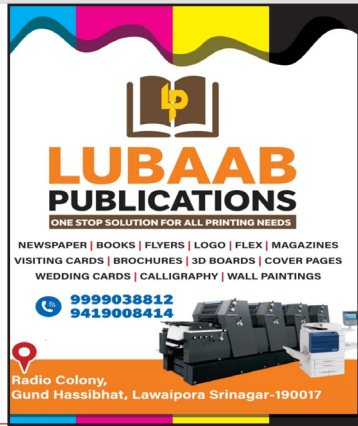


Srinagar
Tuesday
October 14 | 2025
21 Rabi Al-Akhar, 1447 AH
Issue No: 244
Volume: 15
Pages: 12
Price: Rs 02/-



Regularly Update Curriculum to Meet The Objectives of National Education Policy-2020 : LG Manoj Sinha

Chaired 36th Meeting of Executive Council of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University



HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 13: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha chaired the 36th meeting of Executive Council of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, at Raj Bhawan today. The meeting was attended by Prof.

(Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, SMVDU; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor Jammu University; Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor Kashmir University; Prof. Pankaj Chandra, Vice Chancellor and Chairman, Board of Management, Ahmedabad University; Prof. A.S.K. Sinha, Director, Rajiv Gandhi Institute

of Petroleum Technology, Amethi; Prof. Manoj Singh Gaur, Director, IIT, Jammu; Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya, CEO, SMVDSB; Shri Ajay Kumar Sharma, Registrar, SMVDU and other members of Executive Council.

The Executive Council discussed several important academic and administrative issues and gave in-principle approval to various agenda points presented during the meeting.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the University to take a comprehensive

Turn on Page 2

LG addresses 45th Foundation Day of J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra School

HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 13: "Inclusion is the key for prosperity," the Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha said on Monday. He said in the past few years, the government's efforts were focused on ensuring all members of society participate fully in J&K's developmental journey and people with special abilities are able to unlock their potential and contribute to greater prosperity and social stability. The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at the 45th Foundation Day of School for the hearing impaired run by J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra.

The Lieutenant Governor also observed that several forces based abroad and also in India are trying to stop the progress of the country. He said this conspiracy has

Turn on Page 2

Committed to Address Infrastructural and other Constraints to Make J&K More Attractive Destination for Invertors

STRESSES ON ATTRACTING INVESTMENT, STRENGTHENING MANUFACTURING BASE IN J&K



HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday reiterated his government's commitment to addressing infrastructural and other constraints to make Jammu and Kashmir a more attractive destination for investment and manufacturing.

He was speaking during an interactive session with the Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) held in Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by FIEO President S.C. Ralhan, Vice President Shrikant Kapoor, DG & CEO Ajay Sahai, regional chairpersons, past presidents, board members and other dignitaries.

The session discussed various opportunities of collaboration between J&K government and key representatives of India's export community.

Welcoming the FIEO delegation to Srinagar, the Chief Minister said that the organization's decision to hold its Board of Management meeting in the city was "an important vote of confidence" in Jammu and Kashmir. "Your presence here is very reassuring for us," he remarked, adding that J&K has always valued its long-standing association with India's trade and export community.

Turn on Page 2

CM Omar Chairs Review Meeting at Pulwama

HT News Desk

PULWAMA, OCT 13: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a review meeting of District Pulwama to assess the status of development works and implementation of various government schemes in the district.

During the maiden district review meeting, the Chief Minister called upon officers to accelerate the pace of project execution and enhance expenditure levels under both District Capex and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS). He expressed concern over the low percentage of expenditure

Turn on Page 2

Development of J&K Prioritised During 11 Years of Modi Govt: Jitendra Singh

HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 13: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh Monday said that Jammu and Kashmir has received special attention from the Government of India over the past 11 years since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power.

Dr Singh was present with the three BJP candidates nominated for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections when they filed their nomination papers.



Speaking to reporters, he said that the Bharatiya Janata Party has fielded three candidates and expressed full confidence of winning all the three seats and ensuring strong representation for Jammu and Kashmir in the Upper House of Parliament.

He said the Rajya Sabha holds a significant place in the country's democratic system, as it traditionally sends experienced individuals for representation.

"Over the past 11 years, since Modi Ji

Turn on Page 2

Buy Swadeshi products to make Bharat Atamnirbhar: Amit Shah

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: Urging citizens to make India a centre of production for the world, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday called on the people to buy swadeshi (indigenous) products to help grow the country's market and consumption.

After inaugurating an exhibition in Jaipur, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News

Turn on Page 2

Two-Way Movement For Heavy Vehicles On Jammu-Srinagar NH Restored

HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 13: The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has successfully restored two-way traffic movement for heavy motor vehicles on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, ensuring seamless transportation of essential commodities and fruit-laden trucks from the Valley to markets outside, officials said.

The 250-km highway, the only

all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was on August 26 blocked by multiple landslides and road sinking at several locations, particularly at Tharad Bridge and Balli Nallah in Udhampur district, and Maroog in Ramban district, they said.

Traffic movement on the highway had been severely disrupted following heavy rainfall, flash floods, and cloud-bursts during August and

Turn on Page 2

BATTLE LINES DRAWN FOR RS POLLS

NC and BJP lock horns as Congress opts out of race
7 key candidates in fray; forms of 2 non-locals to be rejected

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: Battle lines have become clear for the Rajya Sabha polls in Jammu & Kashmir, with nine candidates-four from the National Conference and three from the Bharatiya Janata Party-filing nomination papers on Monday, the last date for nominations.

A total of nine candidates submitted their nomination papers before the Returning Officer of the election. The Secretary of the Assembly, Manoj Pandita, is serving as the RO for the polls.

According to details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), National Conference's Choudhary

Turn on Page 2

Gulmarg stuns global riders with scenic, challenging trails

HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: Gulmarg has once again captured global attention as the world's top mountain bikers concluded the first-ever international-standard downhill mountain biking event, praising the destination for its stunning landscape, smooth organisation and welcoming atmosphere.

The event, part of the MTB Downhill – Zabarvan Legends Series, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), brought together 23 professional athletes, including 9 international participants from Australia, Italy, Brazil, Taiwan, Indonesia and the Czech Republic. The competition featured a challenging 2.5 km high-difficulty trail through Gulmarg's steep slopes, combining technical precision with breathtaking scenery.

Minister for Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, who presided over the closing ceremony, hailed the global participation and called the athletes "ambassadors of peace". He said the event reflected a new and confident image of Jammu and Kashmir before the world.

"The participants from across the globe are our ambassadors of peace. They

Turn on Page 2

CS directs geo-tagging of all water bodies for their effective conservation

Reviews implementation of Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain Campaign

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today directed the Forest Department to compulsorily undertake geo-tagging of all water bodies across Jammu and Kashmir to facilitate their protection, conservation, and scientific management.

He issued these directions while chairing a high-level meeting convened to review the progress of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain (JSA: CTR) campaign being implemented throughout the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Addi-

tional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra; Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF); Commissioner Secretary, Forests; Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; Secretary, School Education; Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and other senior officers. Deputy Commissioners of all districts participated through video conferencing.

The Chief Secretary underscored the need for seamless coordination between the Jal Shakti Department, Forest Department, and RDD to ensure comprehensive identification and geo-referencing of all

water bodies both in forest and non-forest areas within the next month.

He stressed that this exercise is crucial to formulating future strategies for conservation and must be completed before the onset of snowfall in the winter zone areas.

Calling for concerted and time-bound action, the Chief Secretary maintained that we must act with urgency to mitigate the challenges posed by climate change and ensure that our water resources are secure for future generations. Every department must play its designated role under the key interventions of the

Turn on Page 2

Chief Secretary Reviews Functioning of JKRLM

HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 13: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level meeting to review the functioning of the Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) and directed for effective convergence of the Mission with Mission YUVA, PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing

Turn on Page 2

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Regularly Update.....

review of the various important initiatives and programmes to regularly update the curriculum to meet the objectives of National Education Policy-2020 and transforming SMVDU into a premier educational institute at the National level.

He highlighted the need for a dedicated focus on lifelong learning skill and community engagement, increasing enrolment, industry collaboration and networking, Skill enhancement through short term courses, research, innovation and incubation, patents, strengthening of faculty and staff, and the introduction of new programs from the upcoming academic year.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the University to establish a specialized faculty for languages to offer integrated courses in Hindi, Dogri, French, and German. He emphasized on encouraging students enrolled in foreign languages and technical courses to also pursue Hindi and Dogri languages.

He also instructed the SMVDU to implement the complete digitalization of all University records.

The meeting also reviewed the ongoing projects and construction works in the University, implementation of NEP-2020, important matters pertaining to admissions, recruitment, faculty career advancement, non-functional promotions for non-teaching staff, end to end digitisation of student life cycle management process and utilization of e-Samarth dashboard.

The chair was informed that the university has now been designated as a 'TCS Priority College' by Tata Consultancy Services for a period of three years as part of their campus placement program.

Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University presented various Agenda items before the Executive Council for approval and ratification.

LG addresses.....

been hatched by certain elements but no power can stop our march towards developed India.

"India will emerge more powerful defeating the challenges and hurdles created by certain elements. No one can stop our rise," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor, in his address, called for implementing inclusive rehabilitation measures for people with special abilities and ensuring equal opportunities for them in education and employment.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the four important aspects for empowerment of people with special abilities. First, identifying their strengths and promoting them, secondly, to create an inclusive environment that helps them in independent thinking and taking independent decisions, thirdly, to provide full support to their decision-making abilities and fourthly, to create a conducive environment for self-learning and self-improvement.

The Lieutenant Governor also paid homage to Dr. R.R. Khajuria, founder of J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra and commended all the members of the organisation for their selfless service to the society.

He assured every possible support and assistance to J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra for the smooth functioning of the school. He called upon the corporate houses, business community, and citizens to come forward and contribute to this noble endeavour.

The Lieutenant Governor appreciated the children with special abilities for presenting enthralling performances to mark the occasion.

Shri K.B. Jandial, President, J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra; Dr. Rakesh Khajuria, Vice President; Shri J.K. Vaidya, General Secretary, and other members of J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra, special educators and students were present.

Dr Ashok Bhan, Ms Gunjan Rana and Shri Suresh Kumar Sharma - Members of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Shri BR Sharma, Chairman, Indian Institute of Public Administration, J&K and senior officers also attended the foundation day ceremony.

Committed to.....

During his address, Omar Abdullah outlined the government's ongoing efforts to expand investment opportunities in J&K.

"That is something, as a conscious effort, my government is trying to address so that we can attract more investment into Jammu and Kashmir, more manufacturing. Recognizing the constraints that we have, we are trying to address the infrastructure gaps," he said.

He acknowledged the unique challenges that J&K faces due to its geography and limited resources, stating that the government's focus is on leveraging sectors where Jammu and Kashmir holds inherent advantages. These include agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts, pharmaceuticals, IT services and electronics.

Speaking about the overall business environment, Omar Abdullah highlighted that confidence continues to play a crucial role in shaping the region's industry. He noted, "Confidence is one of the most vital elements for business, and regrettably, Jammu and Kashmir has been deprived of it for the past 30 to 35 years." He added, "We are doing everything possible to ensure that this lack of confidence does not define our future."

Highlighting the resilience of the local economy, he said, "Given the extent of the challenges that we face and the disadvantages inherent to doing business in Jammu and Kashmir, we are still an economy that is growing reasonably well. Our own estimate is that our GDP will grow in the double digits, around 10–11% this year."

At the same time, the Chief Minister expressed concern over the economic repercussions of recent

events, noting that tourism has suffered a serious setback. The impact, he said, has spilled over into agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts sectors and also impacted exports.

He underlined the government's priority to position Jammu & Kashmir as a hub for MSMEs and high-value, low-volume industries, mentioning that the region once had a budding high-tech manufacturing base before militancy disrupted progress in the late 1980s. "Prior to the militancy breaking out in 1989, Kashmir was emerging as a hub for new high-tech manufacturing industries. We believe those are the areas of economy that remain ripe for revitalization," he noted.

The Chief Minister emphasized several advantages that could support renewed industrial growth in the region, including competitive electricity rates, an educated young workforce, and favourable policy frameworks. However, he acknowledged that the perception of the region as a risky business destination has to change for the better.

Concluding his remarks, Omar Abdullah thanked the FIEO delegation once again for their presence in Srinagar, stating:

"Your presence here does, to a large extent, enable us to try and change the perception of Jammu & Kashmir being too unsafe to visit. I thank all of you for choosing Srinagar for your Board of Management meeting, and I look forward to more such engagements that can help J&K move forward."

CM Omar.....

against the approved outlay and urged the departments to step up efforts for timely utilization of funds.

"First of all, I would like to thank the DDC Chairman and MLAs for their valuable suggestions and ideas. I have already given several on-spot directions during the review, but I have one overarching request — please pay more attention towards execution. There is lot of need for overall improvement," the Chief Minister said, while addressing the officers.

"We are now in mid-October, and if we fail to utilize the first instalment under the new SASCI scheme by December, further funds will be withheld — which would be a huge loss for us," he cautioned.

Omar Abdullah directed the Deputy Commissioner to closely monitor progress of approved projects and ensure that any lapses are immediately corrected. "Please keep reviewing the projects regularly. Wherever there are delays, address them promptly. We have restarted the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) for Hon'ble MLAs, but a lot more needs to be done in terms of expenditure," he said.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javed Rana, Javid Dar, Satish Sharma, Chairman District Development Council Pulwama Abdul Bari Andrabi, MLAs Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi (Pampore), Ghulam Mohiuddin Mir (Rajpora), Waheed-ur Rehman Para (Pulwama), and Rafiq Ahmad Naik (Tral), besides Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg, Deputy Commissioner Pulwama Dr. Basharat Qayoom, heads of departments, and district officers.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner Pulwama Dr. Basharat Qayoom presented a detailed overview of the District Capex Budget 2024-25, CSS 2024-25, and physical and financial achievements under Capex 2025-26, CDF, and MPLADS. He gave details of approved capital outlay of the district for 2025-26 and the details of works for which administrative approval has been accorded so far. The DC also gave department-wise, scheme-wise, and sector-wise performance reports covering Public Works (R&B), PMGSY, PMAY(G), Urban Development, School Education, Jal Shakti, Irrigation & Flood Control, Agriculture and allied sectors, Power, Cooperatives, Social Welfare, Employment, Youth Services & Sports, SDRF, Tribal Affairs, Revenue and Food & Civil Supplies.

The DDC Chairman and MLAs raised several public issues concerning their respective constituencies, including irrigation and flood mitigation measures, drinking water scarcity, beautification of Pulwama, Pampore and Tral towns, road connectivity, crop insurance, desilting of rivulets, revenue settlement, illegal mining, completion of the Degree College building at Rajpora, and upgradation of health centres.

The Chief Minister and Ministers gave on-spot directions to the concerned officers for immediate redressal of the highlighted issues.

Taking serious note of illegal mining, Omar Abdullah directed the Deputy Commissioner and concerned departments to initiate strict measures to curb such activities. "If complaints are being received, action must be taken immediately. Whatever has to be done to stop illegal mining, should be done," he asserted.

Expressing concern over the absence of toilets in certain schools, particularly for girls, the Chief Minister directed MLAs to allocate funds from their CDF to such institutions, stressing that lack of basic facilities contributes to higher dropout rates among girl students.

He urged all departments to expedite ongoing works and ensure completion within the stipulated timelines.

On the occasion, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also laid foundation stone of a new Shopping Complex at Pampore in virtual mode.

Development.....

became the Prime Minister. Jammu and Kashmir has been given special priority. Under the leadership of the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the situation in Jammu and Kashmir has improved. Our caravan has once again set out on the path of prosperity," Dr. Singh said.

He added that strong representation in both Houses of Parliament is essential for safeguarding the interests of future generations, strengthening the Prime Minister's hands, and ensuring that the voice of Jammu and Kashmir reaches the highest levels.

"Jammu and Kashmir is moving towards normalcy. Our children are now achieving top positions. They are excelling in all competitive exams, whether in civil services, NET, JEE, or startups," Dr. Singh said.

He noted that last week, a startup program was held in Jammu and Kashmir to encourage innovation among youth. "Our children have always been intelligent, but their potential was held back. Now, the world has started to realize that the era when India followed others is over. Today, India leads by example," he said.

