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# PM Launches ₹35K Cr Agri Schemes



■ HT News Network

NEWDELHI, OCT 11: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched two major agricultural schemes with an outlay of Rs 35,440 crore to

boost pulses production and improve the farm sector growth in 100 low-performing districts, as he exhorted farmers to reduce the country's import dependence and increase exports.

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## Writers Must Research and Correct Misleading Histories: LG Sinha



■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 11: "Writers must do research and use critical proof to challenge and correct the misleading historical accounts," the Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha said on Saturday. He said during colonial era and after independence a certain group of writers distorted our history to shape their ideological agenda. The Lieutenant

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### LG Sinha Pays Tribute to Soldiers Martyred in Kokernag Operation

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 11: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday paid tributes to two soldiers who lost their lives battling extreme weather conditions during counter-terror operations at Kokernag in Anantnag district.

The L-G visited the Srinagar-based headquarters of the Army's Chinara Corps at the Badami Bagh Cantonment, and laid floral wreaths on the coffins as a mark of tribute to the fallen soldiers.

An official spokesman said Sinha paid homage to Army bravehearts Lance Havildar Palash Ghosh and Lance Naik Sujay Ghosh, who laid down their lives for the nation.

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### Govt working to fully restore Darbar Move: Cabinet Minister

■ HT News Desk / KINS

SRINAGAR, OCT 11: Cabinet Minister Javid Ahmad Dar on Saturday said that the Omar Abdullah-led government was making efforts to fully restore the traditional Darbar Move practice in Jammu and Kashmir from this winter.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the launch of two centrally sponsored schemes in Baramulla, Dar said, "The

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### RSN Fraud: 4,500 Accounts Probed

■ HT News Desk / KNO

GANDERBAL, OCT 11: In a first criminal case linked to the controversial Robust Secure Network (RSN) platform registered with the Crime Branch, authorities in Ganderbal on Saturday said to have launched a massive crackdown with approximately 4,500 accounts under investigation for suspected financial irregularities.

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### SUV Hit By Landslide In J&K's Kishtwar, Seven Injured

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 11: An SUV was hit by a landslide in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, injuring at least seven people, officials said.

The vehicle was on its way to

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### BSF recruits showed readiness during 'Op Sindoor': Comandant Agarwal

167 recruits take oath at passing out parade in Humhama

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 11: Commandant CISTC Kashmir, BSF, Yoginder Agarwal on Saturday praised the dedication and readiness of the young 'Seema Prharis,' saying they demonstrated full preparedness even

before their formal attestation during 'Operation Sindoor'.

"In May this year, the Government of India launched Operation Sindoor, and at that time, these law protectors had just completed 22 weeks of basic training," Agarwal said, as per the news agency—Kash-

mir News Observer (KNO).

He added, "After two weeks of specialised training, they stood ready without hesitation for the operation and performed their duties with full dedication. This reflects their wartime preparedness,

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### J&K HC Forms Full Bench to Hear Plea on Forfeiture of 25 Books

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 11: The Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court has constituted a three-judge Full Bench to hear a batch of petitions challenging the government's order for forfeiting 25 books for allegedly propagating "false narratives and secessionism."

The Bench, headed by the Chief Justice and

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## 'Know Your Artisan' Showcases Kashmir's Hidden Masters at Jhelum Riverside

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 11: In a vibrant celebration of Kashmir's timeless artisanal legacy, the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom today launched the groundbreaking "Know Your Artisan" initiative at the picturesque Jhelum River Front.

This one-of-a-kind event, inaugurated by Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Vikramjit Singh, marks the beginning of a series of immersive cultural programs scheduled over the next two months.

Mussarat Islam, Director, Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, alongside other senior officials from the department

were also present on the occasion.

Underscoring the Government's commitment to preserving and promoting the region's rich craft traditions, an official spokesman of the Department stated that Kashmir's craft legacy

is more than mere products, as these embody centuries-old traditions that

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### CS Reviews Measures To Boost Handicrafts Sector In J&K

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 10: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired a high-level meeting to review the measures being taken by the Industries & Commerce Department for promotion and development of the Handicrafts and Handloom sectors in J&K.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce; Director, Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir/Jammu; Director, Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT); and other

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### ACB Launches Probe Into 'Major' Evacuee Land Scam In Srinagar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 11: The Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has launched a criminal investigation into an alleged large-scale evacuee property land scam involving government officials and private beneficiaries, an official said on Saturday.

Evacuee property refers to the assets and lands left behind by individuals who migrated from India to Pakistan during the 1947 Partition.

Addressing a press conference here, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), ACB, Javid Hassan, said the investigation follows a "major scam" involving the illegal exchange and manipulation of valuable evacuee land in Srinagar.

It has brought to light alleged "serious irregularities and fraudulent acts" by certain officials of the Revenue and Custodian Evacuee Property Departments, in active collusion with private individuals for unlawful enrichment, the SSP said.

According to Hassan, the anti-graft agency received "reliable" information about the exchange of prime evacuee property land measuring five kanals and five marlas for proprietary land measuring five kanals and 17 marlas located in the high-security Gupkar Road area of the city.

The exchange was executed without

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## Sakeena Itoo Urges Science-Farmer Collaboration for Sustainable Agriculture

■ HT News Desk

KULGAM, OCT 11: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today remarked that institutions like SKUAST-K have a pivotal role in promoting research and innovation in the agricultural sector.

The Minister stated this while addressing a function held on the sidelines of live telecast of launch of PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) by Prime Minister,

Narendra Modi, organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) of SKUAST-K at Pombay.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister emphasized on the need for greater collaboration between scientific institutions and the farming community to ensure sustainable agricultural growth.

The Minister said that much more needs to be done in the agriculture and allied sectors to improve productivity and profitability. She urged concerned departments to provide continu-



ous handholding to farmers and equip them with the latest technologies and scientific know-how for crop improvement.

Highlighting the recent challenges faced by farmers, the Minister noted that adverse weather conditions and closure of the National Highway have caused substantial losses to the farming community. She stressed that agricultural scientists need to come on front and play a proactive role in guiding farmers towards high-yield and climate-resilient

crops.

Lauding the role of Sher-i-Kashmir, Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah on upliftment of farming community, the Minister said that the Sher-i-Kashmir's land reforms are known across the globe for improving the conditions of farming community.

Speaking on various initiatives of government on development of agriculture sector, Minister Sakeena said that most services are now available online,

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## CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

### PM Launches.....

Modi, in a special event at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) Pusa campus here, launched a Rs 24,000-crore 'Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana' (PM-DDKY) and a Rs 11,440-crore 'Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses'.

He also inaugurated projects valued at over Rs 5,450 crore in agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, and food processing sectors, and laid foundation stone for additional projects worth around Rs 815 crore.

During his 30-minute address, Modi attacked the Congress governments for not having any vision and strategy for the growth of the agriculture and allied sectors, which weakened the farm ecosystem.

Talking about the two new big schemes, the Prime Minister said that the Centre would invest over Rs 35,000 crore in PM-DDKY and pulses mission, which he said would change the "fate of crores of farmers".

The two schemes, already approved by the Cabinet, will be implemented from the upcoming rabi (winter) season till 2030-31.

Modi underscored that farmers have a critical role to play in realising the vision of a developed India (Viksit Bharat) by 2047.

"You (farmers) have made India self-reliant in foodgrains post-Independence. Now, you have a crucial role in making India a developed nation (Viksit Bharat). On one hand, we have to become self-reliant (in food), while on the other hand we should produce for the global market. Friends, we need to knock the doors of the international market," Modi said, urging farmers to focus on crops that have global demand.

"We have to reduce our imports and we should not fall behind in increasing exports," he said, adding that the two new schemes will play a major role in achieving these twin objectives.

Modi urged farmers to diversify beyond wheat and rice, focusing on pulses to ensure protein security. Despite being the world's largest pulses producer and consumer, India still depends on imports, he pointed out.

Under the pulses mission, Modi said the aim is to increase pulses acreage by 35 lakh hectares by 2030 to boost production and achieve self-reliance. The mission targets raising pulses output from the current 252.38 lakh tonne to 350 lakh tonne by 2030-31.

The PM-DDKY, modelled on the government's Aspirational Districts Programme, will target 100 low-performing agricultural districts and integrate 36 schemes from different ministries, he said.

The scheme will focus on enhancing productivity, promoting crop diversification, improving irrigation and storage facilities, and ensuring credit access.

Accusing previous Congress governments for neglecting the farm sector, Modi said the Opposition party lacked "vision" and strategy for the growth of this crucial sector.

The Prime Minister said it is important that the farm sector receive the government support, but he rued that previous governments left agriculture to fend for itself.

"There was no vision from the government side for agriculture. There was no strategy, Modi said, adding that the different government departments related to agri functioned independently.

Due to this approach, he said India's agricultural system was continuously weakening.

To achieve higher growth, Modi said it was necessary to bring reform in the agricultural system and the process began when his government took over in 2014.

Modi said he changed the "careless approach" of previous governments towards farming, and brought many reforms in the farm sector, from seeds to the marketplace. The Centre made efforts to increase investment in the farm sector.

He said the government has increased agriculture budget six times in the last 11 years.

Taking aim at the Opposition party, Modi said while the NDA government has given Rs 13 lakh crore subsidy on fertilisers in 10 years, of which Rs 3.75 lakh crore has been provided to farmers under PM-Kisan scheme, Rs 5 lakh crore subsidy was given in 10 years of the UPA government.

Most recently, GST rates on farm machineries and equipment have been reduced, he said, adding this has brought double savings to farmers as the prices of daily use items too have come down.

As a result, Modi said that in the last 11 years, India's agricultural exports have nearly doubled. Foodgrain production has increased by about 90 million tonne, while fruit and vegetable production has grown by more than 64 MT. Under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, insurance claims worth Rs 2 lakh crore have been disbursed to farmers, he said, and remarked this is not a small amount.

Over the past 11 years, more than 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) have been formed to enhance farmer cooperation and market access.

Modi noted that this new agricultural initiative draws inspiration from the success of the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP).

He reiterated that just like the ADP, the responsibilities for the successful implementation of PM-DDKY lie not only on the farmers but also on local government officials, particularly District Magistrate or Collector of each district.

The design of this scheme allows flexibility so that the planning can be tailored according to the specific needs of each district, he said.

During the event, Modi also interacted with farmers engaged in pulses cultivation who have benefited from various government schemes aimed at establishing a value chain-based approach in agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries.

Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh were present at the event. (Agencies)

### Writers Must.....

Governor was speaking at the inaugural function

of Kashmir Literature Festival organised by Srikula Foundation.

"Today the young historians must provide accurate and factually correct accounts challenging those lies. In the last few years, new writers have tried to do justice to the injustice done to the history of India, which is an excellent initiative. Efforts are also being made to take Indian literature to the world, which is highly commendable," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also called for correcting the narrative regarding Jammu Kashmir by identifying the misinformation and countering it with verified facts.

"For decades, a manipulated narrative was propagated here in Jammu Kashmir. Writers and media figures grudgingly admit that, out of fear of terrorists and their ecosystem, they were forced to promote the narrative being pushed from across the border in the Valley. The terror ecosystem has been dismantled and now is the time to present the true narrative of Jammu Kashmir, free from all bias and fear of gun, to strengthen the trust and accelerate socio-economic growth," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor, in his address, highlighted the need for offering new perspectives and vision to the readers in a rapidly evolving world to meet unprecedented challenges and opportunities, and understanding of nature, culture and people's well-being.

Lieutenant General (Retd.) D.P. Pandey; Shri Yuvraj Srivastava, Founder Srikula foundation; senior officials, prominent literary personalities, members of Srikula foundation, people from different walks of life and youth in large number attended the inaugural ceremony.

### LG Sinha Pays.....

The two soldiers made the supreme sacrifice while conducting counter-terror operations in the Kishtwar Range of Kokernag, battling extreme weather conditions.

"I salute the supreme sacrifice of our Army brave-hearts Lance Havildar Palash Ghosh and Lance Naik Sujay Ghosh. The nation shall remain forever grateful for the exemplary valour and selfless service of our soldiers. We stand in solidarity with the families of our martyrs in this hour of grief," Sinha said.

The two soldiers, part of the Army's elite para unit, had gone missing during a combing operation in Kokernag earlier this week.

The operation was launched in the Ahlan Gadole area, following inputs that terrorists were hiding there. The body of one soldier was recovered on Thursday, while another body was found on Friday, officials said, adding that it seems both died due to hypothermia.

### Govt working.....

government is trying to ensure the complete restoration of the Darbar Move system which has been an integral part of Jammu and Kashmir's administrative setup for decades."

He added that the District Development Commissioner (DDC) has been directed to look into any instances of agricultural land being converted for commercial purposes. "DC Sahab is doing good work here. Action will be taken against violations of land use laws," Dar said according to news agency Kashmir Indepth News Service (KINS).

The minister launched two major centrally sponsored schemes, including the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY), which aims to enhance agricultural productivity in 100 underperforming districts across the country. The scheme focuses on addressing challenges such as low crop yields, limited cropping intensity, and poor access to agricultural credit.

From Jammu and Kashmir, Kishtwar and Baramulla districts have been selected under the scheme. Announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, PMDDKY seeks to converge 36 existing central government schemes from 11 different ministries, creating a unified agricultural support framework to strengthen the rural economy.

Dar said the initiative will provide a significant boost to farmers by integrating resources and ensuring better coordination among departments. (KINS)

### RSN Fraud.....

A series of raids were conducted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) over the past few days, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ganderbal, Khalil Poswal told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). Each of these account holders will receive formal notices at their residences, requiring them to respond to allegations, he said, adding that the Income Tax Department is also expected to initiate parallel inquiries, with high-value transactions from these accounts being closely monitored.

Authorities here have urged the public to exercise extreme caution and not to share personal or financial information with anyone.

"Many young individuals are approaching elderly family members under false pretenses, collecting documents and claiming to be opening insurance policies. These are fraudulent activities—no such policies exist," the senior police official stated.

Meanwhile, in a significant development, another FIR was registered just three days ago.

"Investigations have revealed the involvement of a key suspect who had earlier organized the marriage of a person named Kangan and was allegedly recruiting young people into the gang," he said, adding that strict action will be taken against him.

The families have been appealed to monitor their children's activities more closely.

"Parents must stay vigilant. Many youths are being misled into handing over money at home under the guise of 'investing.' These under-the-table or hidden investments are not just illegal, they are dangerous," the SSP Ganderbal added. "Such cases often end in tragedy, including suicides, by which point it's often too late for law enforcement to intervene effectively."

The public has been advised to avoid using RSN or any similar gaming or investment platforms suspected of illegal activity.

Authorities have issued a stern warning in case the situation continues to spiral and said that preventive detention under the Public Safety Act (PSA) may be enforced.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ganderbal warned people about the RSN fraud case now under investigation.

He said over 4,500 bank accounts are being checked by the Crime Branch and ED and notices will go to people's homes. "Don't share personal documents or fall for fake investment promises," he advised.

He added that many youths have been misled by people promising policies or returns. "Families should keep an eye on what their children are doing," he said—(KNO)

### SUV Hit By.....

Kishtwar town when a portion of a hillock gave way on the Sigdi-Balana link road, they said.

After receiving information about the incident, they said, rescuers rushed to the spot and the injured were evacuated to the Kishtwar district hospital.

### BSF recruits.....

defensive capability, and firm determination."

The Subsidiary Training Centre (STC) Humhama witnessed a grand passing out parade and attestation ceremony for 167 recruit constables (Tradesmen) of Batch No. 44, marking their first step into national service. The recruits, drawn from different parts of India, took their oath to serve the nation as brave 'Seema Praharis'.

