out of the total 27 members, 25 cast their votes offline while two exercised their franchise online, marking full participation in the electoral process. This year's elections reflected both continuity and change. Last year (2023-24), the presidential contest between Syed Kabeer Geelani and Dr. Tarique Raheem had



ended in a tie, leading to a unique arrangement where both leaders shared the presidency in two equal terms—Mr. Geelani from December 21, 2023, to June 18, 2024, and Dr. Raheem from June 19 to December 20, 2024. In the same term, Syed Imtiyaz and Aadil Akbar had also secured the Vice President and General Secretary posts respectively. Their reelection this year reflects the trust and solidarity they continue to enjoy within the fraternity.

For Aatif Qayoom, this marks a return to leadership, having previously served as President in the 2022-23 term. The election proceedings were overseen by the Election Commission of HMA, in the presence of government officials including Tehsildar Langate Mohammad Ismail, SHO Qalamabad Mohammad Ashraf, and several other dignitaries from the sub-district Handwara. The newly elected body has pledged to work collectively for strengthening journalistic ethics, safeguarding press freedom, and addressing the concerns of media persons and the general public of Sub-District Handwara.

JK News Network and Headlines Today Felicitates Teachers for Their Outstanding Contribution in Education

■ [Aashiq Hussain](#)

KREERI, SEP 6: JK News Network and Headlines Today successfully organized a grand Teachers' Felicitation Ceremony on Saturday at Euro Kids Pre School Kreeri celebrating the invaluable role of teachers in shaping society and nurturing future generations.

The event brought together distinguished educators from across the region who were honored with Certificates of Honour and Awards in recognition of their dedication, hard work, and commitment to the noble profession of teaching.

SDPO Kreeri Javid Ahmad the Chief Guest of the ceremony, in his address, highlighted the importance of teachers as the true nation-builders and appreciated JK News Network and Headlines Today for taking this noble initiative. Javid Ahmad



Provisional President JKTF Kashmir province also graced the event and shared their words of encouragement. Speaking on the occasion,

the representatives of JK News Network and Headlines Today stated, "Teachers are the guiding lights of our society. Their tireless efforts deserve recognition

and respect. This felicitation is a small gesture of our gratitude towards them." The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks and a

commitment to continue such initiatives that bring forward the contributions of educators who inspire, guide, and transform lives.

Ehsaas Foundation Organises Free Tea Stall at Dargah Hazratbal on the Auspicious Occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi

■ [HT News Desk](#)

SRINAGAR, SEP 6: In a heartfelt gesture of service and devotion, the Ehsaas Foundation organised a Free Tea Stall at the revered Dargah Hazratbal Shrine on the auspicious occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi. The initiative was dedicated to the memory and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who epitomised mercy, compassion, and service to humanity.

Thousands of devotees thronged Hazratbal to participate in the celebrations marking the birth anniversary of the Prophet, and the Free Tea Stall proved to be a blessing for many, especially those who had travelled long distances. Volunteers of the Foundation worked tirelessly throughout the day, ensuring smooth service with warmth and care, reflecting the Prophet's message of kindness and brotherhood.

The Co-Founder of Ehsaas Foundation, Sahil Bhat, in his message on Eid Milad-un-Nabi, emphasized the importance of peace, humanity, and love in today's world. "The birth of the Prophet is not only a moment of joy but also a reminder of his eternal message of mercy, compassion,



and service to mankind. On this blessed day, we at Ehsaas Foundation reaffirm our commitment to spreading love, unity, and peace among all communities. Humanity was at the core of the Prophet's teachings, and it must remain our guiding light," he said.

He further added that the Foundation will continue to undertake such community-oriented initiatives to serve society, especially the underprivileged, in line with the noble values of Islam.

Devotees and locals expressed their appreciation for the effort, praising

Ehsaas Foundation for being consistently active in social, humanitarian, and welfare activities across the Valley. Many lauded the organisation's dedication to serving people selflessly and carrying forward the values of compassion and brotherhood.

The occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi witnessed a spiritual atmosphere at Hazratbal, with thousands offering prayers, sending salutations upon the Prophet, and participating in various religious activities. The initiative by Ehsaas Foundation added to the spirit of unity, service, and devotion that defined the day.

AIPWS Steps In with Relief Kits for Flood-Hit Families in Bhadarwah

■ [Amir Iqbal Khan](#)

BHADARWAH, SEP 6: Coming to the rescue of families reeling under the fury of flash floods, the NGO All India People's Welfare Society (AIPWS) on Saturday distributed ration kits among the affected households in Lower Bheja area of Bhadarwah in Doda district where torrential rains recently caused extensive damage to homes and property.

Under the guidance of its Chairman Amir Iqbal Khan and in the presence of President Zaffar Hussain Wani, General Secretary Umar Farooq Tak, Chief organiser Anikat Sharma, Volunteer Ab. Rehman, volunteer Nazir Ahmed Shah and other members, AIPWS volunteers distributed essential food items of daily use to the distressed families.

Officials of the NGO said the initiative was aimed at providing immediate succour to those left struggling for basic needs in the aftermath of the calamity.

Speaking on the occasion, AIPWS President Zaffar Hussain Wani expressed solidarity with the victims and assured that the organisation would continue to extend a helping hand until the affected families were rehabilitated. "This humanitarian service transcends barriers of caste, creed or colour and reflects our commitment to community service," Wani remarked.

Meanwhile, the flood-hit locals, grappling with acute hardships, conveyed heartfelt gratitude to AIPWS for standing by them in their hour of need.

Reiterating the NGO's resolve, Wani further said that AIPWS would continue its outreach programmes across other flood-affected areas of Jammu region in the coming days.

LoP Sunil Sharma condemns vandalism of National emblem at Dargah Hazratbal Shrine

■ [HT News Desk](#)

SRINAGAR, SEP 6: A highly unfortunate and disgraceful incident occurred yesterday at the Hazratbal Dargah. Within the dargah premises, a plate bearing the National Emblem of India was attacked by certain anti-social elements, who attempted to deface

and uproot it using stones and other tools. This act is not merely vandalism – it is a direct assault on the dignity of the National Emblem and, by extension, on the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India.

The National Emblem is the very symbol of India's identity and existence. Any attack on it is a vile, cowardly, and disgraceful act that

has deeply hurt the sentiments of every Indian.

Shockingly, instead of condemning this shameful incident, an MLA from the National Conference has attempted to twist the matter by claiming that "religious sentiments" were hurt. The question arises – what connection does the National Emblem have with

religion? Such statements are nothing but an attempt to shield the anti-social elements behind this heinous act. The National Conference does not, and cannot, claim to represent any single religion, and this irresponsible rhetoric only emboldens those who committed the crime.

Chief Minister Shri Omar Abdul-

lah has remarked that the Emblem should not have been placed on the plate. Even if one were to concede that point, once the National Emblem was installed, no mob – under any circumstances – has the right to insult or attack it. This is an unpardonable offense and cannot, under any situation, be tolerated.

Div Com Jammu inspects protection works on Ravi River embankment at Lakhanpur

Also reviews relief, flood damage restoration measures in Kathua district

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KATHUA, SEP 06: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, today conducted an extensive inspection of the ongoing protection works along the Ravi River embankment near Lakhanpur, which has suffered severe damages amidst the recent spell of torrential rains.

He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Kathua, SSP Kathua, Project Director NHAI, senior officers of Punjab Irrigation Department and

representatives of the Indian Army.

During the visit, the Divisional Commissioner held threadbare discussions with all stakeholders including Kathua District Administration, Punjab Irrigation Department, NHAI and Army authorities to devise a multi-pronged strategy aimed at diverting the water flow, protecting critical assets and minimizing risk to life and property.

DC Kathua briefed the Divisional Commissioner about the



emerging situation and the measures being undertaken to safeguard vital installations including the Office of the DDC Chairman, Animal Husbandry Check Post and adjoining government buildings. He informed that men and machinery have been mobilised and are working round the clock to raise crates and carry out strengthening works on vulnerable stretches of the embankment.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned departments to maintain con-

stant coordination and ensure timely completion of protective works. Stressing on the urgency, the Div Com called for deployment of adequate resources, regular monitoring of the situation and immediate plugging of weak points along the embankment.

The Div Com further emphasized upon exploring long-term measures to provide permanent protection against any threats caused by changes in river course. He urged close liaison between J&K and Punjab authorities to

evolve a joint mechanism for flood management in the Ravi River basin.

Meanwhile, the Divisional Commissioner also reviewed the relief and restoration measures ongoing in the affected areas of the District. He asked the district administration to expedite the restoration works of road connectivity that were severely affected during the heavy rains. He directed for complete restoration of Power and water supply, wherever pending in the affected areas, if any.

Reasi Admin releases Rs. 90 Lakh for disbursement of relief among rain, flood affected people

DC reviews restoration of roads, essential services

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

REASI, SEP 06: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik today chaired a review meeting with the SDMs, XENs of PWD and PMGSY and other concerned officials to take a detailed assessment of the progress of relief and restoration works after the recent floods.

The DC emphasised that with weather conditions now clear, all SDMs and Tehsildars must expedite the damage assessment and submit final relief cases by tomorrow to ensure immediate assistance to the affected people. She informed that the District Administration Reasi has released around 90 lakh as relief for loss of life and

livestock, besides Cattle shed damage.

Emphasising timely action, the Deputy Commissioner said that measures are being taken to provide prompt relief to affected families.

The DC also reviewed ongoing restoration works across all subdivisions and directed officials to utilise the clear weather to fast-track repair and restoration activities.

She further directed all Executive Engineers of PWD and PMGSY to ensure adequate machinery is available for road clearance and restoration, and that work continues round-the-clock. The DC instructed SDM Dharmari to coordinate with the GREF depart-

ment for immediate restoration of roads under their jurisdiction.

The Executive Engineer PMGSY Mahore was directed to prioritise the clearance of vital roads. Both PWD and PMGSY departments were asked to submit detailed reports on the current status of all roads in their areas.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the ADC to obtain a report from Executive Engineer PWD Mahore by this evening on the number of roads made trafficable, while SDM Mahore was tasked with verifying the ground status. PMGSY Mahore was instructed to restore all roads by tomorrow, except those that are technically difficult to clear, while

partially open roads must be made fully operational before schools reopen.

On reviewing power restoration efforts, the DC took an update from JPDCL officials regarding areas where electricity has been restored and where it is still pending. She stressed timely repair of feeder lines and transformers to ensure uninterrupted power supply.

The DC also directed Executive Engineer Jal Shakti to ensure repair of all damaged pipelines and restoration of safe drinking water supply to the public.

She reiterated that all departments must work in close coordination to ensure speedy restoration, uninterrupted supply of

essential commodities, and effective relief distribution in affected areas.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the status of houses damaged in Mahore due to land sinking. She directed SDM Mahore to ensure safe and prompt evacuation of affected families to safer locations or relief camps. She further directed that additional relief materials—including tents, mattresses and food supplies be dispatched immediately.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Sukhdev Singh Samyal, ADC Rakesh Kumar, ACR Nitin Verma, XEN Jal Shakti and other concerned officers. The SDMs joined the meeting virtually.

