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Be prepared to deal with adverse weather conditions: CM



■ **HT News Desk**
SRINAGAR, OCT 03: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Friday chaired a high-level meeting at the Civil

Secretariat to review the preparedness of various departments in view of the weather advisory issued by the Meteorological Centre. MET has forecast an active

Western Disturbance likely to affect Jammu and Kashmir from October 4, bringing rain and snowfall to several areas.

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Snow blankets J&K higher reaches, rains lash plains

MeT predicts more rains, snow till Oct 07

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, OCT 03: Several higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir on Friday experienced season's first snowfall, while plains including Srinagar, the summer capital of the region, received light rainfall in the morning.

The season's first snowfall was recorded in Sinthan Top area of Kishtwar, Affarwat and Sunshine peaks of Gulmarg and Gurez Valley today.

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We Targeted Terror, Not Civilians: Rajnath

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today highlighted the 2016 surgical strikes, the 2019 Balakot air strikes, and Operation Sindoor as powerful



examples of India's firm commitment to protecting its people and national sovereignty.

"Whenever India's pride and dignity have been at stake, we have always made no compromises. When we responded to the Pahalgam terror attack, we did not ask the dharm of the terrorists -we targeted terror, not civilians or military establishments," he said at an event organised

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Forces Have Clear Mandate to Avenge Pahalgam Attack: IAF Chief

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh today said India's response to the Pahalgam attack was driven by a clear national directive to make those responsible "pay a price" for killing innocents, and that the resulting operation achieved its objectives swiftly.

"In the aftermath of what happened in Pahalgam, we all know. We took a decision that we have to make them pay a price for whatever they have been doing, to avenge the killing of innocents," Air Chief Marshal Singh said, while addressing the Annual Press Conference here.

"A clear directive, a clear mandate was given to the armed forces, and the Indian Air Force was the prime stakeholder in that — in terms of two major targets out of nine that were chosen," he said.

Describing the three- to four-day conflict with Pakistan Singh said the operation

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India won't show restraint in future: Army Chief

Warns Pak, asks neighbouring country to stop terrorism

■ **United News of India**

ANUPGARH/JAIPUR, OCT 3: In a stern warning to Pakistan, Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi said on Friday that the neighbouring country should stop sponsoring terrorism on its soil if it wants to retain its place on the world map.

The Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) also said the restraint shown by New



Delhi during Operation Sindoor would not be repeated in case of a future military conflict and urged Indian soldiers to remain poised for action.

"India, as a country, is fully prepared this time. And this time, it will not show the restraint that it showed during Operation Sindoor 1.0. This time we will take a step forward and act in a manner that will make

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LG Reviews Security Situation In Ladakh

Schools Up To Class 8 Reopen After 9-Days Closure

■ **HT News Network**

LEH, OCT 3: Ladakh Lt Governor Kavinder Gupta on Friday reviewed the security situation in the Union territory as all schools up to class 8 reopened in violence-hit Leh after nine-days closure, officials said.

Barring prohibitory orders banning assembly of five or more persons and suspension of mobile internet services, most of the restrictions have gradually been lifted in the town following

improvement in the overall situation, the officials said.

"Lt Governor chaired a high-level security review meeting today (Friday) to assess the prevailing law and order and overall security scenario in the Union Territory," his office said in a post on X.

The officials said Gupta convened the meeting in Leh shortly after his return from Jammu where he had gone on previous day to attend a religious event.

The curfew was imposed in Leh town

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116 Cars Transported To Kashmir In Maiden Auto Freight Train

■ **HT News Network**

ANANTNAG, OCT 03: In a major boost to freight connectivity, Northern Railway on Friday dispatched its first-ever automobile rake to the Kashmir Valley, carrying 116 Maruti Suzuki vehicles from Manesar in Haryana to Anantnag district. The new service is being

described as a significant step in linking Kashmir more closely with the country's automobile and freight networks while providing a faster and safer channel for transporting vehicles.

According to officials, the special rake left from Maruti Suzuki's in-plant Gati Shakti Terminal in Manesar and covered

ed a distance of nearly 850 kilometres in about 45 hours before arriving at the newly operational Anantnag goods shed.

Among the models transported in this maiden consignment were the Brezza, Dzire, WagonR and S-Presso. Railway authorities said the service

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J&K Floods: J&K Bank contributes Rs 4.10 Cr to CM's Relief Fund

CEO hands over cheque to CM Omar Abdullah

■ **HT News Desk**

SRINAGAR, OCT 03: Jammu and Kashmir Bank Friday contributed an amount of Rs 4 crore and 10 lakh to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to support ongoing relief and rehabilitation measures for the people affected by the recent floods in the Jammu and Kashmir.



The Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, along with members of the Board of Directors, handed over a cheque of Rs 4.10 crore to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at the Civil Secretariat here.

The Chief Minister appreciated the significant contribution of

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MEA slams Pak over PoJK protests

Calls unrest a result of oppression

■ **HT News Network**

NEW DELHI, OCT 03: India on Friday strongly criticised Pakistan amid ongoing mass protests in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK), calling the unrest a "natural consequence" of Islamabad's oppressive policies and systemic exploitation of the region.

Addressing the media, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "We have seen reports on protests in several areas of Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir, including

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LA Session: Court to decide MLA Doda's participation: Speaker

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, OCT 3: J&K Legislative Assembly Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather on Friday said that the attendance of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Mehraj Malik in the upcoming session of the Assembly depends on whether the court grants him permission.

Speaking to reporters, the Speaker said his attendance depends on whether the court will grant him permission. "It depends on whether he gets permission or not. For that, I think he would need to approach the court. If the government grants permission, he should come-it would be good," Rather said.

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Skill dev must translate into livelihood opportunities: CS

Reviews CAP for skill development across J&K

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, OCT 03: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) for skill development across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting focused on framing a comprehensive strategy aimed at building future ready workforce, skill professionals, enhancing



employability, and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education, Shantmanu; Principal Secretary Finance, Santosh D Vaidya; Secretary School Education, Ram Niwas Sharma; Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD), Kumar Rajeev Ranjan; Managing

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MEERAS MAHAL MUSEUM SOPORE

Yous-e-Meeras

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A Tribute to Late Atiqo Bano's Contributions through Meeras Mahal Museum

Organized by Majlisun Nisa, Jammu & Kashmir in collaboration with Meeras Mahal Museum Sopore and Adbee Markaz Kamraz

Venue: Meeras Mahal Museum, Highland Colony Opposite Govt. ITI, Sopore
Date: 5 October 2025 Time: 10:30 am

Muzamil Bashir
President
Meeras Mahal Museum

Dr. Rafeeq Masoodi
Advisor
Majlisun Nisa J&K Sopore

Shabnum Tilgami
Gen. Secretary
Adbee Markaz Kamraz

For Enquiries please call 9419038953, 9622741287

Div Com Kashmir Reviews Preparedness, Mitigation Plan in view of Weather Advisory

Directs Departments for Operational Readiness, Deployment of Machinery for Snow clearance

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCT 03: In view of the recent weather forecast predicting rain and snowfall from 5th to 7th October issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, convened an urgent meeting with officials from key departments to review preparedness and mitigation plan. The meeting was attended by HoDs & representatives from R&B, MED, BEACON, NHIDCL, Urban Local Bodies, IMD, and the Horticulture & Marketing Planning Department. During the meeting, Divisional Commissioner instructed concerned departments to



ensure immediate deployment of personnel and machinery at critical locations to facilitate swift snow clearance. He stressed the importance of completing the tendering process for the winter snow



clearance plan by October 31, and directed the deployment of trained and experienced machinery operators to avoid damage to road infrastructure. He urged use of High Molecular Weight Polyethylene plas-



tic in snow plows to enhance efficiency and minimize road wear. He laid focus on the timely restoration of road connectivity to remote and border areas, including the Mughal Road, which serves as a crucial link

during winter months. Meanwhile, Div Com also directed the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) department to ensure advance stocking of ration, LPG, and petroleum products in remote

border areas. Additionally, he emphasized the need for advance distribution of October's ration to consumers and instructed that a 15-day buffer stock of LPG be maintained in the Kashmir Val-

ley to prevent shortages. To facilitate the movement of goods, he recommended optimal use of the Mughal Road for the transportation of LPG and dispatch of apple produce. Director of Horticulture Marketing & Planning was advised to encourage fruit growers and traders to utilize railway services for apple transportation, ensuring faster and more economical movement. To ensure coordinated and timely response to any weather-induced emergency, the Divisional Commissioner directed the immediate operationalization of the Divisional Control Room for better coordination and synergy among field departments.

Khyber Cement Observes 5th Swachhata Hi Seva, Pledges Cleaner, Greener Kashmir

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 03: Khyber Cement proudly celebrated the fifth edition of Swachhata Hi Seva 2025, under the aegis of the Indian Bureau of Mines, Dehradun Region, and the Directorate General of Mines Safety, Srinagar Region. The initiative, themed "Let's Build a Cleaner Tomorrow," commenced on 17th September 2025 and concluded on 2nd October 2025, on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. The program began with a Swachhata pledge ceremony at Khyber Cement's factory premises, led by Sri Ramachandran, Deputy Director of Mines Safety, Srinagar Region, reflecting a shared commitment to cleanliness, sustainability, and social responsibility. Over two weeks, Khyber Cement, alongside local schools, administration, and nearby villagers, undertook a range of activities including cleanliness drives, health awareness campaigns,



and plantation initiatives. On 30th September, a plantation drive at the Green Belt around the Khyber Cement factory premises saw the planting of diverse tree species, with the active participation of the Khyber Cement team and locals. Riaz Trambo, Director of Operations, said, "Through initiatives like Swachhata Hi Seva, Khyber Cement has always been at the forefront, leading such drives that make a tangible difference in the communities we serve. We are proud to not only organise these activities but also actively engage employees, local schools, and villagers, fostering awareness and participation. Our commitment goes beyond business as we aim to set a benchmark in social responsibility and sustainable development." Myser Ahmed Khan, Chief of Mines, added, "Khyber Cement's initiatives demonstrate that corporate responsibility can drive meaningful change. Through programs like Swachhata Hi Seva, we are fostering a cleaner, greener, and more prosperous Kashmir." Swachhata Hi Seva, launched by the Government of India, is a nationwide initiative aimed at promoting cleanliness, sanitation, and sustainable practices across communities. Khyber Cement has consistently been at the forefront of such government-led programs, ensuring active engagement of local communities. Through this edition of Swachhata Hi Seva, the company reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable development, social responsibility, and community growth, demonstrating that its impact goes far beyond cement production, contributing to a cleaner, greener, and thriving Jammu & Kashmir.

IRRT Kashmir Organised Multifaith Dialogue In Srinagar, Calls for Peace And Unity

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 03: The Islamic Relief and Research Trust (IRRT) Kashmir held a Multifaith Dialogue Conference at Tagore Hall Srinagar. The program was organized on the eve of Hindu and Muslim festivals and brought together leaders and scholars from different religions. The conference was led by Mirwaiz Central Kashmir Syed Abdul Lateef and was inaugurated by Mufti Azam J&K, Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam. Advocate Abdul Rashid Hanjura, Chairman of the Islamic Relief and Research Trust (IRRT) Kashmir, welcomed all participants in his opening remarks and emphasized that the primary objective of the Multifaith Dialogue is to provide a shared platform where

people of different religions can engage in open conversation, foster mutual understanding and strengthen respect among communities. He said, "Our purpose is to strengthen peace, brotherhood and understanding in society. At a time when divisions are growing in the world, dialogue is the best way to remove mistrust and promote goodwill. This initiative must not stop here but continue at schools, colleges and community levels so that future generations grow up with values of humanity and tolerance." Leaders from different faiths spoke at the event. Among them were Dr. Mazhar Hussain from Hyderabad, Jagmohan Singh Raina (Sikh Coordination Committee), Dr. Philip John (Christian



priest), Prof. Rattan Lal Hangloo (former Vice-Chancellor, USA, online) and several scholars and social activists including Dr. Hameed Naseem Rafiabadi, Mou-lana Showkat Hussain Keng, PSAJK President G.N Var, Dr. Shagufta Rather and Fayaz Ahmad Andrabi.

Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam said, "Religion should unite people and encourage service to humanity. Diversity is a strength not a weakness." Jagmohan Singh Raina added, "All religions teach compassion and kindness. We must spread this message at the grassroots

level." Christian priest Dr. Philip John stressed, "Children should learn the values of peace and coexistence in schools and colleges." Prof. Hangloo, speaking online, said, "India's strength is its diversity. Such dialogues help to keep our unity strong." The program was conducted by Dr. Wahid Raza and a vote of thanks was presented by Shamshad Kralawari, General Secretary of IRRT. At the end of the conference, all participants agreed that Multifaith dialogue must continue regularly, not only in big meetings but also in schools and local communities. The event ended with a common pledge to work for peace, respect and harmony among all people. (NTK)

District Administration Kulgam Felicitates Media Persons at Conclusion of Seva Parv

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, OCT 03: In recognition of their valuable contributions, the District Administration Kulgam today felicitated media persons representing various media houses during the concluding ceremony of the Seva Parv campaign. The event, held to mark the successful culmination of the campaign, acknowledged the efforts of the press in providing extensive and impactful coverage of developmental programs and public welfare initiatives across the district. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commission-



er Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, lauded the media's constructive role in disseminating information, raising awareness, and highlighting both the achievements and the challenges faced by the community "The media, as the

fourth pillar of democracy, plays a vital role in promoting transparency, ensuring accountability, and acting as a bridge between the administration and the public," said the DC. He further emphasized that media has the power

to counter misinformation, raise public consciousness, and contribute to positive societal transformation. The Deputy Commissioner assured the gathering of the administration's continued support and cooperation, urging journalists to uphold the values of fairness, responsibility, and ethical journalism. The ceremony concluded with a note of appreciation for the media's proactive engagement throughout the Seva Parv, reinforcing the importance of collaborative governance and effective communication in shaping a better future for all.

100 Bags of Ration Seized in Pulwama, One Arrested

■ HT News Desk

PULWAMA, OCT 03: Jammu and Kashmir Police have seized 100 bags of suspected ration from the Shallina Tokuna area of Awantipora in South Kashmir's Pulwama district and arrested one individual in connection with the case. The accused has been identified as Fayaz Ahmad Dar, associated with TAJAZIZ & CO, a private food supplies firm. Police officials confirmed that Dar has been taken into custody and is currently lodged behind bars while investigations continue. According to police sources, the recov-

ered ration is suspected to be part of irregular or unauthorized distribution. The case has been registered under FIR No. 207/2025 at Police Station Rishipora, and further investigation is underway to determine the origin and intended destination of the seized goods. Meanwhile, the family members of the accused have come forward in his defense, claiming that Fayaz Ahmad Dar is a private Rice dealer, not a government employee or dealer. They stated that he holds a valid Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) registration certificate, issued on November 15, 2023, under User ID 108278, which legally allows him

to operate a private food business. Speaking to the media, the accused's wife Roziya Jan clarified that she is separate from the ancestral family and has no association with the family regarding this business activities. She further distanced her husband from the rest of the family matter, emphasizing that her husband's own role as a dealer is entirely independent and unrelated to the rest of the family and is legal in all respects. Police authorities have said that all angles of the case are being looked into, including whether the seized ration was being misused or diverted for illegal sale.

EJAC Vice President Farooq Khan Bereaved; Cousin Brother Ghulam Rasool Passes Away

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 03: The Mechanical Irrigation & Flood Control Employees Federation (MI&FCEF) has expressed its profound grief and sorrow over the sad demise of Ghulam Rasool Khan, resident of Bilal Colony, Soura, Srinagar, who passed away on 1st October 2025. The deceased was the cousin brother of EJAC Vice President and MI&FCEF Chairman, Farooq Khan. A delegation of the Mechanical Irrigation & Flood Control Employees Federation, led by the Federation's Chief Spokesperson Farooq Malik, Moulvi Shabir Ahmad Khanday, Bilal Ahmad, Riyaz Ahmad and other members visited the bereaved family to extend heartfelt condolences. The delegation expressed solidarity with the Khan family, particularly with Chairman Farooq Khan, in this hour of grief. On behalf of the Federation, prayers were offered for the departed soul, seeking Jannat-ul-Firdous and magfirat for the deceased. The delegation also prayed for sabri jameel (patience and strength) to the bereaved family members, especially the sons and his close relatives of the deceased, including Mohd Younis Khan, Amir Khan, Umar Khan, Mohd Sultan Khan, Bashir Ahmed Khan, Shabir Khan Riyaz Khan, Ajaz Khan, Ishfaq Khan, Adil Khan, Mohd Yousuf Khan, Rafeeq Khan and others. The Federation stands united with the Khan family in this moment of irreparable loss.



Simplify procedures, adopt people-friendly measures for benefit of Senior Citizens, PwDs: Sakeena Itoo

Reviews performance, functioning of Srinagar/Jammu CRCs

HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 03: Minister for Health & Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today emphasized on the need to simplify procedures and adopt people-friendly measures for the benefit of Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

The Minister made these remarks while chairing a review meeting to review performance and functioning of Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Srinagar/Jammu at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare department,

Sarmad Hafeez; Directors of Social Welfare Kashmir and Jammu, Director CRC Srinagar/Jammu, Executive Director State Rehabilitation Council J&K, Chairman & Managing Director Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), District Social Welfare Officers and other concerned officers. The outstation officers attended the meeting through virtual mode.

Underscoring the importance of ease in access, the Minister directed the concerned departments to streamline the process of issuing disability certificates and providing assistive devices so that the maximum number



of beneficiaries can avail the schemes being implemented

through CRC.

She further directed CRC

authorities to organize awareness camps beyond district

headquarters, ensuring that people in remote areas and far-flung are made aware of the facilities and services available.

Stressing on the importance of quality assurance, Minister Sakeena instructed CRC and ALIMCO to conduct rigorous quality checks of all assistive equipments before distribution to beneficiaries.

The Minister also highlighted the challenges faced by people with disabilities in accessing diagnostic centres operating from upper floors, urging departments to address these infrastructural barriers. She called upon the Social Welfare department to explore ways to support those

unable to obtain or update their Aadhaar cards, so that they are not deprived of pensions and other welfare benefits.

On the issue of empowerment, the Minister advocated for extending loan facilities to persons with disabilities to help them become self-reliant and economically independent.

"Government has to do more in this sector. The people need us, and it is our responsibility to reach their doorsteps with support, care and dignity," she said.

Earlier, representatives of CRC Srinagar & Jammu and ALIMCO gave detailed presentations on their functioning and achievements so far.

District Judiciary Srinagar organizes cleanliness drive under 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign

HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 03: District Judiciary Srinagar, in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar, today organized a special cleanliness drive within the premises of the District Court Srinagar under the banner of the nationwide campaign "Swachhata Hi Seva".

The initiative was undertaken as part of the nationwide efforts to spread the message of cleanliness, hygiene, and environmental consciousness, and to reaffirm building a clean and responsible society.

The programme not only focused on maintaining the sanctity of the court premises but also sought to inspire a culture of collective responsibility among those present, reminding all that the principles of justice are best upheld in an environment of discipline, orderliness, and cleanliness.



The drive was held under the chairmanship of Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, Tasleem Arief and was conducted under the supervision of Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Sajad Ur Rehman.

On this occasion, Tasleem Arief symbolically marked the importance of environmental protection by planting a sapling within the premises of the District Court Srinagar. The plantation ceremony was carried out in the presence of Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Chief Administrative Officer, District Court Srinagar, Rubina Akhter, officials, Legal Aid Defense Counsels, Para Legal Volunteers of DLSA Srinagar, and the dedicated safai karamcharis who play a vital role in ensuring cleanliness on a daily basis.

Cooperative Deptt hosts One-Day stakeholders meet at Jammu

Landmark MoUs signed to strengthen Cooperative sector in J&K

HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 03: The Cooperative department today hosted a One-Day Stakeholders Meet at Convention Centre here to resonate the true meaning of 'Sahakar Se Samridhhi' (Prosperity Through Cooperation).

The meet was graced by Commissioner Secretary, Cooperative Department, Babila Rakwal as the Chief Guest.

Registrar Cooperative Societies J&K, Mohammad Shafiq Chak; Additional Registrar Cooperative Societies, Jammu, Bal Krishan; Joint Registrars, Jammu Division, officers from NABARD, IIM, NCDC, allied departments, MD and Chairperson of UNATI, Agri Allied and Marketing Multistate Cooperative Society Limited were also present on the occasion.

The event also witnessed participation from representatives of three prominent Multi State Cooperative Societies like National Cooperative Organics Ltd (NCOL), Bharatiya Beej Sahkari Samiti Ltd (BBSL) & Na-

tional Cooperative Export Ltd (NCEL) AND -MD of Unati Agri Allied and Marketing Multistate Coop Society Limited who joined for the signing of landmark Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with various agencies. This initiative is seen as a major step towards realizing the Union Government's vision for a robust cooperative ecosystem.

In her keynote address, the Commissioner Secretary stated that the successful signing of these MoUs is a true demonstration of our collective will. She also appreciated the Cooperative Department for facilitating the formation of Apex-level federations within such a short span of time.

The Commissioner Secretary further said that these federations, through their collaboration with the three Multistate Cooperatives, will play a vital role in expanding business opportunities, strengthening value chains, and ensuring benefits reach farmers at the grassroots level.