Solomon Yash Kumar Minz, IPS, Inspector General, STC Kashmir, BSF, the chief guest, was welcomed by Commandant Agarwal. IG Minz inspected the ceremonial parade and praised the recruits for their discipline, dedication, and completion of rigorous training.

The ceremony concluded with the oath-taking, where the recruits pledged to uphold the highest values of integrity, courage, and service while protecting the nation's borders—(KNO)

### BSF Ready.....

to meet these mammoth challenges," said IG STC Kashmir, Solomon Yash, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

IG Minz also appreciated the recruits' "excellent display of self-confidence and picture-perfect coordination," calling it the high point of the parade.

He congratulated them for choosing the BSF as a career and urged them to serve the nation with courage and enthusiasm.

He further lauded STC Kashmir and its instructional staff for their efforts in transforming raw youths into disciplined and confident Seema Praharis, saying, "The training provided here has instilled self-confidence and professionalism in every recruit. I bless them with a bright future in life and service ahead."

He was speaking during the passing out parade and attestation ceremony of 167 recruit constables (Tradesmen) of Batch No. 44 at the Subsidiary Training Centre (STC) Humhama, where the young recruits from across India took their first step into national service as Seema Praharis. The ceremony also saw medals and trophies awarded to the best-performing recruits, including Parade Commander Amit Chandel, who was adjudged best in drill.

Over 44 weeks of rigorous training, the recruits honed their skills in weapon handling, firing, law, drill and border management, while also enhancing their physical and mental capabilities, preparing them to serve the nation in both peace and war—(KNO)

### J&K HC Forms.....

comprising Justices Rajnesh Oswal and Shahzad Azeem, is scheduled to take up the matter on Monday.

The constitution of the Full Bench follows the court's earlier observation on September 30, when it had agreed to consider setting up a three-judge bench to examine the legality of what the petitioners termed the "sweeping and unreasoned forfeiture" of the books.

The petitions, filed separately by journalist David Devadas, CPI (M) leader Mohammad Yousef Tarigami, retired Air Vice Marshal Kapil Kak and others, advocate Shakir Shabir, and Swastik Singh, challenge the Home Department's notification ordering the forfeiture of the publications under Section 95 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

The petitioners have contended that the government's action violates the constitutional guarantee of free speech and expression and lacks any reasoned justification.

On August 5, Jammu & Kashmir Home Department banned the publication of 25 books on Kashmir, including by authors such as Arundhati Roy and A G Noorani, saying they propagate "secessionism".

The other books include political commentaries and historical accounts such as The Kashmir Dispute 1947-2012 by noted constitutional expert Noorani, Kashmir at the Crossroads and Contested Lands by Sumantra Bose, In Search of a Future: The Kashmir Story by David Devadas, Roy's Azadi A Dismantled State: The Untold Story of Kashmir After Article 370 by journalist Anuradha Bhasin.

In August, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) challenging the ban on 25 books was initially filed in the Supreme Court. However, the apex court advised the petitioner to approach the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

### 'Know Your.....

define the cultural identity and economic fabric of the Valley.

"In today's fast-paced market, skilled artisans often fade into the background, overshadowed by intermediaries," he added.

To address this, the Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, under the flagship Soulful

Kashmir campaign, has introduced "Know Your Artisan" as a transformative platform under the brand "Soulful Kashmir". By bringing artisans and consumers together in lively public spaces across Srinagar, the initiative spotlights the human stories, masterful techniques, and deep heritage behind each craft, while forging direct market linkages to empower creators and captivate locals and tourists alike.

The event's core objectives include providing artisans a direct stage to demonstrate their skills and engage with the public; elevating Brand Soulful Kashmir by showcasing authentic crafts and the talented hands that craft them; strengthening market connections to secure direct orders; raising awareness among youth and visitors about the rich diversity of Kashmir's craft heritage; and bolstering artisan livelihoods through targeted promotional and sales avenues.

The spokesman said today's launch featured captivating live demonstrations, intimate artisan interactions, and bustling display-cum-sale counters, complemented by branding exercises and cultural performances that infused the riverside venue with an air of festivity and authenticity. "At the heart of the program were seven eminent artisans, each a custodian of Kashmir's prestigious GI-registered crafts who include

Mushtaq Ahmad, Master of Pashmina Weaving; Maqbool Ahmad Jan, Virtuoso in Papier-Mâché; Farooq Ahmad Mir (Padma Shri Awardee), an icon of Kani Shawl Weaving; Mehboob Ali Beigh, National awardee in Sozni Embroidery; Shah Nawaz Sofi, specialist in Kashmir Hand-Knotted Carpets; Mohammad Yousuf Muran, awardee artisan of Walnut Wood Carving and Ali Mohammad Giru, guardian of Khatambandh craftsmanship

Vikramjit Singh, while inaugurating the event, emphasized its role in sustainable development: "This initiative is a beacon for our artisans, ensuring their voices and visions reach the world directly. By celebrating Soulful Kashmir, we not only preserve our heritage but also weave it into the future of economic empowerment, he stated,

The "Know Your Artisan" series is poised to yield tangible impacts, including heightened engagement from the public and tourists with local crafts; greater recognition and marketing avenues for artisans; a surge in sales and orders both during and after events; amplified visibility for Brand Soulful Kashmir via social and print media; and the creation of valuable documented content for ongoing promotions.

As the nodal agency, the Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, will spearhead the conceptualization, coordination, and execution of this initiative in partnership with local stakeholders, ensuring seamless rollout across Srinagar's iconic locales over the coming months.

### CS Reviews.....

senior officers of the department.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary took stock of the initiatives undertaken to support local artisans and weavers, strengthen testing facilities, and promote genuine hand-made products across the UT.

He underscored the importance of enhancing the testing capacity of existing laboratories and directed for establishment of a robust mechanism for traceability and QR-code based tracking of all Geographical Indication (GI) tagged items. He asked the department to ensure implementation of this digital traceability system by the end of the year without fail.

The Chief Secretary also stressed upon timely grounding of key projects including Ekta Malls in Srinagar and Jammu, besides taking forward other branding and promotion initiatives aimed at giving global recognition to J&K's traditional crafts.

While reviewing the progress on creation of Wool and Silk Villages, Common Facility Centre for Yarn Dyeing, establishment of the Indian Institute of Textiles at Basohli, Sericulture Park, and Craft-based Resource Centre, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned officers to expedite completion of these projects.

He also advised the department to explore possibilities of NSQF accreditation for its training centres, courses, and trainers to enhance employability and credibility of skilled trainees.

Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh, presented a detailed overview of the sector, highlighting that J&K presently has 18 registered GI products in the handicrafts segment, while 10 more are in the pipeline. He informed that the capacity of GI product testing has been significantly upgraded from 50 to 100 tests per day and will soon be enhanced to 250 tests daily upon induction of two additional digital microscopes.

Director, Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, Masarat-ul-Islam, in his presentation, informed that the department has substantially enhanced its operational capacity and reduced the GI certification waiting period to just two days, providing major relief to artisans. He further informed that around 6,000 GI users are currently registered across the UT. He revealed that the department is contemplating to make Craft Development Institute (CDI), Srinagar, a 'Pre-Export Testing Facility Centre' to facilitate direct export of certified products. To further augment testing infrastructure, the department is also working on signing an MoU with SKUAST-Kashmir for product testing and bulk production of woollen carpets.

The meeting was apprised that the QR code traceability project, being developed in col-

laboration with NIELIT, is set to be rolled out soon. Moreover, with the active involvement of NIFT Srinagar, 36 prototype designs in five different crafts have been developed, and nearly 1,000 artists trained under ten design and skill enhancement programmes.

Under the Karkhandar Scheme, it was informed that nationally acclaimed master craftsmen are mentoring new artisans, with each trainee receiving a monthly stipend of Rs 2,000 along with continuous handholding support. So far, 12 Karkhanas have been established and over 120 artisans trained under the initiative.

Regarding the work of IICT Srinagar, the meeting was told that the institute has developed 2,600 carpet designs, 600 Kani designs, and digitized 650 traditional Taleem patterns, generating a revenue of Rs 56 lakh so far.

On the establishment of Ekta Malls in Srinagar and Jammu, it was informed that locations and design layouts have been finalized. These malls will serve as one-stop destinations offering artisans and shoppers a unified platform for showcasing, marketing, and purchasing of authentic J&K crafts.

The meeting was also informed that as part of a major branding and outreach initiative titled "Soulful Kashmir", the department is launching a series of 'Know Your Artisan' programmes beginning today at the Jhelum Riverfront. Eight such interactions have been planned, where the public will get a chance to engage directly with renowned artisans.

Under the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, Craft Safaris have also been organized to artisan clusters in Srinagar, covering Papier Mâché, Pashmina weaving, Sozni embroidery, Carpet weaving, Copperware, Khatamband, and Walnut wood carving.

Additionally, it was informed that brand promotion campaigns for J&K's crafts are being rolled out at airport terminals, city centres, FM channels, and Doordarshan in collaboration with the Department of Information and Public Relations to enhance global visibility and market outreach.

### ACB Launches.....

obtaining the mandatory no-objection certificate (NOC) from the Defence Estates Office and in blatant violation of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court's directions, as well as established government procedures regulating such transactions, the ACB officer said.

An inquiry conducted by the agency revealed that the involved public servants had "deliberately ignored" legal requirements, "manipulated" land records, and "colluded" with private parties to facilitate the "unlawful swap".

"These actions were aimed at extending undue benefits to select beneficiaries while causing wrongful loss to the state exchequer," the SSP said.

The probe has revealed that official records — particularly revenue extracts and tenancy columns — were tampered with and falsified to conceal the true nature of ownership and tenancy rights, he added.

Certain officials allegedly attested and verified false revenue entries and enabled the registration of evacuee property in private names. The value of the exchanged properties was grossly disproportionate, with the evacuee land on the Gupkar Road being of high commercial and strategic importance, Hassan said.

The deliberate bypassing of the NOC requirement and other mandatory procedures indicated a "premeditated conspiracy", the SSP said.

"The acts amount to criminal misconduct, abuse of official position, forgery, and conspiracy to cause wrongful gain to private individuals and wrongful loss to the government," he said, adding that this has also "compromised the integrity of official custodianship over evacuee properties or assets".

Based on the findings, a case has been registered. An investigation is underway to determine the extent of illegal financial transactions and establish individual roles and responsibilities, according to the ACB officer.

Arrests and departmental actions are expected as the case progresses, he said. (Agencies)

### Sakeena Itoo.....

making it essential to ensure proper facilitation and awareness among farmers so they can avail themselves of government schemes and programmes. She highlighted various welfare measures undertaken for the poor and underprivileged, including the revival of stalled projects, enhancement of marriage aid schemes.

The Minister reiterated that the government, under the leadership of Omar Abdullah, is committed to ensuring farmers' prosperity and economic independence.

She said that the government remains steadfast in its mission to work for the welfare of all sections of society and to deliver on the promises made to the people.

The Minister also distributed farm Kits among the ST community members.

MLA Devsar, Peerzada Feroz Ahmad, and DDC Chairperson, Mohammad Afzal, also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts between departments and institutions to strengthen the agriculture sector in the district.

Director Extension SKUAST-K, Dr. Rihana Habib; Head KVK Pombay, Prof. Manzoor Ahmad; other concerned officers, large number of farmers and locals were also present on the occasion.



# Div Com Reviews Building Permissions in Eco-Sensitive Zones

Directs officers to take decisive call in each case without lingering those for undue period of time

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, OCT 11:** The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg today directed the committee members for 'Implementation of Eco Sensitive Zone Notification', in respect of Dachigam National Park, Thajwas (Baltal) Wildlife Sanctuary and Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary, to take swift decisions for construction permissions to dispose off the cases without consuming time of applicants.

He said that lingering issues for an undue period is causing inconvenience to the public.



He made these remarks while chairing a meeting of officers in his office chamber, today. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commis-



sioners Anantnag, Pulwama, Ganderbal; Regional Wildlife Warden, officers from Tourism Department, Forest Department, SDA, Town planning, Pollution



Control Board, Assistant Commissioner Central, OSD to Div Com, Tehsildar Hqd Srinagar besides President National Society for protection of Water



Resources Wetlands & Forests. At the outset, Wildlife Department presented details and data of Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks and the fauna



found in the protected areas besides the circumference of the Eco Sensitive Zone. The meeting held threadbare discussion on individual cases

submitted for grant of permission and the decisions given by stakeholder departments to issue or decline permission.

During the meeting, DivCom directed action in one case in which the applicant has already constructed a structure without proper permission.

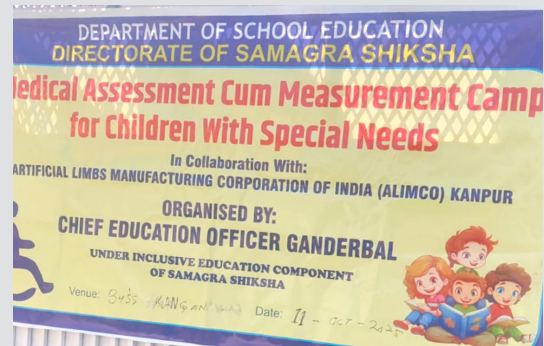
He also directed the concerned department to prepare a map of green corridor of the Eco Sensitive Zone within two months. Besides, he asked Wildlife Department to prepare an action plan to increase the number of Kashmir Stag (Hangul) to bring it out of the present list of critically endangered animals.

## CWSN Assessment Camp Continues on Second Day at BHSS Kangan for Zone Kangan

HT News Desk

**GANDERBAL, OCT 11:** The second day of the Assessment Camp for Children With Special Needs (CWSN) under Samagra Shiksha, District Ganderbal, was successfully conducted today at BHSS Kangan in collaboration with ALIMCO Kanpur.

The camp witnessed the participation of hundreds of children from different schools across the zone who were assessed for various assistive aids and



appliances. A specialized team from ALIMCO Kanpur carried out detailed assessments to identify suitable support devices aimed at improving mobility, communication, and learning outcomes of the children.

The entire program was held under the supervision of the Chief Education Officer (CEO) Ganderbal, ensuring proper coordination and effective implementation of the assessment process.

## Athar Aamir Khan reviews Progress of works under District Capex, UT Capex, & Flagship Schemes

Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, OCT 11:** District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today chaired a meeting to review the progress of works under the District Capex Budget 2025-26 here in the conference hall of Mini-secretariat.

While reviewing the progress, the DDC issued directions to ensure timely and effective implementation of all developmental projects under different schemes.



The DDC directed all line departments to ensure timely execution and completion of works. The progress of all blocks, individual departments including R&B, RDD, Education, Health, Agriculture & Allied sectors, Jal Shakti, KPDC among others was thoroughly done. Status of fund utilisation was also reviewed.

To avoid procedural delays, all departments have been asked to accelerate the allotted works estimation, tendering and complete procurement-related activities within stipulated time.

## Nazir Ahmad Khan Announces Candidacy from Budgam for Awami Ittehad Party

Vows to Bring Change, Criticizes NC and PDP for Neglecting the Region

Ubaid Mehdi

**BUDGAM, OCT 11:** Budgam Assembly by-election scheduled for November, political activity in the region has begun to intensify. On Friday, former DDC Chairperson Nazir Ahmad Khan officially announced his decision to contest the upcoming election from Budgam on behalf of the Awami Ittehad Party (AIP). Addressing reporters, Khan said his decision stems from a commitment to bring real change to Budgam, accusing previous governments of neglect.