DDC Vice-Chairperson reviews relief, Rehabilitation efforts at landslide hit Sundla village, otr parts of Majalta

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, SEP 06: In the wake of incessant rains, flash floods and landslides having unleashed devastation across Udhampur district, Vice Chairperson District Development Council (DDC) Udhampur, Juhi Manhas Pathania today carried out an extensive tour of severely affected areas including Sundla, Nakki, Khoon, Thati, Palnoo among others.

To take stock of the situation that arose after a devastating landslide reportedly affected residential houses in Sundla village- Majalta Tehsil, the Vice Chairperson visited the area and conducted a thorough review of the relief and rehabilitation efforts.

During her visit, Pathania observed that 20 houses have been reduced to rubble, while 50 others were vacated by the administration and local residents as a precautionary measure. Despite the challenges, the relief efforts were found to be satisfactory. A community kitchen, catering to the needs of around 200 people at a time, was running smoothly. Tents had been set up to provide temporary shelter, and fresh water facilities and bio-toilets were available. Medical care and sanitation facilities were also being provided, with the administration and local community working together to distribute essential items, including beds and sanitation kits.

Mrs. Pathania emphasized the need for a comprehensive geological survey of the affected area and surrounding regions to assess the extent of the landslide's impact and potential future risks. This survey would help identify areas prone to landslides and facilitate the development of strategies to mitigate such disasters in the future.

The Vice Chairperson stressed the importance of restoring essential services, including electricity, drinking water, road connectivity, and healthcare facilities, to restore normalcy in the affected area. She directed the concerned departments to work towards ensuring equitable and transparent distribution of relief materials among all affected families.

Mrs. Pathania assured the local residents that the administration is committed to adopting long-term mitigation measures to minimize the impact of future disasters. These measures include strengthening infrastructure, slope stabilization, flood control works, and early warning mechanisms.

The visit aimed at taking stock of the ground situation, assessing damages, and reviewing the pace of ongoing relief measures.

The Vice Chairperson directed all line departments to remain fully geared up for relief and rehabilitation efforts, ensuring that damage assessments are carried out on priority, vulnerable and risk-prone areas are mapped, and precautionary steps are taken in areas where landslides and flash floods continue to pose recurring threats. She stressed upon adopting long-term mitigation and disaster-preparedness strategies including strengthening of infrastructure, slope stabilization, flood control works, and early warning mechanisms to minimize the impact of such calamities in the future.

JMC issues comprehensive health advisory amid post-flood challenges

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, SEP 06: Commissioner Municipal Corporation Jammu Dr Devansh Yadav has made an urgent appeal to the people of Jammu to remain cautious and adopt preventive measures as several areas of Jammu Municipal Corporation and district Jammu continue to recover from the aftermath of recent floods. He emphasized that flood-hit regions are highly vulnerable to outbreaks of waterborne and vector-borne diseases, and immediate action is necessary to protect public health.

Speaking on the current situation, Dr. Yadav stated that contamination of drinking water is a major concern during such times and can lead to illnesses such as stomach infections, headaches, fever and diarrhea. Alongside this, the ongoing season poses an increased risk of mosquito-borne diseases including dengue and chikungunya, which are more likely to spread in areas with accumulated stagnant water.

Issuing instructions to all residents to ensure the safety of their drinking water, Dr. Yadav advised the citizens to boil water for a minimum of 10 minutes before consumption to eliminate harmful microorganisms. "Chlorine tablets should be used wherever possible, and water should be allowed to settle for at least half an hour after adding the tablets before it is used for drinking or cooking purposes. Residents are also urged to maintain their surroundings by removing stagnant water from rooftops, courtyards and nearby drains as such areas provide ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes" he advised.

To facilitate public health services and immediate assistance, the Health Department has activated the 104 helpline number. This helpline will provide guidance and address any health-related queries from residents. In addition, the Jammu Municipal Corporation has intensified its efforts to conduct fogging and spraying activities across all wards of JMC to control mosquito breeding and minimize the risk of vector-borne diseases.

Appealing to the public, Dr. Yadav said if fogging and spraying activities have not yet reached their locality, they should promptly register their area and ward number on the JMC helpline. This will help the authorities prioritize the areas that require immediate attention and ensure that every ward receives timely preventive measures, he added.

The health and well-being of our citizens is our top priority," said Dr. Devansh Yadav, adding that JMC is making every possible effort through coordinated actions involving our sanitation teams, health workers, and support staff. The success of these measures greatly depends on the active cooperation of the public, he said and added that together, we can prevent the spread of diseases and ensure a healthy environment for everyone. JMC is in continuous monitoring and proactive steps are being taken to safeguard the health of the people during this critical period of recovery, he maintained.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) observed with religious fervor in Kishtwar



■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KISHTWAR, SEP 06: The people of Kishtwar today celebrated the auspicious occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) with great religious fervor, devotion, and enthusiasm.

The day was marked by religious gatherings and a grand procession, with thousands of devotees participating from Jamia Masjid Kishtwar to the Holy Shrine of Shah Farid-Ud-Din Sahib (RA).

The procession was taken out in a spiritual and peaceful manner under the leadership of Imam Sahib, Jamia

Masjid Kishtwar, Head of the Majlis-e-Shoura Committee Kishtwar, along with religious scholars and community elders. The event highlighted the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and spread the message of peace, love, and brotherhood.

To ensure the smooth observance of the festival, the district and police administrations made comprehensive arrangements, including security and logistical measures.

Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police, Naresh Singh were present on the occasion and

personally oversaw the arrangements.

ADC Pawan Kotwal, ASP Pardeep Singh, ACR Idrees Lone, besides other senior officers from the civil and police administrations were also present to facilitate the celebrations.

On this occasion, the DC and SSP extended warm Eid greetings to the Muslim community and joined the religious procession.

They urged the people to uphold the noble teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and appealed for lasting peace, unity, communal harmony, and brotherhood across the district and the Union Territory.

Fertilizer Quality Control Laboratory Jammu achieves Revised NABL Accreditation Scope

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, SEP 06: The Fertilizer Quality Control Laboratory (FQCL) Jammu, under the Directorate of Agriculture, has successfully maintained its quality standards in continued compliance with NABL accreditation in the second year of its accreditation.

Following the successful completion of the surveillance audit by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) in July 2025, the laboratory has been granted a revised scope of accreditation for the testing of Neem Coated Urea



in place of Urea. The updated accreditation certificate was officially issued on September 2, 2025.

Recognizing this achievement, the Director Agriculture Jammu,

Anil Gupta commended the dedicated efforts of Agriculture Chemist Jammu, Vinod Kumar Sharma, Assistant Bio-Chemist Jammu, Deepak Singh and the entire team

of FQCL-Jammu for their consistent commitment to maintaining high standards and for elevating the laboratory to new levels of quality excellence. He assured that the Department of Agriculture will extend all possible support to the laboratory in meeting the aspirations of its stakeholders, including farmers, regulatory authorities, and accreditation bodies.

It was further informed that the laboratory, while already performing testing of Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP), intends to apply for the inclusion of DAP testing under the NABL-accredited scope during the year 2025-

26. This strategic step aims to enhance the laboratory's credibility, reliability, and service quality, thereby contributing to more robust fertilizer quality assurance in the region.

Earlier, the laboratory achieved its first NABL accreditation for Urea testing in 2024, marking a milestone in its journey toward excellence. With this revised accreditation and plans for further scope expansion, FQCL-Jammu continues to play a pivotal role in ensuring the quality and authenticity of fertilizers supplied to the farmers of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



DC inspects condition of Purmandal to Samba stretch of NH

Assesses flood damage, restoration measures in affected areas

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SAMBA, SEP 06: In a proactive response to the recent heavy rainfall and flooding, Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Purmandal Morh to Samba stretch of National Highway today. The inspection, undertaken in collaboration with senior officers from the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) and functionaries of other stakeholder departments, focused on assessing flood damage and ensuring swift rehabilitation measures for affected people.

During the extensive field visit, Deputy Commissioner Sudan engaged directly with local residents who have been adversely affected by the recent spell of heavy rainfall, demon-



strating the administration's commitment to ground-level

interaction and responsive governance. She issued categorical

directions to all concerned officers to prioritize the proper maintenance and enhancement of the drainage infrastructure to ensure unimpeded water flow and prevent future damage to public and private property. The DC's inspection also covered the severely affected areas of Sarore and Jakh, where she conducted detailed interactions with local populations to assess their immediate needs and concerns.

Emphasizing the government's commitment to supporting disaster-affected citizens, Deputy Commissioner Sudan provided firm assurances that all individuals who have suffered property losses due to heavy rainfall or natural calamities will receive appropriate compensation under existing government relief schemes, following due verification of docu-

mentation and completion of requisite administrative formalities. She specifically instructed NHAI officials to treat road-related infrastructure issues as priority matters requiring immediate attention and resolution. Furthermore, the Deputy Commissioner directed all departmental officials to extend comprehensive support to affected families by ensuring timely delivery of assistance and expeditious processing of compensation claims.

The inspection reflects the district administration's commitment to proactive disaster management and citizen welfare, with Deputy Commissioner Sudan's hands-on approach ensuring that post-flood recovery efforts are coordinated effectively across all relevant departments and agencies.

Air warriors trained for Disaster Management

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, SEP 06: The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) 2nd Battalion successfully conducted six days Basic Disaster Management Course at its headquarters in Jammu, specifically tailored for personnel from 23rd Wing Air Force Station, Jammu.

As many as 32 Air warriors participated in the training that commenced on September 1 and culminated successfully on September 6, 2025.

Designed to build capacity in disaster preparedness and response, the course offered a comprehensive blend of theoretical sessions and hands-on practical exercises.



The curriculum focused on life-saving techniques and protocols essential for effective disaster management, aiming to empower participants with the knowledge and confidence to act swiftly and efficiently during emergencies. The course underscored the importance of inter-agency cooperation, reinforcing the strong collaboration between the Indian Air Force and SDRF in enhancing community resilience.

The inaugural and valedictory ceremonies were attended by senior officers from both forces, including Zahid Manhas, Commandant SDRF 2nd Battalion, Gp. Capt. J S Sudan and Gp. Capt. Ambresh Pandit.

Zahid Manhas highlighted the growing need for preparedness in an era of increasingly frequent and complex disasters.

Dir Agriculture conducts an extensive tour of Ganderbal district

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 06: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, conducted an extensive tour of Ganderbal district to review agricultural activities and engage with the farming community. The visit focused on promoting sustainable practices and strengthening agricultural initiatives, with interactions centered on apiculture, vegetable cultivation, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), and organic farming in key areas, including Patishalbugh Organic Village, Zazna Village, and Kangan.



During the tour, Shah met with farmers involved in apiculture, emphasizing the potential of beekeeping as a sustainable income source. He highlighted the department's commitment to providing technical support and quality assurance for apiculture products to access broader markets.

In the realm of vegetable cultivation, the Director interacted with farmers to promote crop diversification and modern farming techniques. He reviewed ongoing initiatives under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP), encouraging farmers to adopt high-yield, climate-resilient vegetable varieties. He assured the provision of quality seeds, poly houses, and technical guidance to ensure year-round production and improved livelihoods.