The formal exchange of MoUs,



officialiated by the Commissioner Secretary, marked the beginning

of new cooperative alliance. The agreements were signed between

the apex cooperative bodies of Kashmir and Jammu, represented by the Registrar, Cooperative Societies, J&K, and the Additional Registrar, Jammu, along with officials from the three multi-state cooperatives, BBSL, NCOL, & NCEL.

Also, an MOU was signed between Centre for Cooperative Management, Jammu represented by its Principal, Preeti Sharma, Joint Registrar (Special) and FICCI FLO represented by its Chairperson, Aarti Choudhari. The MoU will facilitate women entrepreneurship, digital and financial literacy and exposure visits for the participants.

Earlier, the Commissioner Secretary also visited various stalls installed by FPOs, PACS, UNATI, Cooperatives etc. She enquired about the products exhibited during the program.

Later, the Commissioner Secretary also distributed the certificates among the young achievers and gave mementos to the representatives of NCEL, NCOL, BBSL and FICCI.

DC Bandipora visits Zalwan, reviews Waste Management Issues

HT News Desk / DIPR

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 03: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today visited the Zalwan area of Bandipora to take first-hand appraisal of waste management issues and to explore solutions for sustainable environmental practices.

During the visit, the DC held detailed interactions with officers of the Municipal Council Bandipora, Tehsildar Bandipora, officials from the Social Forestry Department, Pollution Control Committee, and local residents. The deliberations revolved around tackling challenges of solid waste disposal, segregation at source, recycling

practices, and the need for strengthening existing infrastructure.

The DC directed the concerned departments to formulate a robust mechanism for door-to-door collection and scientific segregation of waste, besides identifying suitable locations for safe disposal. She stressed the importance of raising awareness among the public regarding proper waste management, discouraging single-use plastics, and adopting eco-friendly practices.

She also instructed the Municipal Council to ensure regular sanitation drives in the locality and called upon the Social Forestry Department to create more green zones in and around

Zalwan to act as natural buffers against pollution.

Assuring the locals that their genuine concerns will be addressed in a time-bound manner, the DC highlighted that community participation is vital to devise long-term solutions. She encouraged the residents to form local committees to work in tandem with the administration for effective implementation of waste management strategies.

The DC underscored that sustainable waste management is not only essential for safeguarding the environment but also for ensuring public health and improving the overall quality of life in the district.

DC Bandipora visits Zalwan, reviews Waste Management Issues

HT News Desk / DIPR

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 03: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today conducted an extensive visit to the Zalwan area of Bandipora to review and assess the issues pertaining to waste management and environmental protection in the locality.

During the visit, the DC interacted with officers of the Municipal Council Bandipora, Tehsildar Bandipora, officials from the Social Forestry Department, Pollution Control Committee, and local residents. The discussions centered on devising effective measures to address community concerns related to solid waste disposal, landfill management, recycling of non-biodegradable materials, and scientific methods of waste segregation.

The DC directed the concerned officers to chalk out a comprehensive action plan for door-to-door collection of household waste, proper segregation at source, and the identification of suitable sites for safe and scientific disposal. She also emphasized strict monitoring of sanitation services to ensure that the waste is not dumped in open spaces, water bodies, or forest areas, thereby safeguarding the fragile ecology of the district.

Highlighting the importance of people's involvement, the DC urged residents to adopt environment-friendly practices, avoid single-use plastics, and actively participate in cleanliness drives. She also encouraged the formation of local committees to strengthen coordination with the administration in implementing waste management strategies at the grassroots level.

The DC further instructed the Social Forestry Department to intensify plantation activities in the area to create natural green buffers, improve air quality, and enhance the overall environmental balance. The Pollution Control Committee was directed to carry out regular inspections and awareness campaigns to sensitize people about the adverse effects of unsanitary waste disposal on health and environment.

Assuring the locals that their genuine issues would be resolved in a time-bound manner, Indu Kanwal Chib reiterated the administration's commitment to sustainable development. She said that effective waste management is essential not only for the protection of natural resources but also for ensuring public health, sanitation, and improved living standards in the district.

DC Ganderbal reviews physical/ financial progress under Distt. Capex Budget 2025-26, CDF

HT News Desk / DIPR

GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 03: To assess the pace of development and ensure efficient utilization of resources, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting on the physical and financial progress achieved under the District Capex Budget 2025-26 and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) scheme.

At the outset, the DC sought sector-wise status reports from concerned officers, covering critical departments including Roads & Buildings, Education, Health, Urban Development, Jal Shakti, KPDC, Irrigation & Flood Control, Ground Water Division, Youth Services & Sports, Municipal Council, and Rural Development Department, besides ongoing and new works under the Aspirational Block Development Programme (ABDP) and Aspirational Panchayat Development Programme (APDP).

The meeting was informed about



the progress of ongoing works and expenditure made so far. The DC stressed the importance of timely administrative approvals, technical sanctions, and estimation of works to avoid delays in execution. He called upon the officers to resolve bottlenecks at the departmental level through better coordination and close monitoring.

While reviewing projects under the CDF, the DC emphasized that

these works, being constituency-specific, must be taken up on priority basis to ensure their completion within fixed timelines. He directed departments to expedite allotments, initiate tendering processes at the earliest, and ensure that the benefits of developmental initiatives percolate to the grassroots.

The DC underscored the importance of quality control and accountability, directing officers

to strictly adhere to standard operating procedures and maintain transparency in financial transactions. He instructed Block Development Officers (BDOs) to submit detailed reports of expenditure under spillover works to his office immediately, so that funds are properly reconciled and reallocated wherever necessary.

During the meeting, the DC reiterated that timely project de-

livery is key to building public trust in governance and directed all line departments to maintain strict compliance with set deadlines. He further impressed upon officers to enhance field monitoring, carry out regular site inspections, and ensure visible progress on the ground.

Among others, the meeting was attended by the Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, Dy. CEO JAKEDA, Dy. Registrar Cooperatives, Executive Engineers of PHE, I&FC, R&B, KPDC, Ground Water, REW and R&B, besides District Youth Services & Sports Officer and CEO Municipal Council Ganderbal.

The DC concluded by reaffirming that the administration's prime focus remains on time-bound execution of projects, optimal utilization of funds, and inclusive development in line with the aspirations of the people of Ganderbal.

Satish Sharma flags off group of progressive farmers from Chamb for exposure visit to KVK R.S Pura Jammu

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 3: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma today flagged off a group of progressive farmers on one-day exposure visit under Promotion of Oilseed under HADP scheme.

Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta; Chief Agriculture Officer Jammu, Manohar Lal Sharma; Agriculture Chemist, SMS (DL), SDAO Akhnoor, ASCO Akhnoor, besides JAEs and AEs of Sub Division Akhnoor were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that promotion and area expansion of oilseeds is extremely important to reduce the country's dependence on edible oil imports. He added that for this purpose, farmers need extensive technical and scientific training



so that they can adopt modern practices effectively and increase production.

Satish Sharma emphasized that such exposure visits will help bridge the gap between scientific research

and field-level application.

In his address to farmers, Director Agriculture Jammu high-

lighted the need for diversification of farming activities to enhance farmers' incomes. He said that along with oilseed promotion, farmers will also be given exposure and technical training on mushroom cultivation, keeping in view the upcoming mushroom season, so that farmers can supplement oilseed production with mushroom farming and move towards doubling their income.

Pertinently, under this tour a group of 62 farmers from Chamb Constituency, Sub Division Akhnoor, accompanied by three officers from the Department of Agriculture, Jammu, are participating in the visit to Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), R. S Pura Jammu.

The programme aims to familiarize the farmers with modern technologies, scientific interventions, and best practices in oilseed cultivation, thereby enhancing their knowledge and capacity to adopt innovative methods at the field level.

DC Poonch reviews progress of works in Aspirational Block Mankote

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

POONCH, OCTOBER 3: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today reviewed the ongoing developmental activities under the Aspirational Block Programme (ABP) of the Government of India here at a meeting held in the Conference Hall of DC Office.



Focusing on Aspirational Block Mankote, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed key performance indicators across crucial sectors including health and nutrition, education, agriculture and allied services, basic infrastructure, sanitation, drinking water supply, tap water connectivity (Jal Jeevan Mission), housing under PMAY-G and social development.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized strict compliance with programme guidelines and called for timely data updates on official Portal for transparency and real-time monitoring.

Special focus was laid on education sector, with the directions to Chief Education Officer to engage proactively with school heads to on improving student retention and transition rates.

The DC urged all line departments to bridge performance gaps with targeted and immediate interventions. He also highlighted the necessity of resource optimization and encouraged departments to make strategic investments aimed at the modernization and integrated development of the aspirational block.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Pankaj Magotra; Chief Planning Officer Mohammad Iqbal Zargar; Assistant Commissioner Development Shakeel Ahmed; Chief Medical Officer Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan; Chief Education Officer Mukhtar Ahmed; Chief Agriculture Officer, Yog Raj Salathia; XEN JPDCI Aftab Ahmed; XEN Jal Shakti, Lead District Manager (LDM) Banks; Deputy CEO, Block Development Officers (BDOs), Aspirational Block Programme Fellow, Ajaz Ahmed as well as concerned Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs), Junior Engineers (JEs), TSWO, Veterinary Assistant Surgeons (VAS) and other officials.

Induction Programme for MBBS Freshers held at GMC Udhampur

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 03: An Induction Programme for the Freshers Batch (2025-26) of MBBS students was today held at the makeshift campus of Government Medical College & Associated Hospital (GMC & AH) Udhampur amid enthusiasm and solemnity.

The programme commenced with the traditional lighting of the ceremonial lamp by Principal Prof. (Dr.) Parmod Kalsotra, accompanied by senior faculty members including Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sharma (MEU Coordinator), Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sadhu (HoD Anaesthesia), Dr. Gurmeet Kour (HoD PSM), Dr. Nishu Priya (HoD OBG), Dr. Lokesh Gupta (FA/CAO), and Dr. Sanjeev Gupta (Medical Superintendent, AH GMC Udhampur), besides other faculty members.

In his welcome address, Principal Prof. Dr. Parmod Kalsotra congratulated the new entrants on embarking upon the noble journey of medical education. He apprised them about the structure of the MBBS programme, the challenges and responsibilities that lie ahead, and the importance of discipline, empathy, and ethical values in shaping a competent healthcare professional. He further emphasized the role of GMC Udhampur in providing quality medical education and healthcare to the people of the region.

This was followed by the symbolic White Coat and Stethoscope Ceremony, marking the formal initiation of the students into the medical profession. The students also took the solemn Charak Shapath, pledging to uphold the highest standards of medical ethics and service to humanity.

A special interaction session was organized with the parents of the freshers, during which the Principal encouraged open dialogue and two-way feedback, assuring them of the college's commitment to academic excellence, safety, and overall development of their wards.

Faculty members, while addressing the gathering, highlighted the importance of perseverance, continuous learning, and compassion in the field of medicine. They also motivated the students to participate actively in academic, co-curricular, and research activities to become well-rounded professionals.

The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks and a message of collective commitment by the administration and faculty to support the students in their academic journey. The induction programme not only welcomed the fresh batch but also instilled in them the values of dedication, responsibility, and service towards society.

DC Reasi approves 344 cases under Mission YUVA to boost youth Entrepreneurship

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

REASI, OCTOBER 03: In a major push towards youth empowerment and economic self-reliance, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Reasi, Nidhi Malik, today chaired the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) meeting and approved 344 cases under the Mission YUVA scheme aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and skill-based livelihoods.

The meeting commenced with an extensive discussion on applications submitted through the Skill and Business Development Unit (SBDU). Each case was subjected to detailed scrutiny and evaluation in terms of feasibility, financial viability, and sustainability. After careful consideration, the committee led by the Deputy Commissioner approved the cases for financial assistance and institutional support to enable aspiring entrepreneurs to establish and expand their ventures.

Speaking on the occasion, DC Reasi highlighted that Mission YUVA is a flagship initiative designed to nurture youth talent, enhance employability skills, and provide financial and handholding support to create a strong ecosystem of entrepreneurship in the district. She emphasized that



the scheme is not merely about providing loans or assistance but about ensuring that the youth are guided, mentored, and monitored for long-term success.

She called upon all line departments and financial institutions to work in close synergy to maximize the scheme's outreach and ensure its effective implementation at the grassroots level. Directions were issued to banks for speedy processing, timely disbursement of sanctioned cases, and proper facilitation of beneficiaries.

The DC further stressed on creating a robust post-approval monitoring mechanism, where district officers, industry experts, and bank representatives would regularly track the progress of supported ventures. She underscored the need for follow-up training, capacity-building workshops, and mentorship programmes to ensure that young entrepreneurs overcome challenges and establish sustainable enterprises.

During the meeting, departments were also directed to intensify awareness campaigns about Mission YUVA so that more eligible youth from rural and far-flung areas could benefit from the programme.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Reasi, Sukhdev Singh Samyal; District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Sachin Sharma; Assistant Director Employment Annie Vaid; representatives from banks, District Industries Centre; and other concerned officials.

The DC concluded by reaffirming the district administration's commitment to channelizing youth potential into productive ventures, reducing unemployment, and steering Reasi towards becoming a hub of entrepreneurship and innovation.

DDC Poonch reviews allotment of works under current year District Capex, CDF

Stresses 100% estimation within one week, expediting allotment and tendering process

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

POONCH, OCTOBER 3: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma, today chaired a detailed meeting in his office chamber to review the progress and status of works sanctioned under the District Capex Budget and Constituency Development Fund (CDF) for the financial year 2025-26.

At the outset, the functionaries of concerned departments

presented a sector-wise review of new works proposed under the Capex and CDF budgets. It was informed that a total of 2521 works have been proposed under the District Capex Budget, of which 2383 works have received Administrative Approval (AA) and 170 works have already been allotted. The projects cover multiple critical sectors including Irrigation, Roads & Buildings (R&B), Rural Engineering Wing (REW), Public Health Engineering (PHE), Jammu Power Distribution Corporation

Ltd. (JPDC), and Ground Water Division Jammu.

The DDC laid strong emphasis on achieving 100% estimation of all proposed works within one week, particularly instructing the Executive Engineer, REW Poonch, to prioritize and expedite the estimation process. He directed all executing agencies to speed up the allotment of the remaining works and complete the tendering process within fixed timelines, ensuring that developmental projects do not face unnecessary de-

lays.

Reviewing the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) works, the meeting was informed that 244 works have been proposed under CDF across all three constituencies of the district, of which estimations for 144 works have been completed and 102 works have been accorded administrative approval. The DDC instructed officers to ensure 100% estimation under CDF at the earliest and to immediately initiate the tendering process so that execu-

tion on the ground can begin without delay.

The DDC underlined that timely completion of administrative and technical procedures is crucial for the smooth and effective execution of developmental works aimed at improving public infrastructure, basic services, and the overall quality of life in the district. He warned against laxity and stressed on strict adherence to deadlines, assuring that regular reviews will be held to monitor the pace of progress.

GDC Ramban organises awareness programme on JK Samadhan, JK Sehat Initiative

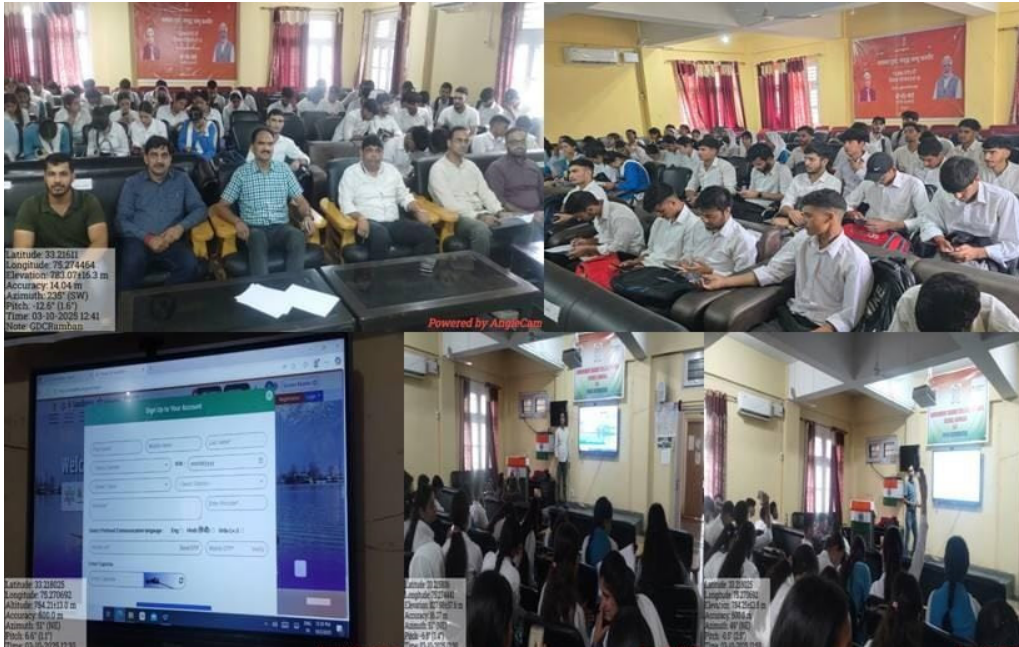
■ HT News Desk / DIPR

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 3: Government Degree College (GDC) Ramban today organised an awareness programme on JK Samadhan and JK Sehat initiatives, in line with the directions of Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan. The event was coordinated by the Department of Computer Applications in collaboration with the College Skill Committee and witnessed enthusiastic participation of students and faculty members.

In his inaugural address, College Principal Prof. Satish Kumar highlighted the significance of digital governance and citizen-centric online initiatives launched by the Government of Jammu &

Kashmir. He noted that these platforms not only bring transparency, accessibility, and efficiency in service delivery but also empower citizens to avail services without bureaucratic hurdles. He urged the students to act as change agents by spreading awareness about these initiatives in their respective communities.

The resource persons of the programme — Prof. Aditya Sharma (HoD Computer Applications), Dr. Anuj Gupta (HoD Geography), and Dr. Vishal Baloria (HoD History) — delivered detailed sessions on the objectives, features, and long-term benefits of JK Samadhan and JK Sehat. They also provided a step-by-step live demonstration of the registration and application process on these portals, making the sessions interactive and easy



to follow for the students.

A special focus was laid on JK Sehat, a health insurance scheme aimed at providing free and cashless treatment to citizens, and JK Samadhan, an e-governance grievance redressal platform that ensures timely resolution of public complaints. The speakers stressed that awareness and mass participation are key to maximizing the benefits of these initiatives.

Following the knowledge sessions, an on-spot registration drive was launched where students successfully enrolled themselves on both platforms under the guidance of the faculty. They were further motivated to assist their families, neighbours, and community members in registering for these

initiatives, thereby acting as facilitators of digital inclusion at the grassroots level.

The programme concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Prof. Arjun Gupta, who appreciated the efforts of the organising departments and lauded the active participation of students. Other dignitaries present included Prof. Raj Kumar Gupta (HoD Chemistry) and Prof. Sanjay Kumar Katal (HoD Physics) along with several faculty members.

The awareness drive not only created greater understanding of government digital initiatives among students but also reinforced the college's role as a catalyst in spreading digital literacy and promoting citizen welfare schemes in Ramban district.

HT EDITORIAL

Plug loopholes in public transport system of Kashmir

With the introduction of smart city buses and e-rickshaws the public transport system has improved in Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir valley but still then a lot more needs to be done. There are many loopholes in the public transport system and the same need to be plugged at the earliest. Once the loopholes are plugged then the public transport system in this part of the world would be up to mark.

Mini-buses and auto rickshaws are important components of the public transport system in Kashmir and the same need to be up to date. There are scores of mini-buses and auto rickshaws that have outlived their life but still then they continue to run on the roads of the different districts as well as towns of the valley. Condition of these mini-buses and auto rickshaws is deplorable and they are a hazard for the people who board these vehicles of public importance.

The office of Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir and ARTOs of the different districts carry out regular inspection of the private vehicles from time to time in order to ensure that the people don't take the law into their own hands. Usually no such parameters are followed with respect to public transport vehicles and in such cases little action is taken against the motorists found to be violating norms. It is important that the corrective measures are taken so that lives of people are saved and there is no harm to them.

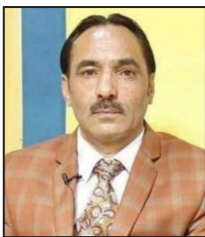
Given the fact that battery operated rickshaws have become a hit among the people it is imperative that such autos are provided to the people who are driving the old auto rickshaws. As far as mini-buses are concerned the authorities should take a call about the operation of this mode of public transport and they need to be replaced. There is a general complaint from the people that these mini-buses move at a snail's pace and a lot of time is wasted.

The mini-bus drivers as well as conductors need to be rehabilitated in a proper manner so that they are not pushed to the wall and live their lives in a peaceful and dignified manner. There is a need to operate the e-rickshaws in the different interior areas of Srinagar and other districts of Kashmir. In such a scenario e-rickshaws should be provided to the mini-bus drivers and conductors through soft loans with easy instalments. This would rehabilitate the transporters and provide affordable means of transport to the masses.