Dr. Singh said India's success stories are being acknowledged globally. "Our best practices are being emulated worldwide, whether in the space sector or in vaccine production. Even today, India supplies vaccines to 200 countries. If you look at our warfare capabilities or advancements in electronics and quantum technology, the world now accepts that the coming era belongs to India," he said ---(KNO)

Buy swadeshi.....

Observer (KNO) said, "We have to make Bharat Atmanirbhar and for that we have to focus on swadeshi."

Referring to the introduction of the three new criminal laws, he said, "India's system is driven by justice rather than punishment."

The Union Home Minister said that the new criminal laws ensure easy and timely access to justice to all and India's criminal justice system has shifted from a punitive approach to one focused on justice and transparency. "The three new laws will provide easy and timely access to justice for all. Through the new criminal laws, our system will be driven by justice," Shah said.

Pertinently, the new laws — Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam — came into effect on July 1, 2024, replacing the colonial-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, and Indian Evidence Act—(KNO)

Two-Way Movement.....

September, the officials added.

The highway was disrupted on August 26 and restored for one-way traffic on September 10 after NHAI swiftly mobilized men and machinery to restore connectivity on a war footing, they said.

"Following sustained efforts, the damaged stretches were repaired and blacktopped. The most affected and vulnerable portion near Tharad, between Udhampur and Chenani, approximately 300 meters in length, was fully blacktopped on October 5, ensuring smooth passage for both HMVs and LMVs," a NHAI official said.

The official said the restoration now enables two-way movement of all types of vehicles, reducing congestion and ensuring uninterrupted flow of traffic along the critical Lakanpur-Jammu-Srinagar corridor.

"NHAi also requested the local administration on October 9 to resume two-way movement of all types of vehicles on the Lakanpur-Jammu-Srinagar Highway to ensure smooth traffic flow and avoid congestion along the route," the official added.

NHAi remains fully committed to maintaining the operational efficiency of the highway, which serves as the lifeline of Jammu and Kashmir's economy, especially during the ongoing fruit season, they said.

"Regular monitoring and maintenance teams have been deployed along the corridor to ensure smooth and safe travel for all road users," a NHAi spokesperson said. (Agencies)

Battle lines.....

Muhammad Ramzan and BJP's Ali Muhammad Mir filed nomination papers for the first notification, under which the election will be held for one seat. A candidate named Prabhakar Dada also filed nomination papers.

Choudhary Ramzan is expected to easily win the seat, given that the NC-led alliance comprises 53 MLAs. He is likely to secure the seat even without the support of Congress, which is reportedly upset over the denial of a safe seat.

For this seat, the BJP commands the support of its 28 MLAs. The non-BJP opposition bloc, comprising seven MLAs, has kept its cards close to its chest.

According to details, NC's Sajad Kichloo and BJP's Ali Muhammad Mir have filed nomination papers for the second notification, under which elections will be held for one seat. Kichloo is expected to win, given that the voting pattern is likely to mirror that of the first seat.

Under the third notification, for which a combined election will be held for two seats, NC's Gurwinder Singh Oberoi, Imran Dar, and BJP's Sat Pal Sharma have filed nomination papers. A non-local candidate named Kante Sayanna has also filed nomination papers for this seat.

The two candidates who receive the highest number of votes will win these two seats.

The NC-led alliance is expected to ensure the victory of Gurwinder Singh Oberoi alias Shammii Oberoi by securing a minimum of 29 votes for him, while allocating the remaining 24 votes to Imran Dar. Meanwhile, BJP MLAs are expected to cast all 28 votes in favor of Sat Sharma.

Sources told KNO that the nomination forms of both non-local candidates are likely to be rejected by the Returning Officer due to the absence of mandatory proposers—(KNO)

Gulmarg stuns.....

should tell the world that Jammu and Kashmir, especially Kashmir, is safe," Sharma said. "We have come up with the odds and are messengers of peace. Through sports, we will tell the world that everything is safe here".

The minister said the government was determined to promote sports tourism and generate employment through such initiatives. "We are committed to uplifting sports tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. We will not bow down before challenges. We should always stay hopeful", he said, lauding the efforts of the Gulmarg administration and all stakeholders involved in hosting the event.

Gulmarg CEO Tariq Hussain credited Zabarvan for taking the initial initiative and said the event's success showed that Gulmarg has the infrastructure and capability to host world-class sporting events.

"It was Zabarvan who came up with the idea of hosting an international-standard downhill mountain biking event. We worked together to make it a reality," Hussain said. "The event's success reflects the teamwork between the government, the organisers and the sponsors. It shows Gulmarg's potential and readiness for global adventure tourism".

The CEO said the weather conditions played a crucial role in the event's success, calling it "a perfect blend of nature and human effort". "The message is clear, Gulmarg is ready for the world. Its natural terrain, infrastructure and hospitality make it one of the most promising adventure destinations," he added.

Athletes from various countries expressed joy and admiration for Gulmarg. "The venue was amazing and challenging. We enjoyed every bit of it," said a group of international riders. An athlete from Australia said, "I am very surprised to be here. The place is beautiful. I will remember this race forever". Others echoed similar feelings, saying, "We will be back to explore more".

Zabarvan Founder Sehan Shetty said the Gulmarg event marked the launch of Phase Three of their long-term mission to unify India's mountain sports community. "This milestone follows 1.5 years of discussions and support from both central and state governments. It coincides with Zabarvan's second anniversary," he said.

The Zabarvan Legends Series will continue with two more legs in Shillong and Guwahati, featuring different terrains and challenges.

Shetty said the initiative goes beyond sports promotion, focusing on nurturing homegrown talent and developing indigenous adventure gear.

He thanked the Jammu and Kashmir administration, Gulmarg Development Authority and sponsors for making the series possible—(KNO)

CS directs.....

Catch the Rain programme.

Speaking on the occasion, ACS, Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra, highlighted that the Jal Shakti Abhiyan provides a robust platform to assess and accelerate progress in water conservation and management across the region.

He observed that the campaign is now transitioning from the planning phase to intensive, community-driven implementation, emphasizing that water security and sustainability form the core objectives of the initiative.

The ACS informed that 100% District Water Conservation Plans (DWCPs) have been prepared and uploaded for all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir on the JSA Portal. This achievement, he said, provides a scientific framework for effective and sustainable management of water resources across the UT.

The meeting also reviewed the progress made in districts including Doda, Ganderbal, Jammu, Baniptora, and Ramban. It was briefed about the post-monsoon visit reports of Central Nodal Officers, which have already been uploaded on the JSA portal.

It was reiterated that the Jal Shakti Abhiyan continues to align its activities around the five key interventions constituting Water Conservation and Rainwater Harvesting, Renovation of Traditional and Other Water Bodies, Reuse of Water and Recharge Structures, Watershed Development, and Intensive Afforestation.

Officials apprised the Chief Secretary that the campaign emphasizes inter-sectoral convergence, with works being undertaken through existing resources and funding channels such as MGNREGS, Finance Commission Grants, and local funds—ensuring that no separate JSA funds are utilized.

It was noted that the 'Catch the Rain' campaign forms a key pillar in the Government's strategy to combat water scarcity and ensure long-term sustainability. The initiative seeks full convergence of departmental efforts with the guiding principle of "Catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls."

By integrating science-based planning, geo-tagging, and community participation, the campaign aims to build climate resilience and water security for generations to come.

Chief Secretary.....

Enterprises (PMFME), and the Lal Ded

Stree Shakti Scheme to maximize employment generation and ensure sustainable livelihood opportunities for women across rural areas of the UT.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Finance; Secretary, Rural Development Department; Managing Director, JKRLM, Subhra Sharma; and representatives from J&K Bank.

The Chief Secretary emphasized that the core objective of JKRLM is to empower rural women through creation of sustainable livelihoods, and this goal can be best achieved by enhancing their access to credit and entrepreneurial support. He stressed upon adopting a convergence-driven model, ensuring that the benefits of various women-centric and employment generation schemes complement each other to deliver tangible outcomes on the ground.

He directed the Mission to cover at least 5,000 women under the Lal Ded Stree Shakti Loan Scheme during the current year and further enhance credit linkage for Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), and Custom Hiring Centres being established under the Mission.

He also called for strengthening the capacity-building ecosystem by establishing community-managed training centres (CMTCs), identifying local resource persons, and fostering an environment of collective learning and participation.

Managing Director, JKRLM, Subhra Sharma, presented an overview of the Mission's major achievements and initiatives aimed at strengthening rural livelihoods and promoting women's economic independence.

She informed that under the UMEED Programme, JKRLM has successfully mobilized 7.66 lakh rural households into 94,962 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) across 20 districts and 265 blocks of the UT. A total capitalization support of Rs 528.86 Cr has been provided to community-based organizations, while the SHGs have collectively accessed Rs 2,806.06 Cr in bank credit since 2013-14, reflecting strong financial inclusion and repayment capacity.

Under the Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP), 7,280 rural enterprises have been established across 14 blocks, with 16.53 crore disbursed through the Community Enterprise Fund (CEF). The progress indicates a robust credit culture, with several SHGs now availing multiple doses of credit owing to their proven repayment track record.

The Mission is also expanding its digital financial footprint through the Banking Correspondent (BC) model. Presently, 710 SHG members are working as BCs — 553 with J&K Bank and 157 with J&K Grameen Bank who have together facilitated financial transactions worth 123 crore during the current fiscal year.

JKRLM has also launched the "Lakhpati Didi" initiative, aiming to transform SHG members into micro-entrepreneurs earning over 1 lakh annually. So far, 17,811 women have been trained under this initiative in collaboration with institutions like it, NIFT, and the Central University of Jammu.

The Mission's efforts to enhance market linkages have also borne fruit, with SHG products now featured on e-commerce platforms such as Flipkart, Amazon, and Meesho. In addition, nine district-level Haats and Retail Outlets have been established, including sales counters at airports, while SHG members have participated in seven SARAS Melas and exhibitions across the country.

To deepen livelihood opportunities, 39,450 women members have been linked with various income-generating activities in Agriculture, Horticulture, and allied sectors, in collaboration with line departments. The Lal Ded Stree Shakti Scheme, recently launched to provide easy credit to women entrepreneurs, has already facilitated 285 disbursements.

Further, 8,820 Mahila Kisans have been brought under Agro-Ecological and Livestock Management Practices to promote sustainable and eco-friendly farming.

In line with the Chief Secretary's direction, the Mission is also working to integrate entrepreneurship promotion with Mission YUVA and the Lal Ded Stree Shakti Loan Scheme, which share the common goal of economic empowerment through self-employment and skill development.

JKRLM has recently signed an MoU with the National Resource Organisation (OMPLIS) to strengthen its implementation capacity through Model Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) and Community Managed Training Centres (CMTCs). The partnership aims at conducting Training Needs Assessments (TNA), developing modules on Governance, Finance, and Gender, and enhancing leadership and financial systems within the CLFs.

Additionally, the Mission has initiated exposure visits for SHG members and officials to successful livelihood models in states like Andhra Pradesh, to learn from best practices and replicate them in J&K.

The Chief Secretary appreciated the Mission's efforts and urged all stakeholders to work in close coordination to scale up livelihood interventions, promote financial literacy, and ensure the economic self-reliance of rural women across Jammu and Kashmir.

Ashok Koul chairs meeting in Srinagar to discuss BJP's strategy for upcoming Budgam Assembly Elections

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, held a meeting at the party office in Srinagar to review organizational preparedness and devise a comprehensive strategy for the upcoming Assembly elections in Budgam district.

Ashok Koul, General Secretary (Organization), J&K BJP, chaired the meeting, which was attended by Sofi Yusuf, Arif Raja, Altaf Thakur, Hakeem Rohullah Ghazi, senior party leaders, district office bearers, and constituency-level team members.

During the meeting, Ashok Koul conducted an in-depth review of the district's political landscape and organizational structure. He emphasized the need to strengthen booth-level management, enhance grassroots communication, and ensure effective public outreach in every village and constituency of Budgam.

Addressing the party functionaries, Ashok Koul said that the forthcoming Assembly elections are an opportunity for the BJP to strengthen its footprint in Budgam and across Kashmir.



Every activist must work with full dedication, coordination, and discipline to carry the mes-

sage of development, good governance, and inclusiveness to every household. The people of Budgam are ready for change, and it is our collective responsibility to reach them with the vision of the Prime Minister for a prosperous and empowered Jammu & Kashmir.

He also urged party workers to stay connected with the people at the grassroots level and to highlight the central government's initiatives that have transformed the region over the past few years.

Koul also prompted for the resolve to intensify mass contact programmes and strengthen the organization at every level to ensure BJP's strong performance in the upcoming elections.

District President Budgam, Hakeem Rohullah Ghazi, in his brief remarks, assured that the Budgam district unit is fully prepared for the elections and that the team is working tirelessly to expand the party's base.

Every booth is our priority. We are committed to carrying BJP's message to every voter of Budgam with sincerity and hard work, Ghazi added.

Walrama Residents Protest Against Water Crisis, Block Handwara Kupwara Highway

Dr. Ab Qayoom

LANGATE, OCT 13: Residents of Kumar Mohalla, Walrama, on Monday staged a peaceful protest outside the office of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Division Handwara, alleging the department's failure to provide them with drinking water for several years. The protestors, including men and women, blocked the Handwara Kupwara highway for about 07 minutes, near PHE Division office Handwara, raising slogans against the PHE Department and accusing officials of neglect and making false promises. The residents said that despite regularly paying water fees, their area has been deprived of a tap water supply for years. They also criticized the tall claims made under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), terming them hollow on the ground. Residents said they are forced to fetch water from far-off areas, causing immense hardship, especially to women and the elderly. They appealed to



the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara to intervene personally and ensure the installation of a public water point in Kumar Mohalla at the earliest. Soon after a little signal, Handwara Police rushed to the spot to pacify the protesters and assured them that their grievances would be conveyed to the concerned authorities. The police later cleared the road and restored the movement of traffic peacefully. When contacted, a senior PHE official (who requested anonymity) admitted that some households in Walrama are facing around 60% water shortage. "The area was covered under the JJM scheme last year, but due to non-availability of funds, the contractors could not complete the work on time. Around 75% of the project has been completed," the official said. He added that funds are likely to be released soon, after which the remaining work will resume. "Today, our team under the supervision of JE Noupreet Singh is reviewing the water supply situation, and we hope the issue will be resolved by this evening," the official said.

Three-Day UT-Level Dissemination Workshop on PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan (PRS)-2024 and Holistic Progress Card, Begins at Srinagar

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: In view of the findings of the PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan (PRS)-2024, which highlighted the need to enhance the learning performance of students in Jammu and Kashmir vis-à-vis other better-performing States and Union Territories, the School Education Department, Jammu and Kashmir, in collaboration with PARAKH, Ministry of Education, Government of India, has launched a structured initiative aimed at improving learning outcomes across all levels of schooling.

As part of this initiative, a three-day UT-Level Dissemination Workshop on PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan (PRS)-2024 commenced today at Srinagar. The workshop, being held from 13th to 15th October 2025, aims to disseminate the PRS-2024 findings, build the capacities of district-level functionaries, and facilitate the formulation of data-driven, district-specific intervention plans to strengthen studen-



DC Kupwara Inaugurates Farmer Training-Cum-Awareness Programme for Hatchmarg FPO Farmers at KVK Kupwara

Dr. Ab Qayoom

KUPWARA, OCT 13: In a major stride towards promoting sustainable agriculture and farmer empowerment, the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kupwara on Monday organized a Training-cum-Awareness Program for the Hatchmarg Farmers Producer Organization (FPO). The initiative focused on advanced agricultural practices, sustainability, and market linkages, drawing participation from over 100 farmers from the Hatchmarg belt. The program was formally inaugurated by Shrikant Balasaheb Suse (IAS), Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Speaking to the gathering, the DC emphasized the importance of such initiatives in strengthening Kupwara's agrarian economy. "Equipping farmers with knowledge and modern techniques is essential for achieving agricultural self-reliance. Such programmes support high-value crops and sustainable practices aligned with national schemes like PM-Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana," he remarked.

Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-Kashmir, attended as the Guest of Honour and highlighted the university's continued support to farmers through technology transfer and access to government-backed schemes. She encouraged FPOs to play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between research institutions and



grassroots farming communities. Earlier, Prof. Kaiser Mohi-ud-Din Malik Malik, Professor and Head, KVK Kupwara, delivered the welcome address, outlining the objectives of the program and reaffirming KVK's commitment to grassroots agricultural development. Scientific experts from various disciplines including plant protection, horticulture, and soil science demonstrated hands-on sessions on precision farming, organic inputs, and climate-resilient crop varieties. The interactive workshops and Q&A sessions encouraged farmers to discuss local challenges and share their experiences. A participant from Hatchmarg FPO said, "This training has given us practical

KU observes International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, highlights need for proactive disaster preparedness

HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: The Department of Geography and Disaster Management, University of Kashmir (KU), in collaboration with the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR), Government of Jammu & Kashmir, organised a special event to commemorate the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) 2025 at the Main Campus.

The 2025 commemoration, themed "Fund Resilience, Not Disasters," focused on the importance of investing in disaster prevention and preparedness rather than relying on reactive response measures. The observance aimed to highlight the growing financial and social burden of disasters and the need for risk-informed policies that strengthen community resilience.

In her presidential address, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said, "Disasters expose the deep inequalities in our societies. The poorest and most vulnerable are often the worst affected and the least equipped to recover. Building resilience requires that we address these underlying vulnerabilities through inclusive, equitable, and proactive planning."

Dean Research KU, Prof. Mohammad Sultan Bhat, noted that disasters are becoming increasingly costly, with global losses running into billions of dollars each year. Mr. Giasul Haq (JKAS), Additional Secretary to the Government, DMRRR J&K, highlighted the need for coordinated institutional efforts to strengthen disaster preparedness and ensure effective implementation of risk reduction strategies at the local level.

Prof. Peter Sammonds, Professor of Geophysics and Climate Risks, University College London (UCL), in his virtual keynote address, said that disasters arise largely from societal vulnerabilities, highlighting the need for strong governance, equitable planning, and community preparedness.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal highlighted the importance of preparedness and ensuring the availability of safety equipment during disasters, while Dr. Jagvir Singh, Scientist-G and Advisor, Ministry of Earth Sciences, GoI, in his online address, highlighted the importance of integrating scientific research with community-based approaches to strengthen disaster resilience. Ms. Snober Jameel, Under Secretary, DMRRR J&K, emphasized the active role of youth in strengthening disaster resilience.

Earlier, Prof. Pervaz Ahmed, faculty, Department of Geography KU, welcomed the participants and introduced the event's purpose. The event proceedings were conducted by Dr. Akhtar Alam, faculty, Department of Geography KU, while the vote of thanks was presented by Prof. G. M. Rather, Head, Department of Geography, KU.

The event also engaged students and faculty from allied departments of the University and its constituent colleges in a road show within the campus, featuring placards and banners to raise awareness about the critical role of education in disaster risk reduction (DRR).

AI Innovations to Transform Dairy Farming in J&K: Interaction with Areete Business Solutions Co-Founder

Mukhtar Ahmad Khan

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: In a significant move to explore the integration of technology in livestock management, a virtual meeting was held on October 11, 2025, with Shri V.S. Shridhar, Co-founder of Areete Business Solutions Pvt. Ltd., to discuss innovative mechanisms that could empower the dairy farmers of Jammu and Kashmir through advanced artificial intelligence (AI) and artificial insemination techniques. The meeting was conducted under the COFE Startup Interactive Session organized by Indigram Labs

Foundation, New Delhi. The session focused on how technology-driven solutions can improve milk productivity, animal health, and overall profitability in the region's dairy sector. Over the past five years, Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed a remarkable surge in dairy production, with hundreds of new dairy farming units established across the Union Territory. The Valley's milk output has increased by nearly 250% in two decades, and currently, J&K houses around 32 lakh cows, accounting for 1.04% of India's total cattle population. The region's milk economy is valued at approximately

₹9,080 crore. During the session, Shri Shridhar highlighted how AI and IoT-based innovations are reshaping dairy farming practices globally. He explained how Areete's pioneering cattle health management platform — an IoT-enabled, neck-mounted device integrated with AI/ML and predictive analytics — provides real-time insights to farmers, including heat cycle alerts, feed rate monitoring, vaccination reminders, GPS tracking, and illness detection. "These timely interventions reduce cattle mortality, enhance milkyield, and minimize veterinary

expenses, offering farmers up to 10X return on investment (ROI)," he noted. The device, branded as Ayushman CowFit, costs around ₹4,500 plus taxes and can prevent losses worth approximately ₹41,000 per year per animal through efficient heat management, health monitoring, and early disease detection. The technology is already addressing India's estimated ₹7,000 crore annual cattle health losses through preventive, data-driven care. Globally, dairy farmers in developed countries achieve around 30 liters of milk per cow per day from

herds of 100 animals. In contrast, India's average yield is about 7 liters per cow, despite being home to 307 million cattle, contributing nearly 25% of the world's milk output and 5% of the nation's GDP. The interaction emphasized the urgent need to introduce AI-driven livestock solutions in Jammu & Kashmir to bridge this productivity gap, digitally simplify dairy operations, and enrich rural livelihoods through affordable and localized technologies. Mukhtar Ahmad Khan, former Area marketing officer horticulture planning and marketing Department Jammu and Kashmir (UT),

Javid Dar inaugurates Kisan Mela-cum-Exhibition at Khanabal Anantnag

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 13: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election departments, Javid Ahmad Dar today inaugurated Kisan Mela-cum-Exhibition at Khanabal here.

The mela was organised by Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare, district Anantnag, under the SMAE-ATMA 2025-26 scheme to aware, educate and motivate

farmers about various welfare schemes available with the department.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Minister emphasized on the importance of Kisan Melas and exhibitions, as they provide a platform to create awareness among farming community about Modern technology equipments and other schemes.

Highlighting the department's plans to conduct similar events across J&K, the Minister added that the Mela will educate the



farmers about latest technologies available to boost agriculture, horticulture and allied sectors.

Javid Dar highlighted that the subsidies are available for farmers to purchase farming equipment, with over 50% subsidy in various schemes. He emphasized that the agriculture sector is a prosperous field for humanity, offering vast opportunities for growth, employment, and sustainable livelihoods.

The Minister underscored the government's commitment to prioritizing agriculture and

supporting farmers to enhance productivity, income, and overall well-being. He noted the region's potential for fisheries, oilseeds, fruits, and vegetables, as well as allied activities like beekeeping, mushroom cultivation, and floriculture, offering farmers vast opportunities to enhance income and ensure sustainable livelihoods.

During the event the Minister also inspected various stalls established by Horticulture, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Cooperative,

Labour and Employment departments showcasing various schemes and services available for farming community.

MLA Dooru, Gulam Ahmad Mir; MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani; MLA Bijbehara, Dr. Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri; MLA Anantnag East, Reyaz Ahmad Khan; MLA West, Abdul Majeed Bhat; Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah; other district and sectoral officers, members of farming community and large number of locals were also present on the occasion.

JKCIP's five days IFAD Start-up Mission commences at SKUAST-K

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 13: The IFAD Start-up Mission under the Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP) commenced today at SKUAST-Kashmir.

The five-day mission (Oct 13-17) aims to strengthen implementation readiness and foster coordination among project teams and stakeholders.

The inaugural session was chaired by Mission Director, HADP/JKCIP, Sandeep Kumar, in the presence of Prof. H.R. Naik, Director Research SKUAST-Kashmir, representatives from IFAD, line departments, faculty from SKUAST-Kashmir and SKUAST-Jammu, and JKCIP coordinators.

In his address, Sandeep Kumar outlined the project's vision and stressed interdepartmental synergy vital for effective implementation.

Meera Mishra, Country Coordinator, and James Marc de Sousa Shields, Country Director, IFAD, reaffirmed IFAD's commitment to building a resilient, market-led, and inclusive agri-development ecosystem in J&K.

Several publications were unveiled during the session, including Bimonthly JKCIP Newsletter; Training Curriculum for Capacity Building; Farmers Scheme Guide (Revised Edition) and Curriculum on Horticulture Promotion.

Technical presentations by Dr. Rizwan Qureshi, Gitika Goswami, and Anil Gupta covered project progress, mainstreaming themes (gender and youth), and climate-smart, market-led production approaches.

The Mission will continue through the week with thematic deliberations on institutional frameworks and sustainable agricultural competitiveness across J&K.

J&K shines at CII Chandigarh Fair 2025 through JKTPO's vibrant display of unique regional culture, craftsmanship

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 13: The Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) marked a significant presence at 28th edition of the CII Chandigarh Fair 2025, held from October 10 to 13 at Parade Ground, Sector 17, Chandigarh.

The Fair was inaugurated by Minister of Industries & Commerce, Investment Promotion, NRI Affairs & Power, Government of Punjab, Sanjeev Arora.

The event served as a vibrant platform to highlight Jammu & Kashmir's cultural legacy and exquisite craftsmanship, leaving an indelible mark on visitors.

Under the visionary guidance of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah and Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary and active

support of Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, JKTPO facilitated and sponsored the participation of 25 exhibitors from the Union Territory in the Fair.

The showcased products from J&K included Luxurious Pashmina shawls and stoles, renowned for their softness and warmth, exquisite handwoven carpets, symbolizing the region's timeless weaving traditions, world-famous Kashmiri saffron, celebrated for its unparalleled quality and aroma, renowned agricultural delights like Rajmash, Honey, and Spices, horticultural treasures including Apples, Walnuts, and Almonds and intricately hand-embroidered garments reflecting authentic Kashmiri artistry.

The J&K Pavilion, designed to emphasize the authenticity, pu-



city, and natural advantage of the Union Territory's offerings, became a major attraction at the fair. The pavilion drew significant footfall, with visitors from diverse backgrounds eager to explore the vibrant array of handcrafted products and traditional specialties showcased by JKTPO.

Minister of Industries & Commerce, Investment Promotion, NRI

Affairs & Power, Government of Punjab, also visited the J&K pavilion, commending the rich diversity of products and the spirit of innovation on display—testament to the region's vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Visitors to the JKTPO stall had the opportunity to not only witness these exquisite products but also to engage with the artisans

themselves. The stories behind each creation and the dedication of the craftspeople were shared with enthusiasm, creating a unique and immersive experience for attendees. The fair provided a platform to bridge cultures and connect local artisans with a broader audience, contributing to the economic growth and empowerment of the region's skilled workforce.

JKTPO's participation in the CII Chandigarh Fair 2025 was a resounding success, reaffirming its commitment to promoting, preserving, and globalizing Jammu & Kashmir's heritage and craftsmanship. JKTPO continues to champion the cause of local artisans and entrepreneurs, fostering economic growth, empowerment, and cultural pride across the region.

DC inaugurates 3-Day Free Eye Surgery Camp at Poonch

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

POONCH, OCTOBER 13: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma today inaugurated a three-day free eye surgery camp.

The camp is being organized by Government Medical College (GMC) & Associated Hospital Rajouri, in collaboration with Pritam Spiritual Foundation and active support

from the District Administration Poonch, under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).

While interacting with the patients, he assured full cooperation and support from the district administration to make the camp a success.

A total of 30 patients from different villages of the district have been

selected for free cataract and other eye surgeries. The first batch of 15 patients has been referred to GMC Rajouri for detailed screening and subsequent surgeries under the aegis of the Principal GMC, Dr. Amarjeet Singh Bhatia and incharge Ayushman Bharat, Suresh.

The Pritam Spiritual Foundation has arranged the transport and food facilities for the patients.

CEO visits Budgam; reviews preparedness for Bye-Election to AC-27 Budgam

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BUDGAM, OCT 13: Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Sanjeev Verma, today visited Budgam district to oversee preparations for the Upcoming bye-Assembly Elections 2025 to 27-AC Budgam.

The CEO chaired a meeting with all stakeholders and reviewed polling station wise arrangements and preparations for the smooth conduct of Bye-election in 27-AC Budgam in the district.

District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohiud-Din Bhat presented the overall scenario of bye-election preparations in the district via presentation.

Joint Chief Electoral Officer, Anil Salgotra; ADC Budgam, ASP Budgam, ACR/RO to 27-AC Budgam, Deputy DEO Budgam, CPO Budgam, CEO Budgam, CMO, all other district nodal officers related to bye- Election to 27-AC Budgam were present in the meeting.

During the detailed review meeting, DEO apprised the CEO about the district's comprehensive preparedness for the upcoming bye-elections.

Addressing the officers, the CEO stressed on the importance of strict adherence to guidelines, timelines for the Model Code of Conduct and media monitoring. He urged all stakeholders to maximize voter turnout through door-to-door campaigns under the SVEEP initiative.

The CEO also directed the district administration to formulate booth-level committees and emphasized on expenditure monitoring. He also laid emphasis on popularization of all election related apps of ECI among the general public.

The CEO further directed the district administration that activities under SVEEP be taken up including plantation, sanitation and distribution of voter slips among the electors for massive involvement of public in the festival of democracy.

The CEO, during the meeting, also took assessment of AMF, transport, material distribution, deployment, training of staff, webcasting, home voting facility and other related preparations in the district.

While presenting overall view of preparedness, the DEO informed that, as per the finalized arrangements, a total of 173 polling stations have been established across 111 polling locations in the 27-Budgam Assembly Constituency. He added that these arrangements have been made after meticulous assessment of ground requirements, ensuring that every polling location is fully equipped with all Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs) like electricity, drinking water, toilets, ramps, and proper signage for voter convenience.

The DEO further apprised that all key election preparedness parameters were thoroughly examined and cross-verified with concerned departments. He also informed about other aspects of election process like readiness of polling staff, EVM and VVPAT functionality, material storage and dispatch logistics, accessibility features for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), and functioning of the Control Room and Help Desk established at the DC Office Complex Budgam.

DC Kishtwar finalizes arrangements for Deepawali Festival

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 13: The District Administration Kishtwar, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma, on Monday convened a meeting in the Conference Hall of the New DC Office Complex to finalize arrangements for the smooth and safe celebration of the Deepawali (Diwali)- the festival of lights.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner directed officers of the line departments to take all necessary precautionary measures to prevent any untoward incidents during the celebrations and emphasized the need to raise public awareness—particularly advising parents to ensure that children do not use firecrackers without proper supervision.

The departments were directed to strictly adhere to the guidelines and ensure timely implementation of the arrangement plans. Stress was laid on synergy and close coordination among stakeholder departments for maintaining law and order, sanitation, uninterrupted essential services and effective crowd management to ensure a peaceful and joyous Diwali across the district.

The Police Department, along with the CRPF 52 Bn was directed to make adequate security arrangements across the town, its adjoining areas and all religious temples. Similar arrangements would be ensured in all Sub-Divisions and Tehsils of the district to maintain peace and order.

The Jal Shakti Department was directed to take advance measures to maintain uninterrupted drinking water supply across the town and its suburbs during the festival days. Meeting decided to deploy Water tankers at Chowgan Ground, ITI Ground and other identified locations to supplement the supply. Barricading of Chowgan Ground for the sale of crackers was also assigned to the Jal Shakti Department.

Similar directions were given to ensure uninterrupted power supply in the town, adjoining areas and all religious places, establishment of First Aid Camps at Chowgan Ground and keeping all PHCs, CHCs and Sub-Centres functional 24x7 with adequate medical staff, ambulances and medicines.

The Health Department was also directed to ensure the availability of emergency equipment and treatment facilities for burn victims and respiratory patients.

The Municipal Council was directed to conduct special cleanliness and sanitation drives around all religious and public gathering places, with the instructions to ensure functioning of all streetlights and illumination of dark spots. Similarly, all Block Development Officers (BDOs) were instructed to carry out cleanliness and sensitization drives in rural religious sites where congregations will be held.

The DC laid special emphasis on ensuring the availability of quality commodities and preventing black marketing. A joint Market Checking Team comprising Tehsildar, Assistant Director FCS&CA, CEO Municipal Council, SHO, District Food Safety Officer and Assistant Controller Legal Metrology was constituted and directed to conduct regular market inspections from today onwards.

The team shall ensure the display of rate lists, the quality of sweets and the food items and take strict action under the Food Safety and Standards Act against violators. The AD FCS&CA was directed to ensure an adequate supply of LPG cylinders, atta and rice and to make home delivery of LPG available across the district to prevent inconvenience to the public.

The Assistant Director Fire & Emergency Services Kishtwar was directed to deploy fire tenders at Hiydal Chowk, Bus Stand and Dak Bungalow from October 18 to 21.

Operation Sadbhavana: Indian Army organises girls archery, shooting competition at Doda

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

DODA, OCTOBER 13: Under the aegis of Operation Sadbhavana, the Indian Army (10 Rashtriya Rifles Rajput) today organized a Girls Archery and Shooting Competition at Sports Stadium Doda.