He also engaged with Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in Ganderbal, discussing their role in collective marketing, resource sharing, and value addition. He emphasized the department's support in strengthening FPOs through training, infrastructure, and market linkages to enhance their operational efficiency and economic impact.

A significant part of the tour included a visit to Patishalbugh Organic Village, where the Director assessed the progress of organic farming initiatives. He interacted with farmers adopting organic practices, praising their efforts in sustainable agriculture and encouraging certification to boost market access.

Director reiterated the department's commitment to empowering the agricultural community through technology, innovation, and financial support under HADP and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs). He urged farmers to leverage these initiatives for enhanced productivity and profitability, assuring close coordination with field functionaries for pre- and post-harvest support.

IAF, Udhampur Admin conduct emergency airlift of two critical patients from Latti-Marothi area

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, SEP 06: In a swift humanitarian response, the District Administration Udhampur in collaboration with the Indian Air Force today successfully airlifted two patients from the flood and landslide-hit region of Tehsil Latti-Marothi for urgent medical intervention.

The two patients namely Shiv Lal, resident of Sira and Diwan Chand, resident of Latti were in a critical condition requiring

immediate medical attention.

Due to incessant rains and multiple landslides, road connectivity between Tehsil Latti-Marothi and Udhampur remained disrupted, making air evacuation the only viable option.

On receiving information from the Chief Medical Officer Udhampur, District Magistrate Udhampur Saroni Rai promptly coordinated with the Indian Air Force under the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief framework to ensure timely

evacuation.

As part of the operation, one patient was shifted to Military Hospital Udhampur, while the other was admitted to Government Medical College Udhampur for specialized treatment.

The District Administration reiterated its commitment to ensuring that all possible assistance, including emergency medical support, reaches people stranded in remote and inaccessible areas due to recent heavy rains and landslides.

DC Reasi withholds salary of Naib Tehsildar for unauthorized absence

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

REASI, SEP 06: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik has taken strong note of negligence and dereliction of duty on the part of Naib Tehsildar JR Chakalhawalan, Tehsil Thakrakote.

"It has come to the notice of this office that, despite widespread heavy rains, thunderstorms, landslides and flash floods causing extensive damage to public and private infrastructure in the district, the said officer was not present at his station and failed to promptly report the damage in his jurisdiction. The duty of the officer was to actively carry out damage assessment for facilitating relief disbursement, but his absence led to delays in the process," the DC noted.

Taking a serious view of the lapse, the officer has been served a show-cause notice directing him to explain why disciplinary action should not be initiated against him. He has been given two days' time to respond, failing which action as warranted under rules shall be taken. Meanwhile, his salary has been withheld until further orders.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized that during adverse weather conditions such as heavy rains, landslides, and thunderstorms, the physical presence of field officers and immediate reporting are mandatory to ensure timely response and relief measures. She reiterated that dereliction of duty in times of crisis will not be tolerated and that officers must remain vigilant and responsive to safeguard the interests of the public.

LMD imposes Rs. 1.31 lakh penalty on erring traders

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, SEP 06: Acting swiftly on consumer complaints, Deputy Controller Legal Metrology Enforcement Jammu has booked three traders for indulging in overcharging and short weighing. The action was taken under the direct supervision of Controller Legal Metrology, Rajinder Singh Tara.

In one instance, a departmental store was caught charging 5 extra over the Maximum Retail Price (MRP). At Jumbo Zoo, a consumer was overcharged under the false pretext of GST. In another case, a rice seller was found supplying underweight rice bags.

All three cases were registered under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, and the

rules framed thereunder. The Deputy Controller, Legal Metrology (Enforcement), Jammu, issued show-cause notices to the offenders, who admitted to the violations. A penalty of 1.31 lakh was imposed as composition money, which has been recovered. The defaulters were further warned against repeating such unfair trade practices.

Controller Rajinder Singh Tara stressed that the department has intensified its enforcement drive and officers have been directed to keep strict vigil on such malpractices. He assured that all genuine consumer complaints will be dealt with on priority to strengthen public trust and encouraged citizens to report unethical trade practices without hesitation.

DLIC Ganderbal approves 96 cases under Mission YUVA

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 06:

A meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) under Mission YUVA was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore.

The aim of the meeting was to review and approve applications submitted by young aspiring entrepreneurs under the Mission YUVA initiative, which



aims to provide financial assistance and capacity-building support to youth for starting and sustaining their businesses so that they can earn their livelihood.

During the meeting, the committee held a threadbare discussion on the applications received under the scheme and after careful scrutiny and discussions, the Committee approved 96 eligible cases for further financial support and guidance.

Cluster Head J&K Bank was directed to ensure timely processing and quick disbursement of sanctioned cases to benefit the youth entrepreneurs at the earliest.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Manzoor Ahmad Bhat; Assistant Director Employment, Chief Agriculture Officer, Cluster Head J&K Bank, Nodal Officer, JKEDI and other concerned officials.

DC Bandipora visits flood vulnerable sites of Sumbal subdivision

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 06: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Saturday visited Sub-Division Sumbal to review the situation caused by rising water levels in Wullar Lake.

During the visit, the DC assessed the impact of rising waters on habitations and essential infrastructure. She interacted with locals and took firsthand feedback on the situation.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that inundation has been witnessed only in a few low-lying villages, which usually face such conditions even during normal times. She said the visit was aimed



especially for the Irrigation & Flood Control Department to assess damage to bunds, seepage points and other related works.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner personally visited these areas to assess the situation. She said that People here are praising the efforts of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department for their timely response and continuous work.

She also reviewed the arrangements made for shifting vulnerable families if needed and directed officials to remain alert and provide timely assistance. The DC stressed that departments including Revenue, Fisheries and I&FC are working in close coordination to respond ef-

fectively to any situation.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited the Transit Accommodation at Odina, Sumbal to interact with migrant employees residing there. The purpose of the visit was to assess their living conditions and address their issues. On the occasion, the DC reviewed the facilities available at the accommodation to ensure they meet the necessary standards of convenience and safety.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by SDM Sumbal, Murtaza Ahmad Sheikh; Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Er. Mutayib Bashir; Tehsildar Sumbal and officers from Revenue, I&FC, Fisheries, and other concerned departments.



No end to water woes of huge chunk of population

The flood scare may be over in Kashmir but there is no end to miseries and problems of a huge chunk of population living in Srinagar city and its outskirts. Population consisting of thousands of souls are up against a basic need that is connected with their daily lives. The problem relates to non-availability of safe and drinking water even though the authorities have issued clarification in this regard.

Ever since the Kashmir valley has been hit by incessant rains people living in multiple areas of Srinagar and Budgam districts are facing the problem. The incessant rains brought a lot of dirt, mud and silt and this led to the blockage of some of the filtration plants located in the two districts of Central Kashmir. Due to the blockage of these filtration plants the water supply has been stopped to many areas of the two districts.

The higher-ups of Jal Shakti department have issued a clarification in this regard and have asked the people to use the water judiciously. The department officials have said that they have been forced to shut down the filtration plants as the deposition of mud, silt and dirt can cause damage to the same. They have said that the restoration work is going on the filtration plants and it will take some more time for the things to be normalized.

Even though the rains have stopped some four days back what is the reason that there has been delay in restoration of filtration plants. Unfortunately the concerned minister seems to be least bothered about the same and he seems to be unaware about the problems being faced by the common masses. Directions from the minister or his secretariat would have kept the officials of the Jal Shakti department on toes and they would have taken extra steps in restoring the filtration plants.

People are suffering like anything and they are looking for a solution to their problems at the earliest. At the same time the tanker service provided by the Jal Shakti department has also failed to meet the expectations of the people. There are hardly few tankers that are making rounds of the affected areas and as such people are craving for even a single drop of clean and potable drinking water. The inapt tanker service has compounded the problems of the masses and as on date they are at the receiving end.

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■ Munish Bhatia

The demand for electric vehicles in India is no longer just an option but has become a necessity of the time. Fossil fuels like petrol and diesel are limited resources, and India is heavily dependent on other countries for their supply. This dependence results in the import of crude oil worth approximately \$200 billion every year, leading to economic imbalance and trade deficit. However, by promoting electric vehicles, India can strengthen its energy security and take significant steps towards a cleaner environment and self-reliance. Additionally, if the share of electric vehicles increases, India can save around \$40 billion in foreign exchange, which would be highly beneficial for economic growth. The development of battery manufacturing and charging infrastructure will also create new employment opportunities, providing jobs to the youth and strengthening the economy.

Air pollution in major cities has become a serious issue, with emissions from conventional petrol and diesel vehicles being a significant contributor, particularly in metropolitan cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata. According to the World Health Organization, 14 out of the 20 most polluted cities in the world are in India. In 2022, Delhi's average Air Quality Index (AQI) remained above 300, indicating a severe pollution level. The smoke from conventional vehicles, containing harmful elements such as nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and carbon monoxide, plays a major role in air pollution. However, the use of electric vehicles can significantly reduce these harmful emissions, promoting clean air and better public health. Since electric vehicles produce zero carbon emissions, and if they are charged using renewable energy sources like solar and wind energy, it will further enhance energy cleanliness and self-reliance.

In recent years, there has been a remarkable increase in the sales of electric vehicles in India, indicating that people are gradually shifting towards electric mobility. For instance, in 2020, around 1.5 lakh (150,000) electric vehicles were sold in the country, while in 2023, this number exceeded 1 million, reflecting increasing consumer awareness and environmental sensitivity. The government is also taking active measures in this direction, such as providing subsidies, tax exemptions, and promoting the development of charging infrastructure. However, several challenges remain in this sector, such as the lack of charging infrastructure, high battery costs, limited range, and long charging time. If the government and private companies work



together to solve these issues, India can emerge as a leader in the electric vehicle revolution.

The number of charging stations in the country is still very limited, making long-distance travel difficult. Currently, India has around 10,000 public charging stations, whereas at least 50,000 stations are required. While some charging points are available in urban areas, there is a severe shortage in rural areas and highway networks, causing inconvenience to consumers and slowing the adoption of electric vehicles. Additionally, the time required to charge batteries is a significant issue. A standard electric vehicle takes about 4-8 hours to charge, while fast charging still takes 30-60 minutes, which is longer compared to conventional vehicles. To resolve this problem, the government needs to increase the number of fast-charging stations on highways and in cities and develop a long-term plan to expand charging infrastructure in rural areas.

The cost of electric vehicles is still higher than traditional petrol and diesel vehicles, primarily due to the high cost of batteries, which account for 40-50% of the total vehicle cost. Moreover, electricity rates for charging and the cost of setting up home charging stations are also concerns for consumers. To reduce battery costs, it is essential to promote local battery manufacturing. If the government and private companies work together to reduce production costs and provide concessions on electricity rates, electric vehicles can become more affordable, increasing their popularity.

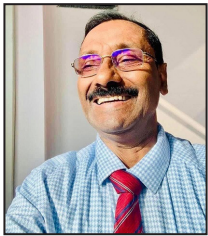
India's road infrastructure and traffic management also pose challenges for electric vehicles. Poor road conditions lead to faster battery drainage, reducing vehicle efficiency. While highways are in decent condition, rural roads are often inadequate, making them unsuitable for electric vehicles. Poor roads can lead to faster battery depletion, which is

a major concern for consumers. To address this issue, the government should prioritize road construction and maintenance, as better roads will not only improve the efficiency of electric vehicles but also help expand their use to rural areas.