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Atiqa Bano (Behn Ji)

A BEACON OF KASHMIRI CULTURE AND HERITAGE

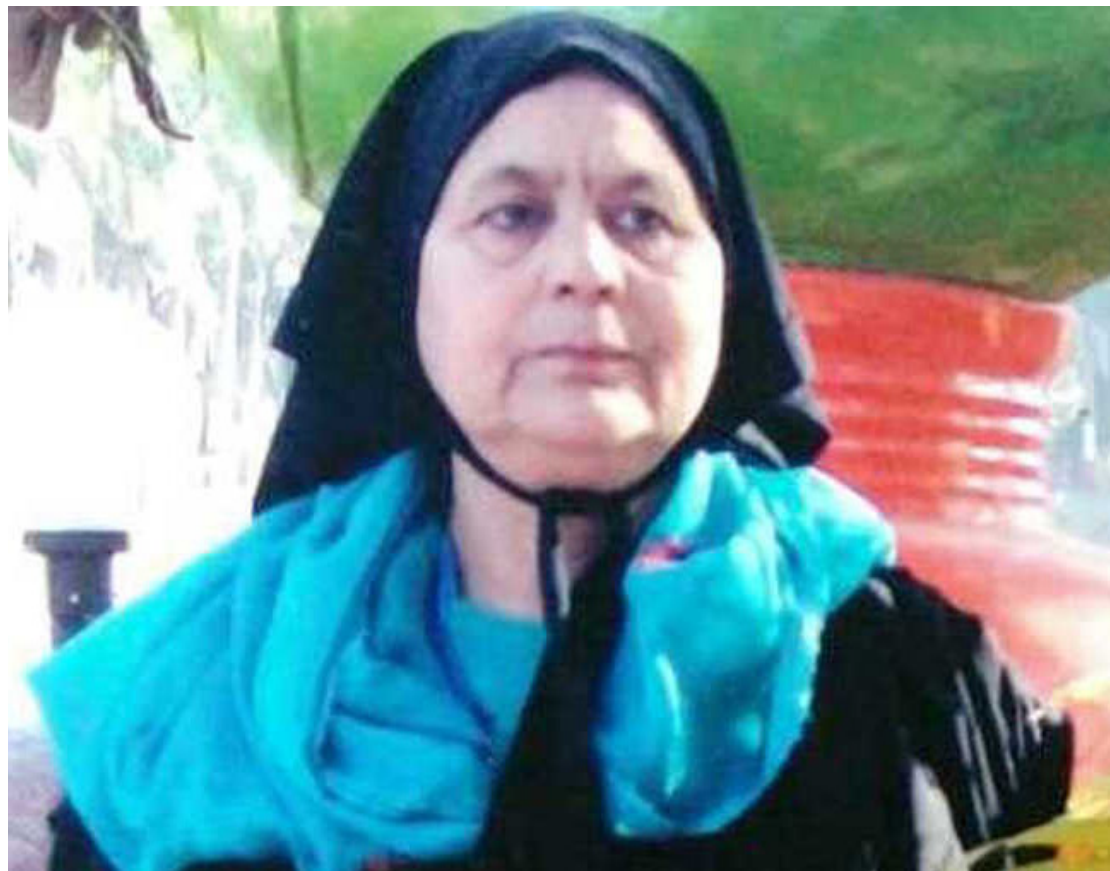


Jameel Ansari

The Valley of Kashmir, renowned for its breathtaking beauty, has also been home to remarkable personalities whose knowledge, service, and cultural contributions have left an indelible mark. Among them stands Atiqa Bano, lovingly known as Behn Ji, whose life was a testament to education, social service, and the preservation of Kashmiri heritage.

Born in 1940 into a scholarly and devout family in Sopore, Behn Ji was raised by her mother after the early demise of her father. She pursued higher education and began her career as a teacher in 1958. Her dedication and capability saw her rise through the ranks, serving as School Inspector, Chief Education Officer, District Education Officer, Joint Director of Education, and ultimately, Director of Libraries and Research, Jammu and Kashmir. Her tenure marked significant educational reforms, particularly expanding opportunities for women and underprivileged communities.

In 1973, Behn Ji founded Majlis-un-Nisa, an organization dedicated to women's empowerment and the welfare of orphans and destitute children. The initiative provided training in tailoring, embroidery, religious and modern education, and supported self-reliance and dignity. Under its umbrella, several institutions came into being, including a B.Ed. College, high schools, Maktaba Taleem-ul-Quran, Begum Yaseen Library Sopore, Kashmir Studies Centre Sopore, and a Calligraphy & Graphic Design Centre — all embodying her vision of



education and empowerment.

Her passion for preserving Kashmiri culture culminated in 2002 with the creation of Meeras Mahal, the first and only private cultural museum in Jammu and Kashmir. Housing rare artifacts, manuscripts, coins, calligraphy, handicrafts, traditional attire, and everyday items, the museum reflects the richness of Kashmiri life and heritage. Beyond being a repository, Meeras Mahal is a mirror of Kashmiri identity and a gift for future generations.

Alongside her institutional work, Behn Ji served as Vice President of Adbee Markaz Kamraz, tirelessly promoting language and literature. She left this world on 4 October 2017, but her vision endures through her institutions and Meeras Mahal. Atiqa Bano's life remains a guiding light, inspiring generations to uphold the values of education, service, and cultural preservation.

May Allah grant her eternal peace, illuminate her resting place, and bless her with the highest station in Jannat-ul-Firdous. Ameen.

Scientific Compassion: SSS and the Future of Gau Mata on World Animal Day



Prof. Dinesh Chandra Rai

On World Animal Day, as we reflect on the 2025 theme, "Save Animals, Save the Planet," we acknowledge the critical truth that animal well-being is inseparable from global sustainability. The current state of the bovine population in India represents a complex and pressing crisis that demands a fundamental reassessment from the perspective of modern animal husbandry. Central to this challenge is a spiritual conviction unlike any other: our firm belief that the cow is the abode of 33 crore gods and goddesses. That deeply held conviction is a cornerstone of Sanatan culture and is central to the concept of the cow as Gau Mata. This belief is a powerful metaphysical statement that elevates the cow beyond a mere animal to a living temple. This theological truth and unparalleled position of sanctity and inviolability in Indian culture instills a cultural mandate of absolute protection that directly influences social, legal, and economic policies.

When a cow concludes its lactation period, the farmer is left with an animal that requires continuous, costly inputs without providing a revenue stream, inevitably leading to the tragic, yet predictable, act of abandonment. This is the structural cause behind the estimated 50 lakhs stray cattle that now compromise public safety, consume plastic waste, and suffer neglect across the nation, an indictment of our failure to trans-

late ethical principles into viable practice.

The Game-Changing Technological Intervention: Universalizing Sex-Sorted Semen

The most profound technological advancement directly addressing the abandonment crisis is the widespread deployment of Sex-Sorted Semen (SSS) technology. SSS is not merely a scientific curiosity; it is the surgical solution to the problem of surplus male cattle. This technology works by separating the X (female) and Y (male) chromosome-bearing sperm cells using a specialized process called flow cytometry, ensuring that approximately nine out of ten calves born are female, milk-producing heifers.

This focus is essential because the male calf is the first to be abandoned. Since the male is rarely needed for draught power due to mechanization, he becomes an immediate economic drain. By ensuring the birth of a female calf with up to 90% accuracy, SSS technology guarantees herd replacement, dramatically enhances dairy farmer income, and promises a seismic decrease in the number of abandoned male animals on streets and highways.

For this technology to achieve its full potential, two immediate policy actions are mandatory:

Universal Availability and Subsidization: The government, through the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM) and allied state programs, must ensure that SSS doses are made available to all farmers, not just those in pilot programs or high-yield zones. This involves heavy subsidization, ideally offering the service at a negligible cost or free of charge, to overcome the initial cost barrier associated with this advanced technology. Furthermore, the indigenously devel-

oped SSS technology must be rapidly scaled across all accredited government semen stations.

Mandatory Awareness Campaigns: Policy must shift from passive availability to active promotion. Comprehensive, state-wide campaigns must be launched to educate farmers—especially small and marginal landholders—about the economic benefit and ethical necessity of using SSS. These campaigns should not simply inform but actively encourage farmers to utilize only SSS-equipped centers for artificial insemination (AI) for their cows. Making SSS the standard practice, wherever financially feasible, is the single most effective way to eliminate the source of the stray cattle population.

Leveraging SSS is no longer optional; it is the most effective scientific tool for ensuring the economic viability of the dairy herd at the source and integrating the cultural mandate of cow protection with modern economic realities.

The Circular Economy: Manure as the New Economic Pillar

While SSS technology resolves the problem of the surplus male calf, it doesn't address the issue of the post-productive cow. The true solution here lies in establishing a circular bovine economy where manure is recognized and commercialized as a high-value commodity. This Waste-to-Wealth principle transforms the non-productive cow's output from an environmental liability (a source of methane) into an economic asset.

By utilizing manure to produce biogas and Compressed Biogas (CBG) for clean energy, and processing the residual slurry into high-quality bio-fertilizer for sustainable agriculture, we create a new, continuous revenue stream. This commercialization is financially viable, demonstrated by

the robust Return on Investment (ROI) from modern CBG plants. This economic model is the only way to provide a sustained financial justification for the lifetime upkeep of all cows, ensuring that the cultural mandate of protection is upheld by sound business practice. The cow remains Gau Mata, but her maintenance is paid for by her ecological contribution.

A Call for Professionalized Infrastructure and Accountability

To implement this vision effectively, the entire management infrastructure must be reformed. Traditional gaushalas must be professionalized into self-sustaining Manure Value Chain Hubs—or "Goshalas 2.0"—integrated with commercial biogas and slurry processing facilities.

We must impose accountability. A mandatory National Digital Livestock Identification (NDLI) system must be implemented to ensure that every animal is traceable to its owner. Abandonment must no longer be a consequence-free action; owners must either retain the animal, demonstrate responsible transfer to a certified Goshala 2.0, or face a significant financial penalty.

This combination of scientific breeding (SSS), waste commercialization, and strict accountability offers the only realistic pathway to securing the welfare of India's bovine population and realizing its potential as a pillar of climate-resilient rural sustainability. The mandate of World Animal Day compels us to move beyond mere veneration to concrete action that ensures both the sanctity and the dignity of the Gau Mata.

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■ Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

The presence of women in Indian science and technology has reached new heights in the past few decades. Their role in everything from space missions to missile development is no secret. But this journey remains incomplete because the so-called "leaky pipeline," the exclusion of women at various stages of education and career, prevents them from reaching leadership positions. This problem is not just about individual aspirations, but about national innovation and excellence. The question is: when will India stop this leakage and when will women take equal control of science?

India has made remarkable progress in science and technology over the past few decades. Indian scientists are recognized globally in areas such as the space program, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, the digital economy, and nanotechnology. Women's participation in this journey has proven to be more than merely formal, but rather concrete and effective. The contributions of Dr. Tessy Thomas, known as the Missile Woman, or the Chandrayaan-3 mission's female scientists Kalpana Kala-hasti and Ritu Karidhal are vivid examples of this. This demonstrates that the role of Indian women scientists is no longer merely symbolic; they have become the driving force behind real change.

Yet, the other side of the picture is worrying. While the number of girls studying science and technology in India is large, this number steadily declines as they reach research and leadership positions. This trend is known as the "leaky pipeline." The 2022 report of the All India Survey on Higher Education shows that women's participation in science and technology at the graduate level is approximately 43 percent. This figure would be a matter of pride for any country. However, when these same girls pursue research and development, only 14 percent remain in this field. Furthermore, the number of female faculty in higher education institutions is limited to approximately 15 percent. The country's most prestigious institutions, such as the IITs, IISc, or CSIR, have never been headed by a woman.

Inequality is also evident in the world of scientific awards and recognition. Of the more than six hundred Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prizes awarded until 2023, only sixteen were awarded to women scientists. This data suggests that while women

The Unfinished Journey of Women in Indian Science

The struggle to move from symbolic presence to effective leadership and the imperative of national innovation



enter science and technology with equal enthusiasm at the initial stage, as responsibilities and pressures increase, their numbers dwindle. This is the leakage that undermines national excellence.

This leakage has many layers. Motherhood and family responsibilities impact women's careers the most. Long working hours, high-pressure projects, and a lack of flexible options lead many talented women to drop out. Institutional structures also remain male-dominated. Promotion and leadership positions in universities and research institutes are difficult for women. Informal networks, social biases, and gender stereotypes further exacerbate

this difficulty.

Funding and recognition are also a major challenge. Women are often given less priority in research grants, limiting the direction of their projects and the potential for innovation. Social perceptions also consider science a male-dominated field, often discouraging girls from pursuing it. Even if a woman takes a career break, re-entry becomes extremely difficult. While the Department of Science and Technology's Women Scientists Scheme exists, its reach remains limited.

This problem not only hinders women's individual achievements, but is also deeply linked to

India's future. As India resolves to fulfill the dream of a developed India, ignoring the participation of half the population in scientific innovation and research could prove self-defeating. The World Bank estimates that increasing women's participation in science and technology could generate an additional \$700 billion in growth for the Indian economy by 2025. If women contribute equally to the fields of artificial intelligence, clean energy, biotechnology, and digital technology, India's global competitiveness will automatically increase.

It's also a question of India's global image. Concrete steps towards gender equality are consistent with India's international commitments and leadership aspirations. When Indian women scientists speak on global issues like climate change at international forums, it becomes a symbol of India's credibility. Furthermore, it's a question of the aspirations of future generations. If we ensure equal opportunities for women in science today, tomorrow our daughters will be filled with confidence and will consider science a field of choice.

The government has taken some positive steps. Initiatives such as the Department of Science and Technology's Kiran Scheme, the Women Scientists Scheme, and the SERB Power Fellowship have been created to encourage young women researchers. ISRO and DRDO have implemented flexible working hours, extended maternity leave, and work-from-home options. Gender sensitivity committees have also been formed in many institutions. But this remains insufficient. There is a need to expand the reach of these schemes and implement them effectively.

The way forward is to establish minimum representation thresholds for women in research institutes and universities. Ensure special funding for women-led projects. Ease re-entry after career breaks and provide increased re-entry fellowships. Build mentoring bridges between senior women scientists and new researchers. Above all, change the mindset of society. Families and society must accept that science is not a domain of men, but of everyone.

Women in Indian science have progressed beyond a symbolic presence, but many barriers to leadership remain. These barriers are not only a personal loss but also a national one. If India is to become a knowledge power, this leakage must be stopped. True innovation and excellence are possible only when men and women stand shoulder to shoulder as equals in laboratories, universities, and research institutes. This is not just a question of equal opportunity, but also of India's scientific future and global competitiveness.

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The Importance of Book Reading in the Digital Age



■ Surinderpal Singh

In an era dominated by smartphones, tablets and digital content, the act of reading printed books is often perceived as an outdated practice. Yet, mounting scientific evidence and psychological research emphasizes that traditional book reading continues to play a profound role in human development, mental health and cognitive growth. Books are not merely repositories of knowledge rather they are instruments that shape the human mind, train the imagination and prepare individuals for the various chapters of life.

The Pros of Book Reading in the Digital Age

1. Deep Cognitive Engagement

Printed books encourage focused attention and deep reading. Unlike digital media, which often demands multitasking and rapid scanning, books require sustained concentration. Studies in neuroscience reveal that reading long-form text activates brain networks responsible for comprehension, empathy and analytical reasoning.

2. Mental Health Benefits

Book reading has been linked with reduced stress levels. Different studies across the globe showed that reading for just six minutes lowers stress by up to 68%, outperforming music, walking or tea. Reading slows down heart rate, eases muscle tension and calms the nervous system by functioning almost like a form of meditation.

3. Enhanced Memory and Imagination

Books stimulate visualization and memory recall, activating both the left hemisphere (logic, language) and right hemisphere (imagination, creativity) of the brain. This dual engagement improves



problem-solving abilities and nurtures creativity, vital skills for navigating modern challenges.

4. Moral and Emotional Development

Literature exposes readers to diverse perspectives, moral dilemmas and complex characters, fostering empathy and emotional intelligence. In this sense, books serve as "simulators of life," preparing individuals for social interactions and ethical decision-making.

The Cons and Challenges

1. Time Consumption

In a fast-paced digital world, reading

books demands time and patience which many find challenging amidst instant content available online.

2. Information Update Lag

Unlike digital media, books cannot be instantly updated. In fields such as medicine or technology, this may lead to reliance on outdated information unless complemented by current sources.

3. Accessibility and Cost

Printed books may not be accessible to all due to cost, distribution or physical limitations, whereas digital resources are widely available at lower expense.

Scientific Impacts of Book Reading on Body and Mind

1. Neurological Effects

Functional MRI studies reveal that reading stories activates brain areas associated with sensory perception. For example, reading about walking stimulates the motor cortex, while descriptions of scents activate olfactory regions. This "embodied cognition" strengthens neural pathways and enhances learning.

2. Impact on Sleep and Circadian Rhythm

Reading printed books before bed promotes healthier sleep compared to screen

reading, which exposes the eyes to blue light and suppresses melatonin production. Thus, books play a therapeutic role in regulating circadian rhythms.

3. Psychological Resilience

Bibliotherapy—using books for therapeutic purposes—has been successfully applied in clinical psychology for depression, anxiety, and trauma recovery. Patients report a sense of comfort, perspective, and healing from engaging with carefully selected literature.

Books as Life's Training Ground

Books serve as mentors, guiding individuals through the varied stages of life.

Childhood:

Storybooks develop imagination, vocabulary and curiosity.

Adolescence:

Novels and biographies shape identity, resilience and decision-making.

Adulthood:

Professional texts and self-help literature provide practical knowledge, leadership skills and emotional balance.

Old Age: Reading sustains cognitive vitality and delays cognitive decline, with evidence showing lower risks of Alzheimer's disease among regular readers.

Books mirror life's complexities, preparing readers to navigate joy, struggle, failure and success with wisdom and perspective.

In the digital age, where instant gratification and fragmented attention are the norms, the slow, immersive experience of reading books becomes not just a leisure activity but a necessity for intellectual and emotional well-being. Scientifically, books enhance brain function, reduce stress and promote empathy. Medically, they safeguard mental health and cognitive longevity. Philosophically, they provide life lessons no algorithm can replicate. Books may no longer monopolize information, but they continue to monopolize wisdom. To neglect them in favor of digital noise would be to abandon one of humanity's greatest tools for knowledge, reflection, and growth.

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



Benefits of Ginger



■ **Sahil Manzoor**

Our body needs an adequate amount of food, needs all the basic components of food. It includes minerals, vitamins, fiber, fats etc. humans are the most beautiful creatures of the almighty in this universe. Almighty bestowed us infinite blessing in various forms whether its food items, natural looking objects and whole environments which covers us like a blanket. Today I am going to highlight the health benefits of ginger (adrak). Ginger has immense health benefits like: - helps to detox our body. It has antibody properties. Can help with prevention of cancer. Garlic helps reduce cholesterol levels. Garlic helps reduce high blood pressure. It helps to boost the immune system.

We are exposed to a wide range of chemicals and compounds daily while living in the world. Many of these compounds are not healthy and may even be detrimental to the body. The environment, water and food include: - personal care products containing chemicals. Household cleaners. Radiation etc. from nuclear plants. Pesticides and chemicals used in agriculture. Garlic is a powerful detox food that promotes glutathione production by various liver enzymes. It provides important detoxifying components, including multiple bioactive selenium and sulphur compounds.

Garlic has antibiotic properties: - garlic contains allicin. Allicin is a bioactive antibiotic that can fight infections and

bacteria in sliced, crushed or diced cloves. Garlic extracts have been shown to suppress the growth of protozoa elements, viral infections, numerous bacteria for example salmonella and fungi elements. Allicin is believed to be a viable antibiotic replacement. It also assists when used in conjunction with conventional prescribed antibiotics.

Prevents one of the lethal disease cancers nowadays called as (CA). According to research, consuming fresh garlic can help lessen the risk of colon cancer. According to the IOWA women's health study. Women who ate garlic regularly with other vegetables and fruits are 35% less likely to get cancer. Garlic helps to reduce cholesterol levels. Cholesterol is a fatty component in the blood. There are two kinds of cholesterol: bad LDL cholesterol and good HDL cholesterol. Far too much LDL cholesterol and not enough HDL cholesterol can cause serious health issues. Garlic has been shown to lower total cholesterol and LDL levels by 10 to 15 percent. Furthermore, eating garlic does not influence your HDL or good cholesterol levels. If you have a family history of heart disease or suffer from heart diseases you should consider adding garlic to your diet.

Garlic helps to reduce blood pressure among the patients: garlic is a special spice to include in your diet for those suffering from high blood pressure or hypertension. However even if you are not a lover of garlic, taking garlic supplements will still give you the health benefits such as lowering high blood pressure, treating fever and many more. Keep in mind that you must make sure that the amount of these supplements you take is the same as four cloves of garlic each day. Dear champs, I am much regarding your health for god sake take fresh and healthy food items. One more thing exercises are very important for you, if you want to keep fit, smart, attractive and healthy.

sahilmanzoor0401@gmail.com

Can 'Loaded Water' Boost Energy, Reduce Sugar Cravings? What Experts Think



■ **Healthline**

If you're not drinking enough water throughout the day, a new social media trend promises to make hydration more exciting and potentially beneficial.