The event aimed to encourage young girls to actively participate in sports and inspire them to represent the nation on global platforms.

Themed "Let's Rise, Aim & Reach the World Stage," the competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of various schools across the district.

The programme was graced by Sheetal Devi, the pride of Jammu & Kashmir and India's Para-Archery Champion as the Chief Guest.

The Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh, officers of the Indian Army (10RR) and dignitaries from civil and police administration were also present on the occasion.

A highlight of the event was the inspiring presence of Sheetal Devi, whose exceptional achievements at national and international levels have brought immense glory to the nation. Her journey of determination and success served as a source of great motivation for the young participants, encouraging them to dream big and pursue excellence in their chosen fields.

During the event, a Pledge for a Tobacco-Free Life was also administered to all participants and attendees, reinforcing the message of health, discipline and positive lifestyle choices among the youth.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Sheetal Devi shared her inspiring story with the students and said, "When I tried, I won medals in archery at both national and international levels. Every child has the ability to achieve great things if they try with dedication and confidence."



She encouraged the students to believe in themselves, work hard, and never give up on their dreams despite challenges.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh appreciated the Indian Army for organizing such a meaningful and motivating event under Operation Sadbhavana. He lauded the Army's continuous efforts in nurturing local talent, fostering sports culture and promoting youth empowerment across the district.

The Deputy Commissioner Doda further remarked that "Sheetal Devi has brought immense pride and recognition to Doda and erstwhile district Kishtwar (Jammu and Kashmir) at the national and international level. If all children try and dedicate themselves with the same passion and determination as seen in this shooting and archery competition, Doda will continue to produce champions who can make the entire nation proud."

An Indian Army Officer also addressed the participants, emphasizing that Operation Sadbhavana is not only a symbol of the Army's commitment to peace and development but also a bridge of trust and cooperation between the Army and the local populace. He encouraged the youth, especially girls, to make the best use of such opportunities and contribute to the progress of the nation.

DC Ganderbal reviews implementation of HADP, JKCIP & KKGs

Approves 499 cases under various schemes

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 13: In order to take thorough review of the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP), besides Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) in the district, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore Monday convened a meeting here.

The meeting aimed to strengthen inter-sectoral coordination and ensure timely and effective execution of key government initiatives to benefit the farming community.



Addressing the meeting, DC stressed scaling up schemes covering Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Fisheries, Horticulture, Horticulture Planning & Marketing, and Sericulture. He emphasized extending benefits to more beneficiaries to maximize the outreach and impact of these programmes across the district.

The DC directed to focus on revenue generation and proper reporting of actual income generated by KKGs through Krishi

Udyamis. He also directed timely issuance of fertilizer licenses to those who have completed the training course.

The concerned departments were directed to take proactive steps to remove deficiencies and

ensure maximum coverage under these schemes.

Earlier, District Nodal Officer HADP through a Power Point presentation briefed the chair regarding the overall performance achieved under various projects of HADP and JKCIP in Ganderbal district.

Officers present also provided a detailed overview of the progress achieved under HADP, JKCIP and KKGs including farmer registration and enrollment through the Daksh Kisan Portal, completion of training courses, established units and fund utilization. Progress on the Kissan Sathi, KCC scheme status, PMFME and PMFBY status besides distribution of Kissan Smart Cards under HADP was also reviewed.

The DC reviewed the set targets, achievements so far, and identified implementation gaps. He directed the concerned departments to take proactive measures to bridge any

deficiencies and ensure maximum acceptance of application and farmer coverage under these schemes.

Later, the DC reviewed and accorded approval to cases submitted under HADP, JKCIP and IDDS in the district.

After a thorough review of submitted applications, the DC approved 268 HADP cases, 224 JKCIP cases and 07 IDDS cases, empowering the farming community and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the district.

The meeting was attended by GM DIC, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Chief Planning Officer, AGM NABARD, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, District Sheep Husbandry Officer, District Sericulture Officer, Sr. Scientist KVK Ganderbal, Assistant Director Fisheries, Area Marketing Officer Horticulture (P&M) and Lead District Manager.

Speaker Rather reviews arrangements for forthcoming annual Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA)

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 13: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather today chaired a high level meeting at Town Hall, Char-i-Shareef here to review the arrangements for upcoming annual Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA) at holy Char-i-Shareef Shrine.

During the meeting, the Speaker directed the officers to ensure that no inconvenience is caused to the devotees during the Urs celebrations. He emphasized on the need for proper arrangements of essential services like transportation, clean drinking water, electricity, availability of essential commod-



ities, and adequate security.

The Speaker urged the concerned departments to work in close coordination to provide a peaceful and comfortable environment for the devotees, enabling them to participate in the spiritual gatherings of the Urs with devotion and reverence.

8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2025: AYUSH Department Conducts Awareness Camp at GMC Handwara

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 13: As part of the ongoing celebrations of the 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2025, the AYUSH Unit in collaboration with the Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Section and Laboratory Section, today organized a comprehensive Awareness-cum-Health Camp at Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara.

The camp witnessed an overwhelming response with over 300 participants, including general public, ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, and local health volunteers from Handwara Town and adjoining areas. The programme was aimed at fostering awareness on nutrition, preventive healthcare, and lifestyle modification to promote holistic wellness among all age groups.

During the camp, several health screening activities were conducted, including Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screening, Anaemia detection, Mizaj (Temperament) assessment, and general health check-ups. In addition, participants attended interactive sessions on balanced diet, yoga-based wellness, and the significance of traditional AYUSH practices

in maintaining physical and mental health. Medical officers and paramedical staff from AYUSH and NCD sections delivered informative lectures highlighting the importance of early diagnosis, nutritional awareness, and preventive healthcare in combating rising lifestyle disorders. Participants were also educated about incorporating locally available nutritious food, herbal remedies, and regular physical activity into their daily routine to achieve better health outcomes.

Informative pamphlets and educational materials on Poshan Abhiyaan, Anaemia Mukh Bharat, and AYUSH-based nutritional guidelines were distributed among the attendees.

The event, held under the theme "Building Suposhit & Samridh Bharat", aimed to align community efforts towards creating a healthy, nourished, and self-reliant nation.

The programme concluded with an appeal from the organizing team, urging all participants to act as Poshan Ambassadors within their communities by spreading the message of balanced nutrition, preventive healthcare, and wellness through AYUSH.

DC Bandipora attends Grand Finale of Maj Gopi Singh Rathore, SC Memorial North Kashmir Football Premier League

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 13: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Monday attended the thrilling grand finale of the Maj Gopi Singh Rathore, Shaurya Chakra Memorial North Kashmir Football Premier League at Sher-e-Kashmir Stadium, Bandipora.

The tournament, organized by the Indian Army, culminated with Meethu FC emerging victorious over Hyderbeigh FC with a 3-1 scoreline in a gripping contest.

The Deputy Commissioner congratulated both the finalists for showcasing exceptional talent and sportsmanship and lauded the efforts of the Indian Army and all supporting agencies for providing a platform that promotes youth engagement, unity, and peace through sports. She emphasized that such events play a vital role in channelizing the energy of youth in a positive direction and strengthening the spirit of togetherness in the Valley.



The month-long tournament witnessed participation from over 60 teams across North Kashmir, reflecting the region's enduring

passion for football and its commitment to nurturing sports culture.

The league was dedicated to the

memory of Major Gopi Singh Rathore, Shaurya Chakra, an officer of the Garhwal Rifles who made the supreme sacrifice in Bandipora on November 10, 2005, after displaying exceptional bravery in close combat. Major Rathore, who had also served as Aide-de-Camp to former Presidents K.R. Narayanan and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, continues to inspire youth towards courage, leadership, and service.

The closing ceremony was attended by senior officers of the Indian Army, BSF, JK Police, CRPF, CISF, and officials from the Civil Administration, besides prominent sports personalities, civil society members, and enthusiastic youth from across North Kashmir.

The DC Bandipora appreciated the collaborative efforts behind the successful conduct of the event and reiterated the administration's commitment to continue promoting sports and cultural activities for youth empowerment and community harmony in the district.

DC reviews Dengue control preparedness measures in Kathua district

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KATHUA, OCTOBER 13: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today convened a meeting of stakeholder departments to review the preparedness and response measures put in place to contain the spread of Dengue in the district.

At the outset, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vijay Raina briefed the meeting about the prevailing situation. He informed that a total of 527 dengue cases have been reported in the current year so far, with no casualties. He further stated that September and October are the most vulnerable months for the spread of Dengue and sampling of suspected cases has been intensified to ensure early detection and timely treatment.

Highlighting the identified hot spots, the CMO informed that in Kathua urban areas, Ward No. 2,



4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 have reported increased activity. Similarly, the vulnerable locations have also been identified in Parole,

Barnoti, CTM, Hatlimorh, Saktachak, Govindsar, Hamirpur, Dyalachak, Mela (Billawar), Ramkote, Lakhri (Basohli), Mahanpur, Bani town,

Backon, Ghatti and Rolka.

It was informed that blood sample collection centres have been established at block levels with samples being transported to GMC & Associated Hospital Kathua for testing. Two dedicated beds with mosquito nets have also been designated for dengue-positive patients in each Sub-District Hospital at Parole, Hiranagar, Billawar, Basohli and Bani.

The CMO further informed that Gambusia fish, known for controlling mosquito larvae have been introduced in 134 permanent ponds across the district as part of vector control measures. The meeting also discussed the functioning of Rapid Response Teams at both district and block levels to ensure swift response to any reported outbreak.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all departments to work in close coordination to ensure

effective prevention and control measures. He laid emphasis on the Municipal Council Kathua to intensify fogging operations, sanitation drives and awareness campaigns through public announcements and jingles.

He directed the Principal GMC Kathua to ensure daily updation of dengue cases and to keep separate provisions for dengue patients. The CTM was asked to maintain sanitation and activate the health unit for quick response.

The Education Department was instructed to create awareness among students about dengue prevention during morning assemblies, while the Jal Shakti Department was directed to repair leaking water taps and ensure regular testing of water sources. The PWD was asked to ensure proper disposal of materials and prevent water stagnation near construction sites.

DDC Presents keys of Combine Harvester to HADP beneficiaries

■ HT News Desk

SAMBA, OCT 13: District Development Commissioner Samba, Ayushi Sudan handed over Keys of Combine Harvester to two beneficiaries under component Farm Mechanization & Automation of HADP at Conference Hall of District Complex Samba.

Beneficiaries Somnath resident of Abtal Katlan & Omkar Singh resident of Raipur Kahlia of Block Samba had applied for Combine Harvester online on Kisan Sathi Portal during 2024-25.

During the key handing over ceremony Champa Devi ADDC Samba, Chief Agriculture officer Samba, District Agriculture officer (Extension) Samba & other staff were also present.

LPG distribution rationalized in Kishtwar to facilitate consumers on Diwali Festival

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 13: In view of the forthcoming Diwali festival, a multiple department enforcement Team, led by the Assistant Director, FCS&CA, Shafqat Ali Keen and Tehsildar Nirbhay Sharma, today conducted an extensive inspection of LPG distributors' godowns in Kishtwar town and its adjoining areas.

During the inspection, the LPG distributors were sensitized to ensure timely and

hassle-free home delivery of LPG cylinders to all households without any lapse. They were also directed to refrain from overcharging or indulging in black marketing of LPG cylinders.

To ensure smooth and systematic distribution, a comprehensive schedule for home delivery of LPG cylinders was framed.

As per the schedule, deliveries will be made on Monday to Shaheedi Chowk, Veterinary, Shakrit Nagar, Shiv Nagar,



Wasser Kund and Simna Colony; on Tuesday to Mini Bus Stand, Link Road, Kichloo Mohalla Malipath, Lower Soori

Mohalla and Upper Link Road; on Wednesday to Sangramhata, Charhar, Jail Road and Shalimar; on Thursday to



Hidyal, Tund, Hargadi, Matta, Tulsi Nagar, Sarkoot, Bera Bhatta and Begana; on Friday to Lower and Upper Pochhal

and Kundali; and on Saturday to Panditgam, Wasser, Banderana, Puhie, Zelna, Berwar, Hular Hunjala and Gudhali.

The distributors were cautioned that any violation of the schedule, overcharging, or failure in ensuring home delivery service, would invite strict action as per the relevant rules and regulations.

In addition, a market inspection drive was also conducted on the directions to monitor and regulate the rates and availability of vegetables and other essential commodities, ensuring that consumers are not overcharged during the festive season.

HT EDITORIAL

Free bus ride a boon for women

Some months back the union territory government introduced the free ride for women in the public transport buses managed by it. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah inaugurated the scheme on April 1 and the step has been welcomed by the people especially by the female folk. Under this scheme females boarding the smart city buses and green buses operated by Jammu & Kashmir Road Transport Corporation would not have to pay any fare while going from one place to another.

The scheme aims to empower the females and one can hope the step is implemented letter and spirit on ground. Some years back the government introduced the special bus service for females on different routes in the Srinagar city. The service was operational for some months before it was disbanded by the authorities. The reason put forward for the same was there was a lukewarm response from the females and as such the exclusive bus service was stopped.

Hope this time around nothing of that sort would happen and the free bus ride for the females would be a hit not only in Srinagar but other places of Kashmir. Since the green buses operate in the different districts of Jammu & Kashmir one can hope the females across the length and breadth of the union territory would take benefit. Females, especially the students should take full benefit of the scheme and they should ensure that they are not bullied by the conductors of green buses and smart city buses.

It is the responsibility of the concerned department to carry out regular review of the scheme and ensure that the benefits are reaching the beneficiaries. Since everybody talks about the rights and duties the females should be fully aware about their rights in this regard. As the government has introduced the free ridership facility for the females it is the responsibility of the intended beneficiaries to ensure that there is no holding back in this regard.

At the same time the government should procure more and more smart city buses and green buses so that more and more benefits trickle to the females of Jammu & Kashmir. Since a limited number of red and green buses operate as on date it is quite natural that benefits of free ridership would be available to a limited number of females. The need of the hour is that the scheme is implemented in totality without any fault.

Chief Patron Of Lubaab Publications Group:
Syed Sad Ud Din Bukhari (Saidi),
Printer Publisher, Owner And Editor:
Syed Jahangir Bukhari,
Printed At: Lubaab Publications, Radio
Colony Gund Hassibhat Lawaipora
Srinagar -190017,
Gen. Manager: Sheikh Mushtaq Ahmad
Cell No - 9697071471,
Editorial Section: 7006846797,
Multimedia Section: 9419008414,
Advertisement Section: 9697071471
RNI No: Jkeng/2011/39231
dailyheadlinestoday@gmail.com
headlinestoday2024@gmail.com

GST 2.0 begins to reshape markets, families feel early relief



Mohammad Hanief

Clarity is the other pillar of the reform. The original GST, despite its promise of “one nation, one tax,” grew complicated over time as multiple slabs and special exemptions created ambiguity.

Businesses often found themselves embroiled in disputes over how a product should be classified: was a particular snack taxable at 12 or 18 per cent, or did a sweetened beverage qualify as a luxury drink? Such disagreements clogged tribunals and courts, increasing uncertainty and costs. GST 2.0 aims to sweep away much of that confusion. By consolidating goods and services into just three categories, the government expects fewer disputes, faster adjudication and a reduction in the administrative burden on both tax officers and entrepreneurs



India's most sweeping tax reform in nearly a decade has begun to unfold across shop counters, factory floors, and household budgets. The revamped Goods and Services Tax—popularly called GST 2.0—came into effect on 22 September 2025, streamlining the country's indirect-tax structure and promising a rare combination of cheaper essentials, simpler compliance, and sharper levies on luxury and “sin” goods.

The measure, approved at the fifty-sixth meeting of the GST Council earlier this month, replaces the earlier four-tier system of 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent with just three broad rates: a five-per-cent slab for essential goods and services, a standard 18 per cent rate for most items, and a steep 40 per cent for high-end or harmful products. Supporters hail it as the boldest fiscal reset since the original GST was introduced in 2017.