For widespread adoption of electric vehicles, the government, industry, and consumers must work together. Key steps in this direction include expanding charging infrastructure, reducing battery costs, providing subsidies and tax exemptions, improving road conditions, and promoting electric vehicles in public transportation. Encouraging local battery manufacturing and electric vehicle production will also reduce import dependence and strengthen India's position in the global market.

Electric vehicles can serve as a powerful means to lead India towards a cleaner, greener, and self-reliant future. This transition is essential not only for environmental conservation but also for economic and energy security. Although challenges such as insufficient charging infrastructure, high battery costs, and poor roads remain obstacles, if the government and private sector collaborate to resolve these issues, the popularity of electric vehicles can grow rapidly. With better policies, technological innovation, and public awareness, India can lead the electric vehicle revolution, emerging as an energy-rich, economically strong, and environmentally responsible nation. This change will not only reduce air pollution in cities but also promote clean energy use in rural areas. Moreover, adopting technologies like battery recycling can further minimize environmental impact. Including electric buses and auto-rickshaws in public transport will help reduce fuel consumption, enabling India to meet its energy needs locally and establish itself as a responsible nation on the global stage.

Red Stain on White Snow-Clad Kashmir



■ Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee

Blood is life but when terrorists enter Kashmir blood assumes a horrible name—Death. Pahalgam massacre is the most recent such horrible occurrence. The heinous plan was aimed at staking communal fire not only in Kashmir but all over India. Kashmir unitedly foiled such audacious attempts by the terrorists. The red stain on Kashmir's snow is more than a tragedy—it is a metaphor. Red is blood, sacrifice, resilience, but also resistance. White is peace, purity, and the hope of a new dawn. When the two clash, it produces a haunting image: the beauty of nature corrupted by the cruelty of man. Yet, even snow that turns red eventually melts. The Valley will see spring again—chinar leaves will glow crimson in autumn, tulips will bloom in Srinagar, and children will once again laugh on sledges in Gulmarg. Terrorists cannot stop seasons. They cannot stop life.

The Valley, known as the Paradise on Earth, has often been drenched in blood. The beautiful snows of Gulmarg, the meadows of Pahalgam, and the serene waters of Dal Lake carry echoes of peace and poetry; yet beneath this idyllic façade lies a painful story of violence and loss. The Pahalgam tragedy, where innocent lives were cut short, once again revealed how terrorism seeks to exploit Kashmir's vulnerability. Kashmir has always been a paradox. On one hand, its cultural history cele-

brates the shared legacy of Kashmiri Pandits, Muslims, and Sikhs living harmoniously for centuries. On the other hand, geopolitics, militancy, and foreign-sponsored terrorism have torn through this social fabric. Snow, the purest image of nature's peace, is desecrated by the red of bloodshed. The contrast is not just visual—it is symbolic of the larger tragedy.

For decades, Kashmir has been a chessboard for larger power games. Militants, often supported and trained from across the border, infiltrate the Valley with the aim of destabilizing India. Their objective is not merely violence but communal polarisation. The Pahalgam incident was designed to strike at the heart of India's secular ethos. By targeting Hindu pilgrims and tourists, terrorists hoped to ignite communal flames that could engulf the whole country.

Pahalgam, the serene base camp for the annual Amarnath Yatra, turned into a site of horror when terrorists unleashed indiscriminate violence. Pilgrims, who had come with faith and hope, found themselves in the grip of death. The attackers fired upon unarmed men, women, and children, attempting to paint the snow with human blood. The symbolism was deliberate. Terrorists wanted to break the backbone of Kashmiri tourism, destroy inter-community trust, and project Kashmir as unsafe. But the Valley's resilience spoke otherwise. Ordinary Kashmiris—Muslims and Hindus alike—rushed to rescue the injured, donated blood, and stood shoulder to shoulder against terrorism. The massacre, intended to divide, actually united Kashmir against terror. The Pahalgam incident is not isolated. Kashmir has witnessed countless tragedies—Kupwara, Pulwama, Uri, Sopore—each leaving scars on the Valley's conscience. Terrorist groups, trained

across the border, have consistently targeted not only security personnel but also civilians, because it is easier to spread fear through the blood of innocents. But the story of Kashmir is not only about victimhood; it is also about resilience. After every attack, Kashmiris return to life. The markets reopen, children go back to school, farmers till the land, and tourists once again come to admire the snow-clad mountains. Terrorists may kill people, but they cannot kill the will of a community that refuses to surrender its humanity. The massacre was a test of India's communal harmony. The terrorists had one aim—ignite Hindu-Muslim hatred. But ordinary Kashmiris rose above the divide. Muslim villagers carried injured Hindu pilgrims to safety. Mosques announced blood donation drives for the victims. This was Kashmir's answer to terrorism: humanity over hatred.

This unity recalls the age-old Kashmiri ethos of Kashmiriyat—a spirit of mutual respect, tolerance, and cultural syncretism. The Valley has given the world Sufi saints like Lal Ded and poets like Habba Khatoon, whose verses celebrate harmony. Terrorists want to erase this tradition, but Kashmiris have proved time and again that the shared cultural heritage is stronger than imported violence.

Yet, tourism revives after every tragedy. The resilience of Kashmiris is astounding. A shikarawala once told me: "Sir, we cannot stop rowing the shikara because someone wants to stop the Dal Lake's beauty. Life has to go on." That sentence captures the Valley's courage.

While Kashmiris rebuild their lives after every attack, one cannot overlook the immense sacrifices of Indian security forces. Soldiers patrol the freezing mountains, braving avalanches and bullets alike, to protect

the Valley. Many have laid down their lives to ensure that pilgrims and tourists remain safe. Terrorists thrive on creating fear. But when the media highlights stories of Kashmiri Muslims donating blood for Hindu pilgrims, the terrorists' narrative of division collapses. It is vital that such stories reach the wider audience so the world understands that Kashmir is not about terrorism—it is about humanity under siege. The red stains on white snow are not easy to wash away. Families of victims carry scars forever. A mother who lost her child in Pahalgam will always see the snow as a graveyard of dreams. Healing is not only physical but psychological. What Writers, journalists, teachers, and artists must carry forward the narrative of peace. The pen must continue to challenge the gun. The Pahalgam massacre shocked the conscience of the nation. But it also reaffirmed one truth: terrorism cannot defeat humanity. Kashmir, with its poets, farmers, artisans, and youth, remains stronger than the gun. The white snow may be stained with red, but it is also a canvas of hope. Every drop of blood shed in Kashmir is a reminder of the cost of peace. But it is also a reminder of the courage of ordinary Kashmiris who refuse to bow down to fear. The Valley is not just a battleground—it is also a prayer ground, where people of different faiths live, work, and dream together. The terrorists came to divide. Instead, Kashmir united. And that unity is the most powerful answer to every bullet that dares to fall on its snow.

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Hazratbal and the Politics of Faith: Why Religion and State Must Stay Separate..(Niccolo Machiavelli)



■ **Yawer Hamid**

In every society, religion and state are two important forces, but they serve very different purposes. Religion is personal; it belongs to the heart and guides people with faith, morals and values. The state, on the other hand, is public; it is about laws, rules, and maintaining order in society. When these two remain in their own space, harmony is possible. But when they cross each other's paths, conflict often arises. The great thinker Niccolò Machi-

avelli emphasized that politics should be guided by reason, not by religious influence. His insight shows that mixing religion and state often leads to tension and unfairness.

The recent incident at the Hazratbal Dargah in Jammu and Kashmir highlights this truth. The Waqf Board placed aboard with its official emblem inside the shrine. What may have seemed like a simple administrative step quickly became a matter of anger and protest. For many Muslims in the region, Hazratbal is far more than a building; it is a sacred symbol of faith and identity. When the emblem of the state appeared inside the shrine, people felt it was an intrusion into their religious space. Protests erupted as locals argued that the state should not interfere in matters of faith or leave its marks in a house of God.

This issue is not just about one board; it is about a larger principle.

Religion must remain free from state control and the state must remain free from religious dominance. If the state tries to control religious matters, trust in governance declines. If religion enters state affairs, laws lose their fairness and equality. In both cases, society suffers.

The lesson from Hazratbal is clear. Religion belongs to the soul, guiding people toward moral values, compassion and peace. Politics belongs to the public realm, ensuring justice, equality, and order. Respecting this boundary is essential for harmony in society. When faith and governance stay separate, both remain strong and effective.

Hazratbal incident reminds us that the state should never claim authority over sacred matters and religion should never dictate political decisions. Only by maintaining this balance can peace, trust and unity flourish. Faith must remain pure and politics must remain neutral this is the true path to social harmony.

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The lesson from Hazratbal is clear. Religion belongs to the soul, guiding people toward moral values, compassion and peace. Politics belongs to the public realm, ensuring justice, equality, and order. Respecting this boundary is essential for harmony in society. When faith and governance stay separate, both remain strong and effective



The Hidden Beauty Of Ignored Tourist Spot Dedani



■ **Mool Raj**

I would like to express my views on Baisakhi Festival and 25 August every year at Durga Mata Temple Dedani Tehsil Marmat District Doda through the medium of your daily English newspaper for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and hope space should be given to my article.

Mandir start on August 25, 2025. The two days annual Traditional festival, Mela "Trishool Bhaintyatra", is celebrated since 1982 in the memory of Re-installation of the ancient idol of Mata Durga after it was recovered from Chenani (Udhampur) stolen by smugglers from the Temple.

The village Dedani is about 30 kilometers, away from District Doda. This year the Darbar of Durga Mandir Dedani is now going to start the Mela on August 24 to 25, 2025. On this occasion, the pilgrims from various parts of District Doda, Ramban, Udhampur, & Kishtwar, Jammu etc & participate in the annual function/festival Mela. The festivals on the special occasion are celebrated on re-installation of the ancient idol of Mata Durga every year. Thousands of pilgrims participate. That is every year of this Mela of Mata Darbar celebration for Three days. The District administration provides every rest of facilities including medical & Security and Now a great facility of drinking water available for which the public of Marmat Galiyan and particularly the man-aging committee is highly grateful of the District administration. Still there is a great problem

that is being faced during the festivals.

In addition to the main festivals the pilgrims

visit the sacred place throughout the year i.e. from Durga falling in the month of August. The festival is very colorful and the celebration starts with thousands of people in large numbers visiting the Temple of Goddess Durga Mata Dedni Wali. Like every year, this year also a fair is going to be held in the temple of Mata Rani and more than thousands of devotees reach here to visit Mata Rani and reach here with their

family and some people with their friend here Mata Rani arrives to visit.

The Main yatra from Khellani via Shree & Saras will start from Durga Mandir Chinar Chowk after Trishool Poojan by 08:30 AM on August 24, 2025. Trishool Yatra from (Paryote) Hambal and Seen other parts startling simultaneously. On August 24, the priests of Mata Rani perform Havan in the temple of Mata Rani in the morning and after that the Darbar of Mata is opened for all the people to visit, after that people continuously bow down at the feet of Mata Rani according to their conditions. And after that there is a vigil here at night. Many people come here. Travelers visit during the night and enjoy this fair and stay awake through-out the night doing devo-tion to Mata Rani.

