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# Statehood Of J&K To Be Restored At Appropriate Time: Amit Shah

■ HT News Network

PATNA, OCT 18: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday promised restoration of statehood for Jammu and Kashmir at “an appropriate time” and a “good resolution” of demands raised by people of the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Speaking at a media conclave in Patna, he also claimed that after the abrogation of Article 370, terror-infested Jammu and Kashmir has “taken a U-turn” and “no local terrorist has been recruited in the last nine months”.

“This is a qualitative change that Jammu and Kashmir, where separatism had been festering since the 1990s, witnessed. Earlier, Pakistan felt no need to send terrorists from across the border. They used to place arms in the hands of four children. Now the situation has changed. The people of Jammu and Kashmir feel they belong to the entire country and the entire coun-



try belongs to them,” Shah said at the conclave organised by ABP News and Hindustan.

“Today, democracy has been restored in Jammu and Kashmir. Panchayat and municipal polls have taken place, and so have elections for the legislative assembly. Rajya Sabha elections will also take place at some time,” the home minister added.

He was asked about a statement by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who spoke of a “gulf” remaining in between Jammu and Kashmir and New Delhi on account of statehood not being restored even after a year of his swearing in.

Shah replied, “He (Abdullah) may be saying this out of political compulsions. But statehood would be restored at an appropriate time. And it will be done following discussions with him.” About the recent agitations in Ladakh, Shah said the Union government is “in talks with the

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# Every inch of Pak within BrahMos range: Rajnath Singh



■ HT News Network

LUCKNOW, OCT 18: Every inch of Pakistan's territory lies within range of BrahMos and what happened during Operation Sindoor was just a trailer, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said here on Saturday, in a stern warning to Pakistan.

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## India must produce rare materials: Rajnath

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, OCT 18: With China tightening export rules for crucial rare earths, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said, “India must produce rare materials used in defence and aerospace to become a technology creator and safeguard its technological sovereignty.”

He was dedicating to the nation a Titanium and Superalloy Materials Plant at PTC Industries' Strategic Materials Technology Complex in Lucknow.

Emphasising the importance of rare earth materials used in defence, space, electronics, and other sectors, he noted that only

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## LG Sinha pays obeisance to Buddha relics at monastery in Russia

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 18: Lieutenant Governor



Shri Manoj Sinha paid obeisance to sacred relics of Lord Buddha brought from India and enshrined at the Central Temple, Geden Shed-dup Choikorling Monastery, also known as “the

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## CM Omar Abdullah inaugurates National Conference on Patient Safety at SKICC

Emphasizes on integrating patient safety & patient care to strengthen healthcare delivery in J&K

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 18: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated the two-day National Conference on Patient Safety (NCPS-2025) at Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), organized by Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences

(SKIMS), Soura. The theme of the conference is “Every Error a Lesson, Every Lesson a Safer Care.”

In his inaugural address, the Chief Minister expressed hope that such conferences will generate clear recommendations for the government to implement across health institutions in Jammu and Kashmir, thereby ensuring better



healthcare and patient safety standards.

“Through this conference, I hope actionable points emerge which the government can adopt in both major and smaller hospitals, ensuring that patient safety becomes as much a focus as patient care,” Omar Abdullah said.

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## Buckwheat honey in Kargil boosts rural livelihoods

■ HT News Network

KARGIL, OCT 18: A Kargil-based agricultural institute has devised a new method to extract honey from buckwheat crops, opening new pathways towards sustainable agriculture and rural livelihood development According to an official, buckwheat honey extraction at School of Agriculture Science and Technology, Kargil Campus, University of Ladakh, was part of efforts to promote apiculture in the region.

In 2019, honey was extracted from alfalfa crop at the institute which was earlier named

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## Dentists Vital To Overall Health, Not Just Teeth: Sakeena Itoo

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 18: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today addressed the 16th Indian Dental Association J&K Dental Conference at Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) here today.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Sakeena lauded the vital contributions of dental professionals in strengthening

the healthcare system of Jammu and Kashmir. She underlined that oral health is cornerstone of overall well-being and must be integrated more prominently into general healthcare policies.

The Health Minister highlighted that oral health was commonly an overlooked aspect for most of the individuals, but in recent times people have understood that oral health plays a critical role in preventing systemic diseases

like diabetes, cardiovascular ailments and respiratory infections.