Enter "loaded water," which refers to beverages infused with ingredients like fruit, electrolytes, or probiotics that add flavor, nutrients, and potential health benefits.

TikTok is chock-full of loaded water recipes showcasing anything from colorful fruit combinations to fizzy probiotic sodas.

Advocates claim the viral drink can help boost energy, support electrolyte balance, and even reduce sugar cravings by offering an alternative to sugary beverages.

But do these extra ingredients actually provide meaningful benefits? And do they really encourage healthy hydration habits? We asked nutrition experts to learn more.

Potential benefits of loaded water

For some people, drinking enough water throughout the day can be a challenge for various reasons.

"Plain water can be boring for a lot of people, so adding colorful ingredients is an effective way to make hydration feel more fun," Kezia Joy, a registered dietitian nutritionist and medical advisor at Welzo, told Healthline. "From a behavior-change perspective, if it makes people drink more fluids, then that's already a win," she said.

Joy noted that while plain water will usually be enough for most people to meet their hydration needs, she said the appeal of loaded water is its ability to deliver specific benefits. "People may want more than just a drink; they also want specific formulations that provide energy, improved taste, or better gut health," she said.

As far as health benefits go, it all depends on the ingredients.

Helen Tieu, registered dietitian and founder of Diet Redefined, said coconut water is a popular addition to loaded water because it adds sweetness, flavor, and potassium.

"This may be beneficial for people who exercise for longer durations or in hot weather, to replenish energy and potassium

stores lost through sweat," she explained.

Tieu explained that formulating your loaded water with electrolyte powders may help replenish some of the sodium, potassium, and magnesium lost during physical activity.

Replenishing these electrolytes helps to maintain proper fluid balance and nerve-muscle function, which supports sustained energy during and after exercise.

When these minerals are restored, blood sugar regulation and energy levels are more stable, which can help reduce sugar cravings that often arise from dips in energy or hydration.

"Fruit, meanwhile, adds natural flavor, may be more appealing for people to consume, and provides small amounts of micro-nutrients and antioxidants," Tieu explained. Tieu noted that adding probiotics to loaded water, such as inulin or chicory root fiber, may help with gut health. A healthy gut can improve digestion and nutrient absorption, supporting steady energy levels.

Are there any drawbacks to loaded water?

The biggest drawback of loaded water is that some of the ingredients can add unnecessary sugar and calories.

"A few slices of fresh fruit would contribute minimal sugar. However, fruit juices, fruit syrups, and some commercial flavor powders can contribute larger amounts of sugar and calories to the water," Tieu said. Added electrolytes are not always necessary for some people, either.

"Excessive intake of some electrolytes, such as sodium and potassium, may be risky in some people, such as those with high blood pressure or kidney disease," Tieu noted. Electrolyte needs can often be met through whole foods in a balanced diet, she added.

Still, many people benefit from added electrolytes, such as those who engage in any type of physical activity, especially in the heat, be it exercise or physical labor.

While probiotic sodas can be beneficial for some people, Joy cautioned they may cause bloating and gas in others.

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SCAN ME



Sat Sharma addresses organizational meet at Mahanpur, calls to intensify Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

■ HT News Desk

BASOHLI, OCTOBER 3 : Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, under the leadership of its President Sat Sharma (CA), held an organizational meeting at Mahanpur in Basohli to review the ongoing activities and future roadmap of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan.

The meeting was attended by General Secretaries Baldev Singh Billawaria and Gopal Mahajan, District President Gopal Krishan, MLA Basohli Darshan Singh, DDC members Narain Dutt Tripathi, Vikram Singh, Tejinder

Goldy, leaders Sanjeev, Romi Khajuria, besides several senior functionaries and party workers.

Addressing the meeting, Sat Sharma called upon the party leaders and cadre to transform the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan into a mass movement. He said the campaign, launched on September 25 on the birth anniversary of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay, will culminate on December 25, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Highlighting the core focus of the Abhiyan, Sharma said that "Vocal for Local" is the bedrock of India's journey towards true



self-reliance. He asserted that the movement draws its strength

from villages, farmers, women, youth, and the poor, and is an

extension of decentralization and Swadeshi as advocated by

Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay.

Sat Sharma emphasized that every citizen must contribute to the mission by adopting Swadeshi in daily life, maximizing the use of local products. He underlined that the party cadre has been tasked to reach every household in the coming three months to make the campaign a true people's movement.

During the organizational discussions, Sharma called for a collective resolve to intensify organizational activities, maximize public outreach, and ensure that the implementation of public welfare schemes initiated by the Modi government.

Gopal Krishan reported that the Abhiyan has infused new energy among grassroots workers. He deliberated on strengthening booth-level committees to mobilize wider participation, ensuring that the message of Atma Nirbharta reaches every village and urban ward.

Darshan Singh termed it a golden opportunity for farmers and youth to actively participate in India's economic resurgence. He said that the GST reforms introduced by the Union Government would serve as a major boost to indigenous businesses and promote domestic production, aligning with the spirit of self-reliance.

BJP blasts J&K govt for cultural neglect, demands action to preserve Languages, Arts, and Heritage

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 3 The Jammu & Kashmir BJP leaders on Friday criticized the state government for its inaction in preserving the region's cultural heritage, promoting local languages, and supporting displaced communities.

Speaking at a press conference, J&K BJP spokespersons Ajay Bharti, Dr. Tahir Chowdhary, and Zorwar Singh Jamwal highlighted the widening gap between political promises and ground realities, calling for immediate government intervention to protect the state's linguistic and cultural diversity.

Ajay Bharti noted that despite Omar Abdullah coming to power 353 days ago with a manifesto promising to preserve J&K's cultural landscape, key commitments on pensions, electricity, gas, and ration



remain unfulfilled. Cultural initiatives, such as connecting Shankaracharya and Hari Parbat via a gondola, have also not progressed.

He stressed that displaced Kashmiri Hindus have specific cultural needs, including recognition of their languages, and called for the establishment of a local film industry to promote arts, language, food, and traditions.

Dr. Tahir Chowdhary highlighted that languages such as Dogri, Pahari, Gojri, and Kashmiri are gradually fading. With Gujjar-Bakarwal communities numbering 18-19 lakh and Pahari speakers around 12-13 lakh, their cultural expressions remain under-represented.

He emphasized the need for national and international platforms for local foods, dress codes, folk dances, and music, while assuring that the BJP is ready to collaborate with the government to support such initiatives.

Zorwar Singh Jamwal recalled the decade-long struggle that led to Dogri being recognized in the constitutional schedule alongside Kashmiri.

He said successive governments, including National Conference and Congress alliances, have failed to promote composite culture or support local artists and performers.

Local theatres, folk singers, and cultural infrastructure remain neglected, despite Jammu & Kashmir's potential to develop film and cultural industries that could boost the local economy and showcase the region globally.

The BJP leaders collectively urged the government to take proactive measures to revive and promote Jammu & Kashmir's languages, arts, traditions, and culinary heritage, stressing that private efforts alone cannot sustain the region's cultural legacy.

Aarti Chowdhary says MoU aims to boost financial literacy & economic independence of women

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 3: In a significant step towards empowering women-led enterprises and fostering inclusive development, the FICCI FLO Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh (JKL) Chapter today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NABARD Jammu and Kashmir Regional Office.

The MoU envisages collaboration in providing market linkages

and promotional support to women-led enterprises, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and other grassroots-level institutions. It also focuses on entrepreneurship development for rural women, capacity building in livelihood activities, and strengthening initiatives in health, education, nutrition, and financial inclusion.

The agreement was signed by Shri Rattan Lal, Deputy General

Manager, NABARD J&K Regional Office, and Smt. Aarti Chowdhary, Chairperson, FICCI FLO JKL Chapter, in the presence of Shri Vikas Mittal, Officer-in-Charge, NABARD J&K Regional Office, Smt. Urmil Lata, DGM NABARD, Shri Kanav Sharma, AGM NABARD, and members of FICCI FLO JKL Chapter including Varuna Anand, Past Chairperson and National Initiative Head for Collaborations and Partnership, Mrs. Ruchika Gupta, Immediate

Past Chairperson; Sona Mehta, Treasurer and Mrs. Nandita Bajaj, Secretary.

Speaking on the occasion, Smt. Aarti Chowdhary, Chairperson, FICCI FLO JKL Chapter, said "This MoU is a landmark step in our journey to create sustainable livelihoods and empower women at the grassroots. By joining hands with NABARD, we aim to provide rural women and women-led enterprises with access to markets,

skills, and financial literacy. Our collective efforts will not only promote economic independence but also contribute to building a more inclusive and equitable society."

Aarti Chowdhary said that the collaboration between FICCI FLO JKL Chapter and NABARD is expected to open new opportunities for women entrepreneurs and strengthen the ecosystem for inclusive rural development in Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Public Notice

It is hereby informed that my name has been recorded differently in some documents:

In Aadhaar Card: Fayaz Ahmad Gojer Teenda
In Bank Records (A/c No. XXXX0663, J&K Bank, Branch Sallar): Fayaz Ahmad (Teenda)

Both refer to the same person i.e. myself. From now onwards, my correct and official name shall be treated as:

Fayaz Ahmad Gojer Teenda, S/o Bashir Ahmad Gojer
Any person having any objection may contact within 7 days of publication of this notice, failing which no claim will be entertained.

Sd/-

Fayaz Ahmad Gojer Teenda
R/o Ro Lehadajan, Tehsil Sallar, Pahalgam

Public Notice

It is hereby notified that my daughter DOB has been wrongly mentioned in adhar and school regards bearing aadhar no 281944553522 as Aayat jaan DOB 15/08/2016 instead of Aayat Jaan DOB 04/08/2016 as for hospital regards now I have applying for it's correction of the same if any person have any objection in this regards may file the same to the office of aadhar seva/ concerned authority within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice After that no objection shall be entertained.

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Corrigendum No 01 for this office E NIT No: 23 of 2025-26 Dated: 22-09-2025
Tender ID No. 2025_IFC_289272_1

Sub: - Extension of dates

In view of poor response, the extension of dates in respect of this Office **e-NIT No. 23 of 2025-26 (Mechanical works to be carried out at Lift Irrigation Scheme Baghichetkaf of MISD Sopore.)** the time extension is being given to ensure healthy competition competitive bidding as under: -

1. Tender Submission date Ends	=	09/10/2025 upto 06.55 pm.
2. Date of Opening	=	10/10/2025 at 01:00 pm, in the Office of the Executive Engineer Mechanical Irrigation Division Baramulla.

All other terms/conditions and stipulations as contained in the eNIT shall remain unaltered/unmodified.

No. MIDB/CC-02/2138-40
D A T E D: 30/09/2025

DIPK: 6732/25

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Baramulla

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR

Tel-0194-2474234 Fax -2482032 – email:- kash.flori@jk.gov.in

Subject: **Extension Notice No. 06**

In view of no response, the Bid Submission end/ opening date (Online) of technical bids in respect of e-NIT No. 18 of 2025 dated: 17.06.2025 invited by this office under endorsement No. DOFK-GS0TNDR/8/2025/E-7711399/-e-NIT-18 dated: 17.06.2025 with regard to "Outsourcing of entry ticketing system of NMBG, Cheshmashahi Srinagar" is hereby extended as per the details given below:-

1.	Bid Submission End date & time	17.10.2025	Up to 02:00 PM
2.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	21.10.2025	At 02:00 PM

Other terms & conditions shall remain same as laid down in the concerned e-NIT.

No: DOFK-GS0TNDR/8/2025/E-7711399/-e-NIT-18

DIPK: 6770/25

Dated: 03-10-2025

Sd/- Accounts Officer,
(Member Secretary)

Jal Shakti Department

Office of the Executive Engineer Flood Control Division Anantnag

Phone Fax: 01932464212, 225119 | D.C Office Complex Anantnag192101

Corrigendum

Subject: This office E Nit No.21 of 2025-26 Issued vide this office No. 3879-3901 Dated 29-09-2025

S.NO.	Please Read this	Instead of this
01.	District Capex (DMRRR)4235 Capital Outlay on Social Security and Welfare (Under the Major Head Of Account (From S.No.1-5)	M&R2025-26MH-2711
02	Dispatch Date of E NIT: - 29-09-2025	29-08-2025

No: FCD/Ang/2025/3921-38
Dated: 29-09-2025

DIPK: 6743/25

Dated: 03-10-2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Flood Control Division Anantnag



JMC Commissioner reviews preventive measures against dengue

Asks Corporation, Health Department to work in synergy

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 3: Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation Dr. Devansh Yadav today convened a high-level joint meeting of officers of Jammu Municipal Corporation, State Malariologist Wing, Jammu and Health Department to review the preparedness and strengthen the response mechanism to fight against dengue, chikungunya and malaria in Jammu City.

With dengue cases rising across the UT, the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), in coordination with the Department of Health and Anti-Malaria Wing, has stepped up preventive measures to control the spread of vector-borne diseases including dengue, malaria and chikungunya in Jammu city. Official figures reveal that 1076 cases of dengue were reported till September

2024, while 346 cases of dengue have been reported till September 2025 within the jurisdiction of Jammu Municipal Corporation.

Under the directions of the JMC Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav, extensive fogging and spraying operations are being carried out in all wards of Jammu Municipal Corporation. A detailed roster has been issued to ensure that each ward is systematically covered, with fixed schedules for fogging and spraying. The structured approach is aimed at preventing mosquito breeding and reducing risk of disease transmission.

During the meeting, the Commissioner directed all Sanitation Inspectors and field staff to conduct door-to-door awareness campaigns in their respective wards. He stressed that public participation is the most crucial element in combating



dengue. Citizens must be informed not only about preventive measures but also about how to actively stop mosquito breeding around their homes.

Dr. Yadav advised that along with maintaining cleanliness outside their homes, residents

must also remain vigilant about common water-collection points inside their houses. Stagnant water in refrigerator trays, water bowls kept for feeding birds, excess water in flower pots, coolers and other containers often become breeding grounds

for mosquitoes. The Commissioner urged that such places should be cleaned or emptied every third or fourth day to break the mosquito life cycle.

The Commissioner also highlighted the need for community ownership of cleanliness

drives, stating that government efforts alone cannot succeed without the cooperation of citizens. He appealed to the public to support sanitation teams, follow instructions and ensure their surroundings are kept clean and dry.

Dr. Yadav directed that fogging and spraying operations must not be limited to public places alone but should also cover vulnerable residential pockets, schools, markets, hospitals and areas with reported dengue cases. Special instructions were issued to intensify sanitation in densely populated localities where the risk of mosquito breeding is higher.

The Jammu Municipal Corporation has once again appealed to all citizens of Jammu to remain alert, practice personal protection measures such as using mosquito repellents and nets, wear full-sleeved clothes and

above all, avoid accumulation of stagnant water.

The health experts present in the meeting shared insights about the disease pattern and stressed the importance of early detection and timely treatment. They advised residents to immediately seek medical consultation in case of fever or symptoms such as headache, muscle pain, or skin rashes, and avoid self-medication.

Among others, Joint Commissioner (Health & Sanitation), JMC Abdul Star, Chief Medical Officer, Health Department, Dr. Harbakhsh Singh, State Malariologist Dr. Dhruv Raina and Health Officer, JMC Dr. Vinod Sharma, besides Sanitation officers and Inspectors from all 75 wards attended the meeting and gave ward-wise updates on the prevailing situation and the measures being implemented on the ground.

SBI RSETI Ramban organizes awareness camp at Seri

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 3: State Bank of India Rural Self Employment Training Institute (SBI RSETI) Ramban in collaboration with the Centre for Financial Literacy (CFL) organized an awareness camp at Seri.

The camp was coordinated by Senior Faculty, SBI RSETI Amrik Singh Raju, and CFL Counsellor, Asif Mustafa Naik.

The objective of the programme was to educate participants about the skill development training conducted by RSETI Ramban and to spread awareness regarding different Social Security Schemes of the Government of India.

Speaking on the occasion, Amrik Singh Raju highlighted the significant role of RSETI Ramban in the uplift and empowerment of people through self-employment training programmes. He also provided detailed information about key financial and social security schemes, including



Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY) and Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY).

The camp concluded with an encouraging response from the participants, with 10 new PMSBY accounts registered and opened on the spot.

JKPSC Exam: DM imposes restrictions around examination centers

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 03: In view of the examinations being conducted by the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) on October 07 and October 08, 2025 for the recruitment of Assistant Professors in various subjects, the District Magistrate (DM) Jammu, Dr. Rakesh Minhas (IAS), has ordered imposition of restrictions around the notified examination centers established in Jammu District.

As per the order, issued under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), the assembly of five or more persons will be prohibited within a 100-meter radius of all designated examination centers on both days. The restrictions will remain in force from 08:00 AM to 06:00 PM, and entry into the restricted zones will be strictly prohibited except for candidates with valid admit cards and authorized personnel on duty.

The order has been issued to ensure smooth, fair, and transparent conduct of the JKPSC examination, and to prevent any untoward incidents such as crowding, disturbance, or malpractice near the examination venues.

The District Magistrate further cautioned that any person found violating the order shall be liable for action under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

In addition, the DM has directed the Jammu and Kashmir Police and other law enforcement agencies to ensure strict enforcement of these restrictions and to maintain law and order in and around the examination centers. Special deployment of police personnel will be made near sensitive venues to prevent gathering of unauthorized persons.

Candidates appearing in the exam have been advised to carry their admit cards and valid identity proof for hassle-free entry into the examination centers.

DM Reasi approves sponsorship support for 290 children under Mission Vatsalya Scheme

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

REASI, OCTOBER 3: In a significant step towards ensuring well-being of the children in need of care and protection, the Sponsorship and Foster Care Approval Committee (SFCAC) approved 290 cases under the sponsorship component of the Mission Vatsalya Scheme at its meeting chaired by District Magistrate Reasi, Nidhi Malik, here today.

At the outset, District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) Sachin Sharma presented a comprehensive briefing on the cases received under the scheme.

The Committee, headed by the District Magistrate, meticulously scrutinized all applications to ensure that eligible children receive the necessary financial and social support while continuing to live within their community and cultural environment.



The District Magistrate reaffirmed the administration's commitment to create safe and secure environment for vulnerable children, enabling them to grow and thrive without displacement from their families or communities.

The DM further emphasized that the approval of these cases stands as a testament administration's dedication to safeguarding children's rights and supporting their holistic development.

The meeting was attended by DCPO Sachin Sharma, the Chairperson of the Social Welfare Committee Reasi and other committee members, reflecting a strong collaborative effort to uplift and empower children through strategic welfare initiatives.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Rolls Out GST 2.0 Reforms, Launches Suvidha Kendras, and Adopts Seven-Step Consumer Benefit Protocol

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 3: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has commenced the implementation of Next Generation GST Reforms 2.0, effective from September 22, 2025, aligning with the national tax rationalization drive and reinforcing its commitment to consumer welfare. The overhaul simplifies the GST framework by reducing multiple tax slabs to just two primary rates—5% for essentials and 18% for most other goods and services. These measures are poised to lower the cost burden on households, insurance, medicines, education, and key livelihood sectors.

To ensure efficient, transparent, and people-centric execution, the Government has adopted Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) across all key departments: State Taxes, Legal Metrology, Health & Medical Education, and Industries & Commerce. District and divisional enforcement teams will intensify market surveillance, verify accurate price revision, and provide direct citizen support through a network of GST Suvidha Kendras and sectoral helplines in every district.

The Suvidha Kendras are equipped to assist taxpayers in understanding GST 2.0, filing returns, re-mapping HSN codes, and resolving grievances.

A robust seven-step implementation protocol anchors the rollout:

- Policy Communication: Issuance of clear advisories to industry and trade associations regarding rate reductions.
- Awareness & Capacity Building: Organisation of webinars, publication of brochures, radio and social media campaigns to broaden understanding.
- Monitoring & Documentation: Systematic collection of invoices and voluntary price declarations to document compliance.
- Consumer Feedback Mechanism: Installation of feedback boxes, operation of helplines, and WhatsApp chatbots to facilitate citizen participation.
- Enforcement & Inter-Departmental Coordination: On-ground inspections, joint anti-profiteering drives.

JMC conducts massive anti-encroachment drive across Jammu City

Advises public to abide by Municipal Regulations

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 03: Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), on the directions of Commissioner and direct supervision of Joint Commissioner (R&E), today carried out a major enforcement drive, taking decisive action against illegal constructions and encroachments within the city limits. The operation underscores the JMC's commitment to ensuring adherence to municipal laws, planned urban development and public health standards.

Sealing of Illegal Restaurant in Sainik Colony

In a significant move, the JMC has sealed a restaurant named "The Street" located in Sainik Colony, Jammu. The establishment was found to be oper-

ating without the necessary permissions and valid municipal licenses, constituting a serious violation of the Jammu and Kashmir Municipal Corporation Act, 2000. The sealing action was executed by the Enforcement Wing of the JMC after due process.

Demolition of Illegal Encroachments on Canal Road

Meanwhile, the JMC conducted an extensive demolition drive along Canal Road, targeting and successfully removing numerous illegal shanties (jhuggis) set up on state land. These encroachments not only obstruct public access and pose a challenge to planned infrastructure development but are also a significant source of insanitary conditions and public health hazards in the area.