The Mata Rani Mandir Dedani, every kind of facility is available for the pilgrims, whether it is a blanket or water facility or all the things of light are found in Mata's along with there is a ground to roam around and people who are their own family. To enhance the beauty of this fair, people from far and wide used to come to visit there. They reach her by road and many sweet shops are set up here, along with all the facilities for langar etc. have been kept here by the management committee

Mata Rani's temple is in the midst of dense forests, where Deodar and Kail trees

will be seen around, where many people happily take photos and videos here and take them to their homes. A notice from the committee is also for all those passengers that no one should come here after drinking alcohol and do not use any such substance, if anyone is found in this way, then strict action will be taken against him and umbrella with him. Keep in and keep warm clothes together so that whenever it rains you can avoid cold.

The Darbar of Durga Mata Mandir Dedani located at Village Dedani native village (Hambal) about 35 kms away from District Doda shall open on April 13 for the annual festival. The annual festival in the form of Trishool Bhaint Yatra, is being celebrated since 1982 in the memory of re-installation of ancient idol of Mata Durga after it was recovered from Chennai (Udhampur). The idol was stolen by smugglers from the temple. The Darbar will open this year on April 13 on the eve of Baisakhi and pilgrims from Doda, Ramban, Udhampur, Kishtwar and many parts of Jammu & Kashmir are expected. The festival is celebrated on the special occasion of Baishakhi every year. The management committee has sought all the facilities for the pilgrims. Security has also been sought. Main yatra from Khellani via Shree & Saras will start from Durga Mandir Chinar Chowk after Trishool Poojan by 07:00 Am. Trishool Yatra from Kihanda (Paryote) Hambal, Saras and other parts startling simultaneously. Some of the famous food items to eat during the festival are Rice & Raj-mash Chawal at the Lungar of Mata Rani. Local food specialties include Klan (or Klan kulcha and are very tasty.

The Durga Mandir Dedani Darbar will open on April 13th, the eve of Baisakhi. This is an annual event where pilgrims from various districts, including Doda, Ramban, Udhampur, and Kishtwar, gather for the festival and to pay their

respects. The Darbar is a sacred place visited by pilgrims throughout the year, not just during the main festivals. The annual festival, in the form of Trishool Bhaint Yatra, is being celebrated since 1982 in the memory of re-installation of ancient idol of Mata Durga after it was recovered from Chenani (Udhampur) stolen by smugglers from the Temple.

The Darbar of Durga Mandir Dedni is now going to open this year on April 13, 2025 on the eve of Baishakhi on this occasion the pilgrims from various parts of District Doda, Ramban, Udhampur, & Kishtwar participate in the annual function/festival. The festivals on the special occasion are celebrated on Baishakhi every year. Thousands of pilgrims participate.

No doubt District administration provides every rest of facilities including medical. Security and drinking water for which the public of Marmat Galiyan and particularly the managing committee is highly grateful of District administration still there a great problem is being faced during the festivals i.e. the provision of electricity power supply.

In addition to the main festivals the pilgrims visit the sacred place throughout the year i.e. from Baishakhi to Durga Ashtma falling in the month of Magher Mass.

The festival is very colourful and the celebration starts with people in large numbers visiting the Temple of Goddess Durga Mata Dedni Wali. On April 13, 2025:- Arrival of sewaks at Darbar by 08:00 Am. April 13, 2025 Havan 7:00 am to 8:30 Am there after Darbar opened for Darsshannd pay obeisance.

April 13, 2025:- Main yatra from Khellani via shree & Saras will start from Durga Mandir Chinar Chowk after Trishool Poojan by 08:30 Am.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER

The Longings

*A flank of chest has kept you safe
In the world of guardians,
reaping the salt
While the toss of scratching
sounds unsafe
To shatter the remarks
of ongoing halt*

*The road map showed me I could
have been better
The Earth is blue I could
have heard
Since you negated the draft letter
My face has got some
"Greenish Beard "*

*I would like to draw your attention
To rising conflicts inside the
"Treasure "
Who is now worth to mention ?
Whether you or your signature!*

*The book is ready to bypass
the stream
You are there on a broken bridge
You can't hear and I can't scream
Who among us is a hapless
midge?*

Shahid Shamshad

Late to Bed and Late to Rise

Habit is Hazardous & Unwise



■ Surinderpal Singh

The proverb Early to bed and Early to rise makes a person healthy, wealthy and wise has been considered as confirmed piece of wisdom for centuries. Even the ultra modern science has confirmed and validated this age-old belief by exploring the various biological, psychological and social benefits of going to bed early and rising up with the sun. Conversely, the habit of staying up late in the night added with waking late in the morning is although common and integral part in today's fast-paced world but the habit has been linked to serious health consequences, including increased risk of dementia, psychological disorders, cardiovascular diseases, metabolic disorders and shortened lifespan.

Pros of Going Early to Bed and Early to Rise

1. Improved Cognitive Health:

Adequate sleep helps in the maintenance of the brain's glymphatic system which is essential for clearance of toxins such as beta-amyloid plaques associated with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.



2. Better Cardiovascular Function:

Different psychological studies have demonstrated that early risers maintain healthier blood pressure and heart rhythms. This could result in lowering the risk of brain strokes and heart attacks.

3. Enhanced Productivity:

Early risers often enjoy better focus, discipline and alignment with the natural circadian rhythms, boosting academic and professional performance.

4. Stronger Immune System:

Sleep during early night hours enhances the release of melatonin and growth hormones, which repairs the damaged cells and helps to strengthen the immunity.

Cons of Early Sleeping and Rising

1. Social Limitations:

In modern society, where many social and professional events extend late into the evening early sleepers may experience reduced participation in night functions and social events.

2. Rigid Lifestyle:

Maintaining an early bedtime habit can be difficult for the shift workers, students or professionals with demanding schedules.

Pros of Staying Up Late and Waking Late

1. Creativity and Flexibility:

The psychological researches suggest that people who work till late nights and prefer waking up late in the morning demonstrate higher creative skills

and improved performances during late-night hours.

2. Adaptation to Modern Demands:

In the modern materialistic world late risers often find better alignment with entertainment, technology-driven industries and global communication needs.

Cons of Late Sleeping and Late Rising

1. Risk of Dementia:

Many neurology reports have established that people who consistently went to bed late and experienced poor sleep quality were more likely to develop dementia due to insufficient clearance of neurotoxic waste.

2. Cardiovascular Risks:

Researches across the globe have revealed that the people working during late night hours are more prone to hypertension, irregular heartbeats and heart attacks.

3. Diabetes Risks:

Late sleepers have higher risks of obesity, type-2 diabetes and insulin resistance due to disruption of circadian regulation of hormones.

4. Shorter Lifespan:

A large-scale study of different people from different parts of the world has predicted that night workers have higher risk of early death compared to the early risers.

5. Psychological Strain:

Late sleepers experience higher rates of anxiety, depression and burnout because of social jet lag, the mismatch between biological rhythms and social obligations.

Scientific Insights into Dementia and

Related Risks

The Scientists throughout the world has emphasized the role of circadian rhythm misalignment as a central mechanism connecting late sleep patterns with dementia and other chronic illnesses. Poor sleep quality could reduce the slow-wave sleep which is crucial for memory consolidation and clearance of toxins from the brain. The accumulation of beta-amyloid and tau proteins is strongly associated with Alzheimer's disease. Additionally, late risers often exhibit higher cortisol levels (the stress hormone), which accelerates neuronal damage, increases vascular inflammation and predisposes individuals to dementia, heart attacks and strokes.

Studies across the globe have indicated that different people prefer different sleeping cycles but the scientific evidences strongly favors the health benefits of going to bed early and rising up early in the morning. Though night owls may experience bursts of creativity and adaptability but the long-term risks that includes dementia, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome and shorter lifespan make the habit medically and socially unwise. Public health campaigns and workplace adjustments should encourage healthier sleep schedules even if they are included in office curriculum. This strategy can play a pivotal role in reducing the dementia and chronic illness burdens worldwide.

The author is a Faculty in Science Department Sri Amritsar Sahib Punjab

Fruits, Spices, Sleep: Wellness Coach's Guide To Staying Healthy

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI: Wellness expert Luke Coutinho has warned that changing weather can reduce immunity and increase the risk of infections. "Building strong immunity is a lifestyle, not a quick fix," he said in a post on Instagram. To boost defences, Coutinho has recommended consuming Vitamin C-rich fruits such as papaya, amla, and guava, along with immunity-supporting spices like turmeric, ginger, and cinnamon (dal cheeni). He also emphasised that sleep plays a key role in immunity, as the body produces cytokines during rest to fight infections and inflammation. Poor sleep, he said, can weaken these natural defences.

He recommended people do moderate workouts, as they improve circulation and immune surveillance, but over-training or inactivity can harm



the immune system. Coutinho also urged people to eat healthy, reduce stress levels and look after their emotional and mental well-being.

"Stress hormones like cortisol, when chronically high, lower white blood cell activity, making it harder for your body to fight off pathogens," he wrote.

He added, "Your immune system is not just a backup plan

for when you fall sick, it is your first line of defence every single day. Yet most people only think of immunity when illness strikes."

He also said that nutrition remains a crucial part, with protein being essential for the production of antibodies. Taking insufficient protein can weaken the defense system. Healthy fats, particularly Omega-3s

from flaxseeds, walnuts, and fatty fish, help regulate inflammation, he mentioned.

Coutinho said that gut health also plays an important role, as 70 per cent of immunity sits inside the gut. Prebiotic foods like onions, garlic, and bananas, as well as probiotics such as curd, sauerkraut, and other fermented foods, help maintain microbial balance.

In addition to this, Vitamin D from sunlight also supports T-cell function, a vital component of immune defence.

He further stated that daily habits such as staying hydrated also immunise the system. He mentioned that if someone is looking to enhance their immune system, they should reduce refined sugar, as it suppresses white blood cell activity for hours after consumption and also limit alcohol and smoking, as they both impair immune cell production.

Coutinho said seasonal foods, naturally aligned with the body's needs, should be prioritised for overall health.

"Immunity isn't built overnight. It is built every single day through small, consistent choices. It's not just about fighting infections; it's about preventing chronic inflammation, slowing aging, and supporting overall vitality," he added. (NDTV)

WEBINAR ON

Topic- Healthy ageing
living well as we grow older

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TIME: 9:30 TO 10:30 PM

RESOURCE PERSON
Prof. (Dr.) Syed Mohammad Waris
Ph.D Physiotherapy
Professor, Myopastoral Rehabilitation
Science School, Italy
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District Conference of ASHA Workers Union Held in Kulgam

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, SEP 6: The District Conference of the ASHA Workers Union was successfully organized in Kulgam, with enthusiastic participation from ASHA workers representing all corners of the district. The event witnessed a strong display of unity and commitment among the grassroots health workers. Several senior leaders from the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) attended the conference as distinguished guests. The notable dignitaries included CITU State Secretary Mr. Abdul Rashid Najar, senior trade union leader Mr. Ghulam Nabi Shaksaz, Mr. Fayaz Ahmad Dewasri, Mr. Tartez Ahmad, and Ms. Mir Hanifa, who all added prominence to the event.