Within days of the rollout the reform is already visible in everyday life. Across major cities and smaller towns, prices of staples such as bread, paneer and traditional sweets have dropped as bakers and dairy suppliers adjust to the new five-per-cent slab. Personal-care items—soaps, shampoos and toothpaste—have seen similar reductions. Pharmacies report lower bills for a wide range of medicines after life-saving drugs were exempted from tax and many others moved to the lowest bracket. Perhaps most striking for families is the removal of GST on life and health-insurance premiums, a change long sought by consumer groups. Agents say inquiries for new policies rose noticeably in the week after the announcement, signalling a potential expansion of financial protection in a country where insurance penetration has remained stubbornly low.

The benefits extend to rural India as well. Agricultural implements, fertilizers, pumps and even sewing machines now carry the five-per-cent rate, easing costs for farmers and small entrepreneurs. For those managing thin margins in villages and small towns, the shift promises measurable savings through the harvest and festive seasons ahead.

The reform is equally significant for manufacturers and retailers of consumer durables. Items that once attracted a 28-per-cent levy—including refrigerators, washing machines, air-conditioners and televisions—now fall into the standard 18-per-cent category. Major electronics brands have already trimmed price tags, with some large-screen televisions discounted by tens of thousands of rupees. Automobile makers, from market leaders to niche players, are issuing revised price lists that lower the cost of popular models by amounts ranging from a few thousand to more than a lakh. Cement, a key input for housing and infrastructure, has shifted to the same standard rate. Builders and contractors say this could reduce construction costs and revive stalled projects, providing a welcome push to the real-estate sector after years of high input prices.

Not every market segment is celebrating. The creation of a 40-per-cent slab for luxury and de-merit goods is reshaping strategy in industries that depend on high-end con-

sumption. Makers of luxury cars, yachts, private aircraft, premium spirits and tobacco products face a much heavier tax burden. Early indications suggest distributors are recalibrating inventories and revising sales forecasts downward as consumers weigh the steeper costs. The government is unapologetic about this tilt. Policymakers argue that taxing luxury and harmful products more aggressively not only discourages undesirable consumption but also offsets the revenue lost from easing rates on essentials. Initial projections suggest the lower slabs could cost the exchequer about ₹48,000 crore annually, a gap New Delhi hopes to fill through higher collections from the top bracket and improved compliance across the board.

Clarity is the other pillar of the reform. The original GST, despite its promise of “one nation, one tax,” grew complicated over time as multiple slabs and special exemptions created ambiguity. Businesses often found themselves embroiled in disputes over how a product should be classified: was a particular snack taxable at 12 or 18 per cent, or did a sweetened beverage qualify as a luxury drink? Such disagreements clogged tribunals and courts, increasing uncertainty and costs. GST 2.0 aims to sweep away much of that confusion. By consolidating goods and services into just three categories, the government expects fewer disputes, faster adjudication and a reduction in the administrative burden on both tax officers and entrepreneurs.

Small and medium enterprises stand to gain the most. Under the earlier regime, delayed refunds and intricate filings tied up working capital and discouraged formalisation. The Council has pledged a streamlined digital filing system and faster refund mechanisms alongside the new structure. Entrepreneurs in the informal and rural economy—where bookkeeping resources are limited—may find compliance less daunting, encouraging more businesses to come within the tax net.

Financial markets have offered an early endorsement. On the first trading day after the announcement, the Sensex and Nifty 50 both posted gains as analysts projected stronger consumer spending and a friendlier business climate. Shares of automobile, housing and consumer-durable companies led the rally, reflecting expectations of revived demand. Economists also point to potential improvements in India's ease-of-doing-business ranking. A simpler, more predictable tax system could attract foreign investment by reducing the risk of sudden disputes and lowering the cost of compliance. Over time, the reform may enhance India's fiscal credibility and align with the government's Atmanirbhar Bharat vision of a self-reliant, investment-friendly economy.

Yet challenges remain. State governments, which rely heavily on GST revenue, are wary of near-term shortfalls as the lower rates on essentials take effect. Several have sought assurances of timely compensation

from the Centre. Any delays could strain state budgets already stretched by welfare commitments and infrastructure projects. Businesses face transitional headaches of their own. Updating billing systems, printing new price labels and retraining staff are costly and time-consuming. Smaller retailers in particular report confusion as they rush to interpret which items fall into which slab. Consumer groups warn that unless authorities monitor pricing closely, some companies may pocket the tax cuts instead of passing them on to buyers. There is also the question of long-term revenue stability. While the government expects the 40-per-cent slab and improved compliance to make up for the estimated loss, skeptics caution that sustained high taxes on luxury and harmful goods could eventually dampen demand to the point where collections fall short.

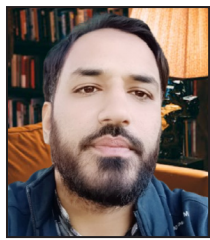
For now, though, the most tangible proof of GST 2.0 is in the marketplace. Shoppers in city supermarkets and village bazaars alike are noticing lighter grocery bills. Electronics stores advertise festival discounts that combine seasonal offers with the new lower tax. Auto showrooms report a spike in foot traffic from buyers who had been delaying purchases in anticipation of the reform. The benefits reach beyond urban centres. Farmers buying fertilizer pumps, tailors investing in new sewing machines and families renewing health-insurance policies are all discovering that the new rates leave more money in their pockets. Even state-owned power utilities expect to pass on modest savings to consumers as taxes on key inputs fall, lowering monthly electricity bills.

India's first GST rollout in 2017 was heralded as a landmark in fiscal integration, but its complex structure gradually eroded that promise. GST 2.0 seeks to restore it, balancing the government's revenue needs with consumer relief and social objectives. By reducing the number of slabs, cutting compliance costs and aligning taxation with health and welfare priorities, the reform positions itself as more than a fiscal tool—it is also a social and economic instrument. The months ahead will test whether those ambitions are realised. Much depends on the speed with which refunds are processed, the efficiency of digital filing systems and the Centre's ability to compensate states. If these pieces fall into place, GST 2.0 could well mark a decisive turning point, reshaping India's fiscal landscape and reinforcing its reputation as a competitive, investment-friendly economy.

As the festive season gathers pace, millions of Indians will experience the reform not through policy papers or council meetings but in the everyday relief of lower bills, affordable appliances and accessible insurance. In markets from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, the lighter price tags tell the story of a tax revolution just beginning to take hold.

The author is a senior analyst in Kashmir and can be reached at m.hanief@gmail.com
Twitter/ X: @haniefmha

When harvest turns to heartache



Masroof Manzoor

Remember each box of fruit that leaves the valley carries not just apples, but the tears, prayers, and sleepless nights of those who nurtured them.

Orchard owners who spent sleepless nights nurturing their trees now watch their hard-earned produce rot before reaching the markets.

Losses have been massive—both financially and emotionally—and the pain runs deep across the villages. Every producer now admits this is of the worst seasons they have witnessed in years — not merely because of financial loss, but because of the uncertainty that looms over the very future of their orchards



Kashmir's apple harvesting season, once a symbol of joy, hard work and hope, has this year turned into a season of mounting worry and quiet despair for the producers. What was supposed to be a joyous harvest season, marked by vivid orchards and the aroma of fresh fruit, has instead become a period of deep agony for growers. The orchards that used to echo with laughter and the fragrance of ripened apples now carry the silence of worry and uncertainty. For many growers, this season no longer feels like a celebration of harvest—it feels like a test of patience, faith and survival. This season has turned into nothing less than a nightmare for the fruit growers of the valley. What was once a time of joy, hope, and reward for a year's hard labour has instead brought heartbreak and despair.

Price fall, markets remaining unstable, and the stagnant demand for apples this year has cast a dark shadow over Kashmir's once-celebrated harvest season. Farmers watch helplessly as truckloads of apples lie unsold, prices plummet, and unseasonal fruit drops ruin months of hard labour. Adding to their woes are poor

road conditions, transport bottlenecks, and a weak market response that has left even the finest grades of apples without fair buyers. Cold storage units across the valley have already filled up much earlier than expected, a silent testimony to the crisis that growers are grappling with. The hands that worked tirelessly all year are left trembling with fear.

Remember each box of fruit that leaves the valley carries not just apples, but the tears, prayers, and sleepless nights of those who nurtured them. Orchard owners who spent sleepless nights nurturing their trees now watch their hard-earned produce rot before reaching the markets. Losses have been massive—both financially and emotionally—and the pain runs deep across the villages. Every producer now admits this is of the worst seasons they have witnessed in years—not merely because of financial loss, but because of the uncertainty that looms over the very future of their orchards.

Talking about our district (Shopian), often called the Kashmir's apple bowl, alone produces nearly 400 metric tons of apples every year. Behind this remarkable harvest

stand thousands of hardworking souls—farmers, laborers, traders, and transporters—who earn their livelihood directly or indirectly from this lifeline industry. For generations, these orchards have been the pride and hope of our land, feeding families, shaping dreams, and keeping the valley's economy alive. However, farmers and traders not only in Shopian rather across the valley lament that this year has brought an unexpected blow—the prices of their hard-earned produce have plummeted to heartbreaking lows. Hence the pride of Kashmir's economy, the apple industry that once symbolized hope and prosperity is now passing through a deep crisis & stands bruised under the weight of neglect and indifference.

If this decline continues, Kashmir's apple orchards could fade away just like the songs of old shepherds—once echoing through the valley, now barely remembered. The fear now is that apples, too might be heading toward that same heartbreaking decline.

The author is a Masters in economics. He is currently working as a teacher

Ahoi Ashtami Vrat: A festival of motherhood and the long life of children



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

The Ahoi Mata fast symbolizes the sacred bond between motherhood and childbearing. This fast embodies a mother's devotion, faith, and selfless love, and has been considered a foundation for family happiness, peace, and prosperity for generations.

In Indian culture, fasts and festivals are not merely a means of worship, but rather reflect the depth of life's ideals, emotions, and relationships. One such fast is the Ahoi Ashtami fast, a sacred festival associated with the spirit of motherhood. Mothers observe this fast to pray for their children's long life, good health, and happiness and prosperity. This festival is a wonderful symbol of a mother's sacrifice, love, and devotion.

The Ahoi Ashtami fast is observed on the Ashtami Tithi (eighth day) of the Krishna Paksha (dark fortnight) of the month of Kartik. This festival falls exactly four days after Karva Chauth and seven days before Diwali. In 2025, Ahoi Ashtami will be celebrated on

Monday, October 13th. Auspicious conjunctions such as Adra and Punarvasu Nakshatras, Bava Karan, Paridhi Yoga, and Shiva Yoga are forming on this day. Worshipping and fasting for Ahoi Mata during this auspicious time are considered especially fruitful.

The purpose of the Ahoi Ashtami fast is a selfless vow made by a mother for the longevity, happiness, and safety of her children. On this day, mothers observe a waterless fast and break it only after seeing the stars at night. This fast is an example of a woman's dedication and faith. In ancient times, it was observed only for the long life of her son, but now it is observed for the well-being of all children—both sons and daughters.

According to legend, a long time ago, there lived a moneylender couple. They had seven children. During Diwali, the moneylender's wife went to the forest to collect soil for their home decoration. While digging, her shovel accidentally struck a porcupine's baby, killing it. This deeply saddened her. Shortly thereafter, all seven of her sons died. She remained immersed in grief, believing this was the result of her sins. One day, she confided her grief to a sage. The sage advised her to worship and fast to Ahoi Mata, who would forgive her and protect her sons. With a sincere heart, she observed the Ahoi Mata fast. Pleased with her devotion

and repentance, Ahoi Mata granted life to all her sons. Since then, this fast has become a symbol of motherhood, forgiveness, and compassion.

On Ahoi Ashtami, after bathing in the morning, mothers vow to fast throughout the day and pray for the well-being of their children. A dry fast is considered ideal on this day, but some women may choose to eat fruits. In the evening, preparations for the puja are made. A picture of Ahoi Mata is drawn on the wall or on paper. The picture depicts Ahoi Mata, Sahi Mata, and seven sons. Seven stars or dots are also drawn, symbolizing seven children or seven generations. The puja plate contains a kalash (urn), a water pot, milk, roli (roli), rice, halwa (pudding), puri (puri), sweets, and a silver Ahoi.

In the evening, when the star begins to rise, a lamp is lit and Mata Ahoi is worshipped. A story is narrated, and a prayer is offered to Mata Ahoi, asking her to protect her children just as she saved the moneylender's sons. After the puja, mothers gaze at the star in the sky, offer water to it, and break their fast at that very moment. In many places, mothers also break their fast when the moon rises, but traditionally, the sight of the star is considered the most important.

The word "Ahoi" itself means "mistake" and "i" means forgiveness. Ahoi Mata is the goddess who forgives unintentional sins and removes troubles

from the lives of her devotees. She is considered an incarnation of Goddess Parvati. Worshipping Lord Shiva along with Goddess Parvati on this day is considered especially auspicious. The effect of the puja is further enhanced when the Shivavas Yoga is observed.

The Ahoi Ashtami fast is not just a religious tradition, but also highlights the role of women in society, their sensitivity, and their sacrifice. This festival highlights the form of motherhood that not only creates but also protects. During this fast, a mother vows to make every effort and sacrifice for the protection and progress of her children. This sentiment makes women revered in Indian culture.

Even in today's modern age, the significance of Ahoi Ashtami remains undiminished. Despite cities and busy lifestyles, women observe fasts on this day, listen to the Katha online, and perform puja digitally. While the medium may have changed, the sentiment remains the same—a mother's selfless love and wish for the well-being of her children. This tradition also teaches that while culture changes with time, its roots remain in faith and relationships.

The Author is a Research Scholar in Political Science, Poet, freelance journalist and columnist, Ubba Bhawan, Aryanagar, Hisar (Haryana)-127045

When Autumn Hesitates

Rayees Ahmad Kumar

Amidst the dancing fall
Of yellow, withered, and
dying leaves,
Echoes the hustle of the
vast fields—
Men and women, young
and old,
Farmers busy in harvest toil.

Some are threshing walnuts,
Others picking and packing
apples.
The chinara has yet to burn
in blaze,
And the natives have not bid
adieu to autumn.

A sudden wave of biting chill—
Silvery snow coats lofty peaks,
Presenting a glamorous sight,
Yet numbing our weary limbs,
Forcing an early indoor stay.

Winter casts its shadow sooner,
While hearts seem unready
to receive it.
Once October was mild
and pleasant,
Now it arrives—agonizing
and fearful.

Writer is a columnist based
in Qazigund Kashmir

The Eternal Imprint of Devotion

Mohammad Arfat Wani

What kind of love is this, that I
rise yet drown again?
As if in the path of existence, a
trace of you remains.
I burned like the candle of
yearning, time and again,
Yet each night and dawn was
engulfed in the flame of your
absence.

Try crushing your ego, perhaps
then you will see

The profound mark left on a
heart so utterly devoted to thee.
These eyes have tired of
counting stars every night,
Yet destiny wrote your imprint
even in dreams' light.

I have become yours entirely;
nothing remains of me,
Beyond my very being, only
your mention and essence I see.
My heart had whispered, "One
day, change your course,"
Yet fate decreed that your
journey would be my force.
The world compelled Arfat to
admit with awe,
In all of existence, such love has
seldom walked the earth's floor.

The author a passionate writer, social
activist, and medical student from
Kuchmulla Trail, is also a B.Sc. Nursing
student at Ramzaan College of Nursing &
Paramedical Sciences, Galander
Pampore, Email: wania6817@gmail.com

Self-Medication A Silent Threat to Health



Medicines or drugs are substances specifically used to promote healing when consumed or administered through different means—by mouth, nostrils, eyes, ears, or through various medical equipment—depending on the patient's condition and need. Nowadays, millions of medicines are being developed for the better treatment of patients suffering from different ailments. The term medicine is vast, and several agencies work to ensure their quality, safety, and effectiveness.

However, self-medication has become a common practice for many people. We often believe that taking a "safe" antibiotic or a tablet of paracetamol is harmless. Visiting a doctor may seem time-consuming or expensive, but what we fail to realize is that self-medication can have serious consequences.

People frequently take medicines such as painkillers, cough syrups, laxatives, antibiotics, anti-allergy tablets, vitamins, and even antacids without consulting a doctor. This careless habit can lead to allergies, drug dependence, resistance, and even addiction.

Unfortunately, there is very little awareness about the disadvantages of self-medication. Many people take doses randomly, without checking the medicine's composition or understanding its side-effects. While pills may provide instant relief, they are not free from harm. Sometimes, patients already under prescribed treatment for other condi-

tions unknowingly take additional medicines that react adversely with their ongoing drugs. Such reactions can be extremely dangerous and may even result in death.