Appeal to the General Public

The Jammu Municipal Corporation has appealed to all citizens, commercial establishments, and prospective builders to strictly adhere to municipal regulations and planning norms.

The Municipal Corporation has urged the public to obtain the requisite building permissions, trade licenses and No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) from the JMC before undertaking any construction, commercial activity or change of land use. Operating or constructing without approval is illegal and will invite strict action, including sealing and demolition.

The citizens have further advised to desist from Encroachment and refrain from setting up illegal shanties (jhuggis) or encroach upon public land.

Sewa Parv 2025 concludes in Kishtwar with overwhelming public participation, promotes community welfare, inclusive governance

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 03: The Sewa Parv campaign concluded successfully in District Kishtwar after an intensive 16-day schedule of activities and overwhelming public participation.

Anchored around the core themes of service, social responsibility and departmental accountability, Sewa Parv saw active participation from government departments, civil society organizations, local bodies, students and citizens across the District. The fortnight-long programme,

inspired by the ethos of collective action, focused on reaching the last mile and addressing grassroots needs.

The event recorded an impressive footfall of over 3.43 lakh participants across the district, who came together to contribute, celebrate and uphold the spirit of service and community welfare.

With 77 diverse activities organized by government departments, the observance addressed key sectors including health, education, environment, social welfare and more.

During the campaign, cleanli-



ness drives were held in public spaces alongside community-led tree plantation initiatives. Awareness programmes promoted dry

and wet waste segregation, reduction of single-use plastic and eco-friendly practices. Donation drives for books, stationery and clothes supported underprivileged students while school beautification campaigns improved educational spaces.

Health check-up camps were organized in both rural and urban areas, complemented by blood donation drives and visits to old-age homes and orphanages. Nutrition and wellness sessions, workshops on organic farming, water conservation and digital literacy events, along with skill develop-

ment camps further strengthened the community empowerment.

Students actively participated in slogan, and essay writing competitions, while special workshops were held to guide citizens in applying for welfare schemes online.

This year's Sewa Parv also emphasized inter-departmental collaboration, ensuring that responsibilities were shared and outcomes were measurable.

Departments undertook self-assessment exercises and engaged with the public through interaction sessions to gather feedback and improve service delivery.

NHAI to install QR Code sign boards with project specific information of National Highways

■ United News of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: To enhance transparency and provide 'ease of commuting' to the National Highway users, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will install project information signboards with 'Quick Response (QR) Codes' along the stretches to provide relevant project specific information and emergency helpline numbers to commuters.

The vertical QR Code signboards will display project-specific details such as the National Highway number, highway chainage, project length, construction or maintenance timelines, and contact information for the highway patrol, toll manager, project manager, resident engineer, Emergency Helpline



1033, and NHAI field office, an official statement said.

They will also provide information about nearby amenities,

including hospitals, petrol stations, restrooms, police stations,

restaurants, the distance to the toll plaza, truck lay-bys, puncture repair shops, vehicle service centres and e-charging stations.

For enhanced visibility, the 'QR Code' sign boards will be placed near roadside amenities, rest areas, toll plazas, truck lay-bys, highway start or end points and signage for the convenience of National Highway users.

Apart from providing specific information about the National Highway stretches and enhancing transparency, the QR code signboards will not only help to enhance road safety through better access to emergency and local information but also go a long way in improving user experience and awareness about National Highways across the country. UNI

BJP slams Rahul Gandhi for tarnishing India's image abroad

■ United News of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: The BJP today came down heavily on Congress MP and leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi for his remarks made abroad, terming them as "repeated attempts to malign India's image on foreign soil."

Addressing the media here, BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi accused Gandhi of being a "thorn" in the country's side, citing his latest comments on the state of democracy in India during his ongoing visit to Colombia.

Trivedi pointed out that within the last 24 to 36 hours, two contrasting narratives have unfolded in



the country. On one hand, India celebrated the centenary of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the world's largest cultural organisation devoted to the nation for over a century. In a historic gesture, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a Rs 100 coin bearing the image of Mother Bharat for the first time on this occasion.

On the other hand, the leader of a 140-year-old political party issued another anti-national statement from foreign soil, he said. Highlighting India's remarkable progress, Trivedi cited a January 2023 report by the Global Times which acknowledged India's rapid institutional reforms that have significantly strengthened its economy.

Why Gandhi, during his foreign visits, refrains from acknowledging India's accomplishments such as the December 2024 Cambridge University case study on India's digital transformation under Prime Minister Modi's leadership and the Stanford AI Index, which ranks India first in AI skills investment and among the top four in AI vibrancy globally, the BJP leader questioned. Instead, Trivedi alleged, Rahul Gandhi chooses platforms such as Stanford University to make derogatory, disrespectful, and baseless remarks about the country. The BJP spokesperson further questioned the unique credentials that prompt foreign universities to invite Gandhi, while numerous distinguished Congress leaders do not receive such invitations. He pointed out that Gandhi is not invited to speak at any Indian universities, raising concerns about why he is sought after abroad.

Yesterday, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad had made similar allegations, asserting that instead of extending good wishes on India's festival days, Gandhi resorts to attacking the nation with unfounded accusations. "He claims there is no democracy, whereas democracy in India is vibrant and intact. His real problem is his insatiable hunger for power," Prasad stated. Referring to Gandhi's remarks in Bogota, where he reportedly claimed that Indian citizens lack freedom of speech, Prasad accused him of "abusing" Prime Minister Narendra Modi and undermining India's developmental achievements. UNI

ED arrests Shivshankar Mayekar in Rs 1,200 Crore Goa land scam

■ United News of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) today said it has arrested Shivshankar Mayekar in connection with a land scam case involving Yeshwant Sawant and others. He was produced before a special PMLA Court during the day, which granted ED custodial remand till October 10. The ED initiated an investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) based on an FIR registered by the Goa Police against Yeshwant Sawant and others under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for allegedly defrauding the Comunidade of Anjuna of land located at Survey No. 496/1-A, Anjuna.

The accused reportedly produced fake documents to get the land mutated in their names, after which parts of it were sold to other individuals, generating additional Proceeds of Crime (POC).

ED's investigation revealed that Shivshankar Mayekar was one of the key figures behind the fraud. He allegedly acquired several land parcels in Goa in the names of his friends and relatives, later selling portions of these properties.

The sale proceeds, deposited in the accounts of his associates, were ultimately diverted into his own accounts.

Earlier, on September 9, 2025, ED conducted search operations and uncovered several land parcels acquired by Mayekar in the names of associates. These properties, spanning several lakh square meters in prime tourist hotspots such as Anjuna and Assagao in Bardez Taluka, Goa, have a market valuation likely exceeding Rs 1,200 crore.

Further investigation is underway. UNI

India slams B'desh Interim Govt for being unable to maintain law and order, and routinely trying to shift blame elsewhere

■ United News of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: India today categorically rejected the false and baseless allegations by Bangladesh blaming New Delhi for the violence perpetrated on minorities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and slammed the interim government in Dhaka for being unable to maintain law and order and routinely trying to shift the blame elsewhere.

The MEA spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, addressing a briefing, also said that the Chief Advisor Mohd Yunus-led Interim government should conduct serious investigations into the actions of local extremists committing violence, arson and land grab against the minority communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

On September 29, Bangladesh Home Affairs Advisor Lt Gen (Retd) Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said that a certain quarter was trying to create an unstable situation in Khagrachhari in the CHT, "allegedly instigated by India or fascist elements".

In response, the MEA spokesperson said: "We categorically reject these false and baseless allegations. The interim govt of Bangladesh, and we've spoken about it on several occasions,



is unable to maintain law and order situation in the country, and has this habit of routinely trying to shift the blame elsewhere. It would do well for them to introspect and conduct serious investigations into the action of local extremists committing violence, arson and land grab against the minority communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts."

At least three people were killed and dozens injured on Sunday in clashes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of southeastern Bangladesh following protests over the alleged gang rape of a schoolgirl.

Violence spread from Khagrachhari town to Guimara, 36 km away, despite restrictions and the deployment of security forces. Khagrachhari is 270 km northeast of Dhaka.

Witnesses reported that homes and businesses were set ablaze during the clashes between Indigenous groups, who are mostly Buddhists, and Bengali settlers from the plains.

The girl was allegedly gang raped on her way from a private tuition and was reportedly found by her parents and neighbours at around midnight in an unconscious state in an isolated area in the town. UNI

ED attach assets worth Rs 61.53 lakh in Ponzi scheme case involving Ranggeeta Enterprises

■ United News of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Panaji Zonal Office, recently attached movable and immovable properties in the form of two residential flats, a fixed deposit, and equity shares worth Rs 61.53 lakh belonging to Gohil Jaykumar and other associated persons in the case involving Ranggeeta Enterprises.

The ED initiated a PMLA investigation on the basis of an FIR registered by the Economic Offences Cell, Goa Police, against Gohil Jaykumar and others under various sections of the IPC. As per the FIR and the charge sheet, Gohil Jaykumar and his associates orchestrated fraudulent investment schemes through which the public was defrauded of over Rs 9.33 crore.



The ED investigation revealed that Gohil Jaykumar, operating through the unregistered entity Ranggeeta Enterprises, with various offices in Goa and Gujarat, solicited public

investments by promising exorbitant and unrealistic returns of up to 20 percent per month.

Investor funds were collected directly into the personal bank accounts of Gohil Jaykumar and his agents. The scheme functioned as a Ponzi structure and collapsed in April-May 2022 when withdrawals exceeded fresh inflows.

It has been established that the proceeds of crime (POC) were not deployed into any legitimate business but were misappropriated for personal enrichment, including the purchase of immovable properties, personal investments, financing an extravagant lifestyle, and meeting other personal expenses.

Further investigation into the matter is ongoing. UNI

Scientists in Australia create natural plastics for everyday packaging

■ United News of India

MELBOURNE, OCT 3: Australian scientists have developed natural plastic films from food waste sugars that could replace petroleum-based packaging, offering compostable alternatives for food and agricultural uses.

The study led by Australia's Monash University (MON) highlights the potential of a new type of biodegradable plastic by converting food waste sugars into polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHA) biopolymers, said a MON statement released Friday. "This research demonstrates how food waste can be transformed into sustainable, compostable ultrathin films with tunable properties," said Edward Attenborough from the MON Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering.

By selecting different bacterial strains and blending their polymers, the researchers produced films that behave like conventional plastics and can be molded into other shapes or solids, the statement said.

As global plastic production exceeds 400 million tons annually, most of it single-use, the study provides a framework for designing bioplastics for temperature-sensitive packaging, medical films and other products, addressing the global challenge of single-use plastic waste, it said.

The researchers fed two soil-dwelling bacteria -- Cupriavidus necator and Pseudomonas putida -- a carefully balanced "diet" of sugars with the right blend of salts, nutrients and trace elements, according to the study published

in the British journal Microbial Cell Factories. Once the microbes produced the plastics inside their cells, the researchers extracted and cast them into ultrathin films about 20 microns thick, and tested their stretchiness, strength and melting behavior.

"The versatility of PHAs means we can reimagine materials we rely on every day without the environmental cost of conventional plastics," Attenborough said, adding this opens the door to sustainable alternatives in packaging, especially where they can be composted along with food or agricultural waste.

The researchers said they are now working with industry partners to develop biodegradable packaging and medical solutions with potential commercial applications. UNI

US President Donald Trump clearing Democratic 'dead wood' in meeting with OMB director Russ Vought

■ United News of India

WASHINGTON, OCT 3: US President Donald Trump has said he and the OMB (Organisation of Management and Budget) Russ Vought will work on which "Democrat Agencies" to cut as the US government shutdown approached its third day.

Likening the shutdown to an opportunity for the Republicans to "clear out dead wood", he portrayed it as a means to reshape the federal spending on bureaucracy and agencies.

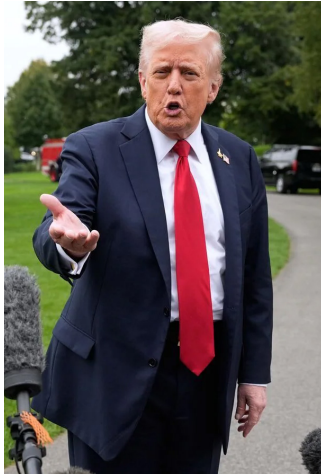
His remarks suggested he may use the shutdown to strip funding from Democratic priorities, escalating tensions as hundreds of thousands of federal workers remain furloughed.

The shutdown has already closed museums, halted infrastructure projects, and left about 750,000 federal employees without pay, while 200,000 federal employees deemed "essential" -- including law enforcement personnel, TSA workers and air traffic controllers -- worked with zero pay,

reports BBC.

It was unclear exactly what Trump could decide in Thursday's meeting with Vought, though they are more essential than ever as Congress failed to keep the US government open amid the two parties finding themselves on opposite ends.

Amid the political impasse, the US government services started to grind to a halt, and thousands of federal workers stayed home, leaving only the most essential federal services unhindered.



Speaking to the media on Capitol Hill, neither party budged an inch, with both quickly playing the blame game.

House Speaker Mike Johnson labelled the crisis the "Democrat shutdown," vowing not to negotiate over Democratic demands to extend health insurance subsidies for low-income Americans.

Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries countered that Republicans were "attacking health care for working-class families" while threatening

federal workers' jobs.

The Republicans need eight Democratic votes in the Senate to advance their spending bill, while Democrats must peel off 13 Republicans to pass their version. Only three Democrats joined Republicans in a failed vote Wednesday, and another attempt is scheduled for Friday.

The White House has already frozen billions in federal projects, including \$18 billion for New York, home to Democratic leaders Chuck Schumer and Jeffries.

Some officials have called

the move emblematic of Trump's readiness to weaponise federal spending, thus further complicating prospects for a bipartisan deal.

Strategically, the confrontation underscores a political manoeuvre by Trump to cast Democrats as obstructionists while cementing his influence over the Republican agenda.

For Democrats, the challenge is to portray the shutdown as an attack on health care and workers, hoping public anger forces Republicans to soften. UNI

Siraj Leads The Line As India Start Home Season With A Bang

Rahul made a composed half-century after India skittled West Indies for 162 on the opening day

■ **Alagappan Muthu**

AHMEDABAD: If there was any anxiety about India's performance this home season, the first day's play went some way to allaying them. Weakened they might be with the retirements of three legends, wounded they might be after losing the last series here 0-3, there is still plenty of fire. West Indies came under it and couldn't really muster up a response. After choosing to bat, they were bowled out for 160 with time to spare for the tea break. At stumps, they were clinging on to a lead of 41.

Mohammed Siraj picked up where he left off after his Iron Man efforts in England. He focused on pitching the ball up. He targeted the top of the stumps. He didn't give the batter any easy reprieves and that was enough for him to pick up four of the first five wickets to fall. He thought he had a fifth - which would've been a landmark moment because he doesn't have a five-for at home - but DRS took it away. Jasprit

Bumrah, his new-ball partner, offered him a pat on the back when replays showed the lbw shout against Justin Greaves being struck down but didn't seem to be so sympathetic when he started ripping out the tail with his yorkers. Eventually Siraj had to settle for figures of 4 for 40. A comfortable day's play offered opportunity for India to make further gains, particularly their new man at No. 3. But Sai Sudharsan's dismissal for 7 off 19 only served as a reminder that this team is still transitioning and that without Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, R Ashwin and Rishabh Pant, who is only injured, there are vulnerabilities. KL Rahul papered over them with a no-nonsense half-century. It feels like he knows how to match his output with his ability now. Something West Indies are struggling with. Their XI has nine centuries in it. Two of their top three have yet to contribute to that count. The other one has a double, but he was coming back to international cricket after a 20-month break.

ESPNCricinfo



Narkara Hunks Clinch Trophy in Grand Finale of MPL T20 Cricket Tournament 2025 at Manchhama

■ **Ubaid mehdi**

BUDGAM, OCT 3: The much-awaited Grand Finale of the 9th Edition of the MPL T20 Cricket Tournament 2025 was held with great enthusiasm at Gulshan Ground, Manchhama, under the banner of the nationwide campaign Sewa Parv. The mega event was organized by renowned social activist of Kashmir, Mr. Muzamil Mehmood, who has been at the forefront of promoting education, sports, and social awareness in the region.

The high-voltage final clash was contested between Narkara Hunks and Malpora Blasters, attracting hundreds of cricket lovers from across the district. In a thrilling encounter, Narkara Hunks emerged victorious, lifting the coveted MPL T20 Trophy



2025 after showcasing remarkable teamwork and sporting spirit.

The event concluded with an inspiring address by Mr.

Muzamil Mehmood, who underscored the significance of education, games and sports, and collective responsibility in combating social

evils like drug abuse. He urged the youth to channel their energy towards constructive activities and to become ambassadors of peace, disci-

pline, and unity in society.

As part of the felicitation ceremony, trophies, medals, and mementos were distributed among the winning and runner-up teams, along with individual awards to outstanding performers of the tournament. The gesture was warmly received by the players and the audience, further boosting the morale of young athletes.

The tournament, which witnessed participation from several teams across Budgam and adjoining areas, was hailed as a platform for nurturing local sporting talent and promoting healthy community engagement. The successful culmination of the 9th edition once again reaffirmed the role of sports in fostering brotherhood, resilience, and a drug-free society.

SYED FARAKH MEMORIAL

FOOTBALL NIGHT TOURNAMENT

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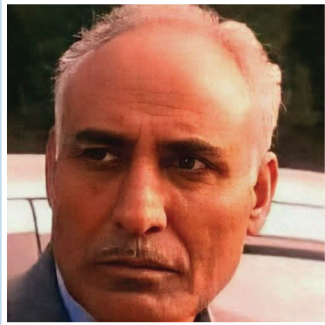
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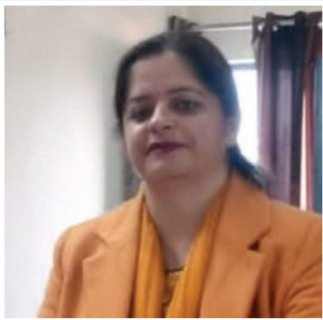
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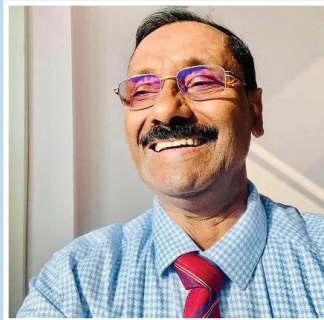
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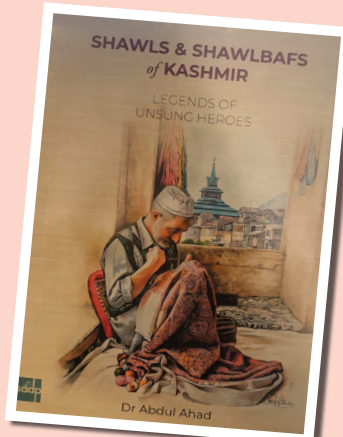
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ONE SHELF, MANY WORLDS

ENGLISH, URDU AND KASHMIRI



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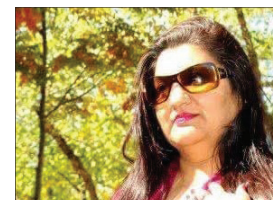


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Short story

Gulla Qasai



Translated by
Dr Basharat Khan



Author
Dr Reyaz Tawheedi Kashmiri

As soon as the cursed face appeared, Gullah the butcher would feel a burning anger rise in his veins, and his hands would instinctively grab the sharp knife to start chopping the meat on the wooden board in front of him. This strange, almost automatic action had been going on for several months. Whether there were customers or not, as soon as he laid eyes on that cursed face, his hands would begin slicing the meat recklessly. His eyes would turn red and yellow with a hateful fury, and his cheeks would flush. Occasionally, a customer would be slightly taken aback by the butcher's strange change in demeanor. Gullah's shop was located right in front of the main gate of the government hospital. From his youth to his middle age, he worked quickly and efficiently. His polite manner and honesty had won over his customers. He treated everyone with great respect but showed a particular reverence for doctors. Whenever a doctor's car passed the gate, his hand would automatically rise in a salute. If a doctor came to buy meat, Gullah would often add one or two extra pieces of meat into the packet. When doctors praised Gullah for his generosity, he would smile and say, "A doctor's profession is one of healing. You not only serve the people but also relieve their pain, giving them a life free of suffering." And while saying this, he would share a personal story about the time when his wife had been admitted to the same hospital in labor. Dr. Mushtaq had stayed up all night working on her treatment, and in the morning, he performed a surgery and placed a beautiful little girl in Gullah's arms. When Gullah tried to thank him with a small tip, the doctor had rejected it, saying, "I am a government employee. I am paid by the government to serve people. Go, buy some clothes for your baby with this money."

As time passed, people's thinking began to change, and with it, the values of humanity were gradually replaced by materialism. Gullah's daughter was unwell one afternoon while he was at work in his shop. His younger son rushed to the shop and told him that his sister was feeling sick and that he should come home quickly. Gullah closed his shop and hurried home, bringing his daughter to the hospital for treatment. She was in great pain, but Gullah was reassured, as he believed that, being a doctor, Dr. Mushtaq would take care of his daughter. However, things did not go as expected. After some time, the nurse handed Gullah a prescription, and he rushed to the pharmacy to get the medicine. The pharmacist, who was an acquaintance of Gullah, looked



at the prescription and said, "Tell the doctor to prescribe medicine from a different company." But Gullah did not understand the context and hurriedly bought the medicine and rushed back to the hospital.