Prominent speakers at the conference were Mr. Abdul Rashid Najar, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Shaksaz, Ms. Mir Hanifa, Mr. Tartez Ahmad, Mr. Fayaz Dewasri, Ms. Dilshada Ji (President, J&K ASHA Workers Union), Ms. Firdousa Ji (General Secretary), and Ms. Amna Ji, among others.

In their addresses, the speakers strongly emphasized the importance of unity and collective strength among ASHA workers. They noted that it is only through solidarity that the workers have achieved success in the past and must continue



on the same path for future victories.

Ms. Dilshada Ji presented a detailed structure and organizational framework of the union. The contributions of Ms. Amna Ji were widely appreciated, with speakers acknowledging her tireless efforts and dedication towards strengthening the union at the district level. Mr. Abdul Rashid Najar highlighted the need to connect the state-level struggles of ASHA workers with national-level movements, emphasizing the positive outcomes of such coordination.

Towards the conclusion of the conference, the new District Body for Kulgam was formally elected. The elected members

are as follows:

Ms. Amna Ji was unanimously re-elected as District President, Kulgam

Ms. Maroofa Ji was elected as District Secretary

Ms. Dilshada Ji was chosen as Block President for Yaripora Rukhsana Ji, Mumtaza Ji, Shaheena Ji (Kulgam), Yasmee-naji and Mehmooda Ji (DH Pora), and Gohar Ji (Qazigund) were elected as members of the new district body.

The conference marked yet another milestone in the growing organizational strength of ASHA workers in the region and reinforced the message that unity and persistence remain the cornerstone of their movement.

Kullu HP Landslide: Amid tears, sobs, 3 Kashmiri labourers laid to rest

■ **HT News Network**

KANGAN, SEP 06: Grief and mourning engulfed Central Kashmir's Kangan on Saturday as the bodies of three local labourers, who were killed in a devastating landslide in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district, were airlifted and brought back to their native villages.

Pertinently, at least eight persons including six Kashmiris were killed in a landslide incident at Inner Akhara Bazar in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh two days ago.

The deceased have been identified as Abdul Rashid Sheikh, son of Mohammad Jamal Sheikh of Kijpora Kangan, Mehraj-ud-Din Lone, son of Mohammad Sabir of Gundari Kangan and Sajjad Ahmad Wani, son of Abdul Ahad Wani of Gundari Kangan.

Emotional scenes were witnessed as the coffins arrived in Kijpora and Ari Guripora Kangan. Thousands of people joined the funeral prayers, with heart-wrenching cries echoing through the villages.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), locals carried the coffins through the narrow lanes before the victims were laid to rest.

MLA Gurez Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurezi, MLA Kangan Mian Mehar Ali, SDM Kangan Nazir Ahmad, and Tehsildar Kangan Mubashir Amin expressed solidarity with the families and took part in the last rites.

Shabir, a resident of Ari, told KNO, "We sent them to earn a livelihood, but they returned in coffins. Our hearts are shattered."

Political leaders across Jammu and Kashmir expressed their condolences.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah termed the tragedy heart-wrenching, while Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha described the incident as "unfortunate and saddening," extending condolences to the bereaved families and praying for the safety of those still missing.

MLA Kangan Mian Mehar Ali said he had spoken to one of the injured labourers and assured the victims' families of all possible support. He also confirmed that MP Central Kashmir Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi had been approached to take up the matter for timely assistance.

Officials confirmed that while the bodies of three victims have been handed over to their families, at least three more labourers from Kangan remain trapped under the debris in Kullu. Their bodies are expected to reach their native villages once recovered.

Rescue operations in Kullu is ongoing on a war footing as anxious families in Kashmir wait for news of their loved ones—(KNO)

40% of Budgam still without clean drinking water: Residents question efficacy of filtration plants

Water crisis hits district, livelihoods at risk amid official inaction

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, SEP 06: A severe shortage of clean drinking water has plunged central Kashmir's Budgam district into crisis, with nearly 40% of the population as per the official sources still deprived of potable water despite repeated pleas to authorities.

Residents across the district have accused the Jal Shakti department of failing to provide basic water supply, raising concerns over the efficacy of filtration plants and the overall management of the region's water infrastructure.

According to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Budgam has been grappling with an acute water crisis following several days of relentless rainfall. The heavy downpour has resulted in streams like Doodh Ganga Nallah and others becoming heavily contaminated with mud, debris, and waste—rendering the water undrinkable and unfit for daily use. Ironically, the Jal Shakti

department continues to draw water from these very streams for its filtration plants, attempting to treat and distribute it to households. However, residents say that the filtration process is failing to meet the community's needs, leaving nearly two-fifths of the district's population without access to safe water. The crisis has been particularly acute in several villages across Sub-Division Beerwah, Khad, and other areas, where both people and livestock are at risk.

"Even our animals are falling sick due to the contaminated water being supplied," one resident told KNO. Locals also report that broken pipes and poorly maintained infrastructure are compounding the problem. "There is no proper filtration system in our area. Pipes are broken in several places and go unrepaired for weeks, which lets dirty water seep in and leads to further wastage. We are forced to drink foul-smelling, contaminated water because we have no alternative," locals told KNO.

Government of UT of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class Zachaldara

Subject: Delay in Registration of Death issuance of orders thereof.

Public Notice

The Registrar Births and Deaths Tehsildar Zachaldara as submitted Case files pertaining of Birth/ Death.

Abdul Rashid Gojer Jatel

S/o: Fazal ud Din Gojer Jatel

R/o: Dogripora

Death of Date: 19-10-2001

In this connection, if anybody having any objection regarding DOB or DOD may contact this office within a period of seven day s during office hours after the no objection shall be entertained.

Dated: 06-09-2025

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Zachaldara

PEERZADA FAMILY BEREAVED



With profound grief & sorrow, we inform the demise of **Peerzada Mohammad Shafi** R/o Sheri Bhat, Gilli Kadal Road (Formally Malapora Jamia Masjid) who left for heavenly abode on 5th September 2025. May Almighty Allah grant Jannat ul firdous to the departed soul. Congregational Fateha Khawani will be held on **8th September 2025 at 10:00 AM** at ancertral graveyard near Masjid Wahab Sahib, Jamia Masjid, Srinagar. Thereafter all are requested to join for *Dua-e-Majlis* at our residence.

BEREAVED

**Peerzada Junaid Shafi
Peerzada Jasmeen Shafi**

Dr. Ayaz Rashid Chishti (PH: 9622411298)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Tangmarg

Notice Inviting e-Tender (Civil Works)

NIT No: 43 /R&B of 2025-26 | Dated: 04-09-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways sand other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost	T.D Cost	E/M	Time	Class	Tender call
1	Improvement of NTPHC Baba Reshi Sahib.	9.62	600/-	19240/-	30 days	D/C	1st

**M.H of Account: Distt. Sector Health
Position Of AAA: Accorded
Position of funds: Assured**

**Project Authority: District Development Commissioner Baramulla
Position of T.S: Accorded**

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	04-09-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	05-09-2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	05 -09-2025
4	Bid Submission End Date	15-09-2025 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	16-09-2025 11:00 AM

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No. , Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender inviting authority)

3. All the bidders must upload Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender receiving authority) (The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, otherwise bids shall be rejected).

38. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25(Double agreement Form), NIT, GFR 2017 & JK PWD Engineering Manual 2020.

39. As per the Circular No. 01 (Adm) FD of 2025 Dated: 08-07-2025 issued by Finance Department of UT J&K "Every participating supplier/contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder".

No: R&B/ Divn./Tang/3793-3803 | Dated: 04-09-2025

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Satish Sharma undertakes extensive tour of Maira Mandrian, Kathar blocks to asses flood damages

Directs for on-the-spot assessment of damages, timely disbursal of compensation

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 06: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, today undertook an extensive tour of Block Maira Mandrian and Kathar to assess the damages caused by the recent floods and oversee the relief measures being extended to the affected families.

The Minister was accompanied by senior officials of the district administration, Revenue, FCS&CA, PWD, PHE, and Rural Development departments.

The Minister visited several inundated localities, inspected damaged houses, agricultural

fields, and public infrastructure, and interacted with the people to understand their immediate requirements.

During his visit, the Minister expressed solidarity with the affected families and assured them that the Government is fully committed for their speedy rehabilitation and restoration of normalcy. He directed the district administration to carry out on-the-spot assessment of damages to houses, crops, and livestock so that adequate compensation is provided without delay.

The Minister further stressed the need for adequate supply of food grains, clean drinking water, electricity, and medical facilities in the affected areas. He instructed the Food & Civil Sup-



plies Department to ensure uninterrupted distribution of ration under PDS and further asked the

Health department to deploy mobile health units to vulnerable areas for immediate medical aid.

The Minister also directed the PWD and Rural Development departments to undertake urgent restoration of damaged roads, culverts, and link paths to ensure smooth connectivity of the villages with main roads, thereby facilitating quick transportation of relief material.

Highlighting the need for long-term solutions, the Minister said that the Government is working on comprehensive flood management and mitigation strategies for the region to reduce the recurring loss of life and property during heavy rains. On the occasion, the locals,

while interacting with the Minister, raised certain concerns and issues like drainage, embankments, and road safety before the Minister.

While addressing the locals, Satish Sharma said: "This is a difficult time for our people, but I assure you that no family will be left unattended. The Government is taking every possible step to provide relief, restore essential services, and support the affected households in rebuilding their lives."

He reiterated that the Government will remain on high alert until complete normalcy is restored and he himself will continue to monitor the progress of relief and rehabilitation works in the constituency.

Commr Secy YSS reviews performance, functioning of JKSC

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 06: Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services and Sports (YSS), Yasha Mudgal today chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to assess the overall functioning and performance of the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council (JKSC).

The meeting was attended by Special Secretary YSS, Director Finance YSS, Secretary JKSC, Executive Engineer JKSC and other senior officers of YSS and JKSC.

While reviewing the human resource issues of the department, the Commissioner Secretary underscored the need to expedite the process of filling all vacant positions. She emphasized that adequate staffing is essential for the optimal functioning of sports infrastructure across the Union Territory.

Highlighting the importance of youth engagement in sports, the Commissioner Secretary directed JKSC to conduct population-wise analysis of youth participation in sports activities across J&K and analyse the same with respect to the national average. She further instructed that a comparative study be undertaken with other states that have demonstrated success in sports development, and adopt their best practices to boost sports culture across Jammu and Kashmir.

In order to enhance the competitive performance of athletes in J&K, the Secretary JKSC was asked to formulate a comprehensive plan aimed at increasing medal tallies in national and international competitions.

Highlighting the potential of J&K as an emerging global sports destination, the Commissioner Secretary advised the JKSC to examine the feasibility of hosting international sporting events, including World Championships, in the Union Territory, which will significantly contribute to enhancing the global visibility of Jammu & Kashmir as a sports destination.

She also stressed on the importance of media visibility and directed the J&K Sports Council to ensure that all sports events receive adequate publicity before, during, and after their conduct.

During the meeting, Secretary JKSC delivered a detailed presentation covering key aspects of the Council's operations like institutional functioning, upcoming projects, major achievements, upcoming international and national championships and the status of the ongoing works under the Capex / PMDP.