All the developmental work I have done over the past five years stands as proof of my dedication. If the previous National Conference or PDP representatives had shown similar concern, Budgam would not have been in such a poor condition today,"



Khan remarked.

Khan urged voters to recognize the opportunity for transformation and lend their support to the AIP. I appeal to the people of Budgam to rise above old loyalties and cast their vote for progress and accountability. This election is not about parties, it's about the future of Budgam," he added.

The by-election comes after former

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who had won from Budgam in the 2024 Assembly elections, vacated the seat upon adopting the Ganderbal constituency under the Garner Bill provisions. With Khan's entry, the Budgam race is set to become a keenly contested political battle, with major parties expected to announce their candidates in the coming days.

## One-Day Conference of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers Union Held at Kulgam

Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, OCT 11:** A one-day district conference of the Anganwadi Workers and Helpers Union, Kulgam, was held today at Kulgam. Delegates from various projects across the district participated actively in the event, which focused on the welfare and rights of Anganwadi workers and helpers. The conference aimed to highlight and discuss key issues faced by the workers, including enhancement of honorarium, regularisation of services, improvement of working conditions, and provision of retirement benefits.

Speakers on the occasion underlined the sig-



## PM Modi Launches ₹42,000 Cr Agriculture Schemes; Kupwara Farmers Join Virtually

Dr. Ab Qayoom

**KUPWARA, OCT 11:** Hundreds of progressive farmers, including a large number of women, from different parts of Kupwara district participated in the live online telecast of the launch of 'PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana' and 'Mission for Aatmanirbhar in Pulses' organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kupwara at its agricultural field on Saturday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the two major agricultural initiatives and laid the foundation stone for multiple projects worth over ₹42,000 crore during a special Krishi programme held at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi. The PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana, with an outlay of ₹24,000 crore, aims to enhance productivity, promote crop diversification and sustainable farming, and improve irrigation and

credit facilities in 100 selected districts. The Mission for Aatmanirbhar in Pulses, with an outlay of ₹11,440 crore, focuses on increasing pulse production, expanding cultivation, and strengthening the value chain from procurement to processing.

At the district level, DDC Member Drugmulla Advocate Amina Malik attended the event as chief guest and interacted with the farmers after the telecast. She lauded the efforts of KVK Kupwara, led by Prof. Kaiser Mohi-ud-Din Malik, for empowering local farmers and promoting agricultural development. Progressive farmers appreciated the KVK scientific team for their support and guidance and thanked Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai and Director Extension Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth for their continued efforts in uplifting the farming community of Kupwara.



nificant role played by Anganwadi workers in the implementation of government schemes related to health, nutrition, and women and child development, and urged the administration to officially recognise their contribution.

During the session, the participants unanimously passed a resolution demanding the immediate implementation of the Minimum Wages Act and the regularisation of Anganwadi workers and helpers. Another resolution concerning pension and retirement benefits was also adopted with majority support.

On the occasion, a new district body of the union was elected with the following office bearers: Daizy Zargar President, Ruqaya Ji Vice President, Daizy Ji Vice President (2), Parveena Mir Secretary, Misra Ji Cashier, Zamrooda Ji Organiser, Zameera, Rifat, and Shaheena Ji Core Members. The function was presided over by Abdul Rashid Najjar, Secretary of CITU, and Haneefa Mir. Lateefa Ji and Amina Ji attended as special guests and extended their support to the workers' demands for justice, fair wages, and job security.



# Chief Secy reviews progress of PMGSY road works

Calls for stronger on-ground monitoring of PMGSY works across J&K

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 11:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a review meeting of the Public Works Department (PWD) to assess the progress of road and bridge construction works being executed under various phases of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) across J&K.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, PWD; Development Commissioner (Works); Chief Engineers; and other senior officers of the department. All Deputy Commissioners participated through video conferencing.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary emphasized the critical importance of timely completion of road projects under PMGSY Phase I and II. He directed the concerned officers to make every possible effort to ensure the execution of all pending works within the stipulated timelines. He further instructed that clear responsibility be fixed in cases where works remain incomplete or unexecuted due to any avoidable reasons.

Underscoring the need for stronger on-ground supervision,



the Chief Secretary called for the designation of senior officers to oversee the progress of PMGSY works on a regular basis. These officers, he directed, should undertake frequent site visits and ensure that site engineers maintain daily monitoring of both the quality and quantity of work being executed.

The Chief Secretary also directed that Executive Engineers and Assistant Executive Engineers be required to conduct regular field inspections, with their movements and site visits tracked and monitored at the highest levels within the department. He remarked that the role of engineers



lies more in the field where the work is executed than in the confines of their offices.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary reviewed the status of works taken up under later phases of PMGSY, seeking detailed information regarding projects sanctioned, completed, ongoing, and pending, along with their physical progress and expected dates of completion.

He also reviewed in detail the works proposed under PMGSY Phase IV, including those aimed at connecting vibrant villages in frontier areas. He took stock of the status of forest clearances required for several such road

projects to ensure that procedural delays are minimized.

Providing a detailed overview, ACS, PWD, Anil Kumar Singh apprised the Chief Secretary about the department's roadmap for completion of balance road and bridge works under various PMGSY phases. He informed that under Phase IV and its subsequent batches, the department has prioritized early execution and time-bound completion of projects across both divisions.

It was informed in the meeting that as of April 2025, 88 road projects under Phase I, 6 under Phase II, and 85 under Phase III were pending completion. Of these, 6

projects under Phase I and 40 under Phase III have since been completed, and a structured roadmap has been drawn to finish the remaining works within the shortest possible timeframe.

With regard to bridges, the meeting was informed that out of 305 bridges taken up under the first three phases of PMGSY, 227 have been completed, while 50 more are targeted for completion by March 2026.

As for Phase IV, it was revealed that 316 schemes have been sanctioned, out of which 3 projects are already under execution. The remaining 313 projects have been tendered out of which 134 are under technical evaluation, 87 under financial evaluation, and 39 for which Letters of Acceptance (LoA) have already been issued and will be taken up for execution shortly.

Reiterating the Government's commitment to rural connectivity and infrastructure development, the Chief Secretary directed the PWD to ensure effective monitoring, strict adherence to quality standards, and timely completion of all sanctioned works under PMGSY across J&K.

## KVIB Organizes Awareness Camp

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 11:** Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB), District Office Srinagar, today organized an Awareness Camp-Interaction Programme at Waripora Balhama, Srinagar.

The event was attended by Deputy Chief Executive Officer KVIB Kashmir, Director JKRSETI, Development Officer Beekeeping KVIB, officers from Lead District Manager Srinagar, Cluster Head J&K Bank Srinagar, various rural Bank Branch Heads & officers from other line departments.

The programme was aimed at creating awareness among rural unemployed educated youth, aspiring entrepreneurs, artisans with a special focus on beekeepers from the rural areas of Balhama, Khonmoh, Lasjan and adjoining regions.

The event featured informative sessions and discussions on self-employment opportunities and various schemes viz. PMEGP & JKREGP implemented by the Board.



Speaking on the event, Deputy CEO KVIB highlighted the Self-employment opportunities in khadi and village industries sector, financial assistance schemes (PMEGP/JKREGP) and employment generation programs offered by J&K KVIB, Technical training and skill development initiatives particularly in Bee Keeping sector, marketing support and linkages for rural entrepreneurs and specific guidance on beekeeping as a sustainable livelihood option.

He further added that the J&K KVIB is committed to generating employment opportunities in rural and urban areas through promotion of Khadi and village industries especially Beekeeping sector.

The interactive session enabled direct dialogue between KVIB officials and local participants, addressing queries related to loan applications, project formulation, and accessing government support schemes. Beekeepers received specialized information on modern apiculture techniques, equipment subsidies, and market opportunities.

On-spot applications from the participants under JKREGP scheme were received and it was assured to them that the same shall be processed as early as possible after prior approval from the DTFC.

It was informed that during the year 2024-25 under PMEGP scheme 322 cases were disbursed involving Margin Money of Rs 507.90 lakh generating employment to 1932 persons and under JKREGP scheme rural cases stand disbursed involving Margin Money of Rs 28.00 lakh thereby creating employment to 96 rural persons.

The initiative received an enthusiastic response from participants, who actively engaged in discussions about entrepreneurship opportunities and government support mechanisms. Beekeepers from the region showed keen interest in exploring avenues for expanding their traditional vocations through modern techniques and institutional support.

This awareness camp represents J&K KVIB's continued commitment to empowering rural entrepreneurship and fostering sustainable economic development in the region. By focusing on traditional industries such as beekeeping alongside other village industries, the Board aims to strengthen local economies while preserving indigenous skills and practices.

The programme marks another significant step in the Board's ongoing efforts to bridge the gap between government schemes and grassroots beneficiaries, ensuring that rural communities have access to the resources and knowledge necessary for economic self-reliance.

## CBP on Community-Based Disaster Management held at Ganderbal

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 11:** A one-day capacity building programme (CBP) on Community-Based Disaster Management was today organised in Ganderbal to strengthen disaster preparedness and response at the community level.

The programme witnessed overwhelming participation from frontline employees, PRI members, and local stakeholders.

Deputy Secretary, Disaster Management Department, J&K, delivered an insightful address on disaster risk reduction, importance of community participation, and effective response mechanisms during emergencies.

Speaking on the occasion, Dy. Secretary stressed the importance of capacity building and inter-departmental coordination in mitigating the impacts of disasters. She urged local communities to stay vigilant, well-informed, and prepared to act as the first line of defense in times of crisis.

Experts and representatives from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Fire and Emergency Services, and Health Department also addressed the participants and shared their practical experiences in handling disaster situations. The sessions focused on first response, evacuation procedures, early warning systems, and inter-agency coordination.

As part of the programme, mock drills and live demonstrations were conducted to familiarize participants with real-time response techniques during fire, earthquake, and flood scenarios. These practical exercises provided valuable hands-on experience to the trainees and enhanced their understanding of disaster response protocols.

The day-long event concluded with a collective commitment from all stakeholders to work in close coordination towards building a resilient and disaster-prepared Ganderbal district.

## KVK-Shopian organizes orientation programme on PMDDKY at Balpora

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 11:** Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Shopian today organized the Prime Minister Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) orientation programme at Balpora, Shopian.

The event also featured the live telecast of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's address, which was witnessed by over three hundred farmers from across the district.

The programme was graced by the presence of MLA Shopian, Adv. Shabir Ahmad Kullay, Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta; ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone; ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Senior Scientist & Head, KVK Shopian, Prof. Zaffar Afroz Badri, scientists of the Kendra, representatives from NGO REACHA, NRLM, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), progressive and champion farmers, farm women and tribal farmers.

In his address, MLA lauded the efforts of KVK-Scientists for their continued outreach to every corner of the district and for sensitizing farmers about various government schemes and initiatives aimed at their welfare.

On the occasion, the DC visited the stall displayed some of the promising varieties of Apple, Almond, Walnut, Maize, Muskmelon and some vegetables successfully cultivated at research cum demonstration farms of Krishi Vigyan Kendra to showcase the technologies



of the variety to the participants for their horizontal expansion in the district to encourage the socio-economic status of the farming community.

Prof. Zaffar Afroz Badri presented an overview of the PMDDKY programme, highlighting its objectives for holistic agricultural development through the convergence of 38 schemes operated under eleven Central Ministries, the State Government, and private entrepreneurs.

The workshop focused on enhancing farmers' understanding of the financial, technical, and institutional

benefits available under PMDDKY.

Discussions covered key themes including natural farming practices to reduce chemical load in soils, restore mineral balance, and improve irrigation facilities. Increasing cropping intensity and diversifying production to achieve higher yields, processing and value addition of farm produce through grading, packaging, and efficient transportation to increase market value and shelf life, pulse production improvement, addressing both quality and quantity aspects for enhanced productivity.

## Book 'Sahzanand' on Sheikh-ul-Alam's Verses Released at Tagore Hall Srinagar

Scholars hail the translation work of Dr. Ghazanfar Ali and Inayat Gul as a significant literary contribution

■ Jameel Ansari

**SRINAGAR, OCT 11:** A grand literary function was held at Tagore Hall, Srinagar, on Saturday under the auspices of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages in collaboration with the Markaz-e-Adab-o-Saqafat Charar Sharif, to mark the release of the English translation book "Sahzanand" — a remarkable joint endeavour by noted scholars and translators Dr. Ghazanfar Ali and Inayat Gul.

The book presents a lucid and comprehensive English translation of the selected verses (Ashloaks) of Hazrat Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA), encapsulating his profound spiritual philosophy, message of human equality, moral purification, and Sufi ideals in simple yet powerful

language.

The event was presided over by eminent scholar Prof. Shafi Shouq, while Prof. Mohammad Zaman Azarda, former Secretary of the Cultural Academy, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Distinguished guests including Prof. Farooq Fayaz, Dr. Rafiq Masoodi, Dr. Shafqat Altaf, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Haleem, and Mufti Shafiq-ur-Rehman, Chief Editor of the Cultural Academy, were also present alongside the authors.

The proceedings began with a warm welcome address by Dr. Shabnam Rafiq, Senior Officer of the Cultural Academy, who highlighted the significance of the event. This was followed by a captivating recitation of Sheikh-ul-Alam's verses by Saima Ashraf, which deeply resonated with the audience.

Scholarly papers on the book were presented by Mushtaq Moharram and Rubia Gul, who offered insightful critiques on its intellectual and literary dimensions.

In their addresses, Dr. Ghazanfar Ali and Inayat Gul shed light on the research background, translation principles, and compilation process of the book. They said that the objective of "Sahzanand" is to introduce the younger generation to the universal message of Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) and provide an academic reference to understand his teachings in a contemporary context.

In his presidential address, Prof. Shafi Shouq described Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) as the cornerstone of Kashmiri spirituality, culture, and language, emphasizing that his verses



represent the essence of the Valley's intellectual and spiritual identity.

Chief Guest Prof. Mohammad Zaman Azarda, in his remarks, said that Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) was not merely a

religious figure but a multidimensional reformer, poet, and philosopher who preached moral integrity and mutual respect. He lauded the translators' efforts, describing "Sahzanand" as "an intellectual

bridge between Kashmir's rich spiritual heritage and the global English readership."

Prof. Farooq Fayaz appreciated the Cultural Academy's continued patronage of such projects, stating that it has always upheld the mission of preserving the synthesis of spirituality, culture, and knowledge. He hoped that the book would open new avenues for the study of Sufi thought beyond Kashmir.

Dr. Shafqat Altaf termed "Sahzanand" not only an exemplary work of translation but also a beautiful blend of spirituality and literature, connecting the timeless wisdom of Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) with the intellectual curiosity of modern readers.

Dr. Rafiq Masoodi called the book a renewed interpretation

of Sheikh-ul-Alam's message of goodness and morality, describing it as a reflection of the Academy's intellectual awakening.

Dr. Ghulam Nabi Haleem congratulated the Cultural Academy and the translators, emphasizing that such scholarly endeavours play a pivotal role in preserving the Valley's intellectual legacy.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Mufti Shafiq-ur-Rehman, Chief Editor (Pahari) of the Cultural Academy, who expressed gratitude to all guests and participants.

The function was attended by a large gathering of writers, poets, scholars, journalists, and admirers of Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA), who lauded the initiative as a significant contribution to the promotion of Kashmiri spiritual and literary heritage.



# Javed Rana reviews functioning of Forest department in Anantnag, Kulgam, Pulwama districts

## Stresses on intensified afforestation, rejuvenation efforts

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 11:** Minister for Forest, Ecology & Environment, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a review meeting at Civil Secretariat, here to assess the functioning and progress of the Forest department in Anantnag, Kulgam and Pulwama districts.