Another major concern is incorrect dosage. Without medical knowledge, people either overuse or underestimate the strength of a medicine, leading to severe side-effects. Ignorance is certainly not bliss in such cases.

The reason behind this growing trend is convenience—self-medication feels quick and cost-effective. Yet, when health complications arise later, the cost of treatment often doubles. As a result, what begins as a small act of convenience may cause irreversible damage, leading to disability or even premature death.

It is high time that government agencies take strict action to regulate the sale of medicines without proper prescriptions. Unregistered medical stores selling drugs like everyday goods pose a grave risk to public health. Awareness campaigns and strict monitoring are essential to control this harmful practice.

In conclusion, while medicines are a blessing when used properly, their misuse through self-medication can turn them into silent killers. Always consult a qualified doctor before taking any medicine—because your health and life are too precious to risk.

sahilmanzoor0401@gmail.com



Sahil Manzoor Bhatti

Exploring The Winter Heart Attack Phenomenon



Surinderpal Singh

While the winter season brings a message of freshness and enthusiasm, it also poses a serious challenge for heart-related diseases. According to scientific studies conducted worldwide, cases of heart attacks increase significantly during the winter months as compared to warmer seasons.

The Scientific Connection Between Cold and the Heart

When temperatures drop the body constricts blood vessels (a process known as vasoconstriction) to maintain internal warmth. This leads to a decrease in the diameter of blood vessels causing an increase in blood pressure. Individuals who already suffer from high blood pressure or cholesterol issues experience increased stress on their hearts due to this condition.

In cold weather the blood viscosity also increases resulting in making the blood thicker and thereby reducing the oxygen delivery. This condition raises the risk of blood clots formation which can block the coronary arteries and result in a heart attack (myocardial infarction).

Hormonal and Metabolic Changes in Winter

During the winter seasons hormones such as adrenaline and norepinephrine are released in higher amounts. These hormones increase the heart rate and blood pressure. As a result individuals with pre-existing conditions like atherosclerosis face a significantly heightened risk of heart attacks.

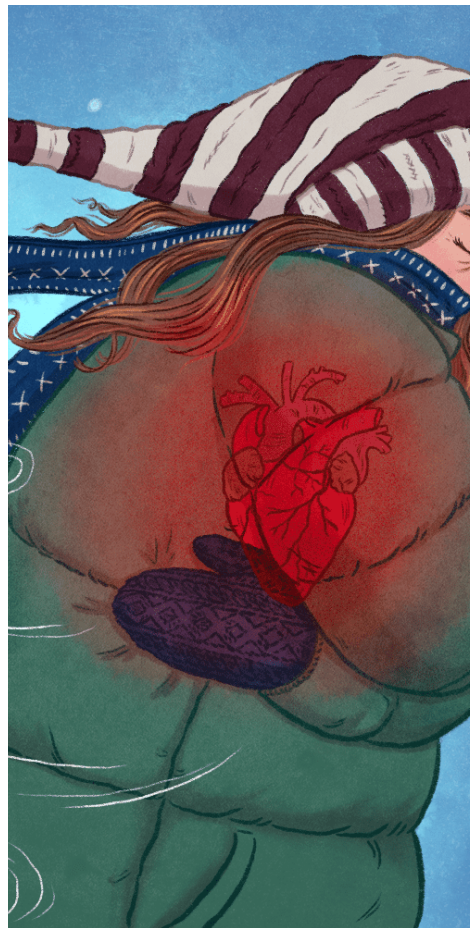
Additionally, the metabolic rate of the body also increases in colder weather leading to a greater demand for oxygen. If the coronary arteries are already narrowed, this increased demand cannot be met, resulting in a lack of oxygen for the heart muscle.

Other Factors Contributing to Increased Heart Attacks

- 1. Morning Cold and Stress:**
Cases of heart attacks are most common between 4 AM and 10 AM due to hormonal changes that occur during this time.
- 2. Sedentary Lifestyle:**
People tend to go out less during winter, leading to reduced physical activity, increased obesity and higher cholesterol levels.
- 3. Smoking and Alcohol Consumption:**
Both the habits tend to increase in winter, further constricting the coronary arteries.

Precautions for Heart Health in Winter

- 1. Warm Clothing:**
Keep the body temperature stable to reduce



the constriction of blood vessels.

- 2. Warm-Up Before Morning Exercise:**
Always perform light warm-ups before exercising in cold weather and avoid strenuous activities in extreme cold.
- 3. Regular Monitoring of Blood Pressure and Diabetes:**
This is essential especially for the elderly and those with high blood pressure.
- 4. Balanced Diet:**
Consume low-fat foods, fresh fruits, vegetables and meals rich in omega-3 fatty acids.
- 5. Avoid Smoking and Alcohol:**
Both substances are particularly harmful to heart health during winter.
- 6. Regular Medication for Heart Conditions:**
Individuals with pre-existing heart issues should consistently take their prescribed medications.

Need for Social Awareness

There is a need for awareness campaigns about heart diseases during winter. Health centers, schools and colleges should organize camps related to the risks of heart diseases. Medical departments should also be prepared with special emergency measures for cold weather.

The cold season poses a tough test for the heart. The drop in temperature directly affects blood flow, hormonal balance and heart function. However, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, proper diet, regular check-ups and precautions can help protect the heart during winter. Science confirms that winter is not just a time of cold but also a time for caution.

The Author Is A Faculty In Science Department Sri Amritsar Sahib Punjab.

HEADLINES TODAY INVITES CONTRIBUTIONS

Are you a writer, poet, storyteller, columnist, or feature writer with a passion for literature or health writings? Headlines Today offers a platform to share:

Literature Section: Well-crafted essays, literary articles, reflections, and creative writings.

Health Section: Well-researched articles, expert columns, and in-depth feature reports from professionals and specialists.

Send your contributions to:

Dr Basharat Khan
Honorary Editor: Literature & Health
Sections (HT) at
chogalwriter76@gmail.com

YOUR WORDS CAN INSPIRE,
INFORM, AND IGNITE; LET
THEM BE HEARD.



ADMISSION Open

Study In BANGLADESH!

- ✓ MBBS / BDS / Engineering / Other Professional Courses
- ✓ Top Government & Private Universities
- ✓ Hassle-free Admission Process
- ✓ Visa, Documentation & Travel Assistance
- ✓ 100% Genuine Consultancy - Trusted by Thousands

Why Choose Us?

- Guaranteed Admissions in Top
- Govt. & Private Universities
- Full Support with Visa, Documentation & Travel
- Affordable Fee Structures
- Experienced & Trusted Consultancy

Apply Early to Secure Your Spot!

Visit us today and take the first step towards a brighter future!

For More Details, Contact Us Now:
Umer Abad, Zainkote, HMT, Sgr.
7006710373 - 7051779981
info@esscoplacements.com, esscoplacements@gmail.com
www.esscoplacements.com

**INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH & HYGIENE
COLLEGE OF NURSING & ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES**

APPROVED BY J & K PARAMEDICAL & NURSING COUNCIL /INC.
AFFILIATED A UNIVERSITY OF JAMMU

ADMISSIONS OPEN

#1 Nursing College in Jammu

THROUGH BOPEE SCORECARD

www.jphnursingcollegejammu.org

LAST CHANCE

**D-PHARMA (RECOGNISED BY PCI)
B.SC. (NURSING)
POST BASIC B.SC. (NURSING)
GENERAL NURSING & MIDWIFERY
MULTI-PURPOSE HEALTH WORKER (M/F)**

LOCATED IN THE HEART OF THE CITY | STATE-OF-THE-ART INFRASTRUCTURE | 100% PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE IN TOP HOSPITALS | WELL EQUIPPED LAB. & DIGITAL LIBRARY AFFORDABLE FEE STRUCTURE (PAYABLE IN EASY INSTALLMENTS) | SAFE HOSTEL FACILITIES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS SEPARATELY

IPH&H Institutional Campus Near Kangar Morh, Kot Bhalwal, Jammu, J&K - 181122

7051179677 | 8082531040 | 8082657200

Tradition Takes Centre Stage as Bhadarwah Hosts Grand International Dangal

■ Amir Iqbal Khan

BHADARWAH, OCT 13: Carrying forward a cherished legacy, Bhadarwah witnessed the grand conclusion of a two-day International Dangal at the Government Boys Higher Secondary School Bhadarwah (GBHSSB) ground, captivating wrestling enthusiasts across the region. Organised by the Youth Action Committee (YAC) in association with the Indian Army, Bhaderwah Development Authority, J&K Police and District Administration Doda, the event registered the presence of thousands flocking to the venue to soak in the action packed bouts.

The championship flagged off by Rajya Sabha MP Ghulam Ali Khatana along with local MLA Daleep Singh Parihar and District Development Council Chairman Dhananther Singh Kotwal, dovetailed with celebrations marking the onset of the local harvesting season. Wrestlers from across Jammu and Kash-



mir, Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh took to the ring battling it out over the course of the event.

Spectators were kept on the edge of their seats as seasoned wrestlers locked horns in various weight categories (Mallies). The headline act, a thrilling showdown by international wrestler Javed Gani from Rajouri pulled off a decisive victory against Rahul from Uttar Pradesh clinching the prestigious 'Badi Mali' crown and a prize purse of Rs.60,000/=. Rahul, displaying grit and determination throughout took home Rs.40,000/= as the runner-up.

Breaking new ground, the dangal also opened its doors to female competitors for the first time that is a move hailed by locals as a significant step towards inclusivity in traditional sports.

"This event is our heartfelt tribute to the nation's martyred soldiers who laid down their lives in the line of duty," said Naseer Mehboob, Chairman of the YAC while fielding questions from reporters.

Echoing the sentiment, social activist Tariq Parvaiz underlined Bhadarwah's vibrant socio-cultural heritage noting, "The wrestling competitions here have long stood for communal harmony, brotherhood and peace that form the values that have withstood both human and natural challenges. Year after year, these festivities paint a lively portrait of Bhadarwah Valley's glorious past."

With the grand success of the International Dangal, Bhadarwah once again underscored its place as a hub of tradition and spirited competition keeping alive a colourful chapter of Jammu and Kashmir's cultural tapestry.

RedR India Launches DRR and CCA Clubs in Educational Institutions on International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

■ Farooq Rather

NEW DELHI, OCT 13: To mark the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) 2025, RedR India launched Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) Clubs across colleges and universities in India through a national webinar. The initiative witnessed participation from over 100 educational institutions, including faculty coordinators and student representatives, formally inaugurating the DRR and CCA Clubs network nationwide.

The webinar was inaugurated by Shri Krishna S. Vatsa, Hon'ble Member, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), as the Chief Guest. Prof. Vinod Menon, President, RedR India and Founder Member, NDMA, and Manish Mohandas, Programme

Officer (Resilience), UNDP India, were the Guests of Honour. The welcome address was delivered by Puthumai A. Nazarene, Executive Director, RedR India, while Er. Aamir Ali, Member, RedR India and former Director, Disaster Management, moderated the session. Meghana Vaidya, Director (Operations), RedR India, presented the vote of thanks.

In his keynote address, Shri Krishna Vatsa highlighted the critical importance of investing in resilience, observing that "every rupee spent on preparedness and mitigation saves multiple times in recovery and reconstruction." He assured that NDMA would support the establishment of DRR Clubs through collaboration with State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs).

Prof. Vinod Menon emphasized the vital role of youth in



building a disaster-resilient India, urging educational institutions to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation into their academic and extracurricular activities. Puthumai Nazarene described the DRR and CCA Clubs as "living laboratories"—platforms where students can translate knowledge into practice through risk mapping, safety audits, and community outreach. "This is not just the

launch of clubs but the beginning of a movement for resilience spreading from campuses into communities," he said.

UNDP's Manish Mohandas lauded the initiative, noting its alignment with global climate resilience frameworks and reaffirmed UNDP's commitment to supporting youth-led innovation and preparedness.

Each DRR and CCA Club will serve as a platform for student-led

initiatives focused on risk mapping, campus safety audits, climate awareness campaigns, mock drills, and innovation projects addressing local resilience challenges. Clubs will operate under faculty coordination and receive technical guidance, capacity-building support, and networking opportunities from RedR India's pool of experts.

Er. Aamir Ali remarked that the formation of these clubs represents "the sowing of seeds for a safer, more prepared, and climate-resilient India." RedR India, a leading humanitarian and disaster management organization, continues its mission to build "a safer, more resilient world" through training, technical support, and partnerships with government bodies, academic institutions, and international agencies.

'Bach Nagma' Breathes New Life into Kashmir's Endangered Art Forms

■ Gulfam Barji

SRINAGAR, OCT 13: The Serendipity Folk Arts Grant is making remarkable progress in Kashmir by empowering young artists and reviving Bach Nagma, one of the region's most cherished traditional folk dance forms.

The grant has been awarded to Ravice Rashid, popularly known as Rayees Wathori—a young theatre artist and cultural activist working passionately to preserve and promote the folk heritage of Kashmir.



Under this initiative, a training program is being conducted to nurture young talent and reconnect them with their cultural roots through local art and performance traditions.

Speaking about the project, Rayees Wathori said: "Such programs give us hope that our art and culture will never fade. I am deeply grateful to the Serendipity Arts Foundation for initiating such meaningful efforts and to the honorable jury for recognizing my vision. Their support encourages me to continue working for the preservation and promotion of our folk arts."

IIM Collaborates with GDC Paloura to Host Workshop on Innovative Bootcamps

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCT 13: Innovation incubation cell, GDC Paloura, Jammu under the patronage of Dr. Kulvinder Kour, Principal GDC Paloura, in a dynamic effort to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical industry skills, in collaboration with Indian Institute of Management (IIM), successfully organized a one-day workshop on "Innovative Bootcamps".

The workshop brought together students, faculty members, and industry professionals to explore the potential of bootcamps as accelerated, immersive learning models aimed at enhancing employability and entrepreneurial thinking. The event was part of a broader initiative to promote experiential learning, innovation, and skill development among students.

Dr. Rajat Gupta in his welcome address emphasized the importance of bootcamps in modern education, stating, "Traditional academic frameworks must evolve. Bootcamps offer a fast-paced, application-oriented model that equips students for real-world challenges."

The resource person of the event was Mr. Vivek Sharma (chief innovation officer, IIM Jammu), he in his address gave importance on Understanding the Bootcamp Model Designing, Industry-Integrated Learning Experiences, Entrepreneurship through Innovation Bootcamps, Student Success Stories from Boot-



camp Graduates.

Mr. Kannav Padha, Manager, DST-iTBI; and Ms. Druvi Sharma, Deputy Manager, DST-iTBI guided students through various stages of innovation, design thinking, and startup development.

The program was also graced by Mr. Keshav Singh Bhau, Founder of Organic Jammu, who shared his entrepreneurial journey, explaining how innovative ideas can evolve into successful startups and how various government agencies can support and fund such initiatives.

Principal Dr. Kulvinder Kaur appreciated the efforts of the Internal Incu-

bation Cell and the collaboration with IIM Jammu, emphasizing that such bootcamps are crucial in nurturing innovative thinking and preparing students for entrepreneurial challenges.