DC Budgam chairs meeting on relief & restoration measures in flood-affected areas

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 06: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat today convened a review meeting at the DC Office Meeting Hall to take stock of restoration measures and departmental response in the wake of the recent floods.

The meeting was attended by SE Hydraulic with all Executive Engineers including Executive Engineer FSC, SE R&B with all Executive Engineers, Executive Engineer PDD with AEEs, SDM Beerwah, SDM Chadoora, ACD, ACR Budgam, AO, ARA, Nazarat and personnel from the Relief section.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held on Flood Analysis & Gap Assessment in which departments presented an overall analysis of the recent flood situ-



ation, challenges faced during relief operations, and gaps in infrastructure and manpower.

During the meeting a tentative

lists of damaged assets and estimated financial losses suffered due to floods were shared for compilation.

Meanwhile, officers briefed the chair about immediate restoration measures already executed to restore essential services in affected areas.

A Short-Term Restoration Plan was made in which works to be completed within the next 3-4 days were identified, with specific timelines and departmental responsibilities.

Under permanent measures, departments proposed long-term and permanent flood mitigation and disaster resilience works to be taken up in the future to prevent recurrence of such damages in the District.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC underscored the importance of a coordinated and transparent response for timely restoration of all affected services.

He stressed that the administration's focus must not only remain

on immediate restoration but also on building long-term resilience against natural calamities.

The DC directed all line departments to submit real, fact-based reports on damages and restoration works undertaken. He impressed upon officers to work in close coordination and ensure that every intervention is need-based, timely and effective.

He further emphasized that upgrading infrastructure, strengthening manpower and adopting proactive planning are crucial to minimize the impact of such disasters in the future.

DC reiterated the commitment of the district administration to safeguard lives, property and livelihood of people, and assured that all possible measures will be taken for early restoration and sustainable flood mitigation in budgam.

'Wakefulness Night' event organized

Peace, Spirituality & Brotherhood Stressed by Nalwa Across J&K

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, SEP 6: In a remarkable display of spiritual unity and musical celebration, Ranjodh Singh Nalwa, President of Minority Morcha BJP J&K, was warmly welcomed as Chief Guest at the grand 'Wakefulness Night' event held at Gandhi Nagar, here.

The night witnessed a gathering of over 2,000 attendees from across Jammu & Kashmir, celebrating a message of peace, love, and faith.

Journalist and entrepreneur Boney Kumar was the Guest of Honour on the occasion. The event was elevated by the soul-stirring performance of world-famous Gospel singer Stephen Munir, whose powerful voice and spiritual message left the audience deeply moved.

Organised by Pastor Dr. Zion Richard, Senior Pastor of The Church of Prayers and Wonders, the Wakefulness Night was a powerful celebration of faith, hope, and communal harmony.

Pastor Zion led prayers and blessings over the gathering and specially



prayed for Ranjodh Singh Nalwa, asking for divine favour and double growth in his life, family, and political career.

Addressing the massive crowd, Ranjodh Singh Nalwa shared a heartfelt message of love and peace as taught by Lord Jesus Christ, emphasizing unity across faiths and cultures.

He affirmed his personal commitment—as well as that of the BJP Minor-

ity Morcha—to support such faith-based gatherings that promote peace, spirituality, and brotherhood across Jammu & Kashmir.

The evening was also attended by numerous Christian political leaders and spiritual heads from different parts of J&K, reflecting the growing spirit of religious harmony and interfaith dialogue in the region.

J&K Bank Hands Over Rs. 130.77 Cr Dividend to UT Administration

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

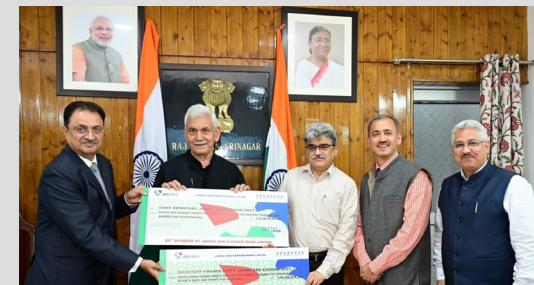
SRINAGAR, SEP 06: Initiating the payment of dividend to shareholders, Managing Director and CEO J&K Bank Shri Amitava Chatterjee today presented two dividend cheques of Rs 122.85 Crore and Rs 7.92 Crore to the UT Administration – the Bank's promoter and major shareholder – for the Financial Year 2024-25.

The dividend cheques were handed over to Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan.

Chief Secretary Shri Atal Dulloo; Principal Secretary, Finance, Shri Santosh D Vaidya; Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, and Shri Mohammad Shafi Mir, Company Secretary J&K Bank were present on the occasion.

The dividend pay-out, which followed the Bank's approval of 215% dividend at its 87th Annual General Meeting (AGM), underscores both the Bank's financial strength and its pivotal role in supporting the region's economic development.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated the entire team of Jammu Kashmir Bank and urged the Bank to continue to drive substantial and sustained growth and serve the people with excellence.



The Lieutenant Governor said that J&K Bank should continue its focus on financial inclusion by connecting people and it should promote small and micro-enterprises for manufacturing and services. He also observed that J&K Bank had witnessed complete turnaround after 2019. The Bank was in loss of Rs. 1139 Crore in the year 2019-20, however, it was transformed and within 4 years it reported a profit of Rs. 1700 Crore in the year 2023-24.

Shri Amitava Chatterjee, Managing Director and CEO, J&K Bank outlined the Bank's performance and roadmap ahead. He reiterated the J&K Bank's commitment to offering the best banking services while actively contributing to Mission YUVA for inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economic growth across J&K.

Inclusive development in remote areas priority for Ladakh Administration: LG Kavinder

Says Citizen Participation & Govt initiatives key to equitable development

■ HT News Desk

LEH, SEPTEMBER 06: The UT Administration has pledged to take development to even the most remote villages of Ladakh, with a clear focus on empowering rural communities. By strengthening schools, improving healthcare facilities, and addressing the day-to-day challenges of people in far-flung areas, the UT Administration aims to ensure that growth is not limited to towns but reaches every corner of the Union Territory.

This was stated by the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, today while addressing a public meeting at the Dak Bungalow, Hemya. In the meet-



ing, people of nine villages, namely Hemya, Tarchit, Tiri, Liktsay, Tukla, Skidmang, Kairy, Chumathang and Kyungyam took part and highlighted their issues. In the public durbar, DC Leh, Romil

Singh Donk; SSP Leh, Shruti Aro-ra; Tehsildar Nyoma, Councillor Kyungyam, Thinles Nurboo; Councillor Nyoma, Ishey Spalzung and district officials were present.

While addressing the public

gathering, the Lt Governor underlined the importance of making citizens active stakeholders in grassroots development. "When people are aware of their rights and voice their concerns, it ensures accountability, strengthens democracy, and enables the administration to design development plans that reflect local aspirations," he observed.

Commending the people of Ladakh, particularly those in far-flung areas, for raising their concerns with courage and awareness, the Lt Governor said that such participation is vital for building a just society and responsive governance. He highlighted education, healthcare, and tourism as the three key pillars for shaping La-

dakh's future. "Education provides the skills and innovation needed for economic growth, healthcare ensures a healthy and productive society, and tourism generates livelihoods while promoting Ladakh's rich cultural heritage," he stated.

The Lt Governor also emphasised the need to bridge the gap in educational access, pointing out that a 100 km distance to an institute often becomes a barrier, especially for students from rural and resource-poor families. "The administration is working to reduce these hurdles so that students, particularly girls, are not held back due to long travel, safety concerns, or financial constraints," he assured.

Trump says Modi is 'great Prime Minister': Modi says he 'deeply appreciates, fully reciprocates'

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: US President Donald Trump has described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "great Prime Minister" with whom he will always be friends.

Prime Minister Modi said he deeply appreciates and fully reciprocates President Trump's sentiments.

The statement by the US President is significant as it comes after his verbal tirade against India and Prime Minister Modi in the recent past over India buying oil from Russia. President Trump and his Trade Advisor Peter Navarro have accused India of fuelling Ukraine war by buying Russian oil.

The statement also comes after India warmed up with China and Russia with Prime Minister Modi attending the 25th Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) at Tianjin in China on August 31-September 1. US had said India should be with the US and Ukraine and not with China and Russia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stated that he deeply appreciates and fully reciprocates President Trump's sentiments and positive assessment of India-US ties, an official spokesman said here.



The Prime Minister posted on X "Deeply appreciate and fully reciprocate President Trump's sentiments and positive assessment of our ties. India and the US have a very positive and forward-looking Comprehensive and Global Strategic Partnership."

Earlier President Trump said "I will always be friends with Modi, he is a great Prime Minister. India and the United States have a special relationship. There is nothing to worry about." UNI

Sanjeev Jha accuses BJP ministers of neglect in flood-hit Jahangirpuri

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA from Burari, Sanjeev Jha, today visited Jahangirpuri's D, E and EE blocks, where several families are facing severe waterlogging. He alleged that residents have been living in knee-deep water without electricity for the past two days and criticised the BJP-led government for not providing adequate relief.

Jha distributed mosquito nets at relief camps during his visit and claimed that no responsible minister or officer had visited the affected areas. He said that basic medical facilities were missing in the relief camps and that children had been falling sick. He also alleged that repeated requests for a generator at the camps had gone unanswered.

Jha criticised union Minister Parvesh Verma, saying that instead of addressing the situation,



he was busy on social media denying the existence of floods in Delhi. He said, "If he has even a shred of shame left, he should come and see Jahangirpuri for himself."

The AAP legislator also raised questions about the handling of desilting and cleaning of the Yamuna and drains. He noted that despite the Yamuna's water level being lower than in 2023, Jahangirpuri had still experienced flooding this year. He attributed the situation to administrative failure, stating that drainage pumps were only installed after he personally intervened with senior officials.

Jha further alleged that people in other areas, including G Block, H Block and Badli, were also struggling with waterlogging, yet BJP representatives had not visited their constituencies. He accused the government of insensitivity and said residents felt abandoned.

The MLA argued that the present situation showed lapses in preparedness and accountability. He claimed thefts were being reported in abandoned houses and that families were forced to move to schools for shelter. UNI

GST reductions to benefit over 10 crore dairy farmers

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: Over 10 crore dairy farmers across the country will benefit from the government's recent overhaul of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in key sectors.

These reforms will strengthen the cooperative sector, make their products competitive, increase demand for their products and increase income of cooperatives. It will promote rural entrepreneurship, promote cooperatives in food processing sector and ensure affordable access to essential goods for millions of households, an official statement said.

GST rate reductions will benefit cooperatives in farming and animal husbandry, promote sustainable farming practices, and benefit small farmers and FPOs. The Next Gen GST reforms have been hailed by the entire dairy cooperative sector, including the big cooperative brands like AMUL.

In the dairy sector, direct relief has been provided to farmers and consumers as milk and paneer, whether branded or unbranded, have been exempted from GST, while the tax on butter, ghee and similar products has been reduced from 12 percent to 5 percent, and GST on milk cans made of iron, steel or aluminium has also been lowered from 12 percent to 5 percent.