The meeting focused on evaluating ongoing initiatives of afforestation, eco-tourism development, soil and water conservation, protection of forest assets and role of community engagement in sustainable management of natural resources.

The Minister took stock of the achievements made so far and deliberated on key areas requiring further attention and improvement.

In light of the growing environmental challenges, especially those posed by climate

change, the Minister underscored the urgent need to enhance the green cover in South Kashmir.

He directed the concerned Divisional Forest Officers to accord top priority to plantation drives, formulate detailed and area-specific plantation plans.

Emphasizing that the sustainability and survival of plantations are just as important as plantation itself, he instructed the department to integrate post-plantation care and monitoring mechanisms to ensure long-term impact and ecological restoration.

Reaffirming Omar Abdullah-led Government's commitment to forest-based sustainability and improving livelihoods, Rana called for intensified afforestation and rejuvenation efforts across districts.

He emphasized the need for robust Information, Education and Communication (IEC) cam-



paigns to raise environmental awareness, urging the active participation of local communities, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations

(NGOs) in such initiatives. The Minister also reviewed the status of pending forest clearances for developmental projects and stressed the im-

portance of streamlining the approval process and vigorous follow-up to ensure timely clearances for critical infrastructure projects like water

supply, road connectivity and community development, while ensuring that environmental safeguards are not compromised in the process.

Rana placed special emphasis on soil conservation and social forestry activities, noting their crucial role in preventing soil erosion, improving groundwater recharge and generating sustainable livelihoods for forest-dependent communities.

He highlighted the importance of integrating these activities into broader climate resilience and rural development frameworks.

The Minister further reviewed the district-wise implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), with particular focus on the recognition and documentation of both individual and community forest rights.

He directed the Forest department to maintain close coordination with the Revenue and

Tribal Affairs Departments to facilitate timely processing of claims, effective grievance redressal and proper documentation of pending cases.

In a bid to boost eco-tourism in South Kashmir, Rana called for the identification and development of new potential eco-tourism sites.

He underlined the role of local youth in managing and promoting eco-tourism initiatives, stressing that such ventures not only create sustainable employment opportunities but also foster greater awareness and responsibility towards the conservation of forests and natural ecosystems.

The Minister reiterated the government's resolve to strengthen forest governance and conservation efforts across Jammu & Kashmir, ensuring a balanced approach between development needs and environmental sustainability.

## SANKALP-HEW Mission Shakti, SWD Bandipora Celebrates International Girl Child Day 2025

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 11:** In connection with the celebration of International Girl Child Day 2025, SANKALP Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW) Mission Shakti, Social Welfare Department (SWD) Bandipora in collaboration with the Education Department, today organised a series of activities at Sumbal to promote empowerment, leadership, and safety among girls.

The celebration was held in line with this year's global theme "The Girl I Am, The Change I Lead: Girls on the Frontlines of Crisis."

Awareness sessions were conducted by Gender Specialist and Financial Literacy Specialist, who sensitized students about various government welfare schemes, legal rights, health, and financial literacy for girls. The school faculty also delivered motivational talks and lauded the efforts of the Social Welfare Department Bandipora in advancing women and child welfare initiatives.

To encourage physical fitness, confidence, and resilience among girls, sports and self-defence activities were also organised on



the occasion. Free sports uniforms were distributed among students, followed by a badminton tournament among girl students of Sumbal area, aimed at promoting teamwork and sportsmanship.

Experts from Star Sports Academy conducted self-defence and kickboxing training sessions, equipping girls with essential safety skills and confidence-building techniques.

## DC Shopian chairs Grievance Redressal Camp at Zampathri Keller

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 11:** As part of the Government's ongoing Public Outreach and Grievance Redressal Programme, the District Administration Shopian today conducted a Grievance Redressal Camp at Pan-chayat Halqa Zampathri Keller, presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta.

The event aimed to bring the administration closer to the people and ensure that public grievances are addressed promptly at their doorsteps.

The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation of senior citizens, women, youth and locals from Zampathri and adjoining villages who raised a wide range of issues pertaining to road connectivity especially Zampathri to Trag-pathri road, Shukroo road, Gandow road, Keller/Zrakan/Mashwara road, play ground at Zampathri, health-care facilities, dearth of staff in Keller Hospital, irrigation, drinking water



& power supplies, development of Tourism infrastructure in the area, installation of Transformers, upliftment of education, livestock development and horticulture support.

While interacting with the public, The DC listened to all grievances patiently and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned

officers for early redressal and appropriate action. He stressed on responsive, transparent and accountable governance, urging departments to act promptly on the issues projected by the people.

The DC assured that the administration is fully committed to resolving public issues in a time-bound

manner and emphasized that such grievance redressal camps are an integral part of participatory governance while directing officers to make regular field visits to assess ground-level issues and to ensure the saturation of government schemes, particularly those aimed at youth empowerment, livelihood generation, rural infrastructure and welfare of weaker sections.

Officers from departments including Rural Development, KPDC, Jal Shakti, Health, Education, Agriculture, Horticulture, Social Welfare and Revenue departments were present and responded to the grievances raised by the locals. Many issues of public importance were resolved on the spot, while others were taken up for early action at the district level.

ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone, ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, Tehsildar, Keller, Latifat Shawl and other officers and officials along with people in large number participated in the said event.

## DLSA Budgam Organises Awareness Programme on International Girl Child day

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BUDGAM, OCTOBER 11:** District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Budgam, organized an Awareness Programme on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child in collaboration with Girls Higher Secondary School, Budgam.

The programme was conducted on the directions of, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Shazia Tabassum under the supervision of, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Budgam, O.P. Bhagat and the guidance of Secretary, DLSA Budgam, Nusrat Ali Hakak.

The primary objective of observing the International Day of the Girl Child is to highlight and address the unique challenges faced by girls, promote their human rights, and empower them to build a future of equal opportunities in education, health, and safety and free from discrimination and violence.

The day also emphasizes the potential of girls as innovators and leaders, calling for greater investment in their well-being during formative years to enable their meaningful participation in sustainable development.

The DLSA, Budgam, deputed Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsels as resource persons for the programme. They delivered insightful presentations on relevant legal schemes and raised awareness among participants about their objectives and implementation.

They spoke about the rights of girls with a special emphasis on combating child marriage, child labour, and gender-based violence. It was highlighted that child marriage is internationally recognized as a form of gender-based violence and a grave violation of human rights. Such practices expose girls and women to heightened risks of sexual, physical, and psychological violence, as well as adverse health outcomes including HIV infection, unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, poor mental health, depression, and even loss of life through femicide or suicide. Furthermore, gender-based violence including child marriage that leads to reduced educational attainment and limited economic and employment opportunities.

## J&K Judicial Academy Holds Refresher Programme to Strengthen Digital Efficiency of Court Staff

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 11:** Under the patronage of the Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Judicial Academy), Justice Arun Palli and under the guidance of Chairperson and Members of the Governing Committee of the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy, a One Day Refresher Programme was organized at the Academy premises, Mominabad, Srinagar.

The programme was organized for Readers, Bench Secretaries, Secretaries, Assistant Registrars, Administrative Officers, Stenographers of all cadres, Section Officers, Head Assistants, System Assistants, Data Entry Operators, Senior Assistants, and Junior As-

sistants of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Srinagar Wing.

The programme commenced with introductory remarks by Additional Registrar, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Farhana Ali who underscored the importance of continuous professional development for administrative and technical staff in ensuring the smooth functioning of judicial processes. She highlighted that the integration of technology through eCourts initiatives and digital workflows has transformed the justice delivery system, making capacity-building programmes essential to maintain efficiency and accuracy in court operations.

The first technical session, conducted by CPC eCourts, Fayaz Ahmed Qureshi, focused on a Brief

Overview of the Case Information System (CIS) including its structure, real-time case updates, and common operational challenges such as data entry errors, incorrect categorization, and missing case types. The session also covered E-Filing Operations, detailing the registration process for users and advocates, document uploading procedures, and validation mechanisms.

During the session participants discussed everyday issues in CIS and court proceedings, followed by an interactive Q&A session exploring practical scenarios and solutions.

The second session was led by the CPC eCourts, and Senior Technical Officer, Wasim Hyder Khan, who addressed Digital Infrastruc-

ture Limitations and Network Troubleshooting for Court IT Systems. They provided practical guidance on identifying and resolving issues such as connectivity failures, bandwidth limitations, IP conflicts, and network congestion. The session emphasized data security, privacy, and ensuring operational continuity during technical disruptions.

Demonstrations of basic troubleshooting steps such as using ping/tracert commands, DNS checks, and hardware resets were shared to help staff handle minor IT challenges efficiently.

The final session, conducted by the CPC eCourts, and Senior System Officer, Uzeir Nazir Chik-en focused on the Data Management Software (DMS), explaining its

core features, workflow automation, and security compliance framework. The session underscored the significance of maintaining data integrity, proper document storage, and adopting secure digital practices within the judiciary.

The programme concluded with a comprehensive interactive session and feedback exchange, where participants shared their on-ground experiences and practical challenges in operating CIS, DMS, and e-filing systems.

The Refresher Programme highlighted the Academy's ongoing commitment to enhancing the efficiency, digital literacy, and professional competency of court staff of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

## Javid Dar attends launch of PMDDKY, Self-Reliance in Pulses Mission virtually at Baramulla

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 11:** Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj & Election Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar, today attended the virtual launch of Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) and Self-Reliance in Pulses Mission, inaugurated by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

MLA Baramulla, Javid Hassan Beigh; Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa; Heads of various departments, and progressive farmers were also present on the occasion.

Minister highlighted that these initiatives will play a crucial role in strengthening the agriculture sector, improving farmers' income, and advancing sustainable and self-reliant farming practices across Jammu and Kashmir.

The event, aimed at boosting agricultural growth, enhancing food security and



promoting self-sufficiency in pulses production.

Participants appreciated the Government of India's continued focus on farmers' welfare. The officers underlined district's commitment to effectively implementing these flagship programmes in alignment with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

## DC Ganderbal chairs DLC meeting on Mission YUVA, approves 109 cases

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 11:** With an aim to review and accord approval to applications submitted under the Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyamita Vikas Abhiyan) scheme, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today chaired a meeting of the district level committee (DLC), here.

During the meeting, a total of 109 cases, verified by SBDUs, were placed before the committee for consideration, and were approved for financial assistance and handholding support under Mission YUVA by the DLC. The committee conducted detailed scrutiny of each application based on eligibility, business viability and the socio-economic background of the applicants.

Addressing the meeting, DC emphasized the importance of promoting self-

employment opportunities among local youth, especially those from under privileged and marginalized sections of society.

The DC directed concerned officers to convene weekly BHD meetings, to properly scrutinize applications before forwarding for approval. He also directed Yuva Doots to engage with aspirants at BHD level, check the quality of applications.

He directed all concerned departments to ensure timely disbursement of financial support, continuous monitoring and proper mentoring to ensure the long-term sustainability of the approved ventures.

The DC stressed enhanced outreach and awareness to ensure wider participation under the scheme, and called for pro-active coordinated efforts to achieve the mission's objectives in a time-bound manner.



HT EDITORIAL

## IPL brings stars from lesser known cities to fore

The Indian Premier League popularly known as IPL has led to a revolution on the cricketing scenario of India and due to this abundant talent has come to the fore. In the past the cricketers used to come from main cities of the country and just a few from less important cities would make it to the national team after performing at the domestic level. This trend has changed with the IPL.

Cricketers like Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah and many others excelled in the initial years of IPL and it was due to this reason that these players made a tremendous mark on the international scene. The IPL started in 2008 has come up as the best T-20 league in the world and it has virtually transformed the T-20 format of cricket. The aggressive nature of the league can be gauged by the fact that a score of 200 runs in 20 overs is no longer considered to be a safe score.

It is due to this league that players like Shubman Gill, Tilak Verma, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sai Sudershan and others have made a name and they have replaced superstars like Kohli and Rohit. The new generation of Indian cricket stars have already won accolades from people across the world and the same was displayed in the recently concluded Asia Cup. These young guns kept cool in pressure games and helped their team to win crucial games and ultimately won the tournament.

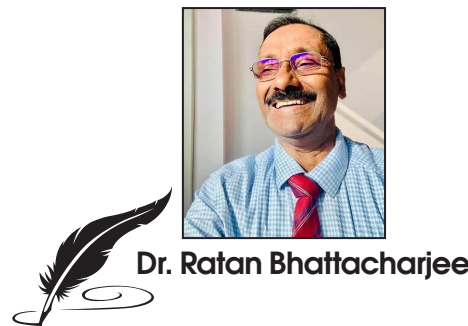
The impact of T-20 cricket on the other forms of cricket is visible on ground and the credit for the same goes to the IPL and the players taking part in the league. The mindset of the batters has changed and they start to tonk the ball from word go. On the other hand the bowlers have learned many tricks to get the batters out. The standard of fielding has improved a lot and the present day cricketer has to be a wonderful fielder who is always alert and agile.

The abundance of cricketing talent in the country can be understood by the fact that India can have three world class T-20 teams at a particular time and these teams can beat any international team and that with convenience. It is important that good work is carried forward and talent is nurtured so that more and more stars arrive on the cricketing horizon of India.

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# María Corina Machado: Nobel Laureate in Peace 2025

Keeping the Flame of Democracy Alive in Dark Times



It highlights that she has served as a unifying figure in an opposition historically fragmented, helping to rebuild shared ground in pursuit of free elections and representative government. The Committee also notes that amid global democratic backsliding, defending the space for dissent, pluralism, and accountability is of paramount importance.

“Democracy — understood as the right to freely express one’s opinion, to cast one’s vote and to be represented in elective government — is the foundation of peace both within countries and between countries.”

In short, the award is at once a recognition and a call to action: democracy is fragile, and its defenders often face the gravest dangers

In its long history, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has honoured brave women and men who have stood up to repression, who have carried the hope of freedom in prison cells, on the streets and in public squares, and who have shown by their actions that peaceful resistance can change the world. Maria Corina Machado meets all three criteria stated in Alfred Nobel’s will for the selection of a Peace Prize laureate. She has brought her country’s opposition together. She has never wavered in resisting the militarisation of Venezuelan society. She has been steadfast in her support for a peaceful transition to democracy. Maria Corina Machado has shown that the tools of democracy are also the tools of peace. She embodies the hope of a different future, one where the fundamental rights of citizens are protected, and their voices are heard. In this future, people will finally be free to live in peace. “It was a choice of ballots over bullets.” She said. Venezuela’s authoritarian regime makes political work extremely difficult. As a founder of Súmate, an organisation devoted to democratic development, Maria Corina Machado stood up for free and fair elections more than 20 years ago. As the leader of the democracy movement in Venezuela, Maria Corina Machado is one of the most extraordinary examples of civilian courage in Latin America in recent times.