The event was organized by Prof. Vijay Kumari (Convener, Internal Incubation Cell, GDC Paloura), Prof. Neha Bhagat, Dr. Rishi Sharma, Dr. Rajat Gupta, and Prof. Soom. Raj. The vote thanks was presented by Prof. Soom Raj. The occasion was graced by Prof. B. L. Thakur, Prof. Amit Bhalla, Dr. Usha Rani, Dr. Chinmei Sharma, Prof. Neha, Dr. Skinder, Prof. Vikram, Prof. Renuka.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Executive Engineer, Water Works Division Srinagar

HQ: Kothibagh Srinagar

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Short Term E-NIT. No. 22/WWD/Sgr/Civil of 2025-26 | Dated: 11.10.2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT of J&K e-tenders are invited from Registered/Approved and valid Civil Class of Contractors/Agencies/Firms registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments and whose registrations are renewed for current financial year for the following works on 'Percentage Basis in Two Cover System':

Table-I

S. No	Name of Work	Estd. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Tender Doc. Fee (in Rs.)	Head of Account	T.O.C	Class of Contractor	Tender Call
1	Improvements of water supply to Lanker Gali and adjoining of Mallabagh.	1.02	2040/-	100/-	CDF	15 Days	D	1 st

Position of AAA: **Accorded**

Position of Funds: **Available with Competent Authority**

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Book of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website: www.jktenders.gov.in As per schedule of dates given below

Table (II)

01	Date of publishing of Tender Notice	11.10.2025
02	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 11.10.2025 10:00 A.M. To 20.10.2025 04:00 P.M.
03	Bid Submission Start Date	11.10.2025 10:00 A.M.
04	Bid submission End Date	20.10.2025 Upto 04:00 P.M.
06	Date and time of opening of Bids (Online)	21.10.2025 at 2:00 P.M. in the office of the Executive Engineer Water Works Division Srinagar

No: WW/Sgr/CC/4264-86 | Dated: 11.10.2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Water Works Division Srinagar

DIPK: 7125/25

Dated: 13-10-2025

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: 85/EEA/R&B of 2025-26/5297-5307 | Dated: 11-10-2025

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

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	T.D Cost (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority
1.	Establishment of kindergarten at Govt BPS Wakherwan.	0.49	200/-	2% of Adv cost	20 days	UT Capex Budget of 2025-26	DEE	DSEK
2.	Establishment of kindergarten at Middle School Rajpora.	0.43	200/-	2% of Adv cost	20 days	UT Capex Budget of 2025-26	DEE	DSEK
3.	Establishment of kindergarten at Primary School Larkipora-B.	0.49	200/-	2% of Adv cost	20 days	UT Capex Budget of 2025-26	DEE	DSEK
4.	Establishment of kindergarten at UPS Khandaypora.	0.47	200/-	2% of Adv cost	20 days	UT Capex Budget of 2025-26	DEE	DSEK

Position Of AAA: Accorded vide order No:242-DSEK of 2025 Dated: 13.09.2025.

Position of funds: Committed

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	11-10-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	11-10-2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	12-10-2025
4	Bid Submission End Date	20-10-2025 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	22-10-2025 12:00 PM

- Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)
(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).
- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No., Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (tender inviting authority)
- All the bidders must upload Earnest money / Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (tender receiving authority) (The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, otherwise bids shall be rejected).

Sd/- Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora

DIPK: 7119/25

Dated: 13-10-2025

Div Com calls for systematic regulation of traffic on NHs

Decongestion measures in Jammu City ahead of festival season

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 13: Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar today directed enforcement agencies to ensure systematic regulation of traffic on National Highways and take effective measures to decongest city roads in view of the ongoing festival season. He directed the concerned departments to ensure smooth vehicular movement and hassle-free commuting for the public.

The Divisional Commissioner Jammu was chairing a meeting of Deputy Commissioners, Traffic Officers, representatives of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and other concerned departments to review the traffic related issues in Jammu city and vehicular movement on the National Highways.

At the outset, the Divisional Commissioner took a detailed review of the prevalent traffic scenario in Jammu city as well

as along the National Highways viz Lakhanpur to Banihal NH, Jammu Pooch road, Mughal road, Doda Kishtwar and other major roads.

He expressed concern over the frequent traffic jams in the city that are causing inconvenience to the public. He directed the traffic regulating authorities to take immediate and effective measures to ensure smooth vehicular movement, particularly during peak hours and in the busy market areas of the Jammu city.

The district administrations and Traffic department were asked to intensify patrolling and deploy additional personnel to facilitate smooth movement during the festival season. He also instructed to facilitate movement of fruit laden trucks, essential supplies and seasonal migration of Nomads.

"Facilitate movement of supplies and fruit-laden trucks at all transit point to avoid unnecessary halts and delays. Also devise a well-coordinated move-



ment plan for the seasonal migration and movement of nomads along with their cattle and livestock," he said observing that it

often leads to traffic congestion on the highways.

Referring to upcoming and new infrastructure projects, the

Div Com directed the executing agencies to expedite the completion of formalities to fast track construction of four new pro-

posed bridge projects. He further instructed for expediting the blacktopping and road renovation works, particularly in areas

prone to traffic jams.

The Div Com laid special emphasis on effective traffic management and enforcement, instructing the officers to identify critical congestion zones and take timely remedial measures. He called for strict action against illegal parking, roadside encroachments and violation of one-way routes. The Div Com also stressed on public cooperation, urging commuters and transporters to follow traffic advisories and extend support to the administration in maintaining order on the roads.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners of concerned districts, Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic), officers from NHAI, BRO, PWD and other line departments. The Div Com directed all the participating departments to maintain close liaison and submit periodic progress reports to his office for continuous monitoring.

DC Samba reviews Diwali preparations

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SAMBA, OCTOBER 13: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a high-level meeting with key officials to review and finalize the preparations for the upcoming Diwali festival. The meeting focused on ensuring a safe, secure, and smooth celebration for the residents of the district.

During the meeting, various crucial aspects were thoroughly discussed, including security arrangements, traffic management, health and sanitation, price regulation, fire safety and monitoring of fire-



cracker vendors.

DC Sudan laid special emphasis on traffic segregation to ensure the smooth plying of vehicles during peak festive hours. She directed the police department to deploy adequate security personnel in coordination with the traffic police to maintain law and order.

The Deputy Commissioner also stressed the importance of price regulation and monitoring of essential commodities, instructing the concerned departments to keep a close check on market rates to prevent any undue price inflation during the festival.

Highlighting the significance of public health during the festivities, DC Sudan called for strict food safety inspections and directed the enforcement of hygiene standards, particularly at eateries and food stalls.

Instructions were also issued to the Health, Sanitation and Fire Services departments to ensure they are fully equipped and manned to handle any emergencies. She also directed for the proper inspection of firecracker vendors, ensuring compliance with safety norms.

The DC urged all departments to work in close coordination to ensure a safe, clean and joyous Diwali for all citizens.

The meeting was attended by ADC Samba Jagdish Singh, AD Food, All Tehsildars, CMO, DIO, representatives from police and traffic department.

DC Reasi reviews achievements of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry Departments

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

REASI, OCTOBER 13: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik today reviewed the performance and achievements of the Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Departments in the district in two separate meetings.

The Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal of the Agriculture sector Central Schemes and flagship programmes aimed at improving the socio-economic condition of farmers. The review covered Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, Soil Health Card Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme, besides Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIP) - a UT government initiative to improve competitiveness in the agriculture and allied sectors.

The concerned functionaries informed that 2704.37 quintals of High Yield Variety (HYV) seeds and 932.65 metric ton fertilizer have been distributed among farm-

ers across the district.

"Under the PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi Yojana, an annual income support of ₹ 6,000 is provided in three equal installments to all eligible landholding families. So far, ₹ 133.60 crore has been disbursed under the scheme. Under the KCC Scheme, a total of ₹ 134.32 crore has been disbursed to the farmers of the district," the meeting was told.

Regarding Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), the meeting was informed that an amount of ₹ 2.24 lakh was disbursed for the Rabi crop during 2024-25, while this year, 7068 farmers have been registered and the claim disbursement process is underway.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the progress of beekeeping activities in the district. It was informed that 1845 bee colonies have been established, producing 42 quintals of honey, generating an income of ₹ 16.80 lakh. The district currently has 100 active beekeepers, of which 18 are registered on the Madhukranti Portal.



Reviewing the JKCIP implementation, the meeting was told that out of 89 applications received, 41 were approved and 15 rejected, while 5 are under scrutiny and 28

have been placed before the District Level Committee (DLC).

Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik emphasized the need to further strengthen outreach

programmes and awareness campaigns to ensure that more farmers avail the benefits of government schemes. She directed the officers to ensure timely distribution of seeds, fertilizers and insurance benefits to enhance agricultural productivity and farmers' income.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner chaired a detailed review meeting of the Animal Husbandry Department to assess its progress and performance.

She stressed on conducting regular vaccination drives, holding awareness camps and prompt disease reporting to safeguard livestock health. The Chief Animal Husbandry Officer briefed the DC about ongoing departmental initiatives, livestock population statistics, artificial insemination coverage, fodder development and extension activities being carried out across the district.

The meetings were attended by CAO Vinod Kumar Kundal, CAHO Dr. R.K. Kaith and other concerned officers.

DC Ramban inspects traffic regulation on National Highway

Calls for seamless movement of Fruit laden trucks

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 13: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Iyas Khan along with Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak today conducted an inspection of the National Highway (NH-44) to review the regulation of vehicular movement in view of the ongoing seasonal migration of nomads and the heavy flow of fruit-laden trucks moving towards various destinations across the country amid the peak fruit season.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the possibility of restoring

double carriageway movement on the National Highway to facilitate the smooth flow of traffic in both directions.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner was also accompanied by Addl. SP Majeeb-Ur-Rehman, DySP Om Prakash, Dy. DP Traffic Sajjad and other officers and officials of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

The Deputy Commissioner took stock of traffic regulation and directed the concerned departments to ensure smooth and uninterrupted vehicular movement, particularly for

essential commodities and perishable fruit consignments. He emphasized the need for close coordination among the Traffic Police, NHAI and District Police to prevent congestion and ensure the safety of commuters and livestock during the ongoing migration.

The DC instructed officers to remain vigilant at critical junctions and bottlenecks, deploy adequate manpower and maintain real-time coordination with control rooms to address any traffic disruptions promptly.

The DC also directed NHAI to focus on maintenance works where required and ensure proper road conditions.

Civic Action Programme: IRP-22nd

Battalion organises Seminar on "Drug Abuse and Preventions" at GDC Chatroo

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 13: Continuing its sustained outreach efforts under the Civic Action Programme 2025-26, the IRP-22nd Battalion today organized a Seminar on "Drug Abuse and Preventions" at Government Degree College (GDC) Chatroo, Kishtwar. The programme aimed to spread awareness among students regarding the detrimental effects of drug abuse on physical and mental health, family relationships, and the social structure at large.

As many as 200 students from GDC Chatroo and Government Model Higher Secondary School, Chatroo attended the awareness seminar. Out of them, 20 students actively participated by presenting thought-provoking speeches, skits, and presentations highlighting the increasing threat of substance abuse among youth. The participants collectively emphasized that drug addiction not only leads to personal ruin but also erodes community values, urging their peers to take a stand for a drug-free and responsible society.

The event concluded with a valedictory ceremony, which was graced by Dr. Ved Kumar, Principal GDC Chatroo, as the Chief Guest, and Vinod Kumar, Principal Govt. Model HSS Chatroo, as Guest of Honour. Senior officers from the IRP-22nd Battalion also attended the function and delivered motivational addresses, underscoring that drug abuse is among the most critical challenges confronting society today. They called upon students to act as torchbearers of awareness, stay away from harmful habits, and encourage their peers to lead a healthy and disciplined lifestyle.

To acknowledge the efforts of participants, trophies, cash prizes, and certificates of participation were presented to students who delivered outstanding performances during the seminar.

Speaking on the occasion, the officers of IRP-22nd Battalion reiterated that the Jammu and Kashmir Police remains deeply committed to community-oriented policing, promoting youth engagement, and strengthening police-public relations through educational, cultural, and sports activities under the Civic Action Programme.

The seminar concluded with a vote of thanks extended to the faculty and students of GDC Chatroo for their cooperation and enthusiastic participation.

DC Samba chairs NCORD meeting

Call for collective action to eliminate drug menace

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SAMBA, OCTOBER 13: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired the District level NCORD Committee meeting to review progress across departments in the execution of anti-narcotic and drug control measures. Senior officials including Zonal Director NCB Jammu, ASP Samba and departmental heads attended the meeting held at the DC Office.

Highlighting the district's zero-tolerance policy, the DC noted that 48 NDPS cases have been registered this year, signaling firm enforcement action. A dedicated drug helpline has been activated by District Police to encourage public reporting and sup-



port.

In a key transparency move, the district has achieved 100% implementation of computerized billing in chemist shops, with routine inspections underway to curb substance abuse.

Reviewing rehabilitation mea-

sures, the meeting was informed that 41 individuals have received professional de-addiction counseling between April and September this year.

The DC directed line listing of students in Schools and Colleges to identify vulnerable groups and

mandated screening in the transport sector.

Youth engagement emerged as a strategic focus. The DC reviewed a district-wide IEC calendar and sports schedule, stressing reactivation of youth clubs to offer constructive outlets. Media involve-

ment is being leveraged to amplify anti-drug messaging.

Plans are underway to strengthen Border Checkpoints, expand Addiction Treatment Centres and deploy field counselors. Departments have been tasked with aligning employment schemes to support at-risk youth and deter drug involvement.

The Deputy Commissioner reaffirmed the administration's commitment to a drug-free Samba, urging civil society, parents, educators and community leaders to collaborate in this critical mission.

The NCORD Committee will continue to monitor and guide multi-pronged interventions, ensuring sustained momentum against the drug threat.

Piyush Goyal launches series of initiatives on marking four years of PM GatiShakti National Master Plan

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, OCT 13: Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal today launched a series of transformative initiatives by the Logistics Division marking four years of PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP), an official statement said.

The launches include the Knowledge Management System (KMS), Decentralized Data Uploading and Management System (DUMS), PMGS NMP Dashboard as part of the Comprehensive Multi-Sector Reporting System and PM GatiShakti Compendium Volume-3. "The Government had developed and launched the PM GatiShakti District Master Plans (PMGS-DMP) for 28 Aspirational Districts in Octo-

ber 2024. The plans facilitate geospatial-based planning for critical social and economic infrastructure such as schools, health centres, anganwadis, roads, and water pipelines using the PM GatiShakti platform," the Minister said while launching the initiatives here.

"To enable effective planning, five sector-specific tools were developed for schools, health centres, anganwadis, roads, and water pipelines. Comprehensive capacity-building training for district teams was conducted at BIS-AG-N, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, in December 2024, followed by regular regional workshops and online sessions for officers across districts and States," Minister added.

The Minister also noted

that districts have already begun developing practical use cases for area development, including road widening projects such as the Damoh-Jabalpur road from two to four lanes, solar park site selection in Damoh, and administrative boundary planning.

He also highlighted drinking water provision under the Jal Jeevan Mission, electrification of unelectrified villages, road connectivity for unconnected habitations and watershed management planning in Baran district.

Based on these successes, the PM GatiShakti District Master Plan is now being progressively rolled out across all 112 Aspirational Districts.

It aims to enable data-driven, integrated planning



for social and economic infrastructure development nationwide.

Goyal noted that over the

past four years, numerous Ministries and States have undertaken innovative measures, developed digital tools,

and created use cases demonstrating how geospatial planning can be leveraged to improve infrastructure development and decision-making.

The Knowledge Management System (KMS) serves as a centralized repository of digital tools, use cases, SOPs, compendiums, and training resources, promoting replicability, scalability, and cross-learning across Ministries, Departments and States/UTs.

Moreover, at the core of KMS, there is an integrated NMP dashboard offering real-time insights into onboarded data layers, registered users, and planned projects.

It will also report issues through the Issue Management System, forming the basis of the Comprehensive Multi-Sector

Reporting System.

Complementing this, the Decentralized Data Uploading and Management System ensures accurate, uniform, and accountable data management through a three-stage workflow.

First is the data upload by designated managers, review by nodal officers, and final publication by BISAG-N, enhancing transparency, operational efficiency, and multi-sectoral coordination.

With these new initiatives, PM GatiShakti continues to set new benchmarks in integrated infrastructure planning, data-driven governance, and inclusive development. It also reinforces India's vision of modern, connected and resilient nation. UNI

Charges framed against Lalu Prasad Yadav, family in IRCTC Scam; trial set to begin

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, OCT 13: In a major political and legal development, a special CBI court today framed charges against RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav, his wife Rabri Devi, son Tejashwi Yadav and 11 others in the IRCTC scam, paving way for the start of the trial.

The court's decision to formally frame charges is a critical step, confirming that there is sufficient evidence to proceed with a trial against all 14 accused. The case pertains to allegations of corruption in the awarding of railway tenders during Lalu Prasad Yadav's tenure as the



Railway Minister.

The CBI alleges that Lalu Prasad Yadav entered into a criminal conspiracy with the owners of Sujata Hotels, Vijay and Vinay Kochhar, to grant them favourable contracts for two IRCTC hotels in Ranchi and Puri. In return, a prime piece of land in Patna was sold by the Kochhar brothers to a company managed by a close aide of Lalu Prasad Yadav, Rajya Sabha MP Prem Chand Gupta.

This company and the valuable land were later acquired at a significantly low price by Lalu Prasad Yadav's family members through a firm called Delight Marketing Company Private Limited.