In food processing and household items, a major relief has been given as GST on cheese, namkeens, butter and pasta have been reduced from 12 percent to 18 percent to 5 percent, while jams, jellies, yeasts, bhujia and fruit pulp or juice-based drinks are now taxed at 5 percent. Chocolates, corn flakes, ice creams,



pastries, cakes, biscuits and coffee have also seen a reduction from 18 percent to 5 percent.

Additionally, GST on packing paper, cases and crates has been reduced to 5 percent, easing logistics and packaging costs for cooperatives and food producers.

The GST on tractors below 1800 cc has been reduced to 5 percent, which will make tractors more affordable and benefit not only crop farmers but also those engaged in animal husbandry and mixed farming. While tractor components such as tyres and tubes, hydraulic pumps, and several other parts have also seen a reduction from 18 percent to 5 percent.

GST on key fertiliser inputs such as ammonia, sulphuric acid and nitric acid has been reduced from 18 percent to 5 percent.

Similarly, GST on twelve bio-pesticides and several micronutrients has been reduced from 12 percent to 5 percent, promoting eco-friendly and sustainable farming practices.

The GST on commercial goods vehicles such as trucks and delivery vans has been reduced from 28 percent to 18 percent, lowering the upfront capital cost of trucks which form the backbone of India's supply chain. The reduction of GST on third-party insurance of goods carriage from 12 percent to 5 percent with Input tax Credit (ITC), further complements these efforts. UNI

PM Modi has telephone talk with Macron. Both leaders discuss Ukraine, India-France cooperation

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron today and reviewed the developments in bilateral cooperation across different sectors including economic, defence, science, technology and space.

The two leaders also reaffirmed their commitment towards further strengthening the India-France Strategic Partnership, in line with the Horizon 2047 Roadmap, the Indo-Pacific Roadmap and the Defence Industrial Roadmap, a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said.

They exchanged views on recent efforts towards bringing an end to the conflict in Ukraine. Prime Minister Modi reiterated India's consistent



support for peaceful resolution of the conflict and early restoration of peace and stability.

The Prime Minister thanked President Macron for accepting the invitation to the AI Impact Summit to be

hosted by India in February 2026, and looked forward to welcoming President Macron in India. Both leaders agreed to continue to remain in touch and work closely together to promote global peace and stability. UNI

WHO Adds Key Cancer, Diabetes Drugs to Essential List

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, SEP 6: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has unveiled the updated editions of its Model Lists of Essential Medicines (EML) and Essential Medicines for Children (EMLC), incorporating vital new treatments for several cancers and diabetes, particularly addressing associated conditions such as obesity.

The revised list also features medicines for cystic fibrosis, psoriasis, haemophilia, and other blood-related disorders, according to a statement here by the global body.

Among the notable additions is the triple combination therapy elxacaftor/tezacaftor/ivacaftor (ETI), aimed at cystic fibrosis management. The update includes GLP-1 receptor agonists — semaglutide, dulaglutide, and

liraglutide — alongside tirzepatide, a dual GLP-1/glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) receptor agonist, for the treatment of diabetes and obesity. Furthermore, PD-1/PD-L1 immune checkpoint inhibitors, which enhance the immune system's ability to target cancer cells, have been incorporated.

Pembrolizumab has been added as a first-line monotherapy for metastatic cervical, colorectal, and non-small cell lung cancers, with atezolizumab and cemiplimab recognised as therapeutic alternatives for the latter, the WHO noted.

Cancer remains the world's second leading cause of death, responsible for nearly 10 million deaths annually and accounting for almost one-third of premature deaths from non-communicable diseases. For over a decade, cancer

medicines have been a key focus of the WHO EML.

The WHO EML and EMLC, serving over 150 countries, guide public sector procurement, medicine supply, and health insurance schemes globally. This release marks the 24th edition of the EML and the 10th of the EMLC, said the statement.

Dr Yukiko Nakatani, WHO Assistant Director-General for Health Systems, Access and Data, described the update as a significant advancement in broadening access to medicines with proven clinical efficacy and substantial global public health impact.

The WHO Expert Committee, responsible for the review had examined 59 applications — including 31 proposals for new medicines or classes — leading to the addition of 20 new medicines to the EML and 15 to the EMLC. Seven existing

medicines also received new use indications. The updated lists now encompass 523 essential medicines for adults and 374 for children.

However, the committee highlighted concerns regarding the high cost of certain diabetes drugs, such as semaglutide and tirzepatide, which restrict patient access. It advocated prioritising high-need patients, encouraging generic competition, and extending availability to primary care, especially in underserved regions, to improve health outcomes.

Deusdedit Mubangizi, WHO Director of Policy and Standards for Medicines and Health Products, underscored that medicines constitute a significant portion of out-of-pocket expenses for noncommunicable diseases, even for those classified as essential and ideally affordable for all. "Equitable access demands

coherent health system responses backed by political commitment, multisectoral cooperation, and people-centred initiatives," he said as per the statement.

The committee also endorsed evidence-based clinical and health system strategies from cancer experts aimed at enhancing access and affordability of cancer treatments. These include dose optimisation protocols to deliver faster benefits, particularly in resource-limited settings, although wider health system reforms require longer-term government action.

The Expert Committee, said the statement, exercised rigorous criteria, approving only those cancer therapies that extend life by at least four to six months, following evaluations of 25 cancer medicines across seven applications. UNI

Thirteen officers injured at rallies in Serbia, 42 protesters detained: Interior Ministry

■ **United News of India**

BELGRADE, SEP 6: Thirteen police officers were injured at protests in Serbia's Novi Sad on Friday night, and 42 demonstrators were detained, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Ivica Dacic said on Saturday.

On Friday night, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said that 11 police officers were injured at a protest in Novi Sad, and that dozens of rioters would be detained. Over 7,000 people rallied in the protest action that began at the faculty of philosophy of the local university on Friday evening.

"There were 13 injured police officers. Over the past few weeks, since the demonstrations have become

violent, very aggressive towards the police, unprovoked by the police ... more than 150 police officers have been injured," Dacic told Radio Television of Serbia in an interview.

The demonstrators used sticks, rods, paint, pyrotechnics, flares and wore helmets and masks, the minister said.

"Forty-two people have been detained, what the prosecutor's office will do with them is not up to us. Eighteen police cars were damaged. One service pistol was taken from a policeman," he said.

The Serbian authorities' opponents gathered several thousand people in Novi Sad on Friday evening for a rally "Serbia, do you hear us?" at the building of the Faculty of Philosophy,

in front of which a police cordon was built.

Student and opposition protests began in Serbia after the collapse of a canopy at the Novi Sad railway station on November 1, 2024, killing 16 people. The situation in Serbian cities escalated in mid-August. As protesters became more agitated during the late hours, they became more confrontational towards law enforcement officers, barricading and blocking access roads.

In August, Vucic said that he was not considering introducing a state of emergency in Serbia. Vucic has also said that the September 1 protests had gathered 16,000-17,000 people in Serbia and that he was offering dialogue to the protesters. UNI

Man killed in shark attack at northern Sydney beach

■ **United News of India**

SYDNEY, SEP 6: A surfer has died after being attacked by a shark at a beach in northern Sydney on Saturday morning. A police statement said that emergency services were called to reports that a man had been critically injured at Long Reef Beach, 16 km northeast of central Sydney, shortly after 10 a.m. on Saturday. He was retrieved from the water and brought to shore, but died at the scene.

Police said the man was bitten by what is believed to have been a large shark. Two sections of a surfboard were recovered and have been sent for examination. Experts will be consulted to determine the species of the shark involved.

Long Reef Beach and the surrounding beaches have been closed until further notice. UNI

Mayank Agarwal

Set To Join Yorkshire On Short-Term Stint

■ **Shashank Kishore**

BENGALURU: Agarwal, who is expected to link up with the squad ahead of their match against Somerset on Taunton starting September 8, will play three matches in all before returning to India in time for the 2025-

26 Ranji Trophy season. This will be Agarwal's first county stint.

He was most-recently in action at the Maharaja T20 Trophy, Karnataka's flagship T20 tournament. Prior to that, he was part of an IPL-title winning campaign with Royal Challengers Bengaluru, after being

signed as a late replacement for the injured Devdutt Padikkal.

Agarwal, 34, is no stranger to England, having been on two tours previously with the Test side - in 2021-22 and for the World Test Championship final against Australia in June 2023. He had been in line to open during

the 2021-22 tour, which India drew 2-2, but was ruled out prior to the series opener due to concussion. He has also been on two tours with the India A team. Agarwal, currently Karnataka's all-format captain, comes with rich first-class experience. He has 8050 runs in 190 innings at an

average of 43.98 with 18 hundreds and 44 half-centuries. In all, Agarwal has hit 1488 Test runs in 36 innings at an average of 41.33, with four Test centuries, including a best of 243 against South Africa. He played the most recent of his 21 Tests in March 2022 against Sri Lanka in Bengaluru.

Other prominent Indians to feature in the UK domestic season this year are Khaleel Ahmed (Essex), Tilak Varma (Hampshire), Yuzvendra Chahal (Northants), Ishan Kishan (Notts) and Sai Kishore (Surrey). Jaydev Unadkat is set to join Sussex this month.

Espncricinfo



AUSTRALIA SPINNER SOPHIE MOLINEUX EYES WORLD CUP DREAM AT CWC25

■ **United News of India**

SYDNEY: Defending champions Australia have locked in Sophie Molineux for their ICC Cricket World Cup 2025 squad.

The seven-time winners, who have ten members of the squad that featured in the previous edition back in 2022, have added the returning left-arm spinner to bolster the spin attack in sub-continent conditions.

The Australian spin attack will now feature Ashleigh Gardner, leg-spinner Alana King, and Georgia Wareham, along with Molineux.

Speaking to cricket.com.au on her road to recovery, Molineux expressed her hope on getting some game time before the Cricket World Cup. But ongoing rehabilitation for a knee injury she sustained last year could keep her away from action, with direct participation in the tournament instead.

"We were aiming to play some games before that World Cup, but the way it's panned out is I'll probably get



into it at the World Cup - no (better) way to rip a Band-Aid off than that," she said.

"Traditionally, I'd bowl and bowl and bowl, and feel really confident and comfortable through bowling a heap of overs each week and playing games at cricket, (but) it's not the case now," Molineux

said.

"So I think I've been able to tap into some different things to prepare for a World Cup and to perform, hopefully, straight away," she said.

Since her debut in 2018, Molineux has played 13 ODIs, taking 23 wickets at an impressive average of 14.39 and

an economy rate of 3.29. Though the journey to recovery has been tough, the spinner is looking forward to her participation in what will be her maiden Cricket World Cup.

"The cherry of a World Cup is definitely something big, I've never been to a one-day World Cup, so the sound of that was always chiming in the back of my head throughout the winter," Molineux said.

"But I think it's (also) just about getting back and feeling good out on the cricket field again, no matter what colours I am in," she added.

Molineux is unlikely to feature in the three-match ODI series against India before the marquee event begins as a precautionary measure with the defending Cricket World Cup champions hoping for her full recovery ahead of the tournament starting September 30.

Australia will take on New Zealand in the first game of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2025 on October 1 at Indore. UNI

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