Machado has been a key, unifying figure in a political opposition that was once deeply divided — an opposition that found common ground in the demand for free elections and representative government. This is precisely what lies at the heart of democracy: our shared willingness to defend the principles of popular rule, even though we disagree. She has spent years working for the freedom of the Venezuelan people. Democracy is a precondition for lasting peace. However, we live in a world where democracy is in retreat, where more and more authoritarian regimes are challenging norms and resorting to violence. Despite serious threats against her life she has remained in the country, a choice that has inspired millions of people. She reminds us that freedom must never be taken for granted, but must always be defended — with words, with courage and with determination. On 10 October 2025, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced that the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize would be awarded to María Corina Machado of Venezuela. The citation honors her “tireless work promoting democratic rights for the people of Venezuela and her struggle to achieve a just and peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy.” The decision comes at a moment when democracy faces mounting pressures in many parts of the world. In choosing Machado, the committee underscores not only her personal courage but also the broader ideals of civic resistance, human rights, and the rule of law. The Nobel Committee’s decision is not incidental—it sends a message: in times of darkness, defenders of democratic rights deserve global affirmation. In Latin America, where the pendulum of power has swung between populism, authoritarianism, and liberal democracy, Machado’s award could renew faith in nonviolent civic resistance. Her example reinforces that institutional decay and social collapse are not inevitable — renewed engagement, public accountability, and courageous leadership can still matter.

The Financial Times noted that Machado’s award “dashes the hopes of U.S. President Donald Trump.” The official Nobel press release frames the Award for Peace as honoring not only an individual, but a movement for democracy. It says: “As the leader of the democracy movement in Venezuela, Maria Corina Machado is one of the most extraordinary examples of civilian courage in Latin America in recent times.” Since its inception in Alfred Nobel’s 1895 will, the Nobel Peace Prize has recognized individuals and organizations “who have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies, and the formation and spreading of peace congresses.” Over time, the Peace Prize has often been a moral spotlight: honoring figures like Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Aung San Suu Kyi, the International Red Cross, and numerous peacemakers. Machado now joins this lineage, especially among women laureates—highlighting the crucial role women play in peacebuilding and democratic movements.

It highlights that she has served as a unifying figure in an opposition historically fragmented, helping to rebuild shared ground in pursuit of free elections and representative government. The Committee also notes that amid global democratic backsliding, defending the space for dissent, pluralism, and accountability is of paramount importance. “Democracy — understood as the right to freely express one’s opinion, to cast one’s vote and to be represented in elective government — is the foundation of peace both within countries and between countries.” In short, the award is at once a recognition and a call to action: democracy is fragile, and its defenders often face the gravest dangers.



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María Corina Machado was born on 7 October 1967 in Caracas, Venezuela. Coming from an upper-class background (her father was a prominent businessman in the steel industry), she studied industrial engineering—an educational path uncommon among many frontline political leaders. In her early public life, Machado co-founded Súmate, a Venezuelan civic organization focused on electoral monitoring and citizen participation. Through Súmate, she rose in prominence as an advocate for clean elections and transparency, often clashing with the governing authorities. In 2010, she won a seat in the Venezuelan National Assembly, serving until 2014. Even during her legislative tenure, she became known for her outspoken criticism of authoritarian overreach and defending citizen rights. Later, in 2014, she became a founding leader of Vente Venezuela, a political party committed to democratic renewal and liberal reform. Over the years, Machado’s political path led her to become a central figure in the opposition coalition, increasingly viewed as a unifying leader amongst fragmented forces seeking change. Her refusal to leave her country in the face of danger has been described by the Nobel Committee as a key factor in awarding her the prize: “despite serious threats against her life, she has remained in the country, a choice that has inspired millions.”

In Venezuela, the regime responded with predictable denunciations, calling the decision a partisan interference or foreign conspiracy. Among international actors, praise was widespread. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio called Machado “the personification of resilience, tenacity, and patriotism.” Many observers saw the choice as a rebuke to those who had

nominated or campaigned for other high-profile figures—especially U.S. President Donald Trump, who had mounted a visible campaign to win the Nobel Peace Prize earlier in the year. In fact, Trump had been a conspicuous contender in the public discourse around the Nobel this year. But ultimately, the Nobel Committee reaffirmed that its decision rests on the values set out in Alfred Nobel’s will—not public lobbying. Domestically, Machado’s win has reenergized opposition groups, civil society, and ordinary citizens who have long endured economic collapse, shortages, emigration, and political repression.

While Machado’s story is deeply Venezuelan, the themes resonate widely. In many regions, democratic norms face erosion: executive overreach, disinformation, suppression of protests, judicial politicization, and civic disempowerment. Receiving the Nobel Peace Prize is not an endpoint; rather, it frames a renewed mission. Here are critical dimensions Machado and her allies will likely confront: Engaging human rights organizations, foreign governments, and multilateral bodies can help monitor abuses, advocate for oversight in elections, and deter violence. The regime has long dominated state media and narratives. The opposition must build credible platforms—digital, diaspora, and international media—to maintain visibility and counter misinformation. Machado is lauded for her moral clarity, willingness to risk, and her capacity to articulate a democratic vision under duress. Her role as a unifying figure in a historically fragmented opposition is especially praised.

María Corina Machado’s Nobel Peace Prize is not merely a personal accolade—it is a vote of confidence in the ideals she has championed: active citizenship, free and fair elections, accountability, pluralism, and the dignity of dissent. For Venezuela, it is a moment of renewed hope, a clarion call to redouble efforts toward political opening, institutional renewal, and social reconstruction. For global democracy watchers, it is a reminder that even in the darkest times, courageous voices can still shine a beacon. The Nobel Peace Prize for 2025 goes to a brave and committed champion of peace—to a woman who keeps the flame of democracy burning amid a growing darkness.” Indeed, democracy in crisis demands defenders—with vision, resilience, and sacrifice. María Corina Machado has stepped into that role. Now, the world will be watching whether this prize becomes a turning point—and whether a battered nation can reclaim its democratic promise.

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# I Wrote Myself Under The Moonlight

By Wani Ibtisam

Review By



Imbisat Tareen

In the poem **BACKBONE** he is praising his friends .The speaker describes meeting friends as a stranger in a "tiny classroom". They highlight the emotional connection, where their "souls were same" despite their bodies being different. The friends console each other when they feel low and have a trust and bond that has been "dug in our soul" over thirteen years. The speaker concludes that the word "backbone" will always mean them

"I Wrote Myself Under The Moonlight" by Wani Ibtisam is a heartfelt non-fiction work that explores personal experiences and reflections. With gratitude towards his parents, the author shares his story, offering a glimpse into his life and emotions. The book's themes and style are likely to resonate with readers seeking authentic, relatable narratives.

The author expresses gratitude in the acknowledgments to those who supported his journey.

#### Acknowledgments

- **Family Support :** Wani Ibtisam thanks his parents for their love and support, making everything possible.
- **Friends and Teachers:** Friends kept his grounded, and teachers like Syed Ishfaq sir introduced him to new things.
- **Inspiration:** His cousin Imbisat Tareen's book "The Inner Voice" was a source of inspiration.
- **Publisher :** Gratitude to the publisher for taking a risk on the book.

#### Themes and Style:

The book appears to touch on themes of self-discovery, personal growth, and emotional expression, resonating with readers seeking authentic narratives. Ibtisam's writing style is described as engaging, with some reviewers noting the language could benefit from polishing in certain areas.

The author's use of imagery and metaphor is particularly noteworthy, creating vivid scenes that readers can immerse themselves in.

This book, *I Wrote Myself Under The Moonlight*, is a collection of 22 poems by Wani Ibtisam. The poems are described as "bleeding, weak, and real". They don't rely on fancy words but rather a sense of immediacy. The author shares their experiences and existence rather than writing traditional poetry.

In poems like *MY RUINS* and *I Remember*, the young poet explores feelings of being lost and questioning one's own existence. The speaker feels "dead" in their room and describes a state of "decomposing alive" where their heart and blood are running out of them. It conveys a feeling of being neither fully alive nor completely gone. The later poem is a nostalgic look back at childhood. The speaker remembers being a "teddy bear," small and soft, spending their days in a rocking cradle. They recall a time of innocence, asking "what's that?" about everything, and growing up like a prince who got everything he wished for. The poem ends with a simple, powerful statement of remembrance: "I still remember!"

He also recalls his school memories in the poem "THE LAST BENCH" "This poem reminisces about school days



and the camaraderie shared with friends. It describes the anticipation of break time, when the students would laugh and speak "all kinds of nonsense". The "wooden bench of memories" symbolizes the bond and shared experiences of learning, solving problems, eating, and playing together. The speaker notes how all of those experiences have now become memories.

In the poem *BACKBONE* he is praising his friends. The speaker describes meeting friends as a stranger in a "tiny classroom". They highlight the emotional connection, where their "souls were same" despite their bodies being different. The friends console each other when they feel low and have a trust and bond that has been "dug in our soul" over thirteen years. The speaker concludes that the word "backbone" will always mean them.

In the poems like "THE MOON" and "IN THE ABSENCE OF THE MOON" The speaker says the moon is "Too far but.... still close... very close" and is "dug deep inside my chest". The moon's radiant light is described as a source of care and love that makes the speaker's heart beat. The

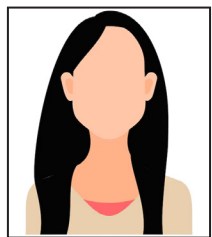
poem concludes with a wish to become the moon's protector and continue the journey "forever, and ever" with the moon as a guide. A companion to the first poem, the later one explores what happens when the moon disappears. While the moon is usually the sole focus, its absence allows every star to shine brighter and try to "steal my attention". Despite this, the speaker still misses the moon, its beauty, love, and care.

I feel incredibly proud of my cousin, Wani Ibtisam, for writing this beautiful book and sharing his authentic self with the world. The poems are a testament to his talent and heart, offering a raw and honest glimpse into his experiences. This collection is a powerful reflection of his inner world, and it's a privilege to see his words come to life. I wish him all the success he deserves and hope that this book finds a wide audience who can connect with its moving poetry.

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## Book Review of Majeed Masroor's Naagrad

Review By



Iqra Parvaaz

The word **Naagrad** itself carries symbolic meaning — as if all shades of pain, love, emotion, and humanity are strung together in a single thread. It is worth noting that although *Naagrad* was published in 1994, many of its poems had already gained fame since 1983 — and remain alive even today. Among its most popular verses is this one: "Mata traavtam kafan wuni dahaanas path, waye patta pheriye, kali waathakh myaanas mazaras path, waye patta pheriye..."

In the realm of literature, the name of Majeed Masroor Sahib fills the mind with the fragrance of Kashmiri literature — a fragrance deeply rooted in the soil of this valley, echoing through its dialects, and touching every heart through his simple yet profound poetry. When I first heard the name "Naagrad", I felt an inexplicable pull — as if this book wasn't simply a book, but a feeling, a symbol of an era that infused new life into the Kashmiri language and literature. The name Majeed Masroor itself unveils a story — a story of dedication, passion, and love for literature. He is among those rare souls who did not merely give words to poetry but infused soul into language. In Jammu and Kashmir, there is hardly anyone unaware of this great poet and writer. He is one of those few who enticed hearts not through pretentious grandeur, but through sincerity and emotion. For him, literature is not a profession or pastime; it is devotion — a spiritual experience. When I opened the first page of *Naagrad*, it felt as though I had been carried back to 1994 — the year when this book first hit the strands and stirred the literary winds of Kashmir. The book not only secured a place for Majeed Masroor in the hearts of readers but also set a new standard for Kashmiri poetry. The word *Naagrad* itself carries symbolic meaning — as if all shades of pain, love, emotion, and humanity are strung together in a single thread. It is worth noting that although *Naagrad* was published in 1994, many of its poems had already gained fame since 1983 — and remain alive even today. Among its most popular verses is this one: "Mata traavtam kafan wuni dahaanas path, waye patta pheriye, kali waathakh myaanas mazaras path, waye patta pheriye..."

This poem reached the people through the soft, melodious voice of Abdul Ghaffar Kanahami Sahib and became immensely popular in its time. Even today, people listen to it repeatedly, experiencing a new wave of emotion every time. Another equally cherished poem goes:

"Az teh rudus intizaras aakh maa,  
Okhua bah pyaraan didaaras aakh maa..."

This composition became widely known through the mesmerizing voice of Kashmir's noted musician Manzoor Ahmad Shah Sahib. The verses reflect the passage of time, the intensity of love and longing, and the purity of human emotion. Majeed Masroor's poetry is not confined to love or mystic passion; it also reflects social, cultural, and historical insight.

Another celebrated piece reads:

"Gulab zyul ghilhaar yath shakras manz,  
Timah shehrak bah teh chhus rozan wulat,  
Yath maan chh ravanah zakras manz,  
Timah shehrak bah teh chhus rozan wul..."

These lines mirror human emotions, the contrast between city and village life, and the delicacy of human relationships. The renowned artist Qaiser Nizami Sahib recited this poem, carrying its message far and wide — its relevance remains timeless. *Naagrad* is not merely a collection of poems; it is the heartbeat of an era — a time when Kashmiri poets used their pens to keep the spirit of the nation alive. Majeed Masroor carried this legacy forward with grace and strength. His poetry is marked by simplicity — and that simplicity is where its true depth lies. His words blend sorrow and supplication, love and divine knowledge, the world and devotion — all in a single breath. His *Na'atiya* (prophetic) poetry sinks deep into the soul. These verses still bring peace to hearts:

"Madni Shah lajawab, Allah Allah,  
Sah chhe rakmatuk ingilab, Allah Allah..."

These lines carry a spiritual ecstasy. Calling the Prophet (ﷺ) "Madni Shah lajawab" is not just praise — it is the depth of love. The poet's heart seems immersed in the fragrance of Durood (blessings upon the Prophet). The next verse takes the reader even deeper into that sacred state:

"Muhammad chh miidtar, Muhammad chh sarwar,  
Toy daal majas kitaab, Allah Allah..."

Here the poet feels blessed to read the words of divine love. The "book" in this context symbolizes both the Qur'an and his own poetic creation — infused with the love of the Prophet (ﷺ). And then comes the verse that shakes the heart:

"Fida maut teh madhosh, Masroor baras tal,  
Karaan khoon-i-figars habab, Allah Allah..."

Here the poet's love reaches its peak. He declares that even death in the love of the Prophet (ﷺ) is not death, but the most beautiful moment of life. "Blood of the heart as a kebab" symbolizes both the depth of sacrifice and the creative struggle of the artist. Reading such verses, one feels the poet's heart overflowing not merely with words, but with prayers. His love is not romantic alone — it is worship. This is what makes Majeed Masroor distinct from others. His poetry on Hussainiyat (the spirit of Imam Hussain) also carries a revolutionary essence. For instance:

"Zindagi hund ma'na matlab chhe Hussaini ingilab,  
Ya Hussain. In Ali chh ak aadamas manz lajawab."

These verses awaken courage and conviction. The poet connects the meaning of life with the spirit of Hussainiyat, declaring that one truly lives only if one embodies the spirit of Imam Hussain — of truth, sacrifice, and resistance. Hussaini Inqilab thus becomes a timeless symbol of moral revolution. *Naagrad* includes many such ghazals that move the heart. The Kashmiri essence in Masroor's poetry reflects the very spirit of his homeland. Nature, humanity, love, pain, and truth — all coexist within his verses. His lines mirror the emotions of the soul:

"Madan maars lagah ha pari haari hath beeth year,  
Doh raath chashman khoon chhum jaari haari  
hath beeth year."

(In the voice of the late Ghulam Hassan Sofi)

This verse embodies the pain of separation — the ache of absence and the wound of remembrance. The phrase "chashman khoon chhum jaari" (my eyes flow blood) evokes such intensity that the reader feels silent grief. It is as if the tears are not from eyes, but from the heart itself. Another exquisite ghazal blends art and emotion beautifully:

"Thadakh paayakh daftar kya chh jaananas,  
Tath ewaanas chh nah dagniyaar.  
Madi azay chhe madanas,  
Tath ewaanas chh nah dagniyaar."