As Gullah walked back and forth outside the ward, his heart was torn by the sound of his daughter's agonized cries. He kept praying silently, asking for mercy from Allah. Soon, the nurse told him that despite the doctor's efforts, his daughter was not improving. The nurse explained that the doctor's shift was over and that he had to go to his private clinic. Gullah was left with two options: either take his daughter to the city hospital or to the doctor's private clinic. After consulting with his wife, they decided to take her to the clinic. The nurse handed him another prescription and said that his daughter needed major surgery, which would cost around twenty thousand rupees.

The mention of such a large sum of money left Gullah in shock. He thought, "How will I arrange such a huge amount?" He had saved a few thousand rupees for emergencies, but most of it had already been spent. He shared this with his wife, and both of them felt the pressure. As they were pondering, Gullah noticed the gold bangle on his daughter's wrist. He felt a wave of guilt as if he was robbing his own

home. As the market was closing, Gullah went to a jeweler with the bangle, where the jeweler, after weighing it, told him that due to the falling gold price and the fact that it was second-hand, he could only give him fifteen thousand rupees. After some negotiation, the jeweler gave Gullah sixteen thousand, and Gullah rushed to the clinic.

After gathering the money and taking it to the doctor, as Gullah entered the room, he heard his daughter's last words:

"Papa...!" It felt as though the sky had fallen on him. The voices of crying and screaming around him seemed to drown him out. After spending days in mourning, Gullah returned to his shop with a heart full of stone. He now looked at the government hospital with disdain. His hand no longer rose in salute when doctors passed by, nor did he share the story of Dr. Mushtaq's kindness.

It was the festival of Eid-ul-Adha, and the market was bustling with excitement. Gullah's shop was crowded with customers. As he was chopping meat, a familiar voice made him freeze. The cursed face appeared again. Gullah's eyes turned red with fury as he trembled.

The doctor smiled and said, "I need one kilogram of mutton because my daughter is due for delivery." As he handed over the money, he added, "I will pick up the meat

after I finish my work at the hospital." The words "My daughter is due for delivery" kept ringing in Gullah's ears, stirring a strange feeling inside him. Once he finished his work at the shop, he went to the pharmacist to buy a bottle of medicine. He mixed the medicine in water and soaked the meat in it. His mind was filled with strange thoughts as he impatiently awaited the doctor's return. Half an hour later, the doctor came to pick up the meat. With a smile, Gullah handed him the packet. The doctor went towards his car. Gullah took a deep breath of relief, but his mind was troubled, torn between good and evil.

As the doctor started his car, Gullah's conscience grew uneasy. This was the cursed face, the one that had destroyed Gullah's sense of humanity. By handing over the meat, Gullah felt a fleeting sense of calm. But then, the call of "Allahu Akbar" from the mosque broke through his thoughts like a jolt of electricity. His conscience began to tip towards the good side. Gullah heard his daughter's voice again, calling "Papa," not in vengeance, but in a plea for her life. Gullah rushed barefoot to the car, opened the door, and shouted, "This is goat meat, not mutton."

Translated from urdu short story Gulla Qasai
chogalwriter76@gmail.com

Love, Loss and Life: Shafaq Sopori's Poetics



Professor Muhammad Aslam

The Poet

Dr Shafaq Sopori is a contemporary poet, fiction writer, satirist, critic, researcher, and musicologist. Shafaq (Shafaq is his nom de plume) superannuated after completing an illustrious career as Professor of Urdu in the Department of Higher Education, Jammu and Kashmir, and Cluster University. He is the author of many books. Some of them are: urdu gazal aur hindustani mausiqi, mausiqi, shairi aur lisanyat, makhzan e mausiqi, farhang e mausiqi, glossary of terminology (music), urdu shairi aur istilahat e mausiqi and istilahat e mausiqi aur urdu loughat.

Shafaq's poetry got published in the famed periodical 'shabkhood' for a long time. Although he has tried his hand at all genres of poetry, his forte lies in the ghazal. His poetic collections are: dil e khakbasar, betee mausamon ke dukh, dasht miai door kahin, raisham sarab khawab, yaad ki ajnabi mundaaron par, and pehli tanhayian. He has also written short stories and novels. He is an all-time writer, poet, and critic.

I have chosen three poems (two are from his poetic collection yaad ki ajnabi mundaaron par ('On the Unfamiliar Terraces of Memory') that have love as their theme, but treat it quite differently. I have found in him a vast canvas of his personal feelings and philosophical undertones that make him one of the best poets to enjoy. I am sure readers would appreciate his poetics and the landscape that he has tread in his poetic journey.

Poem 1

Transliteration

aakhir kaar 'ishq ne yaaro!
ham ko jotaa kisaan ke hal main
yaad hai jab chiraagh-e-vahshat ki lau
humakti thi tere aanchal main
aaj koe udaas bijli shafaq
mar gae hai safed baadal main

Translation

O friends! At last, love has ground me beneath the farmer's plough. I remember when the lamp of horror once flickered within your mantle. Today, Shafaq, a sorrowful twilight lightning, has died away inside a white cloud.

Coupletwise Interpretation

C1 "O, Friends...the farmer's plough": The poet compares himself to the earth being crushed under a plough. "ishq" (love) has been portrayed as a merciless and inevitable force like the plough of a farmer. Love has turned the narrator into a field to be tilled, which suggests suffering, humiliation, and self-effacement.

C2 "I remember...your mantle": "Horror" (vahshat) here symbolises a lamp burning under the beloved's mantle. Love was once an ecstatic frenzy, but it soon began to flicker, suggesting that it had become unstable, dangerous, and full of



passion. "Mantle" (aanchal) represents intimacy, secrecy, and feminine allure.

C3 "Today Shafaq...a white cloud.":

Today, a sorrowful twilight lightning has died away inside a white cloud. In the past, love was a passion, but now it is an image of dying brilliance, fading vitality, and emotional exhaustion—"sorrowful lightning of twilight." The "white cloud" suggests numbness, suppression, or the lack of passionate intensity. Here, we find a sharp contrast between the past love (fire and flame) and the present reality—suffocation and extinction.

Critical Assessment

The poem portrays love as a disaster, and not as bliss. The poet has used the farmer's plough as a metaphor (usually used for gardens and flowers in Urdu poetry) for love's brutality and as a force that tears and reshapes the lover's self. The "lamp of horror" is a classical motif of flame and moth, but in this poem, the flame burns under the mantle, which denotes close intimacy with secrecy. Love declines into despair, which is conveyed through the use of flame transforming into extinguished lightning—the lightning dying in white clouds, a symbol representing passion dying in emptiness.

The tone of the poem shifts from nostalgic longing to melancholic resignation. The confessional cry, "O friends!", is both intensely personal and universal. Love has been for the lover a journey from ecstasy to annihilation. The tragic impact of the poem has been created by a temporal contrast between past passion and present emptiness.

Poem 2

Transliteration

ye ishq bhi ajiib hai ik aan ho gaya insaan
saari umr ko hairaan ho gaya

woh shakhs kya gaya hai idhar se ke shehre-dil
phir dekhte hi dekhte veeraan ho gaya
us gham ne kaisi shakal badal li ke kal talak
dushman tha meri jaan ka ab jaan ho gaya
woh zulf mere baazu pe bikhri nahin to
main us zulf se zyaada pareshaan ho gaya
hai saltanat hi meri na lashkar mera magar
main badnaseeb jang ka maidaan ho gaya
main usko zinda dekh ke khush ho gaya
shafaq woh mujh ko zinda dekh ke hairaan ho gaya

Translation

This love is so strange—it took just a moment to happen, I was awe-struck for the whole of my life.

That person, once gone from here, the city of my heart, instantly, became desolate.

How strangely this grief has changed its face: yesterday, it was my life's enemy; now it's my very life.

If her tresses no longer fall upon my arm, then I'm left more restless than her very locks.

I have no empire, no army of my own, yet I, ill-fated, have become the very battlefield.

Shafaq, I was happy to see her alive
She was bewildered on seeing me living.

Coupletwise Interpretation

C1 "This love is...whole of my life.":

Human life is itself a journey of endless surprises. Man is caught between love, loss, and existential questions.

C2 "That person...became desolate":

The beloved's absence has changed the lover's heart into a desert. Without love life has no charm.

C3 "How strangely...my very life.":

Here, we find a profound paradox. The lover has embraced grief as an essential part of his existence, though initially he rued it.

C4 "If her tresses...very locks.":

If the beloved's tresses do not fall on the lover's arm, he feels very disturbed and chaotic, more chaotic than the entangled hair. The imagery of hair has been used as a motif for intimacy by Urdu poets for generations.

C5 "I have no empire...the very battlefield.":

Here, the poet is depicting his own self as a site of conflict. There is an inward clash of desire and despair in him. He has nothing, yet he hosts wars of love, longing and fate.

C6 "Shafaq...seeing me living.":

The beloved is shocked to see the lover living, despite the suffering that he has undergone. However, the lover was happy to see his beloved as joyful as before. It seems that their love has been asymmetrical.

Critical Assessment

This poem offers a profound meditation on the paradoxical nature of love and grief, illustrating how a transient moment of tenderness can fundamentally alter an individual's life trajectory. The speaker's emotional state undergoes a significant transformation—from awe and reverence to despair and desolation, and from resistance to surrender—highlighting how the absence of love engenders grief that assumes a formative, almost existential, significance. Through the use of evocative metaphors such as the "city of my heart" and the depiction of the speaker as a "battlefield," the poem elevates personal sorrow to an epic dimension, emphasizing its universal and timeless qualities. The lyrical tone, complemented by intimate imagery—including references to the beloved's tresses—conveys a persistent yearning that endures beyond physical separation.

Poem 3

Transliteration

ishq ki waarda-e-awwal mein gayi jaan-e-azeez
daldal mein
jee yeh kehta hai kaanch ke rezay main mila
doon tumhare kaajal mein

yaad kar kis darakht ke neeche
tu ne chhoda tha mujh ko jangal mein
yoon teri yaad aa gayi jaise chaand utra ho
khaali botal mein

Translation

In love's very first assault,
my precious life sank into a swamp.
My heart longs to mix shards of glass
into the koh of your eyes.

Remember under which tree
you abandoned me in the wilderness.
Your memory returned to me like
a moon descending into an empty bottle.

Coupletwise Interpretation

C1 "In love's...into a swamp":

Love's very beginning is depicted as destructive: instead of joy, it drags the lover into entanglement and loss, like sinking into quicksand.

C2 "My heart longs...your eyes.":

A violent, shocking image. It reflects the bitterness of betrayal and the urge to retaliate by corrupting the beauty of the beloved's eyes. Love's sweetness has turned into a desire for vengeance.

C3 "Remember under...in the wilder-

The Hood; a review



Shafi Ahmad

The Hood is a new novel by celebrated author, columnist and translator from Kashmir, Mushtaque B Barq. Barq has introduced a new phenomenon in the story line where Hoods of various colours are an interesting happening and add sheen to the story line. In the beginning Barq introduces the Hood Land in detail.

In the masquerade of custodians, hooded men roam the heart of the city where nights are no longer significant, except for the sirens of ambulances or the barking of street dogs. Among the residents, wearing a hood is a fashion statement—a symbol of their identity. Hoods have specific uses for various occasions, but there is one universal hood, the “Black Hood.” It embodies the common narrative of the region, a place where ambulances and gunshots coexist with mysterious creatures who share their lives with human beings.

This place, called Hoodland, is situated in the southwest of two major landscapes: one raised above sea level, known as Highland, and the other, enmeshed within dense forests like a gorge, called Lowland.

An important character Rohan, a young boy is baffled as the people in the area put on hoods and he asks an apt question about wearing of hoods.

“Why do they put the hood on?” Roshan’s nine-year-old son Rohan asked him. He was new to this land, having been raised at his grandmother’s house. He had seen men in hoods. He had heard of men wearing hoods. Roshan often dismissed his unending questions, but today he seemed determined to make him speak, which he eventually did, albeit only to evade him.

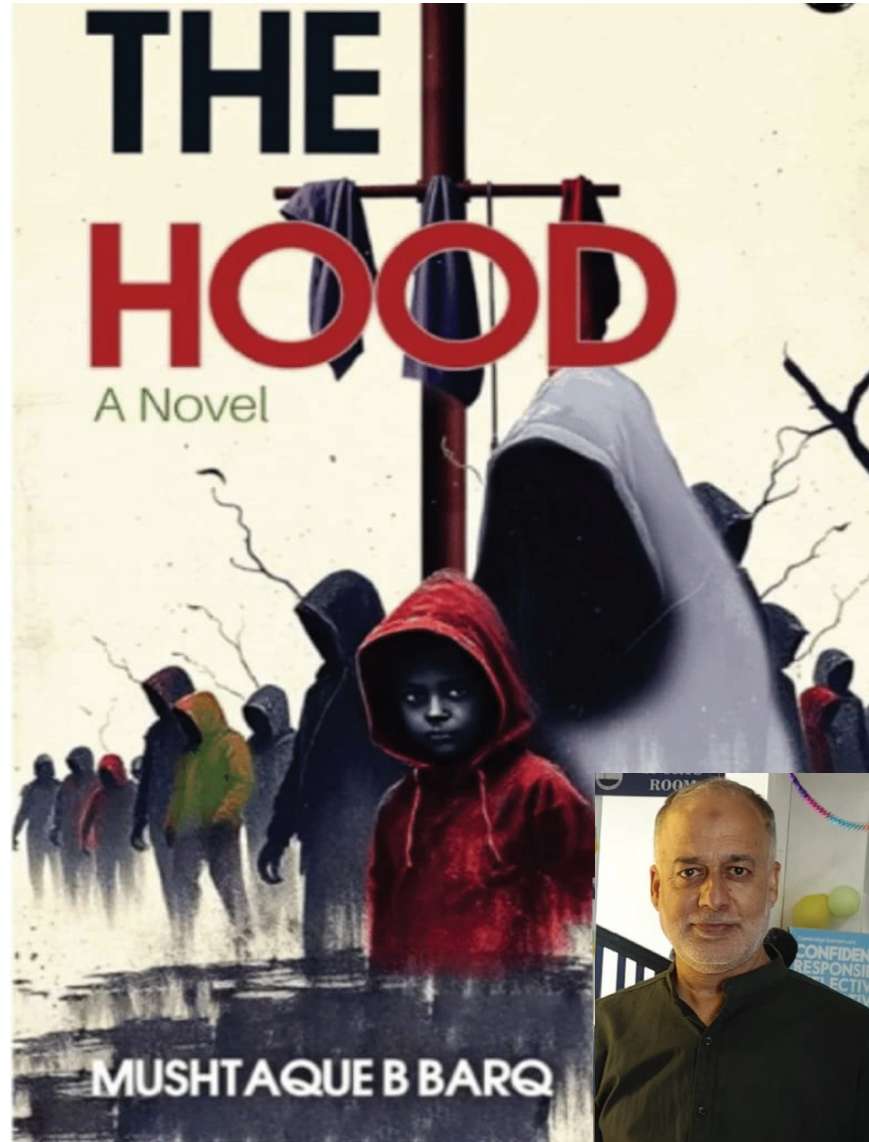
Death across the globe is an incident of lament and tragedy but Barq has introduced a new and interesting significance; it was not only celebrated but enjoyed.

Death was a significant metaphor in Hoodland. It was not only celebrated but also enjoyed, as death symbolized yet another opportunity to add a hood to the pole in the temple yard. Each year, the pole would swell with hoods to the extent that it would take hours to walk around it.

Hoods of all colors were tied to the pole as a mark of respect for those who had passed away during the year. Thus, every deceased man, woman, young, or old was seen as an additional contribution to their hood culture. Each death meant an additional hood, making the pole grow thicker and heavier—far beyond what one could imagine.

Story unfolds :

The novel ‘The Hood’ presents a dystopian society ruled by an oppressive system where individuals are identified and categorized by their hoods. The colour of the hoods are significant as it reveals the status of the groups in the society. “A wealthy family responsible for maintaining the temple was allowed to only off-white hoods symbolizing their holiness and purity. The clergy members exclusively wore snow white hoods with a red



patch.....Red hoods, in contrast, represented the working class —teachers, labourers, doctors, and other professionals.....Orange hoods, worn by artisans, reflected creativity and craftsmanshipGreen, reserved for scholars, poets, and authors was a symbol of growth, intellect and the cultivation of knowledgepurple, the colour associated with grave diggers, undertakers (pages 7,8,9).

The story line follows Roshan, his wife Radhika and their son Rohan, a boy with extraordinary yet tragic ability—he can predict deaths. “Roshan’s nine year old son, Rohan, suffered a serious head injury at birth when he slipped from the doctor’s hands in the labour room”(Page 12)

Rohan, suffering from a severe neurological condition since birth, undergoes surgeries that seem to awaken a supernatural gift. His mother, Radhika, sees his powers as both a burden and a blessing, struggling with the ethical dilemma of whether to harness them for personal gain or protect her son from exploitation. Meanwhile, Roshan, a devoted father, endures societal humiliation and personal sacrifices to ensure his son’s well-being.

Radhika challenges the rigid traditions of the Hood Land, where authority is dictated by the Pole authorities, and any defiance leads to dire consequences. Her act of resistance—removing her hood, sets off a chain of

events leading to a brutal trial, exposing the hypocrisy and injustice of the ruling class.

As the novel unfolds, Rohan’s visions become increasingly intense, foreseeing the tragic fates of people around him, including his own family. His father, torn between loyalty to his wife and fear of the system, struggles with his role in a crumbling society. The climax is marked by a desperate confrontation with the authorities, revealing the deep corruption and manipulation within the ‘Hood Land’. The corruption runs deeper in the framework of literary and artistic awards where deserving ones are ignored, the mediocre are pushed up. ‘Sign the agreement’ is an exceptional rule prevailing in the Hood Land. “Mr.Girish, this is how things work in Hood Land. Every awardee in the past has signed an agreement. You are not alone.”(page 94).

Ultimately, The Hood explores themes of oppression, resistance, fate, and the cost of challenging deeply ingrained societal norms. It is a haunting reflection on the struggle for justice in a world that thrives on fear and submission.

Conclusions :

Mushtaque Barq studied through his previous scripts and the present one comes up like a craftsman who plays with words. He weaves fantasy, prophecy, and pattern into a richly layered script in this novel. Follow-

ing lines explain how each of these elements function in the story:

Fantasy in The Hood is not used for escapism but as a metaphorical and symbolic lens to critique real-world issues, especially those related to identity, power, and systemic control.

The use of Hoodland is a fictional geographical area where imaginative entities like the Highland and Lowland provide existing residencies to the people residing there.

The hoods of various colours worn by individuals are fantastical in their societal purpose, functioning like magical identities that declare one’s social role, class, and fate.

The Black Hood, in particular, evokes an aura of mysticism, symbolizing suffering, loss, and shared trauma in a militarized or conflict-ridden land.

Supernatural elements like Rohan’s prophetic ability to foresee deaths deepen the fantasy and surrealism of the narrative, blending medical reality with mystic prophecy.

Prophecy is central to the plot, both literally and thematically.

Rohan, born with a neurological trauma, develops a supernatural gift of foreseeing death. His character resembles the mythical seer archetype—a super human whose knowledge is both a blessing and a curse.

His visions guide the story’s trajectory and reveal the hidden rot in Hoodland’s social and moral order.

His mother, Radhika, interprets these prophetic visions not only as personal burdens but as keys to disrupting an unjust system.

Prophecy here symbolizes foresight and resistance—the knowledge of coming doom, and the courage (or despair) to act upon it.

Pattern operates on multiple levels in The Hood—symbolic, structural, and societal. Color-coded hoods create a rigid caste-like hierarchy. The Pole—where hoods of the dead are tied—grows with every death, physically manifesting the accumulation of suffering, memory, and conformity.

The moment of agreement-signing for awards (e.g., Mr. Girish on page 94) exposes another pattern: institutional corruption. Here, success is systematically bought, not earned.

●Structurally, the novel’s unfolding—beginning with innocent curiosity (Rohan’s question), moving to personal awakenings (his powers), then societal rebellion (Radhika), and finally tragic confrontation—follows a classical pattern of dystopian resistance.

In Essence Fantasy gives the narrative a symbolic space to question reality, Prophecy drives the emotional and narrative core through the young Rohan’s visions and Pattern highlights the mechanisms of oppression and conformity that define the society of Hoodland.

Finalthought

The Hood is not just a dystopian fantasy—it’s a political fable. Through allegorical storytelling, Barq critiques authoritarianism, social stratification, and the silence imposed on truth-tellers. It’s both an imaginative parable and a sociopolitical mirror, uniquely grounded in the realities of conflict zones.

I am of firm belief that Barq with this new novel, will receive accolades for the enchanting story and the plot.