The Health Minister added that in recent years oral hygiene practices and dental check-ups have emerged as an essential routine for people, especially the young generation. She urged the dentists and participants to aware people about adopting regular oral hygiene practices and dental check-ups an essential part of their

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## Rajya Sabha polls stir old ghosts of crossing vote in J&K

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 18: The upcoming Rajya Sabha election in Jammu & Kashmir has rekindled memories of cross-voting by Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) during elections to the now-defunct Legislative Council, which was abolished by Parliament under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act of 2019.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News

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## Govt to ban artificial colouring on fruits: Javid Dar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 18: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar on Saturday said the government will soon introduce a law to prohibit the use of artificial colouring on fruits, saying the practice is damaging Kashmir's fruit industry, consumer health and market credibility.

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# DC, SSP Srinagar chair District NCORD meeting, Reviews Anti-Drug Measures

Emphasis laid on intensified action to combat drug menace

HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCT 18:** To review the impact of ongoing efforts and strategize further measures in the fight against drug abuse and its trafficking, a meeting of the District Level Committee on Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) was today convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Sandeep Chakravarthy was also present in the meeting.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner was given a comprehensive briefing on the key measures undertaken in the district to combat drug abuse, trafficking and ensure proper rehabilitation of affected individuals.



The DC was apprised of recent seizures, arrests, financial investigations, and detentions carried out under the

NDPS Act.

Furthermore, the DC was apprised of steps taken to ensure accurate revenue entries

in NDPS cases to safeguard property records and cent per cent use of computerization/online billing system at phar-

maceuticals in district.

On the occasion, the DC emphasised effective anti-drug public awareness and

sensitization campaigns, strengthening of Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs), improved interdepartmental

coordination, and intensified surveillance and preventive measures at identified vulnerable hotspots.

The DC underscored the importance of eradicating the illegal cultivation of contraband crops such as bang and poppy within the district. He also sought proactive community engagement in the ongoing war against drug abuse.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Aadil Fareed; Superintendent of Police, Umar Shah; SDM East, SDM West, Chief Education Officer, District Statistics & Evaluation Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Assistant Labour Commissioner and Officers of Excise, Drug Control Organization, DYS&S, Heads of ATFs at SMHS, SKIMS Bemina and other concerned.

## Kulgam Police Arrest Two Drug Peddlers, Recover Heroin and Cash During Naka Check

### Mission Drug-Free Kulgam continues

Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, OCT 18:** Continuing its intensified drive against drug peddlers under the "Mission Drug-Free Kulgam" initiative, the Kulgam Police on Saturday arrested two more drug peddlers and recovered contraband substances along with cash believed to be proceeds of narcotics trade.

A police party from Police Station Yaripora had established a checkpoint at Kanjikkullah for checking and frisking of suspicious persons and vehicles. During the operation, a motorcycle (registration number JK13J-7576) driven by Faizan Ahmad Dar, son of Nafees Ahmad Dar, resident of Brazloo, and his pillion rider Sheeraz Ahmad Lone alias Sher Khan, resident of Tungdanoo, was intercepted.

Upon search, police recovered 06 grams of heroin-like contraband substance and cash amounting to ₹15,720, believed to be proceeds from the sale of narcotics, from their possession. Both individuals



were arrested on the spot, and the motorcycle used in the commission of the crime was seized.

In this regard, a case FIR No. 66/2025 under sections 8/21 and 29 of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Yaripora, and further investigation is underway.

Police said that such operations are part of ongoing efforts to root out the drug menace from society. "Drug peddlers are destroying the lives of the common people, especially the youth, by spreading this menace in society," a police spokesperson said, appealing to the general public to cooperate with Kulgam Police in their ongoing crusade against drug abuse.

## SKUAST-K hosts first-ever 'Livestock Show' to celebrate Livestock Wealth

HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, OCT 25:** The first-of-its-kind Livestock Show 2025 (Pashu Dhan Mela) was successfully held at the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences, SKUAST-K, Shuhama Alusteng, jointly organized by Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) and the JK Dairy Farmers. The mega event showcased the rich livestock diversity of Jammu & Kashmir, drawing participation and attention from thousands across the region.

The event featured a wide array of exhibitions and shows, including the magnificent Horse Show, Army Dog Show, Dairy Cattle Show, Sheep and Goat Show, Poultry and Fancy Bird Show, KVK Excellence Show, Industry Exhibition, Recreation Zone, Food Festival, Wool and Pelt Exhibition, SKUAST-K Startups and Products Show, Fish and Post-Harvest Technology Show, Forest Products Display, and much more. These exhibits highlighted the vibrant and diverse livestock sector of J&K and the innovations transforming agriculture in the region.