While the accused, including Lalu Prasad Yadav and his family, have previously argued that the CBI lacks evidence, the agency has maintained it has a strong case. The court has now scheduled the case for the recording of prosecution evidence, which will be conducted between October 27 to November 7, on a day-to-day basis. UNI

Far-right Israeli ministers Ben Gvir, Orit Strock express mixed feelings over ceasefire deal amid exchange of Palestinian terrorists

■ **United News of India**

JERUSALEM, OCT 13: Far-right officials within Israel have been extremely sceptical of the ceasefire deal, and while they expressed joy over the return of hostages, they voiced misgivings over the truce, owing to the release of convicted terrorists in exchange - terming it both a victory and a defeat.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, a long-time critic of the deal posted a short message on X, "And the children

shall return to their border," as the first seven Israeli hostages were released and transferred into IDF custody, despite having voted against the deal that secured their release.

The biblical verse is commonly cited in Israel to express hope for the return of captives, though Gvir and his far-right Otzma Yehudit party have long opposed the current US-brokered ceasefire and corresponding release of the remaining hostages in exchange for Palestinian security prisoners.

The party argues that freeing the Palestinian prisoners is tantamount to giving Hamas more fighters, who are dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish state, and the only true victory would be one which sees the total destruction of the terror group.

The minister has opposed all previous ceasefire deals and has boasted that he foiled previous ceasefire and hostage-release proposals over the course of the two-year war.

Likewise Israeli Minister for Settlements and National Proj-

ects, Orit Strock urged US President Donald Trump to ensure the demilitarisation and dismantling of Hamas in Gaza, writing directly to the president in a series of long social media posts amid Trump's arrival at the Knesset in wake of the ongoing release of the 20 living Israeli hostages under the ceasefire deal brokered by him.

"It's important that you remain committed to the key principles of demilitarising Gaza, removing all threats from it toward Israel, and fully dismantling Hamas' rule

there," praising him as a "true friend of Israel."

"Don't be tempted to believe that soldiers fought and paid with their lives only for the return of the hostages," wrote the far-right Religious Zionism lawmaker, who voted against the ceasefire and hostage-release deal alongside party leader and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich.

"You, who taught the entire world the concept of 'fake,' surely do not want to be associated with a 'fake victory' or a 'fake peace,'" she added. UNI

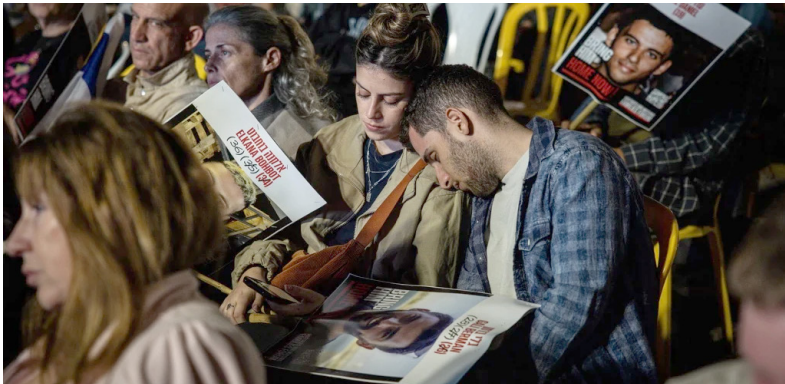
Israel's Hostage & Missing Families Forum accuses Hamas of breaching ceasefire deal as only four out of 28 bodies returned

■ **United News of India**

JERUSALEM, OCT 13: The Hostage and Missing Families Forum has accused Hamas of a "blatant breach" of the ceasefire deal, after learning that the terror group would be returning only four out of the 28 bodies of dead hostages. "This represents a blatant breach of the agreement by Hamas. We expect Israel's government and the mediators to take immediate action to rectify this grave injustice," the forum said, noting it is "shocked and dismayed", reports Times of Israel.

The development comes only hours after all the 20 living hostages were released by the Islamic terror organisation under the US brokered ceasefire agreement, as President Donald Trump is currently in Israel and is scheduled to speak at the Knesset. "The families of the deceased hostages are enduring especially difficult days filled with deep sorrow," added the group.

"We will not abandon any hostage. The mediators must enforce the agreement's terms and ensure Hamas



pays a price for this violation."

There has been no official confirmation from Israeli authorities regarding the exact number of bodies expected to be repatriated today, nor have the identities of the four been made public. According to several families, Israeli officials informed them on Saturday that their loved ones' remains would not be returned today or tomorrow, but assured them that every effort was being made to locate and recover them.

Earlier reports had suggested that most of the bodies would be handed

over in this phase of the ceasefire implementation.

Hamas officials had earlier warned that it would have difficulties locating some of the bodies, due to the rubble surrounding the war-torn enclave.

One of the key demands for ending the war in Gaza was that Hamas return all hostages - living and dead - on the same day. While it has returned the living captives, the issue is compromised due to the group not transferring the remains of the deceased as agreed, hindering any further progress in the Strip. UNI

PM welcomes release of Israeli hostages by Hamas

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, OCT 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed the release of all hostages by Hamas today after more than two years of captivity and said he supported US President Donald Trump's sincere efforts to bring peace to the region.

The Prime Minister said the freedom of the hostages stood as a tribute to the courage of their families, the unwavering peace efforts of President Trump and the strong resolve of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

He also supported President Trump's efforts to bring peace to the region.

"We welcome the release of all hostages after over two years of captivity. Their freedom stands as a tribute to the courage of their families, the unwavering peace efforts of President Trump and the strong resolve of Prime Minister Netanyahu. We support President Trump's sincere efforts to bring peace to the region," the Prime Minister tweeted on X.

Earlier today Hamas released last 20 Israeli hostages under a US-brokered ceasefire deal. Israel confirmed that all hostages had been released. The hostages were taken by Hamas gunmen in an attack on October 7, 2023. However, Hamas has not handed over the remains of about 28 deceased hostages. In exchange for the hostages, Israel has released about 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees. UNI

India, Canada resolve to strengthen cooperation in various sectors, put bilateral ties back on track

■ **United News of India**

NEW DELHI, OCT 13: India and Canada today agreed on several key matters including strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation in an attempt to reset the ties that were hamstrung in 2023.

The two countries will contribute to rebuilding trust and deepening bilateral cooperation. They agreed that their High Commissions and Consulates will strengthen institutional capacity by progressively deploying expertise in the economic, political, Defence and technology domains to deliver on the shared ambitious agenda. A Joint Statement issued after talks between visiting Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar here said both Ministers pledged to expand collaboration

on global issues, including working to ensure more effective and inclusive multilateral institutions.

The Canadian Foreign Minister who arrived here yesterday on a two-day visit at the invitation of the External Affairs Minister, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and highlighted Canada's commitment to working with India to make meaningful progress on economic partnership between the two countries.

The Prime Minister noted the significance of enhanced cooperation between the two countries in trade, energy, technology, agriculture and people-to-people ties and said her visit would contribute to ongoing efforts to impart new momentum to the India-Canada bilateral partnership. She later held a meeting with the External Affairs Minister.

According to the Joint Statement, the meeting between the two Foreign Ministers is a follow up to the "guidance" provided by the Prime Ministers of the two countries during their talks on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada.

Pursuant to this guidance, both sides initiated steps including joint announcement of rein-statement of High Commissioners on August 28 at a meeting between the National Security Advisers of the two countries. In keeping with the priorities that the Prime Ministers had set out for bringing momentum to the relationship, both sides reached consensus on a New Roadmap for India-Canada relations.

The two Foreign Ministers recognized that reviving the strong and resilient India-Canada bilateral relationship will not only create opportu-



nities for enhanced economic cooperation but also help mitigate vulnerabilities arising from shifting global alliances, ensure more reliable supply chains and reinforce strategic stability.

Expressing satisfaction at the substantial increase in bilateral trade, which reached 23.66 billion Dollars in 2024, and the

expanding presence of Indian and Canadian enterprises in each other's markets, they also acknowledged the important role played by Canadian provinces, six of which maintain representation in India, and by Indian states in advancing mutually beneficial economic cooperation.

Affirming trade as a corner-

stone of bilateral economic growth and resilience, and acknowledging the growing opportunities in goods, services, and investment, both sides agreed that early initiatives in trade cooperation will include commencing ministerial-level discussions on bilateral trade and investment.

According to the Joint Statement, the two sides agreed on:

Resuming the Canada-India CEO Forum which will bring together leading business executives from both countries to facilitate increased bilateral trade and investment with focus on priority sectors like clean technology, infrastructure, agri-food and digital innovation. The Forum will convene on the margins of a senior-level trade mission in early 2026.

Recognizing their shared vision of a sustainable future and underscoring the impor-

tance of collective action in addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

They agreed to increase bilateral cooperation on climate action, environmental protection and conservation, support joint climate and environmental goals by finding effective, long-term solutions.

Reaffirming their intention to support sector activities and deepen cooperation in advancing clean, secure and equitable energy collaboration, they decided to re-establish the Canada-India Ministerial Energy Dialogue (CIMED), including the related Action Plan at the earliest.

They decided to work together on emission reduction, environmental management, power sector digitalization and disaster resilience and advance global energy efficiency process, including through multi-lateral fora like the G20.

Two Budding Girl Students from Vilgam Kupwara selected for UT-Level Competitions

■ **Javaid Bhat**

VILGAM KUPWARA, OCT 13: In a proud moment for the frontier region of Kupwara, two promising girl athletes, Suriya Tariq and Seerat Ahad, have qualified for the Union Territory (UT) level competitions, bringing laurels to their respective institutions and inspiring young girls across the district.

Suriya Tariq, a talented student of UPS Bangergund Vilgam, has been selected for the Under-14 Kabaddi team. Known for her agility and sportsmanship, Suriya has consistently balanced her academic excel-

lence with active participation in sports. Speaking on the achievement, Shabir Ahmad Malik, Head Teacher of UPS Bangergund, expressed pride in her success, saying, "Suriya Tariq is excelling both in sports and studies. Her hard work and determination have made the entire school and locality proud."

Similarly, Seerat Ahad, a bright student of BHSS Kukroosa, has earned her place in the Under-17 Cricket Team. Her remarkable performance in the inter-school tournaments has set a benchmark for other aspiring players.

Both students represent the growing spirit of girl empowerment and

active participation of youth in sports under the Khelo India Abhiyan, a government initiative aimed at promoting sports culture at the grass-roots level.

Their achievements not only highlight the sporting potential of rural areas like Vilgam but also reaffirm that with encouragement and opportunity, young girls can excel in every field.

The community, teachers, and parents have congratulated both students and wished them continued success at the UT-level competitions, hoping they bring further glory to the district.



Boland's MCG Heroics More Relevant Than 2023 Ashes Blip

■ **ESPNcricinfo**

MELBOURNE: Australia coach Andrew McDonald has warned England that Scott Boland will be a different prospect at home, and any belief they have figured the Victorian out is based on a false economy.

Boland's role for this summer's Ashes is now appearing increasingly important, with concerns over how many Tests Pat Cummins will be able to play throughout the series.

The 36-year-old Boland debuted against England four years ago on Boxing Day, with his 6 for 7 in the second innings catapulting him into cult-hero status.

The one blip in Boland's Test career remains the 2023 Ashes, where England went after him and messed with his lengths at Edgbaston and Headingley.

Boland's career average of 16.53 also remains the best of any bowler in the past 100 years, while his economy-rate of 2.75 makes him the most miserly of any regular seamer since his debut.

But he took just two wickets at an average of 115.5 in the 2023 Ashes, as England's batters walked at Boland and took him for 4.91 runs an over in his two Tests.

That alone prompted former England captain Michael Atherton to state this week Cummins's back injury was a massive boost for the tourists given they had no fear for Boland. Not that Australia's coach is buying into the suggestion.

"Scotty was challenged with some lack of bounce in the benign conditions in England," McDonald said. "I think conditions sort of conspired a little bit against him. I know there's been some press around that England have worked Scott Boland out. But when he comes back into the Australian conditions, he gets bounce, hits the deck, he's a handful."

4th Annual Sports Day 2025 Celebrated with Great Enthusiasm at Ayesha Ali Academy Kanipora Kulgam

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, OCT 13: Ayesha Ali Academy, Kanipora Kulgam, celebrated its 4th Annual Sports Day 2025 with immense enthusiasm and energy, highlighting the true spirit of sportsmanship, teamwork, and discipline among students.

The grand opening ceremony was attended by Headmaster Mr. Javid Ahmad Bhat, Academic Advisor Mr. Gh. Nabi Nayyir, Primary Block Headmaster Mr. Tahir Pala, Pre-Primary Headmistress Ms. Ruhi Jan, Non-Academic Head Mr. Hilal Abdullah, and Deputy Head Mr. Ismail Bhat.

In his address, Headmaster Mr. Javid Ahmad Bhat emphasized the academy's commitment to holistic education by balancing academics with co-curricular excellence. He praised the institution's Chairman for his visionary leadership, remarking that, "Education at Ayesha Ali Academy goes beyond textbooks — it builds character, leadership, and resilience."

Sports Coordinator Mr. Sajad Ahmad Shah expressed pride in the students' enthusiastic participation and lauded the teamwork of teachers and management for making the event a resounding success.



The day featured a wide range of competitions including volleyball, cricket, archery, martial arts, kho-kho, basketball, tug of war, football, and badminton. The atmosphere was filled with cheer and excitement as students displayed remarkable talent and sportsmanship.

The event concluded with a grand award ceremony recognizing not only the winners but also applauding every participant for their dedication and team spirit.

The celebration truly reflected the academy's guiding motto "Where Excellence Meets Character."

'Impact injury' keeps Sai Sudharsan off the field on the third day

■ **ESPNcricinfo**

There will be no B Sai Sudharsan on the field for India on the third day

of the ongoing second Test against West Indies in Delhi after he suffered "an impact injury" on the second day of the Test. The good news for India is that "the injury is not serious, and he is doing fine," as a BCCI media statement on Sunday morning said.

Sai Sudharsan, fielding at forward short-leg on the second day, picked up the injury when he "caught" John Campbell off Ravindra Jadeja - the big slog-sweep from the West Indies opener hit Sai Sudharsan in the helmet grille before the ball lodged itself in the crook of the fielder's arms.

That was in the eighth over of West



Indies' first innings after India had declared on 518 for 5, and Sai Sudharsan stayed off the field for the remaining 35 overs that were bowled on the day.

"He continues to be monitored by the BCCI medical team," the BCCI said. There was no update on whether Sai Sudharsan would bat - at his No. 3 spot or at all - on Sunday's third day if the West Indies first innings were to end.

Sai Sudharsan had earlier made an important contribution when India batted, scoring 87 in 165 balls with 12 fours. He put on an 193-run stand with Yashasvi Jaiswal for the second wicket and was dismissed when trying to flick Jomel Warrican across the line in the 69th over. Jaiswal's 175 and Shubman Gill's 129 not out put India in the driver's seat to make it 2-0 in the series.

LUBAAB PUBLICATIONS

ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL **Printing** NEEDS

NEWSPAPER | BOOKS | FLYERS
LOGO | FLEX | MAGAZINES
VISITING CARDS | BROCHURES
3D BOARDS | COVER PAGES
WEDDING CARDS | CALLIGRAPHY
WALL PAINTINGS

999038812
9419008414
01942496287

Gund Hassi Bhat, Radio Colony, Lawaypora, Srinagar

TABINDA MEMORIAL SOCIETY HANDWARA

in collaboration with

NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA
Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India

ORGANISES

ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION
Reading is to the mind, what exercise is to the body

ON

TRANSFORMATIVE REFORMS FOR VIKSIT BHARAT 2047	College Students
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT	11th & 12th Students
ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY	8th, 9th & 10th

PRIZES in EACH CATEGORY

1st	Rs 30,000
2nd	Rs 25,000
3rd	Rs 20,000

VENUE: GOVT. DEGREE COLLEGE HANDWARA **DATE OF TEST:** 26-OCT-2025 SUNDAY
FELICITATION CEREMONY: ENVIRONMENT HALL HANDWARA **DATED:** 2ND NOV. 2025

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT US: **+91 9858906029 | 7006704789**

Sponsored by:

NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA

Courtesy:

MC HANDWARA MC KUPWARA

Education Partners:

Media Partners:

Rising Kashmir, ZEE J&K LADAKH, GULISTAN NEWS, MUNSHI TV, ANIN NEWS, KASHMIR, HEADLINES TODAY, KNS