Here, the poet contrasts intellect and heart — reason and ecstasy. Those lost in books and logic, he says, cannot comprehend the rapture of true lovers. This is a verse of philosophy wrapped in mysticism. Each poem and ghazal in *Naagrad* carries its own story. Majeed Masroor's mastery lies in his ability to express vast emotions through simple words. There is no artifice, no pretension — only sincerity. And it is this sincerity that keeps his poetry alive. When I read *Naagrad*, I feel it is not merely a creation of one poet, but an effort to preserve a language. At a time when Kashmiri writing was fading, Majeed Masroor revived it, proving that Kashmiri holds enough beauty and depth to touch every heart. His work became a reaffirmation of Kashmiri identity. When first published, *Naagrad* sold in thousands. Readers embraced it, musicians turned its verses into songs, and it echoed through every corner of the valley. It was more than a literary success — it was a cultural awakening. Though Majeed Masroor

later published other books, *Naagrad* remains closest to people's hearts. My mother and grandmother told me that when it first appeared, people would travel far just to find a copy — a testament that this was not a mere book, but an experience. Majeed Masroor Sahib's personality radiates humility, love, and knowledge. He remains active in literature and stands as an inspiration for the younger generation. As a student, when I read his writings, I feel he teaches us that literature is not just words — it is emotion, truth, and soul. His style is fluent and musical; the language of *Naagrad* is simple yet poetic. He not only expresses his emotions but draws the reader into them — a mark of a true poet. Sometimes I wonder: if *Naagrad* had never been written, perhaps Kashmiri poetry would have lost an entire generation's heartbeat. This book is not merely poetry — it is culture, faith, love, and resistance bound together. Through *Naagrad*, Majeed Masroor proved that revolutions can live within words. When I close the book, a sense of peace descends upon me — and yet, a quiet ache lingers — the same ache the poet once felt, the same pain that belongs to every sensitive soul. Perhaps that is the power of literature — it compels us to look within. *Naagrad* is, for me, not just a book but an emotion, a guide. It has taught me that to love one's language is to love one's identity. Poets like Majeed Masroor are the eternal lamps of this land, spreading light even in darkness. His verses are treasures for generations to come. *Naagrad* is as alive today as it was in 1994 — because it was written not with ink, but with heart. As a student, a reader, and a daughter of Kashmir, I do not see *Naagrad* merely as a masterpiece of literature but as a part of my own existence. When I read its verses, I feel as if I am dreaming in my own mother tongue. In conclusion, I can only say that the service Majeed Masroor Sahib rendered to literature through *Naagrad* is not only a gift to the Kashmiri language but to all humanity. His poetry is filled with love, devotion, and the fragrance of humanity — a fragrance that will never fade. May Almighty Allah bless Majeed Masroor Sahib with health, honor, and continued creative strength so that he may gift us more such "Naagrad" — works that touch hearts and turn words into prayers.

The author from Chadoora Budgam,  
Jammu & Kashmir



# The Science of Hobbies

A Pathway to Mental Health, Fulfilment, and Prosperity



Surinderpal Singh

**Engaging oneself in the hobbies has measurable physiological and psychological benefits. Scientific studies across the globe has showed that leisure activities stimulate the release of endorphins and dopamine which are the neurotransmitters associated with pleasure, motivation and reward. This biochemical response not only enhances mood but also strengthens neural pathways related to learning and memory**

Hobbies were often regarded as leisure pursuits in ancient times but nowadays are the essential tools to maintain mental, emotional and physical well-being of an individual. Recent researches in the field of neuroscience, psychology and behavioral health has revealed that engaging in hobbies stimulates the brain function, reduces the stress hormones and enhances overall quality of life. In addition to personal enrichment, hobbies are increasingly becoming potential sources of financial independence in the digital era.

In an age dominated by professional and personal stress, digital overload and social isolation, the hobbies have re-emerged as a powerful means of self-expression and mental restoration. A hobby is any activity undertaken voluntarily during leisure time that brings enjoyment, satisfaction or creative fulfillment. From painting, gardening and music to coding, blogging and photography, hobbies are deeply intertwined with human evolution and psychology. The importance of hobbies extends far beyond recreation — they play a vital role in maintaining mental equilibrium, fostering creativity and even providing economic opportunities in today's interconnected world.

## Scientific Basis and Health Impacts of Hobbies

Engaging oneself in the hobbies has measurable physiological and psychological benefits. Scientific studies across the globe has showed that leisure activities stimulate the release of endorphins and dopamine which are the neurotransmitters associated with pleasure, motivation and reward. This biochemical response not only enhances mood but also strengthens neural pathways related to learning and memory.

### 1. Stress Reduction:

Hobbies act as a natural antidote to chronic stress. Activities like gardening, knitting or painting promote a state of flow — a psychological condition where one becomes fully absorbed in a task, leading to reduced cortisol (stress hormone) levels and lowered blood pressure.

### 2. Cognitive Health:

Cognitive engagement through reading, playing musical instruments or solving puzzles keeps the brain active and helps delay age-related decline. Neuroimaging studies suggest that mentally stimulating hobbies increase synaptic plasticity and improve long-term memory.

### 3. Physical Benefits:

Physical hobbies such as swimming, hiking, dancing or cycling improve cardiovascular health, muscle coordination and immunity. The release of endorphins during physical



activity contributes to both physical and emotional resilience.

## 4. Social and Emotional Development:

Group hobbies like sports, theatre or volunteering enhances the social bonding and empathy. Shared interests reduce feelings of loneliness, improving emotional well-being and overall life satisfaction.

## Hobbies as a Therapeutic Tool Against Depression

Depression is one of the most common mental health disorders worldwide, often stemming from prolonged stress, isolation or a lack of purpose. Hobbies provide a constructive outlet for emotional expression and serve as a non-pharmacological intervention in mild to moderate depression.

Behavioral Activation Therapy, a clinical approach to treating depression, often includes encouraging patients to resume or discover hobbies. This promotes engagement in rewarding experiences which helps reverse the cycle of withdrawal and negativity.

Psychological studies has indicated that individuals who regularly engage themselves in different hobbies report a 34% lower risk of developing depressive symptoms.

Creative hobbies such as art, writing or music therapy are particularly effective in improving emotional regulation and self-esteem. In essence, hobbies cultivate mindfulness, provide a sense of accomplishment and redirect attention from negative thought patterns to productive creativity.

## Hobbies as a Source of Income in the Modern World

In the 21st century, hobbies have transcended the boundaries of personal pleasure and evolved into potential sources of financial stability. The rise of digital platforms has democratized access to audiences and markets, enabling individuals to monetize

their passions.

### Creative Hobbies:

Artists, photographers and writers can showcase and sell their work through online platforms.

### Technical and Digital Hobbies:

Coding, graphic design, video editing and content creation on YouTube or social media have become viable career options.

### Culinary and Handicraft Skills:

Baking, pottery, and handmade crafts can be turned into profitable small-scale businesses.

## Gardening and Sustainable Living:

Urban farming, home gardening and eco-friendly crafts attracts a growing audience seeking sustainable lifestyles.

Thus, what once began as leisure can be transformed into livelihood, empowering individuals economically while preserving their mental health and creativity.

Hobbies are not mere pastimes rather they are a vital part of a healthy and balanced life. From enhancing neurological function and reducing stress to serving as tools against depression and avenues for financial growth, hobbies offer multidimensional benefits. In a rapidly changing world marked by anxiety and overwork, integrating hobbies into daily life is an investment in well-being and long-term happiness.

As medical science continues to validate the psychological and physiological rewards of hobbies, society must recognize them as essential components of holistic health. Encouraging the pursuit of hobbies in schools, workplaces and communities could redefine public health strategies—promoting not only productivity but also peace of mind.

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

## Indian Red Cross Society, J&K organized a Medical Check-up and Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Camp

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, OCT 11:** The Indian Red Cross Society, Jammu & Kashmir today organized a Medical Check-up and Menstrual Hygiene Awareness Camp at Government High School, Chak Lagan, for the students and the local residents of the village. The camp was conducted as part of the Society's ongoing initiatives to promote health awareness, preventive care, and menstrual hygiene among rural communities.

Team Red Cross including Dr. Manpreet Kour, Medical Officer, Sh. Balbir Singh, Lab Technician, Sh. Joginder Kumar, Pharmacist and Ms. Vironica Marwah, Field Officer from the Red Cross provided free medical consultations, health screenings, and diagnostic services to the participants. Students, women, and elderly people were examined for various health issues such as anemia, nutritional deficiencies, Blood sugar, Hyper-



tension and seasonal illnesses.

In addition to the general health check-up, a special session on Menstrual Hygiene Management was organized for adolescent girls and women to raise awareness about maintaining personal hygiene during menstruation, safe and sustainable sanitary practices, and breaking social taboos associated with it. The Red Cross team also distributed sanitary napkins among the participants to promote the message of menstrual health and dignity.

Speaking on the occasion, Sh. Rohit Khajuria, General Secretary, Indian Red Cross Society, J&K, said, "The Red Cross Society is committed to ensuring that quality healthcare and awareness reach every corner of Jammu & Kashmir, especially rural and underprivileged areas. Through our mobile health van and awareness initiatives, we aim to promote a culture of health, hygiene, and compassion among all sections of society."

The local residents and school authorities expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Red Cross Society, J&K, for bringing essential healthcare and awareness programs to their doorstep. The initiative was highly appreciated by the community and reflected the Society's continuous efforts to improve community health and social well-being.

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## Over Two Dozen Vehicles Seized, ₹5 Lakh Fine Imposed for Illegal Mining in Kulgam

Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, OCT 11:** In a major crackdown on illegal mining and transportation of raw materials, the Department of Geology and Mining, Kulgam, has seized more than two dozen vehicles and imposed fines amounting to ₹5 lakh across various areas of the district. According to officials, the enforcement drive was carried out throughout the month of September under the supervision of District Mineral Officer (DMO) Kulgam. During the raids, a total of 25 vehicles, including 4 JCBs, 15 tractors, 4 dumpers, and 2 tippers, were



seized for their involvement in illegal extraction and transportation of minerals.

DMO Kulgam Dr. Khurshid Ahmad said that the department conducted surprise inspections during both day and night hours to curb the unlawful activities. "Fines totaling ₹5 lakh were imposed for various violations related to illegal mining," the official added. He further stated that strict action will continue against those found guilty of exploiting natural resources. "No leniency will be shown to individuals or groups indulging in illegal mining and causing irreparable damage to the environment," he said.

# DC Kupwara Chairs Mega Block Diwas at LoC Keran

HT News Desk

**KUPWARA, OCT 11:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse today chaired a Mega Block Diwas event at LoC Keran, to ensure redressal of grievances and developmental issues of the people living in far flung border area at their door-steps.

The Block Diwas was attended by ACR Kupwara, Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad, Chief Education Officer Kupwara, Mehraj-u-din Shah, Tehsildar, BDO Keran, besides, other District/Block Level Officers and general public.

While addressing the Block Diwas function, the Deputy Commissioner said that Keran has immense potential for growth, and the Government is giving special attention to its overall development through several flagship initiatives like Aspirational Block Development Programme (ABDP) and the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP), which are designed to bring holistic progress to border areas like Keran.

Under the Vibrant Village Programme, the DC directed the concerned departments to formulate a comprehensive action plan to fulfill the developmental needs of Keran, with a focus on improving basic amenities and livelihood opportunities. He also



stressed upon the youth to actively enroll under Mission Yuva, which aims to channelize their energy towards skill development and entrepreneurship.

Responding to various public demands, the DC reaffirmed the district administration's commitment to improving road connectivity, mobile network coverage, and hospital equipment in the

region. He assured that a separate review meeting will soon be convened with concerned officers to assess the progress of ongoing works and ensure timely redressal of public issues under the Aspirational Block framework.

Emphasizing the importance of education, the DC directed the Chief Education Officer to prepare an action plan to curb school

dropout rates, especially among girl students. He also instructed the education department to strengthen monitoring mechanisms to ensure the regular attendance of teachers and staff, thereby improving the overall functioning of schools in the block.

The DC further announced that a Tourist Festival will be

organized in Keran to promote tourism and showcase the area's scenic beauty and cultural richness, thereby increasing tourist inflow and local economic activity. He also assured that adequate electricity, food, and medical supplies will be ensured during the upcoming winter season so that residents of Keran do not face any hardship.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner inspected stalls set up by various departments including Fisheries, Agriculture, Health, Revenue, Animal Husbandry, and Education, and reviewed their progress under the ABDP. He urged upon officers and field functionaries to intensify their efforts for the saturation of developmental indicators, which would enhance the overall quality of life in this remote border block.

Prominent citizens and local representatives also spoke on the occasion, highlighting key concerns such as poor mobile connectivity and the need for macadamization of inner roads. Later, the DC inspected PHC Keran, took a detailed stock of the medical services being provided in the centre, and instructed officers to expedite ongoing projects and ensure visible development on the ground, making Keran more accessible and livable for its residents.

## Mission Shakti Kupwara Celebrates International Girl Child Day — Promotes Education, Inclusion, and Empowerment

HT News Desk

**KUPWARA, OCT 11:** The SHEW-Mission Shakti Kupwara today celebrated International Girl Child Day with great enthusiasm at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Salkoot Kupwara. The event was held under the theme "Empowered Girls, Empowered Nation", highlighting the importance of education, inclusion, and equal opportunity for every girl.

During the function, tablets were distributed among girl toppers as a token of encouragement for their academic excellence, while smartphones were provided to girls with special needs to support digital accessibility and learning. The initiative reflects the district administration's continued



commitment towards fostering empowerment and creating an inclusive environment for all girls. The programme witnessed active participation

of students, teachers, and members of Mission Shakti, who collectively reaffirmed their pledge to stand for every girl's right to dream, learn, and lead.

## TLSC Handwara Holds Awareness Programme on International Girl Child Day at AIIMS Handwara

HT News Desk

**KUPWARA, OCT 11:** Tehsil Legal service Committee (TLSC) Handwara, today organised an awareness programme at AIIMS School Handwara to commemorate International Girl Child Day. The programme aimed to highlight the importance of educating and empowering the girl child, ensuring gender equality, and spreading awareness regarding the legal rights and protections available to girls and women under the law.

The programme featured insightful talks by resource



persons from TLSC Handwara including advocate Tawseef Raja (LADC), who spoke on the protection of children from sexual offence (POCSO) Act, 2012, highlighting mechanisms for reporting and preventing sexual offences against minors. Advocate Nadeem khaliq, delivered a talk on the prohibition of child marriage Act, 2006, stressing the legal consequences of child marriage and the importance of the timely intervention by authorities and communities.

The speakers collectively underlined the role education, awareness and law enforcement in protecting the rights of the girl child. Students of AIIMS school participated enthusiastically through speeches. The school management appreciated the efforts of TLSC Handwara for organising such awareness events that inspire young minds and foster a culture of respect and equality.

As a mark encouragement, certificates of appreciation were distributed among the students and teachers who spoke on theme of empowerment of the girl child and actively contributed to the success of the event.

## MVD Baramulla Intensifies Enforcement to Strengthen Road Safety, Law Compliance

HT News Desk / DIPR

**BARAMULLA, OCT 11:** In a determined move to enhance road safety and ensure adherence to traffic regulations, the team of Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) Baramulla conducted a special enforcement drive during the past week.

During the drive, over 300 vehicles were checked across various locations in the district. Out of these, more than 110 vehicles were found violating provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act and Rules.

The enforcement teams issued 95 e-challans on the spot, while 6 drivers were served notices recommending suspension of their driving licences. Additionally, 8 vehicles were blacklisted on the VAHAN portal for repeated offences.