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The Divine Wizard



Dr Supriya Shukla

A recent cataclysmic, nerve-shattering incident of the much-discussed fatal plane crash that went up into flames incinerating all passengers except One who survived that ill-fated crash is not only enigmatic and baffling, but one that defies causality and human understanding. That was indeed a Miracle that left everyone aghast!! It was as if the Lord took him in his lap and he survived, instantly a reminder of the 15th century mystic poet Kabir's couplet,

“जाको राखे साईया मार सके ना कोय...” signifying and reflecting the universal spiritual truth about Divine protection.

It was not that HE who is all-loving and caring could not come to the rescue of those who perished, but such incidents are inexplicable. The Supreme Force, That Divine Power, That Mystical Presence occasionally reminds us of His jurisdiction through events that are beyond human logic and comprehension. God does not ask us to understand, comprehend or figure it out...

HE just asks us to pray, seek and trust! Birth, Death and the Future are indeterminate and not in the periphery of human intelligence. Living in the present should therefore be the motto of all mortals.

Although births are now well planned and executed as per one's requirement, yet what we foolishly ignore is that these so-called



planned events are also ordained by The Almighty or they would not happen.

However, the future and death still remain unpredictable. The most acclaimed knowledgeable astrologers, the best of fortune-tellers are inept in making predictions.

Natural calamities and disasters, accidents, terminal illnesses are recurring events but even amidst these there are survivors which seem like freak incidents to us.

These are HIS Miracles that do occur from time to time.

The 2001 catastrophe of the earthquake in Bhuj had reduced everything to rubble. Rescuers were digging through dust and debris hoping against hope to find any survivors. Three days had passed and there was no possibility of any survivor to be alive

beneath collapsed buildings. Yet when all hope was lost a faint whimper was heard from a mound of shattered bricks...it was a 3 month old baby covered in dust with eyes wide open. The child had survived against all odds without food or water. That was one of His miracles.

Another incredible survivor was the soldier believed to be missing and dead. At Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, avalanches are merciless. In February 2016, one such avalanche buried an Indian Army post under 25 feet of ice and snow. Ten soldiers were trapped, and after days of search, hope was fading.

On the sixth day, rescuers reached a frozen shelter. As they cut through the ice, they could hardly believe what they found

— a soldier, still alive. It was Lance Naik Hanamantappa Koppad. His body was battered, his pulse weak, but he was breathing. A Miracle!!

It is through such unbelievable hair-raising events that The Almighty keeps reminding us of His benevolent presence. Albert Einstein rightly pointed out,

“There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.” It depends on how one perceives life.

The logical mind doubts and is not ready to believe such incredible episodes as Miracles. These are above and beyond human creativity and the rapidly advancing human intelligence. The rational, analytical mind is apprehensive about the future depending on past events, regretting how the past could have been made better.

Shelley ruminates on the futility of yearning for the past or even fretting about the future. In his Ode To A Skylark he deplores the tendency of mortals to be engrossed in this....

“To look before and after And pine for what is not.”

What we need to realise, feel and be sensitive about is that every moment there are miracles happening around us – a flower blossoming, a bird tweeting, a bee humming, a raindrop falling, a snowflake wafting along the clear evening air. There is magic everywhere. If one learns how to live it, life is nothing short of a daily miracle. To ignore or be nonchalant and insensitive towards such Divine brilliance is apathetic, inhuman and sacrilegious indeed.

Pondering about this inertness, apathy and the absorption with the material world

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Daring to Dream



Lily Swarn

"Deams are illustrations...from the book your soul is writing about you", said Marsha Norman. An uninterpreted dream is like an unread letter, staring you in the face, teasing and nagging, like a vengeful wife. The safe, secret world of dreams, is like a nocturnal visitor, crawling in from the hidden, secure, strong room of your, precious vault. Its fascinating wonders, unfurl, like colourful flags, on a mountain top.

Thoughts that we tuck away, in the folds and recesses of our, jumbled mind, creep out to either poison our sleep or to perfume it with their, mind boggling, designs and contortions. Our dreamland is the, divine gift of the lord to us. It prods, shakes, scares, entices, in turns. The irritating problem with dreams is, that they do not speak in

a routine, day time language. They have their own code language, befuddling our minds, with their erratic patterns and vivid visuals.

The private world of our souls, unknown to us, graphically unwinds, serpent-like, in our dreams. Often it introduces us, to our other selves. The one, we do not meet in the waking hours. The shades and hues of dreams, are never to be seen in the stark, mundane world of reality. Bhai Vir Singh, wrote "supne vich tussi mile asanu, assi ja galvakdi paai; nira noor tussi hath na aaye, saadi kambdi rahi kalaai." The form is missing. It's bubble and froth. You feel it was palpable and real, yet the ephemeral, slips through your hands, like a chiffon scarf.

The transient and fleeting feeling, of having connected is fascinating. The creator of the numerous levels, of the sub conscious layers of the mind,



is a master strokesman. Carl Jung, gives one a rude jolt when he explains "who looks outside dreams; who looks inside awakes". A hunger to accomplish one's dreams, may be the road to great achievements, despite being forewarned, by Sigmund Freud's views of analysis. Strangely, the wives of most dreamers and speculative philosophers, have thought them to be utter idiots.

'Badi mushkil se sulaaya hai khud ko maine, apni aankhon ko tere khwaab ka laalach dekar'. "Dyaar e khwaab ki gam gashtagi se achha hai, tavaaf e koocha na meherbaan kiya jaaye."

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The Alchemy Of Healing: Pharmacy's Silent Evolution at SKIMS



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Once, in the tender dawn of my childhood, when a virulent flu held me captive in a fevered grip, my mother clasped my wrist and carried me to the lone dispensary in our mohalla. Behind the counter stood a man in a white coat, no degree dangling on the wall, no gilded certificate to announce his authority, yet his presence exuded an aura that transcended mere profession. With a listening ear and a grave nod, he turned to the regiment of glass bottles arrayed like sentries upon wooden shelves. With alchemist's dexterity, he measured draughts from one bottle, then another, stirred them together with a clinking spoon, and finally poured the potion into a humble 100 ml vial.

"Five milliliters, thrice a day," he instructed with a voice of quiet certainty. And lo, after the very first draught, the prisoner of fever was liberated. By the next day, my laughter rang once more in the playground, echoing among my companions like the restored chime of a clock.

Compounding Panacea

In those days, he was known as the compounder. He had no degree in pharmacy, no university syllabus to anchor his craft, yet the community placed in him an almost devotional trust. His alchemy was not in molecules but in faith, in the assurance that a measured swirl and a labeled instruction were enough to restore balance in the fragile economy of health.

Later, the nomenclature shifted to medical assistant. These men and women were not magicians born of instinct alone; they had at least eighteen months of structured training. It was a bridge between informality and professionalism, a step toward order and systematization. Then came the 1990s, an era when the floodgates of professional pharmacy courses opened. Lecture halls brimmed with eager youth, their notebooks thirsting for pharmacology, pharmaceuticals, and biochemistry. The silent corner of medicine called pharmacy began to hum with academic vigor, slowly rising from the shadows to claim its rightful place in the edifice of healthcare.

Genesis Of Drug And Pharmacy At SKIMS...

It was at this historic cusp, when compounders, apprentices, medical assistants, and qualified pharmacists converged, that the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura raised its pharmacy services. The late 1980s marked the genesis of what would become a citadel of medicine. At SKIMS, these streams, diverse in pedigree but united in purpose, fused into a



single force: the Drug and Pharmacy Wing of SKIMS. From those humble beginnings, this wing has grown into a bastion of healing as steadfast as the Koh-i-maraan, the hillock gracing the heart of the city.

From a mere single basement storeroom, the pharmacy expanded its reach like roots searching for sustenance. It spread first toward the heart of clinical services, then unfurled into the farthest corners of the Cath Lab, and finally ascended to the proud establishment of a 24x7 drug sales outlet, a grand gaurd that never shutters, never sleeps, never denies.

Pharmacy In Times Of Turmoil.....

What makes this journey more than institutional is its resilience in strife. From the inception of militancy in Kashmir, through long decades of turmoil, the Drug and Pharmacy division of SKIMS never surrendered its post. When roads were blocked and curfews clamped, when other shutters fell and cities froze, the pharmacy counters remained illuminating and abuzz with activities.

During the 2014 deluge, when waters swallowed Srinagar, cutting arteries of communication and drowning shops, Drug and Pharmacy SKIMS stood tall, a levee against despair. Again, amid the violent convulsions of 2008 and 2016, when public

life was paralyzed by fear and strife, its counters opened unfailingly. Even when gunfire echoed in the distance, these white-coated sentinels stood behind the counter like a lead-plated wall, dispensing medicines and solace in equal measure.

To narrate the history of SKIMS pharmacy is to narrate the parallel history of Kashmir itself, a history where healing persisted even when hope was scarce, where medicines crossed barricades when movement was forbidden, where service became silent resistance against chaos.

Humble Counters To Crores.....

The early pharmacy counters were modest alcoves. Shelves carried essentials: painkillers, antibiotics, antiseptics, and a few anticancer formulations. Annual revenues scarcely grazed a few lakhs.

But SKIMS was destined to expand as being only tertiary care health care center and the real cynasure of hope for millions of people of J&K. Soon it became the beating heart of healthcare in Kashmir. Patients streamed in not just from Srinagar but from mountain hamlets, riverine villages, and far-flung valleys. For them, SKIMS is sanctuary, its corridors echoing with the footsteps of hope.

In its shadows rose the 24-hour pharmacy counters, sentinels that stood unwavering. And there, the revolution truly unfolded. What once trickled in pennies cascaded into torrents. Annual sales leapt from a few lakhs to thirty and forty crores. Oncology drugs, immunosuppressants, biologics, the formidable armamentarium of modern medicine and high end surgicals and implants, found place upon its shelves.

Unlike the predatory markets outside, where profit dictates price, SKIMS pharmacy anchored itself in humanity. Chemotherapy regimens that cost fortunes in Delhi or Mumbai are here dispensed for a fraction, "for peanuts," as many patients testified with tears of gratitude. Thus, SKIMS pharmacy has become not just a dispenser of drugs but a dispenser of justice, a leveling force in a land where disease often preys hardest on the poor.

The Silent Sentinels.....

Doctors diagnose, surgeons operate, nurses console. Their visibility earns them recognition, garlands, and headlines. But pharmacists, the silent sages of healing, stand in the shadows. They are the last gatekeepers before a drug touches the patient's lips or veins, the curators of authenticity in a market infested with spurious drugs, the advisers to physicians, the guardians against dosage errors and lethal interactions.

At SKIMS, their role is amplified. They are not mere sellers of medicines; they are custodians of life itself. Yet, how invisible they remained like hundreds of other employees form other corners of SKIMS, No bouquets adorn their shoulders, no promotions for decades together. Until

TEENS AND TECHNOLOGY



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INTRODUCTION

While experts say that parents should remain skeptical of the notion of internet addiction, however, they also argue that parents should be alert and aware of the hazards that technology offers our teens and preteens – from cyber bullying to sexting, and from information beyond their maturity levels to cyber predators. Not only that, but screen time can encourage a sedentary lifestyle, which may lead to obesity or other health problems. There is ample evidence that intense social media use and excessive gaming – spending two-thirds or more of free time – is correlated with negative mental health outcomes, including higher incidence of anxiety, depression and substance use, impairment with cognitive functioning and decreased learning ability.

Some parents may feel like there's nothing they can do about technological dangers. After all, teens seem so much more tech-savvy than their parents these days. Can't kids get around any barriers parents set up? In fact, there are several strategies recommended by expert psychologists that parents can adopt to monitor their child's technology use and guide them in using it appropriately.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

First of all, keep in mind that educating your child about technology begins long before the teen years. Not only that, but it should be an ongoing conversation with your child, not one quick sit-down talk. It's the same thing as talking to kids about friendships, relationships, drugs, or anything else. That means bringing it up as you go along. Talk to your children about their online interests, ask them who they like to talk to online and what they talk about, and give some advice about internet safety.

Keep in mind that the questions you ask to them - are not supposed to sound like an interrogation, rather should help in opening the lines of communication with your children on the subject of technology, and letting them know that you're interested in talking to them about it. As they get older, keep on talking to them so that they'll feel comfortable coming to you if they're not sure what to do, or if they feel they're getting in over their heads.

USE TECHNOLOGY TO MONITOR TECHNOLOGY

Sometimes you have to fight fire with fire, and sometimes you have to use technology in order to keep your child's relationship with technology healthy. For example, if you see that your child is using her cell phone late at night and therefore doesn't get enough sleep, you can arrange for your provider to automatically turn off her phone at a given time at night. You can also become a site administrator on your child's social networking sites like Face-



book, Twitter, Instagram etc.

For younger children who might accidentally mistype a site address and encounter age-inappropriate material, you can organize a bookmark history so that they can click on the links of any games or activities that they usually play. You can also put blocks on the search engines and on YouTube.

One less-known option you have is to have all of the texting history from your child's phone mailed to you. Don't worry – that doesn't mean you have to read all of their texts. In fact it is an advise to the parents not to read any texts at all, unless you have a strong reason to suspect that your child may be experiencing cyber bullying, sexting, or any other dangerous side of texting.

KNOW YOUR KIDS

Knowing your kids is also one major step towards making sure that they are using technology safely. Take the time to get to know who their friends are, how their school days are going, and where they spend a lot of their time. Also, keep in mind that some kids are more susceptible to technological dangers than others. Here are some questions that you can ask yourself about your kids to determine whether they have any of the risk factors for falling prey to the dangers of technology: Does your child lack friends? Has your child seemed to withdraw recently? Does your child spend

all of her time online? Has your child been bullied or depressed?

GIVE CHILDREN POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES

Keep in mind that the American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) recommends no more than two hours of screen time – or time in front of a television, computer, cell phone, or other electronic screen – each day. As a parent, you can set the rules about how long your children stay online or on their cell phones, but you'll be a lot more successful if you give children positive activities to replace screen time. Play games as a family or one-on-one, encourage them to read, and keep a variety of interesting activities around the house. With a bit of work on your part, you can help your child have a healthy relationship with technology.

IMPACT OF TV

Research shows the impact of TV on children and teens is mostly negative. Violence on TV has been linked to real-life aggressive or violent behaviour by kids. Many studies have also shown that the more TV kids watch, the more likely they are to become obese. Obesity is linked to several major health problems, including asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and sleep apnoea (a sleep disorder) among young people. In addition, kids who watch a lot of TV are likely to read less than other students. They are more likely to get lower grades

in school. They may also be more likely to smoke, use alcohol or drugs, have a poorer body concept and self-image, and be sexually active as teens.

PARENTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Parents can shape how TV affects their kids by setting limits on how much they watch and what they watch, by talking to them, and by setting a good example.

❖ Set rules on how much TV they can watch. The American Academy of Paediatrics recommends no more than 1 to 2 hours a day of quality programming (and no TV for kids under 2). Avoid letting children watch large blocks of TV (i.e. 4 hours straight) by having them choose specific programs to watch.

❖ Set rules about when they can watch TV. For example, no TV until homework or chores are finished; no TV late at night or on a school night; no TV during dinner, etc.

❖ Set limits about what they can watch. Teens can handle more serious programs than younger kids can. But it is still important to limit the amount of violent, sexual, or stereotyping material they are exposed to. Get to know the TV rating system or use the TV guide to help you decide what is okay. When you can, watch shows with your teen and discuss what they are seeing with them.

❖ Help them balance TV with other activities. Don't just tell them to watch less. Encourage them to spend time finding and doing other activities they enjoy such as: reading, music/arts, sports, hobbies, outdoor play, social activities, family activities, etc.

❖ Know what they are watching. Pay attention to what is on the screen. Also, be aware of what your teen is watching when you are not around. Many teens and pre-teens report that they watch different shows when they are away from their parents.

❖ Watch TV with your kid. Watch at least one episode of their favourite programs. Make sure you think it is okay. Surf the internet together or play their video games with them, as well.

❖ Encourage kids to watch more positive programs. It may be easier to get your teen to watch something else, rather than limit how much they watch, at first. Use videos and DVDs to record or show high-p themes it shows. Make links between the show and personal experiences, books, history, or places of interest.

❖ Beware of advertising. Talk about TV ads particularly with your pre-teen. Help them understand what ads are trying to sell, how they do this, and how they can be misleading.

❖ Limit your own TV watching. Try to watch less or watch more educational programs, more so when your younger children are around. Remember, your kids watch you and will copy what you do.

❖ If you or your kid snacks while watching TV, try eating healthier snacks. While sitting in front of the TV, many kids and adults eat unhealthy snacks. There are also many ads that make foods loaded with fat or sugar look good. Try to resist the temptation. Eat something good for you and your family like unsalted popcorn, vegetables, or fruit.

Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo is a Physician/ Public Health Expert.

Tube-well



Dr Sharmistha Chatterjee

Fettered waters, gargling and splashing out into buckets
Mita's, Smita's, Sana's and Farhana's :
blue, green, yellow and red.
Finite shapes to hold allotted necessities.

With each jerk the bangles jingle,
fountains of laughter merge with the froth of waters,
satin dupattas slither from the worn out cotton kurtis,
Droplets of sweat smudge the vermillion and wet the scarf.

Toughened grips push and pull the buckets under flow,
slits of sunlight play on the rounded waters,
slices of luck around the darkened shanties.

The chit-chat reaches a cacophonic crescendo.

Sana's eyes do not miss the drops from Smita's,
silently blending into the sunlit slice.
The peals quieten into a hush, a rare camaraderie.

Squatted heads congregate in a circle,
the tube-well at the centre.

The cool metal is a silent witness to the tales of sun and rain.

If waters could wash away sadness and sins!

Words of advice and comfort replace the flow.

Buckets change their places,
red, yellow, blue and green.

Sorrow and laughter dance on the twinkling waters.

Hands change.
Petite bodies exert to press out a trickle—

sudden change of fate in cheaper parts of the world.

(Dr Sharmistha Chatterjee is a Professor Dept of English Aliah University Kolkata, West Bengal)

BETWEEN YOUR RIBS



Wani Nazir

Your ribs are a cathedral—
each breath a congregation rising,
then leaving.
I press my ear there,
listen to this as in pulse not as noise
but a child of the bare foot
running
through wet grass—
and the grass is on fire.
Light.

Always light.
Even in your eyes,
I see a map of exits.
Somewhere a moth
burns itself into history.
You laugh and your teeth
tinkling as dice on the table of night.

I gather them—
hold them against my tongue
like prayers,
like failures that still glitter.

In sleep
you turn
the dark splits open.
A river of mirrors inside.
Inside, my face breaking again,
then mending,
because you breathe.
Tender,
you say,
as if the word itself
were a wound I could live in.

And I—
I am the ash
it leaves your laughter on the pillow,
light embedded within the cavities
between your ribs,
the moth,
the fire,
the quiet ruin
that wants only to learn
how to fold itself
inside you
without disappearing.

A Sketch



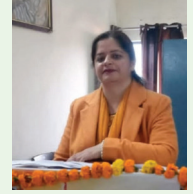
Mandira Ghosh

The depth of the ocean
Measured by
Mermaids sigh
Now absolute silence
On the ocean shore
Near unparalleled palms near the beach
Outstretched arms sways
Quenching thirst, waited for me to step
for aeons to come.
I measured sunlight, on
Rainbow feathers of the kingfishers
Measured darkness of barn owls
Rainbow Parrots called from the past
Sound and sighs more you circulate
In the universe

More mysteries are born every day.

**(Mandira Ghosh is a Secretary/
Treasurer Poetry Society Of India
mandiraghosh55@gmail.com)**

I Am A Poet



Dr. Dipika Bhatt

I don't promote any specific language, culture and history
I never like boundaries of race, religion and politics

I fly with the wings of an enlightened imagination

I shed in the deep emotions
Even though I can love...hate..

create... destroy through my words
I am what...I want to be

I am a poet, my poetry likes to live in its own freedom of words and elegant existence of thoughts!

(Dr. Dipika Bhatt is Assistant Professor in Department of English, HVM (P.G.) College, Raisi, Laksar, Haridwar, Uttarakhand. She is a bi-lingual poet in English and Hindi, writer and academic)

Why they Miss You?

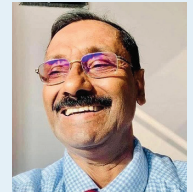


By Dr. Purnima

They miss you ---not for who you are,
But for the light you stored in jars.
For your warmth, when they were cold,
For stories shared and the load you hold.
They miss the way you calmed their storm,
Your quiet strength, your subtle form.
It's sometimes love and sometimes desire
They need your love to quench the fire
When wild winds rise, they need your anchor
They need your wisdom and your fervor
They miss you when their paths are steep,
When silence grows too wide, too deep.
They seek your voice in dusk's retreat,
The echo where their fears repeat.
Not always fair, this aching truth---
You were their harbor, thread, and roof.
But only when they needed shelter
The itinerant wanderer would come near
They miss you not only for all you were
But also, what in them you stirred
So, if you feel your worth erased,
Remember where your soul has graced—
Not everyone who says goodbye,
Stops needing the Sun which lighted their sky.

Dr. Purnima, poet and Assistant Professor of English in Varanasi, writes in Hindi and English. Author of In Search of (Me)aning and co-author of Mirari and Dararon ki Roshani, her work blends nature, mysticism, and women's voices, seeking beauty, healing, and harmony in a fractured world.

The Machine Gun Whimpers



Dr Ratan Bhattacharjee

The machine gun whimpers in the cradle of dusk,

Its barrel bowed like a monk in remorse.