The total fine amount from the e-challans issued during the drive is expected to exceed Rs 2 lakh.

The drive was carried out under the supervision of the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Baramulla, Mukhtar Ahmad Sofi and will continue in the



coming days to ensure strict enforcement of road safety norms and compliance with legal provisions.

The MVD has reaffirmed its commitment to promoting safe and responsible driving, urging motorists to follow traffic regulations and contribute to creating a safer road environment across the district.

# جموں و کشمیر وقف بورڈ

## سنٹرل وقف آفس سونہ وار سرینگر

### پروگرام عرس تقریبات

### علمدار کشمیر حضرت شیخ نور الدین نورانی صاحب چرار شریف

علمدار کشمیر حضرت شیخ نور الدین نورانی صاحب کا سالانہ عرس مبارک حسب سابقہ اسامی ۲۶ ربیع الثانی ۱۴۴۷ھ مطابق 20 اکتوبر 2025 بروز سوموار عقیدت و احترام کے ساتھ منایا جا رہا ہے۔ عرس تقریبات ۲۳ ربیع الثانی ۱۴۴۷ھ مطابق 18 اکتوبر 2025 بروز پنجوار سے شروع ہو رہے ہیں۔ عرس تقریبات کے سلسلے میں وقف بورڈ کی طرف سے تشکیل دیا گیا پروگرام عوام الناس کی آگاہی کے لئے مشترکہ کیا جاتا ہے۔

## ﴿ پروگرام ﴾

☆ **پوشاک بندی:** ۲۳ ربیع الثانی ۱۴۴۷ھ مطابق 18 اکتوبر 2025 بروز پنجوار، بعد نماز ظہر روزہ شریف کی پوشاک بندی عمل میں لائی جائیگی۔ اس دن خانقاہ فیض پناہ میں نماز ظہر ٹھیک (1:30) ایک بجے تیس منٹ پر ادا کی جائے گی۔

☆ **شب خوانی:** ۲۵ ربیع الثانی ۱۴۴۷ھ مطابق 19 اکتوبر 2025 اتوار، نماز عشاء ٹھیک ساڑھے آٹھ بجے (8:30) رات ادا کی جائیگی۔ نماز عشاء کے بعد رات بھر شب خوانی کے دوران تلاوت کلام پاک، دُور دروازہ کا رخصتات، عظمت، نعت و منقبت خوانی کے علاوہ کلام شیخ العالم (شیخ غفرک) کی روح پرور مجالس کا اہتمام ہوگا۔

☆ **عرس مبارک:** ۲۶ ربیع الثانی ۱۴۴۷ھ مطابق 20 اکتوبر 2025 بروز سوموار عرس مبارک کی تقریب ہوگی۔ اس سلسلے میں دن بھر آستان عالیہ پر رخصتات، عظمت کی مجالس جاری رہیں گی۔ نماز ظہر ٹھیک ایک بجے تیس منٹ پر (1:45) ادا کی جائے گی۔

☆ **اختتامی تقریب جمعۃ المبارک:** ۳۰ ربیع الثانی ۱۴۴۷ھ مطابق یک 24 اکتوبر 2025 جمعۃ المبارک عرس شریف کی اختتامی تقریب ہوگی۔ اس روز نماز جمعہ ٹھیک اڑھائی بجے (2:30) ادا کی جائے گی۔ (ان شاء اللہ)

وقف بورڈ نے عرس مبارک کے پیش نظر زائرین کی سہولیت کے لئے ضروری انتظامات کئے ہیں۔ ضلع انتظامیہ بڈگام، خصوصاً محکمہ بجلی، واٹر ورکس، فرائیڈر، میونسپلٹی، ہیلتھ ڈیپارٹمنٹ اور پولیس سے گزراش ہے کہ وہ عرس تقریبات کو احسن طریقے سے انجام دینے میں ادارہ ہذا کے ساتھ تعاون کریں۔

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**Subject: Extension Notice No. 04**  
In view of no response, the Bid Submission end/ opening date (Online) of technical bids in respect of e-NIT No. 20 of 2025 dated: 01.08.2025 invited by this office under endorsement No. DOFK-GS0TNDR/12/2025/E-7734435/e-NIT-20 dated: 01.08.2025 with regard to **“Outsourcing of entry ticketing system of Children Park Srinagar”** is hereby extended as per the details given below:-

1. Bid Submission End date & time	24.10.2025	Up to 02:00 PM
2. Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	28.10.2025	At 02:00 PM

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

**No: DOFK-GS0TNDR/12/2025/E-7734435/e-NIT-20**  
**Dated: 11/10/2025**

Sd/- Accounts Officer,  
(Member Secretary)

**DIPK: 7084/25 | Dated: 11-10-2025**



# Rana reviews progress of water supply projects Anantnag, Kulgam, Pulwama districts

## Calls for rejuvenation, protection of traditional water bodies

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 11:** Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress and performance of various ongoing water supply projects in districts of Anantnag, Kulgam and Pulwama.

The meeting, held with the objective of evaluating on-ground implementation and identifying potential bottlenecks, was attended by Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti Department, senior departmental officers and district-level officers from the three South Kashmir districts.

The review also focused on accelerating the delivery of clean and reliable drinking water to every household in line with the

vision of equitable and sustainable water access under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

During the meeting, the Minister reaffirmed the commitment of Omar Abdullah led government to ensure access to safe and clean drinking water for all its citizens.

He underscored the importance of robust monitoring systems and effective execution strategies to meet mission objectives within stipulated timelines.

Stressing on the principles of transparency, accountability and quality assurance, the Minister directed officials to enhance service delivery mechanisms, swiftly address public grievances and continuously work to improve citizen satisfaction.

Highlighting the critical importance of sustainable water management, Rana advocated



for the adoption of scientific methods and technology-driven

approaches to conserve water, minimize wastage and ensure

the long-term viability of natural water sources.

Emphasizing the role of citizens in the success of government initiatives, he appealed for greater community involvement in water conservation efforts.

"It is our moral responsibility to make judicious use of available water resources. We must adopt eco-friendly lifestyle to mitigate the impacts of climate change and ensure a sustainable future for the generations to come," the Minister stated.

He issued directives for the rejuvenation and protection of traditional water bodies such as ponds, springs, streams and wetlands.

The Minister emphasized that such efforts not only enhance water availability but also contribute to strengthening local ecosystems and resilience against water scarcity.

Rana also called for the convergence of schemes under Jal Jeevan Mission, Jal Shakti Abhiyan and other related programs to maximize resource utilization and project outcomes.

He stressed on the timely and efficient execution of projects, with strict adherence to quality norms and transparency at all levels of implementation.

Acknowledging the efforts of the district administrations of Anantnag, Kulgam and Pulwama, he appreciated the progress made so far and encouraged the officials to maintain momentum while overcoming challenges on the ground.

He reiterated the Government's full support in achieving the shared goal of making Jammu and Kashmir a water-secure region, with universal access to safe and sustainable drinking water.

## Live Streaming of PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana launch hosted at Kisan Kendra Jammu

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, OCTOBER 11:** The Department of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Jammu organized the live streaming of the launch of PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY), Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses and the inauguration and foundation stone laying of more projects under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Food Processing Sectors by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, from NASC Complex, Pusa, New Delhi, today. The live streaming event was held here at the Auditorium- Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo.

More than 200 farmers from different parts of Jammu district attended the live streaming programme.

The occasion was graced by MLA Jammu West, Arvind Gupta; Mission Director HADP/JKCIP Sandeep Kumar; Secretary Agriculture Production Department Nitu Gupta; Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta; Director Law Enforcement Balbir Singh; Director Command Area Development Shiv Kumar; Director Horticulture Gul Sayed and Director Sheep Husbandry Dr. Syed Moin-Ul-Haq.

Joint Directors, senior officers and staff of the Agriculture Department were also present on the occasion.

During the event, participants witnessed the live telecast of the national launch function and address by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Kishtwar district in Jammu division and Baramulla in Kashmir Division figure among 100 districts of the country selected for implementation of the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) and to be developed as Aspirational Agricultural Districts. The selection of these districts was based on key indicators such as low crop productivity, low cropping intensity and lesser disbursement of short-term credit to farmers. The focus in Kishtwar under the scheme will be on improving the agricultural sector through enhanced crop productivity, promotion of crop diversification, development of irrigation infrastructure and strengthening of post-harvest management facilities.

On the sidelines of the event, PGS-India Organic Cluster Certificates were distributed among farmers to promote organic farming initiatives and encourage sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

The programme proceedings were conducted by District Level SMS Rajeev Katoch, while the vote of thanks was presented by Chief Agriculture Officer Jammu Manohar Lal Sharma.

## Live streaming of PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana launch held at KVK Kathua

### DC hails Scheme's integrated approach to enhance productivity, rural prosperity

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**KATHUA, OCTOBER 11:** A live webcast of the launch of Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PM-DDKY) was today organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kathua to disseminate the key objectives of the newly launched flagship programme aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture, enhancing farmers' income and ensuring food and nutritional security.

Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma presided over the programme as the Chief Guest in presence of Chief Scientist & Head KVK Dr. Vishal Mahajan; Chief Agriculture Officer Jatinder Khajuria and Chief Horticulture Officer Ashwani Khajuria.

The programme witnessed participation of more than 150 farmers, farm women, members of cooperatives and FPOs, who actively interacted with experts and raised queries which were suitably addressed by the scientists of KVK Kathua.



In his address, Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma highlighted the significance of the newly launched scheme in trans-

forming the agriculture landscape through convergence of different developmental initiatives. He lauded KVK Kathua and Agriculture

Department for creating awareness among farmers about Government schemes including Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and JKCIIP.

The DC emphasized that the initiatives envisaged in PM-DDKY would act as a multiplier in improving productivity, diversification and income generation in the agriculture and allied sectors.

Earlier, Chief Scientist & Head KVK Kathua Dr. Vishal Mahajan welcomed the guests and participants. He gave a brief on the objectives of PM-DDKY. He reiterated KVK Kathua's commitment to serve as a platform for capacity building, knowledge dissemination and farmer empowerment through need-based training and demonstration programmes.

The live webcast featured the address of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who elaborated on the Government's vision of making Indian agriculture more sustainable, technology-driven and self-

reliant.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Agriculture Officer, Jatinder Khajuria stressed upon scientific interventions, skill development and adoption of modern farm techniques to enhance productivity and profitability.

Chief Horticulture Officer Ashwani Khajuria highlighted the immense potential of horticulture under PM-DDKY, encouraging farmers to diversify towards high-value and protected cultivation crops.

The proceedings of the event were coordinated by Chief Scientist (PP) Dr. Anamika Jamwal, with active support from Dr. Ajay Kumar, Neeraj Singh, Amit Kumar, Sushant Sharma, Raj Kumar and Rishav Sharma.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Chief Scientist (A.E) Dr. Berjesh Ajrawat, who expressed gratitude to the participants and assured continued support in strengthening the agricultural ecosystem of Kathua district.

## Launch of PM Dhan Dhaanya Yojana celebrated with great enthusiasm across District Doda

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**DODA, OCTOBER 11:** The launch of the Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhaanya Yojana, a new integrated scheme designed to accelerate the economic progress of farmers, was celebrated with great enthusiasm across District Doda.

The event was held in sync with the national launch by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose address was streamed live for farmers and officials at multiple venues across the district.

The main programme was hosted at the Agriculture Complex, where Additional District Development Commissioner, Roshan Lal, graced the oc-

casation as the Chief Guest while Chief Agriculture Officer Amjad Hussain Malik was the Guest of Honour. A large number of farmers from Doda and nearby areas participated in the event, expressing gratitude to the government for continuous efforts towards agricultural development and rural empowerment.

Speaking on the occasion, the dignitaries highlighted the objectives of the PM Dhan Dhaanya Yojana, which aims to integrate various agricultural support initiatives under one umbrella—focusing on improved crop productivity, financial assistance, irrigation facilities, modern farming techniques and market linkages. The scheme

is expected to significantly boost the income of farmers, promote self-reliance and ensure food security through sustainable agricultural practices.

Similar programmes were also organised at the Sub-Divisional and Tehsil headquarters across the district, where officers from the Agriculture Department and allied sectors, including Haroon Hussain, Agriculture Development Officer (Veg), Doda, participated.

The event reflected the government's strong commitment to transforming the agricultural landscape by empowering farmers through innovation, technology and inclusive growth.

## Scintillating event organised at GGHSS Doda to celebrate Int'l Girl Child Day

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**DODA, OCTOBER 11:** The International Girl Child Day was celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm here at Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GHSS) under the guidance of the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO). The event was organized by the Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Social Welfare Department Doda as part of the ongoing Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) campaign, which aims to promote gender equality and empower girls through education and awareness.

The celebration highlighted the vital role of girls in shaping a progressive and inclusive society. Numerous activities, including painting and debate competitions, were held where students showcased their creativity and shared inspiring thoughts on girl child empowerment, equal rights and education.

The competitions encouraged participants to reflect on challenges faced by girls and propose innovative solutions to achieve gender equity.

Adding vibrancy to the event, students presented a captivating cultural programme, featuring dancing and songs that celebrated the spirit of confidence, courage and empowerment. The performances spread a strong message of breaking stereotypes and promoting opportunities for girls in every field of life. The event also featured motivational speeches from teachers and officials, emphasizing the need for community support in nurturing the potential of every girl child.

The program concluded with an inspiring address from the DSWO Doda, who appreciated the efforts of the organizers and participants. The DSWO highlighted the continued commitment of the Social Welfare Department and SHEW in collaboration with One Stop Centre - Sakhi and Women Helpline 181, towards building a safer, inclusive and empowered environment for women and girls in the district. The celebration served as a reminder that empowering girls today leads to a stronger and more equitable nation tomorrow.

## Empowered Girls, Empowered Nation: Poonch celebrates International Girl Child Day

### Education, awareness key to empowerment: DC

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**POONCH, OCTOBER 11:** The District Social Welfare Department Poonch celebrated International Girl Child Day here at Government Girls Higher Secondary School with great enthusiasm and participation from students and officials.

Deputy Commissioner Ashok Sharma was the Chief Guest. Chief Education Officer Mukhtar Manhas and numerous functionaries from the Police and Health departments also attended the event.

In his address, Deputy Commissioner Ashok Sharma encour-



aged girls to stay confident, aware and career oriented. He emphasized that education, self-reliance and vigilance are key to empowerment, urging students to make the best use of government schemes and opportunities available to them. He lauded the efforts of the Social Welfare Department for organizing the meaningful celebration.

Earlier, the programme began with a welcome address by District Social Welfare Officer Khalil A. Bandy, who extended greetings to the guests and listed the government initiatives for promoting girls' edu-

cation, safety and empowerment. Speakers from the Health and Police Departments delivered informative lectures on girls' health, safety and legal rights. Students presented engaging cultural items, including skits and songs, focusing on the theme of the day.

The School Principal Anjuman Shaheen presented the vote of thanks, appreciating the presence of government functionaries and participants. Students were felicitated with tokens of appreciation, while mementos were presented to the guests.





# Researchers develop new menstrual cup with flushable tablet for safer, eco-friendly use

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, OCT 11:** Researchers at Canada's McMaster University have developed a new menstrual cup that includes a flushable tablet made from seaweed material to reduce spills during removal. This makes the cup safer, easier to use, and better for the environment compared to traditional menstrual products.

Led by Dr. Zeinab Hosseini-doust, the team aims to improve women's health with wearable technology that can monitor reproductive health and detect infections early. Their research was published in ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces and Nature Communications.

The new tablet works with the existing Bfree Cup, which repels viruses and bacteria without



needing to be boiled. Developed with Women's Global Health Innovations, this product targets menstrual health challenges,

especially in low-income communities, helping women access safer, affordable period care. The menstrual cup lasts for

years, reducing waste and costs. Future versions may include sensors to spot infections and health issues early, offering women bet-

ter control over their reproductive health. Dr. Tohid Didar, associate professor of mechanical and bio-engineering and co-lead researcher, described this as "a potential new form of wearable technology that could surpass the health benefits of smartwatches by providing critical insights into women's reproductive health."

Leisa Hirtz, founder of the organization, highlighted that access to safe and dignified menstrual products is crucial for enabling education, employment, and social participation for women in impoverished communities. This new flushable tablet builds on the proven Bfree Cup technology, which uses lubricant-infused silicone to naturally repel viruses and bacteria, eliminating the need for boiling between uses. UNI

## PM-DDKY, mission for pulses to raise farmers' income: Rajiv Ranjan Singh

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, OCT 11:** Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana (PM-DDKY) and the Mission for Aatmanirbharta (Self-Reliance) in Pulses launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will bring innovation and development to transform agricultural districts across the country, union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, Dairying, and Panchayati Raj, Rajiv Ranjan Singh said today.

Singh said the PM-DDKY reflects the Prime Minister's vision to increase farmers' income, strengthen rural economies, and make fisheries, animal husbandry, and dairy key pillars of Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India).

The Minister highlighted that since the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying was formed in 2019, these sectors have received focused policy support and rapid development. Today, over 10 crore people earn their livelihoods from these sectors, with women making up more than 70 percent of the dairy workforce — a strong sign of women's empowerment in rural India.

Thanks to schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) and Fisheries Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), modern infrastructure like fishing harbours, hatcheries, feed mills, and cold chains have been developed. India now ranks second in the world in fish production, which has nearly doubled from 96 lakh tonnes in 2013-14 to 195 lakh tonnes in 2024-25, he noted.

In dairy and animal husbandry, milk production has increased by 63 percent, from 146 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 239 million tonnes in 2024-25, making India the top milk producer globally. Productivity of cattle and buffaloes has also risen by over 25 percent, the fastest growth worldwide. Extensive vaccination drives have helped control diseases, further boosting milk exports, said the Minister.

The Prime Minister had also inaugurated 16 major projects worth Rs 947 crore and laid the foundation stone for a key project worth Rs 219 crore in the animal husbandry sector. For the fisheries sector, he laid the foundation stone for seven new projects worth Rs 572 crore and inaugurated nine projects worth Rs 121 crore. UNI AJ SS

## Vaishnav inspects high-tech passenger lounge at New Delhi Railway Station

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, OCT 11:** Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav today inspected the newly constructed Yatri Suvidha Kendra at the New Delhi Railway Station, a move aimed at easing passenger flow and enhancing the travel experience during the festive season.

The facility, described as a Permanent Holding Area, is designed to accommodate approximately 7,000 passengers at any given time.

Speaking on the occasion, Vaishnav said the initiative would significantly improve passenger comfort, particularly during peak travel periods.

"Similar Yatri Suvidha Kendras with state-of-the-art amenities will be developed at other key stations across the country," he added, according to a statement from the Railway Ministry.

The newly operational centre is structured into three functional zones—pre-ticketing, ticketing, and post-ticketing—to streamline passenger movement and reduce congestion near entry and ticketing areas.

Northern Railway has equipped the facility with 22 manual ticket counters and 25 Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs).

Passenger amenities include seating for 200 individuals, 18 fans for improved ventilation, a toilet block, and an RO-based drinking water system, the statement noted.

To strengthen passenger safety and convenience, the facility houses 18 CCTV cameras, five door frame metal detectors (DFMDs), and five baggage scanners. A modern public announcement system, comprising 24 speakers and LED-based train information displays, has also been installed.

In parallel, the extension of Foot Over Bridge 1 (FOB 1) was completed. This provides seamless access between train platforms and the adjacent Metro station, enhancing multimodal connectivity.

The construction involved the removal and relocation of several existing structures, including ATMs, a Delhi Police cabin, and advertisement hoardings. Sensitive utilities—such as water lines, drainage systems, and optical fibre cables—were shifted without disrupting station operations, the statement said.

The Minister was accompanied by Railway Board Chairman and CEO Satish Kumar, Northern Railway General Manager Ashok Kumar Verma, and other senior officials. UNI

## India-Mongolia ties in focus, Mongolian President to embark on maiden visit to India

■ **United News of India**

**NEW DELHI, OCT 11:** In his maiden visit to India, President of Mongolia H.E. Khurelsukh Ukhnaa will meet President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The visit, scheduled from October 13 to 16, is being undertaken at the invitation of the Indian President.

A statement from the Ministry of External Affairs said the Mongolian President will be accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, senior officials, business leaders, and cultural representatives.

This will be President Khurelsukh's first visit to India in his capacity as Head of State of Mongolia.

During the visit, a banquet will be hosted by President Murmu in honour of the visiting dignitaries.

President Khurelsukh is expected to hold talks with Prime Minister Modi and review the full spectrum



of bilateral relations.

Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar are also scheduled to meet the visiting dignitary, the release

stated.

Diplomatic relations between India and Mongolia were established in 1955.

Over the past seven decades, the two countries have developed a close and multifaceted partnership, anchored in shared cultural and spiritual links and democratic values.

The collaboration spans defence and security, parliamentary exchanges, development partnerships, energy, mining, information technology, education, healthcare, and cultural cooperation.

India and Mongolia are strategic partners, spiritual neighbours, and "third neighbours." The forthcoming State Visit will provide an opportunity for the leadership of both countries to review progress in bilateral relations, set the vision for strengthening the strategic partnership, and exchange views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. UNI

## Sqn Ldr Shivangi Singh becomes IAF's first woman QFI, Pak propaganda hits back with fake image claim

■ **Parwinder Sandhu**

**NEW DELHI, OCT 11:** Just hours after Squadron Leader Shivangi Singh made history as the first Indian woman fighter pilot to receive the prestigious Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI) badge, a Pakistani propaganda account named "Ousai2002" tried to create controversy by claiming that the Indian Air Force had shared a digitally altered image of the officer.

After completing an intensive six-month training programme at the Indian Air Force's Flying Instructors School in Tambaram, Tamil Nadu, Singh earned the coveted Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI) badge, during a felicitation ceremony organised on October 9. The officer was awarded the honour by Air Marshal Tejbir Singh, Senior Air Staff Offi-

cer (SASO) of the IAF's Training Command.

It isn't the first time that Singh has become a victim of fake propaganda. Earlier, during Operation Sindoor, various rumours circulated suggesting that India had lost several fighter jets, including a Rafale. Some reports even alleged that Singh, India's first and only female Rafale pilot, had been captured near Sialkot after ejecting from her aircraft, which was purportedly shot down. Soon after a fake video claiming that IAF Chief, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, visiting the home of the IAF pilot went viral on social media.

Later, the chatter on social media handles has gained momentum regarding her "alleged disappearance. However, it was debunked by the government which claimed that Singh, was not captured by Pak-



istan during Operation Sindoor".

The Squadron Leader shot into the limelight way back in 2020 when she was shortlisted for flying Rafale. Earlier she was flying MiG-21 Bison aircraft. Hailing from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, Singh got commissioned in the Indian Air Force in 2017, as part

of IAF's second batch of women fighter pilots. Following an intrusive process, she was shortlisted as a Rafale pilot in 2020.

Stating that the recent claim of the picture being fake is incorrect, the Press Information Bureau's Fact check team posted on X. "This claim is #FAKE. Squad-

ron Leader Shivangi Singh was awarded the Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI) badge during the Valedictory Ceremony of the 159th Qualified Flying Instructor Course (QFIC). The official image from the ceremony is available on the official X handle."

Amid speculation following Op Sindoor, the IAF shared the first photograph of the officer, posting on X: "The valedictory ceremony for the 159th #QFIC was held at FIS AFS Tambaram on 09 Oct 25. Air Mshl Tejbir Singh, SASO TC IAF, was the Chief Guest. A total of 59 officers from the IAF, sister services, and friendly foreign nations were awarded the prestigious '#Qualified Flying Instructor' badge." The images showed Singh receiving the honour from the Air Marshal and later posing in a group photograph with fellow officers. UNI

## From margins to markets: Deaf women in Tanzania find their voice through entrepreneurship

■ **United News of India**

**DAR ES SALAAM OCT 11:** In the heart of Dar es Salaam, a quiet revolution is unfolding, one that speaks volumes without a word. Led by Tanzania Joy Women Entrepreneurship for the Deaf, known locally as FUWAVITA, deaf and disabled women across the country are rewriting their stories. Once sidelined by stigma and systemic barriers, they are now running successful businesses, supporting families, and reshaping how society sees ability, thanks to a grassroots movement founded by trailblazer Aneth Gerana Isaya.

Founded in 2010 by Aneth Gerana Isaya, the first deaf woman to graduate from the University of Dar es Salaam, FUWAVITA was born out of necessity. After

being denied employment because of the perceived cost of hiring a sign language interpreter, Aneth decided to take action.

"I was told I couldn't be hired because communication would be too difficult," Aneth, who is currently pursuing a master's degree in international development, told Xinhua recently in a written interview. "That moment pushed me to create something that would prove our worth and potential," she added. From that determination grew a nationwide movement that now supports more than 3,500 women with disabilities across Tanzania. FUWAVITA's mission is clear: to equip deaf and disabled women with the tools they need to achieve economic independence and social dignity.

Through hands-on training

in skills such as peanut butter production, poultry farming, handicrafts, and even wine and chili making, the organization provides not just knowledge but also startup capital and equipment. As a result, women who once relied on family support are now running their own businesses and making significant contributions to their communities. Among them is 45-year-old Mwajuma Ally Mwambo, the FUWAVITA secretary who now runs a thriving peanut butter and wine business. "Before FUWAVITA, I depended on others for survival. Now, I support my family and have hope for the future," she said.

Seated beside her colleague and fellow trainer, Mwambo spoke to Xinhua through a sign language interpreter. She joined



the group in 2016 after learning about it through friends and social media, and has since been deeply involved in passing on the experience to other women with hearing disabilities. "Through these activities, I am now able to earn an income to support my children's education and meet other family needs," Mwambo

said.

Despite the successes, challenges remain. Communication remains a significant hurdle, especially when marketing products in communities with a limited understanding of sign language. "If more people in society learned sign language, many of these barriers would disappear,"

Mwambo said.

Looking ahead, FUWAVITA plans to establish a large-scale production facility to expand operations and employ more individuals with disabilities. Mwambo believes such initiatives will not only improve livelihoods but also break stereotypes about dependency. "For women facing challenges, whether deafness or otherwise, FUWAVITA is a place where you can learn skills, create products, and contribute meaningfully to your family and society," she said.

The impact stretches far beyond income generation. FUWAVITA actively combats gender-based violence and exploitation by fostering self-reliance. It also advocates for the recognition of Tanzanian sign language and partners with insti-

tutions such as the University of Dar es Salaam to expand interpreter services and enhance access to education. Aneth's advocacy has already yielded lasting change. She successfully pushed for the hiring of the university's first sign language interpreter, paving the way for future deaf students.

"True success isn't just about earning certificates. It's about the mark you leave behind," she said. Today, FUWAVITA operates in several regions, including Dodoma, Mbeya, Iringa, Coast, and Shinyanga. Its model, combining training, startup support, and advocacy, is increasingly seen as a blueprint for inclusive development. "Our disabilities do not define us. We are defined by our courage to rise above them," Aneth said. UNI





# Shami, Akash Deep, Mukesh Lead Bengal Pace Attack for Ranji Opener

■ ESPNCricinfo

**BENGALURU:** Mohammed Shami has been named in a strong Bengal squad for the start of the 2025-26 Ranji Trophy season. Shami will be partnered by Akash Deep, Mukesh Kumar and Ishan Porel in the pace department, with the squad captained by opener Abhimanyu Easwaran.

Bengal had earlier named Anustup Majumdar as captain. But the late change is understood to have been made in consultation with Sourav Ganguly, the former India captain who recently took charge as president of the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB).

Shami hasn't played for India

since featuring in the Champions Trophy in early March. Asked of his omission from the squad for the West Indies Tests, chief selector Ajit Agarkar had highlighted Shami's lack of match time as one of the reasons.

Sofar, since the end of IPL 2025 in June, Shami has featured in just one first-class game, for East Zone in the Duleep Trophy. In that game, he sent down 34 overs across the two innings, picking up one wicket. In the second innings of that match, Shami didn't bowl much on the final day in a game East Zone lost after conceding a big first-innings lead.

The Ranji season is also an opportunity for Akash Deep and

Mukesh to get back on the Test selection radar ahead of the South Africa series starting November 14. Akash Deep was part of the England tour in the summer, where he featured in three of the five Tests and starred with a ten-wicket haul in India's win in Birmingham. However, since his return from England, Akash Deep has had to undergo rehab for a back injury that ruled him out of the Duleep Trophy. He has since passed a fitness test but was not picked in the squad for the ongoing series against West Indies.

Mukesh was part of the India A tour of England in the summer, where he picked up three wickets in his only outing.



**Shashank Singh: 'I've realised cricket is my life. I don't know what I would do without it'**

■ Ashish Pant

**CHANDIGARH:** The night of June 3 still haunts Shashank Singh. Punjab Kings had done most things right in IPL 2025. They topped the group stages, qualified for their first IPL final in 11 years, and looked set for a maiden title. But they fell short in the final. Shashank was a central figure in the team's run to the final. He was their fifth-highest run-getter, with 350 runs in 17 innings and a strike rate of 153.50. More importantly, he was their designated finisher.

When he came in to bat in the final, PBKS were four down, with the required rate close to 12 an over. Quickly running out of partners, Shashank got a few boundaries away, and while he finished unbeaten on 61 off 30, it wasn't enough. PBKS lost to Royal Challengers Bengaluru by six runs.

"It still hurts," Shashank says. "Sometimes, when I recall what could have happened... it is very easy to say that I have moved on. But these things take time. "You say things [like] the sun will rise tomorrow, there will be another day. These things are nice to say and hear. It is very important to move on in cricket, but sometimes it doesn't happen. The next



ten to 14 days were very tough for me.

"Every ball. I remember every ball even now. Where could I have been better? Should I have attacked Krunal Pandya? Should I have gone after Romario Shepherd a little early? Should we have done better [in] the field? What could I have done differently? I have moved on, obviously, and there are lots of things to look forward to. But yeah, sometimes it still hurts."

Since the start of IPL 2024, only Prabhsimran Singh has more runs than Shashank's 704 in 28 innings for PBKS. Shashank averages nearly 47 across these two seasons, while striking at 158.91. While things are on the up now, it was very different three years ago, when he was left devastated after going unsold at the auction for the 2023 IPL. Having been on the IPL circuit since 2017 with Delhi Daredevils (2017), Rajasthan Royals (2019-21) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (2022) and still only having played ten games, Shashank, 31 at the time, was left contemplating his future.

His PBKS signing for the 2024 season was mired in confusion after a mix-up during the auction where for a while it seemed that Punjab Kings wanted to rescind their winning bid for him. It led to plenty of trolling on social media for months. But now, with the worst behind him, Shashank firmly believes it was all for the best.

"Whatever I am today is because of that IPL auction where I did not get picked on December 23, 2022. I am what I am today because of that date," Shashank says. "If someone tells me that I am gradually improving, it is because of that year - it keeps me in check."

ESPNCricinfo



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