Smoke curls upward, not in triumph—
But as incense for the dead it cannot forget.

A child's marble rolls through a cratered street,

The trigger louder than a thousand rounds,

untouched, trembles in rust,
Haunted by fingers that once knew fear.

A crow nests in the hollow of its mouth,

Feeding its young with scraps of silence.

The sun stains its steel with golden shame,

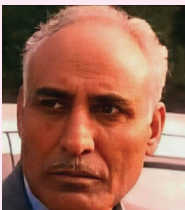
Each gleam a memory it cannot erase.
A soldier's ghost ties ribbons to its frame,

Not for glory, but for grief.
The gun dreams of being a flute—

But its breath is broken, and its song is gone.

APJ Abdul Kalam Awardee poet Dr Ratan Bhattacharjee is a former Affiliate Faculty of English Virginia Commonwealth USA and a multilingual columnist

The Yellow Festival



Ali Shaيدا

the hump of strandedness
dancing with my waiting sighs.
A siren
pirates the calmness
of the unheard eyes.
All that is there,
a plate of hunger,
a tumbler of thirst.
In deep slumber,
on the face of the black-topped road,
hiding wrinkles,
turned hopeless and disgruntled,
the witness
of the yellow festival.

Ali Shaيدا, a well-known poet from Nepora Qazigund, Kashmir, is a retired banker and author of 11 books. He also led Maraaz Adbee Sangam from 2022 to 2025.

I got the season,
wrapped with yellow color,
to celebrate the festival of harvest.
Laden with sorrows
on the stretch of stillness,

Short Story

The Eternal Sleeper



Shah Nawaz Nazir
nawazrather786@gmail.com

Arif was born in 1900, in a small Kashmiri village by the banks of the Jhelum. His father was a school teacher, a strict but kind man who believed knowledge was the only way to rise above hardship. Arif grew up with books, astronomy charts, and a telescope that his father had bought secondhand from a British officer.

He loved the stars. On clear nights, he would lie on the roof and whisper the names of constellations as if they were old friends. Cassiopeia. Orion. Lyra. The vastness above did not frighten him. It called him, like an unending promise.

The Night of the Meteor Shower

In December 1920, when Arif was twenty, a rare meteor shower was predicted. He carried his telescope to a hill outside the village. The night was icy. He wrapped himself in a thick shawl and set up his instruments.

The stars rained across the sky in golden arcs, thousands of them, like sparks from an unseen fire. Arif watched with childlike wonder until his eyes grew heavy. He lay back, still looking upward, and drifted into sleep beneath the storm of light.

When he awoke at dawn, his clothes were frosted white, and the air stung his lungs. But he felt strangely alive, full of energy, as if the stars themselves had touched him. He returned home, thinking it was nothing more than a memorable night.

He was wrong.

The First Signs

Years passed. Arif's friends began to show signs of adulthood: tired eyes, thinning hair, slower steps. He did not. At thirty, he still looked like a man of twenty. At forty, he looked the same. At first, people teased him—"Arif, you must be drinking from some secret spring!" But soon the teasing turned to suspicion.

His father died. His mother, frail and old, looked like his grandmother rather than his parent. Arif stayed at her bedside until her last breath, but even then, the villagers whispered. "There is something unnatural about him."

He left his village.

A Century of Wandering

For decades, Arif lived in different cities—Lahore, Delhi, Karachi, Istanbul, even Paris for a time. He changed names, jobs, addresses. He became a teacher, a translator, a bookseller. He made friends but never let anyone too close.

The pattern was always the same. People aged. He did not. Someone noticed. He disappeared again.

He carried no photographs, no documents from his past. Only the telescope remained, his one link to the night that had cursed—or blessed—him.

His heart was lonely. He fell in love once,



in the 1950s, with a woman named Noor in Delhi. She was an artist, full of laughter. But as the years passed, she grew older, and he remained the same. She began asking questions. Arif vanished without a word, leaving her only a note: Forgive me. My time moves differently than yours.

Meeting Zara

In 2015, Arif was living in Srinagar again. He had returned, drawn by the mountains and rivers of his childhood. He rented a quiet apartment above a bookshop and spent his evenings watching the stars.

One evening at a literary gathering, he met Zara. She was a writer in her late twenties, with sharp eyes and an easy smile. She was fascinated by the cosmos, just as he had been a century ago.

"Why do you like the stars so much?" she asked him over tea.

"They remind me that time is both endless and fleeting," he replied.

She laughed. "That sounds like something an old man would say."

Arif smiled but said nothing.

Zara began visiting him often. They would sit on his balcony, her notebook open, his telescope pointing skyward. He told her stories of the past—of old markets, forgotten songs, silent winters. She thought he had simply read too many history books.

She did not know he was speaking from memory.

Against his better judgment, Arif began to love her.

The Grandmother

One evening, Zara said, "I want you to meet my grandmother. She loves old stories. You two will get along."

They drove to a quiet house at the edge of the city. An old woman waited in a chair by the window, her hair silver, her hands trembling slightly. But her eyes were sharp.

As Arif stepped inside, she froze. The teacup slipped from her hand and shattered.

"Arif?" she whispered.

His blood turned cold. He looked closer—and recognized her. It was Noor. The woman he had loved in Delhi sixty years ago.

Zara rushed forward. "Grandmother, are you alright?"

But Noor's gaze did not move from Arif. "It's him," she said softly. "He hasn't aged a day."

Zara frowned. "What are you talking about?"

Noor's voice trembled. "This man... I knew him when I was young. He left me. He said time was different for him. And look at him now—he is exactly the same."

Zara turned to Arif, confusion in her eyes. "What is she saying?"

Arif's heart pounded. He wanted to deny it, to laugh it off. But Noor's gaze pinned him like a spear.

"I told you," she said, tears in her eyes. "I told you I wasn't crazy."

The Revelation

That night, Zara confronted him.

"Tell me the truth," she demanded. "Who are you?"

Arif sighed. He took her to the balcony, where the stars glimmered like cold witnesses.

"I was born in 1900," he said quietly. "I slept beneath a meteor shower when I was twenty. Since then, I have aged ten times slower than the world. Everyone I knew has grown old and died. But I remain."

Zara stared at him, pale. "That's impossible."

"I know. But it is the truth."

She shook her head. "My grandmother loved you. And now I—" She broke off, unable to finish.

Arif reached for her hand, but she pulled away.

"You should have told me," she said. "You should have told her. Instead, you just... vanish from people's lives."

"Because I have no choice," he said softly. "I bring only pain."

Zara's eyes filled with tears. "And what about me? Do you plan to disappear from me too?"

Arif had no answer.

The Choice

Days passed. Zara stopped visiting. Arif wandered the streets, torn between desire and duty. He wanted to stay, to love, to finally be honest. But he remembered Noor's face, the pain he had caused her.

One evening, he packed his bag. He would leave again, as he always had. It was safer.

But as he stepped outside, he felt dizzy. His chest tightened. He collapsed on the ground.

At the hospital, Zara stood by his bed, her face pale with fear.

"Don't leave," she whispered.

Arif opened his eyes. For the first time in a century, he felt weak, mortal. The doctors could not explain it, but something had changed. His body had begun to age again. His hair, once black, now showed threads of grey.

The gift—or curse—was gone.

The Ending

Arif recovered slowly. Months passed, and wrinkles appeared on his once-young face. He laughed at his reflection. At last, he was part of time again.

Zara forgave him. She saw him not as a mystery, but as a man who had suffered too long. Her grandmother, Noor, died peacefully soon after, leaving behind a smile as if she had finally been proven right.

On clear nights, Arif and Zara still looked at the stars. But now, he no longer feared time. He cherished it. Every wrinkle, every moment, every passing day was a gift.

For the first time in over a hundred years, Arif felt human again.

Shah Nawaz Nazir is a Author, Columnist.

Short Story

The Book Thief



Mir Imtiyaz Aafreen
imtiyazaafreen@gmail.com

The evening sun spilled through the latticed windows of Asra's study, laying molten light across the wooden floor. Her shelves stood like silent guardians, heavy with the breath of centuries. Austen, Dickens, Brontë, Hardy, Eliot—all bound in leather and dust. Among them, a single book called to her, worn and faded, its spine cracked, its cover torn, its pages yellow with time. She lifted *Jane Eyre* and the room dissolved. The walls bent, the floor vanished, and memory drew her into another world, into the forgotten lanes of Gulmor where a girl once hungered for words as though they were bread. The faint memories took her down the memory lanes of childhood spent in a village full of labour and commotion. Her imagination took her back to her teenage years when she was extraordinarily pedantic and imaginative.

Gulmor was beautiful and cruel. Orchards flowered white in spring, chinars bled fire in autumn, and in winter the river slept under snow. But Asra lived as if within a cage disguised as a meadow. Her father's voice was a law that left no appeal. "Books will not feed you," he said, thrusting baskets into her hands. "Your place is in the fields." Her mother, rigid as stone, echoed him. "A daughter must bend her back to the home, not waste her eyes on paper."

There was little tenderness. The days passed in burdens that bent her small frame—milking cows, carrying grass and wood. Affection was rationed to crumbs. Yet within her woolen *feran* a fire smoldered, and whenever Aslam sir, the village teacher, placed a book in her hands, that fire blazed. She read under the poplars, beside the murmuring river, and once, staring into its restless current, whispered, "Why must my mind be feared? Why can't I drink words as others drink water?" The river said nothing, yet its silence seemed to keep her secret.

At school, shadows followed her. Her father's mutterings of marriage, her mother's harsh commands, her friends fading one by one into household drudgery. Only Sabha, the daughter of her favourite Aslam sir, her only friend, with her furtive loans of books, gave her a way to breathe. Sleepless nights in the attic with her books became her coveted world. Lantern light flickered on borrowed pages while the house slept. Reading was no pastime. It was her rebellion, her survival, her prayer.

She finished her twelfth grade with a heart that beat faster than the village lanes could hold. Against her parents' grudging permission she boarded a bus to Srinagar. Each journey was an act of escape, the orchards stretching like scripture, the air colder and freer as Lal Chowk approached.



The city dazzled her senses: vendors' cries rose like hymns, bakeries exhaled warmth, streets throbbed with the pulse of a world she had only dreamed.

College became her sanctuary. Classrooms opened into unseen universes. And within them shone Professor Rahi. His voice carried the cadence of rivers, the weight of winds. Reading Austen and Brontë, she made language a living flame. Asra sat spellbound, heart clenched with awe, as though each sentence lit a lamp in her chest.

One afternoon, trembling, Asra asked, "Sir, which book is closest to you?"

Professor Rahi's lips curved with memory. "Every good book is a flower, each with its fragrance. But perhaps begin with *Jane Eyre*. It will answer you."

That title became her talisman. Saving a year's allowance—one hundred and twenty rupees—she walked to a bookshop, Bookworms, by Ganta Ghar. The bell above the door chimed softly. The smell of paper and ink enveloped her. She wandered among shelves until her eyes fell upon it. *Jane Eyre*. Its letters glimmered faintly, as if waiting. She touched it with reverence,

and then her eyes froze at the price. Three hundred rupees.

A chill gripped her. She had never longed for silk, or ornaments, foundations or perfumes. But this—this was life itself. The ache surged so fiercely her hands trembled. Her hands reached out, yet the weight of coins pulled them back. A decision arrived not by thought but by something darker. She slipped the book into her bag, heart racing, throat dry. Has she resorted to thievery? Unthinkable.

She opened the door and stumbled into the street. Her flashing face exuding the sweat of shame wished to take a sigh of relief. Not looking back, she straight away went to her village with the forbidden fruit of her dreams. The book burned against her side, a weight of both sin and salvation.

That night, she opened it under the weak glow of her lamp. The words leapt to her like voices across centuries. She entered Jane's solitude, her resilience, her defiance. Tears blurred her sight. "I am not alone," she whispered into the shadows. "She too has walked where I walk."

But hunger once awakened does not rest. Weeks later, restless, she asked Professor

Rahi, "Sir, which is the greatest novel?"

The professor's eyes glowed. "For me, it is *Anna Karenina*. It is the ocean of all things—love, ruin, the human soul."

The name lodged in her heart like a seed. Days and nights turned around it. Anna called to her. Soon, again, she stood in the Lal Chowk bookstore. There it was, bound in green, solemn and luminous. Five hundred rupees. A wall she could not climb.

She whispered to herself, "Not again." Yet her body betrayed her vow. The book slid into her bag. Again her volition lost the inner battle. Avoiding the bookseller, she moved toward the door. But someone called from behind, sharp as judgment.

"Stop."

The bookseller's voice was steady. He stepped close, pulled out the book, and studied her. His eyes were not cruel but heavy with pity. "I knew you would come again. I was feeling suspicious of you. You are not wicked. But you are a book thief."

Shame crushed her chest. She fled into the street, his words branding her soul. That night she wept into her pillow, whispering, "Never again." Tears wetting her pillow and making her a bit melancholic.

Winter deepened. Frost lay on rooftops, streets turned brittle under ice. Still she walked each day to her classes, holding books as though they were warmth itself. She wrote essays through nights of hunger. She listened, absorbed, endured. Professors began to notice. "You do not simply read," one said. "You live inside the words."

Coins gathered in a cloth pouch became her rebellion. With each saved rupee, she chipped away at the walls built against her. One exam after another, one sleepless night after the next, until the path opened. A degree, then another. Recognition. A seat among scholars. Once a timid and inquisitive student turned into a Professor in Government Degree College at Srinagar.

Her parents' doubts softened into silence, then into a pride they could not confess aloud. Gulmor, though, never left her—the smell of almonds, the ache of denied tenderness, the hush of the river that had once listened to her secrets. All of it had tempered her like steel in fire.

Years later she returned to Lal Chowk. Afternoon sunlight washed the streets in a golden hush. She stepped into the same bookstore. The bell chimed again, softer now, almost kind. The shelves stood unchanged, though the dust was thicker. Behind the counter sat the bookseller, older, greyer. His eyes slid over her without recognition.

She placed money on the counter, crisp notes earned with years of labor. In her bag lay a dozen classics, bought honestly.

He glanced at them. "A fine choice," he said.

Her lips curved faintly. "Books saved me," she murmured, more to herself than to him. "Even the ones I once stole."

Outside, chinara leaves swirled in the breeze, golden pages scattered by unseen hands. She walked through them, carrying everything—the ache of Gulmor, the shame of theft, the fire of struggle, the quiet triumph of return. All bound into a single story, her story, written not on paper alone but on the marrow of her life.

FROM PAGE 3...

Love, Loss and...

ness.”:

This couplet conveys abandonment and loneliness. The jungle is both literal and symbolic: a dark, chaotic place of exile. The memory of betrayal is tied to a physical space, intensifying the wound.

C4 “Your memory...any empty bottle.”: A surreal and haunting simile. Memory is compared to a moon trapped inside a bottle: luminous yet imprisoned, beautiful yet distorted. This evokes both awe and despair, as remembrance is luminous but suffocating.

Critical Assessment

This poem is a vivid and eerie exploration of love’s destructive power and the haunting weight of memories. The opening line, “In love’s very first assault,” portrays love as a violent force, thrusting the speaker into an emotional quagmire—a metaphor for feeling trapped and overwhelmed. The striking image of “mixing shards of glass

into the kohl of your eyes” blends beauty with pain, suggesting an inseparable link between love and suffering. The scene of the speaker abandoned beneath a tree in the wilderness evokes a sense of desolation, casting them as a forsaken figure. The final image, “a moon descending into an empty bottle,” is both poetic and eerie, symbolizing how grief can trap and warp even the most radiant memories.

Conclusion

As can be seen, Shafaq is a master craftsman in using metaphors and symbols that show love not necessarily as “a thing of beauty” or “a joy for ever”, but a psychological trauma that eats up the vitals of your life slowly and steadily: “In love’s very first assault,/ my precious life sank into a swamp”. Although in the beginning, it might look like “ye ishq bhi ajiib hai ik aan ho gaya/insaan saari umr ko hairaan ho gaya (This love is so strange—it took

just a moment to happen,/I was awe-struck for the whole of my life), it slowly changes with the passage of time and starts giving pain: “Shafaq, I was happy to see her alive/ She was bewildered on seeing me living”. The poet gets so disturbed that he wants to “mix shards of glass into the kohl of [beloved’s]eyes”. He feels so grief-stricken, and the memory of his beloved brings nothing but pangs: “Your memory returned to me like/a moon descending into an empty bottle.” To me, Shafaq is like the Knight-at-arms in John Keats’ poem, ‘La Belle Dame Sans Merci’, or the tragic lover in Lord Byron’s ‘When We Two Parted’ who waits, thus:

When we two parted In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold, Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold Sorrow to this.
They name thee before me, A knell to

mine ear;

A shudder comes o’er me— Why wert thou so dear? They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well— Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met— In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget, Thy spirit deceive.

If I should meet thee After long years,
How should I greet thee?— With silence and tears.

Love, which is the predominant theme in the three poems of Shafaq, has been ailing the narrator from its beginning, when he was awestruck by how he had fallen in love in the first instance, to its culmination when it has descended like the moon into an empty bottle. Three poems on love with different voices ending in the same tragic and elegiac note that the beloved has proved to be “La belle Dame sans Merci”.

FROM PAGE 6...

The Alchemy Of Healing...

present disposition under the leadership of Prof Ganie ,Director SKIMS and Ex-officio Secretary to Govt, of Jammu and Kashmir proved too munificent and broke the decade old jinx. Almost every staff member was promoted to next level and given his due .

A Leap Of Faith.....

To say that pharmacy counters leapt from lakhs to crores is not a sterile statistic. It is the leap of faith of an entire population. Patients have voted with their feet, abandoning private counters for SKIMS, because here medicine is not a commodity, it is a covenant. This leap is economic, yes, but also moral. It tells the story of a public institution proving that in the ruthless marketplace of health, ethics can still triumph over greed.

While on the other hand a well versed

free drugs store with hundreds of formulations including chemotherapy drugs are dispensed free to the patients admitted in the hospital. There is a separate budget for procuring free drugs and every penny is utilised to the last one left.

Toward the Future.....

World Pharmacists Day, celebrated each year on 25th September, offers glossy brochures and global conferences extolling the pharmacist’s role. But in Kashmir, and particularly in SKIMS, the day must serve as a mirror. It must remind us that this division despite workforce constraints has achieved the extraordinary: crores in service, humane prices, availability round the clock, unwavering dedication through crises.

The road ahead is clear. With the hands of affection of Director SKIMS , who has

nurtured great plans for the development of Drug and Pharmacy SKIMS , the day is not far away when Drug and pharmacy would take a big leap and establish itself as a department.

While as many feats have already been achieved in terms of digitalisation of the entire pharmacy counters along with interconnectivity with wards and other paurirncare areas.

Introduction of new technology like digital prescriptions, automated dispensing, real-time inventory tracking are the host of things Director SKIMS is very curious about to happen in near future.

Training pharmacists not merely as dispensers but as clinical partners, stepping into ICUs and wards as equals with physicians is one more dream Director SKIMS is translating into reality very soon.

The Constant Pulse.....

From a humble start to today’s mammoth services rendered 24x7 by Drugs and Pharmacy SKIMS , the journey has been nothing short of epic. It is a saga of evolution: from compounder to apprentice to medical assistant to pharmacist, from shelves of few drugs of generation 1st drugs to vaults of chemotherapy, from lakhs to crores, from a basement store to a sprawling grand new block .

But through it all, one truth glows constant: pharmacy is the quiet pulse of healthcare, the unsung hymn of healing, the invisible bridge between prescription and cure. On this World Pharmacists Day, let us not merely salute but safeguard these sentinels, lest in ignoring them we imperil the very heartbeat of SKIMS.

They are not merely custodians of drugs. They are custodians of life itself.

FROM PAGE 5...

The Divine Wizard...

William Wordsworth laments in the sonnet The World Is Too Much With Us :

“ late and soon

Getting and spending , we lay waste our powers Little we see in Nature that is ours

We have given our hearts away A sordid boon “.

In reality every day that passes by smoothly is a miracle ...that we wake up alive with all our senses and organs functioning and are able to go about our business as planned by us ,is nothing short of a Miracle... To

think of how each and every individual in the remotest corner of the world , irrespective of nationality , religion, caste , creed is being lovingly nurtured, protected, and how every wish is being fulfilled by That Power is mind-boggling . This is a sheer Miracle !

Nevertheless it is unfortunate that as Wordsworth feels : “For this , for everything we are out of tune;
It moves us not .”

For all the wonderful or the most infinitesimal happenings of Our Creator

, our greatest service to Him can be heartfelt gratitude , to be thankful every single day of our lives till our last breath !

It is only when this feeling of gratefulness envelops us can we truly honour and marvel at the wonders of His Creations .

This will also lead to a significant negation of grudges and grievances for when one is completely enraptured and ecstatic with His miracles ,will the deep sense of fulfillment , blessedness and gratitude dawn upon every individual awakening to higher and

more elevated levels .

It is only then that mortals can constructively think good for others and for society at large .

Most importantly one should never stop believing in hope for The Divine Wizard is making Miracles happen everyday !!

The Writer is a retired Principal and former HOD English VSSD College Kanpur, freelance writer and TOI empanelled blogger.



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