The event was inaugurated by Advisor to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Jenab Nasir Aslam Wani, who was accompanied by Vice-Chancellor SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, along with senior officers of the university and officials from the Departments of Animal and Sheep Husbandry, Kashmir.

A large gathering of more than 50,000 people, including progressive farmers, students, scientists

and representatives from the livestock and dairy industry, attended the event and witnessed the various exhibitions.

In his inaugural address, Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani appreciated the University for organizing such a meaningful event. He expressed delight in witnessing the treasure of livestock wealth in Jammu & Kashmir and reiterated the government's commitment to supporting initiatives

that contribute to farmer empowerment. He emphasized that precision livestock farming holds significant potential to transform rural livelihoods and the agricultural economy of the region.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Nazir A Ganai, in his address, highlighted the objective of the event, to create awareness among farmers and the general public about the livestock resources of J&K and their importance in strengthen-

ing the agri-economy. He stated that SKUAST-K is actively working to transform agriculture in the region from traditional to commercial and secondary agriculture, through initiatives such as the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

Champion dairy farmer, Shri Sandeep Singh Chib, also spoke at the event, underscoring the vital contribution of dairy farmers to the region's growth and thanking SKUAST-K for creating a platform to recognize their efforts. Earlier, Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences, Prof RA Shah, welcomed the dignitaries and participants, and briefed about the event highlights.

The Livestock Show 2025 (Pashu Dhan Mela) marks a significant milestone in showcasing the livestock wealth of Jammu & Kashmir, promoting innovation, and strengthening linkages between farmers, academia, and industry.

The Mela will continue tomorrow, featuring more exhibitions and activities. Awards and prizes will be distributed to the winners of various livestock shows and competitions during the concluding ceremony.

## Kulgam Police Holds Police-Public Partnership Meeting in Devsar

Focus on strengthening community relations and addressing local issues

Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, OCT 18:** In its continued efforts to foster stronger ties between the police and the public, the Kulgam Police on Friday organized a Police Community Partnership Group (PCPG) meeting at Police Station Devsar.

The meeting was chaired by SDPO Qazigund Shri Mansoor Ahmad, and attended by SHO Devsar Masood ul Hassan other senior officers and officials of Kulgam Police, as well as prominent citizens including members of Auqaf Committees, Chowkidars, Numberdars, and youth representatives from Devsar, Pahloo, Guddar, and adjoining villages.

During the interactive session, participants raised several issues of public importance concerning civic amenities, local security, and youth engagement. The chairing officer gave a patient hearing to all grievances and assured the participants that genuine issues would be taken up with the concerned authorities for early redressal. He further stated that police-related matters would be



resolved at the earliest possible time. SDPO Qazigund also urged the participants to maintain close cooperation with the police in upholding law and order, identifying anti-social and anti-national elements, and preserving peace and harmony in the region. The meeting concluded on a positive

and collaborative note, with a shared commitment from both the police and community members to work together for ensuring public safety and eliminating social evils from society.

Would you like me to translate this into Urdu for publication as well?

## Two Long-Time Absconders Arrested by Kulgam Police

ONE AMONG THEM EVADING ARREST FOR 26 YEARS

Farooq Rather

**KULGAM, OCT 18:** Continuing its sustained efforts to bring offenders to justice, the Kulgam Police have arrested two absconders, including one who had been evading arrest for the past 26 years.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Mohd Ismail Bhat, son of Mohd Ramzan Bhat, resident of Alamgunj, Shopian, and Showkat Ahmad Dar, son of Mohd Yaqoob Dar, resident of Khanaywabora, Qaimoh. According to police, Mohd Ismail Bhat was wanted in connection with FIR No. 48/1984 registered under sections 148, 149, 323, and 452 of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), while Showkat Ahmad Dar was wanted in FIR No. 183/2016 under sections 151, 153 RPC, and 7/25 Arms Act at Police Station Kulgam. A warrant under sections 299/512 CrPc, issued by the Hon'ble Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Kulgam, had been pending against both accused. Acting on credible inputs, a special police team from Police Station Kulgam successfully traced and arrested them. The duo was subsequently produced before the Hon'ble Court for further legal proceedings.

Commending the police team for their efforts, SSP Kulgam Shri Anayat Ali (IPS) said, "Kulgam Police is committed to ensuring that no offender, no matter how long he evades the law, escapes justice. Our consistent focus remains on upholding the rule of law and maintaining public confidence in the justice system." The Kulgam Police have reiterated their resolve to continue the crackdown on all absconders and proclaimed offenders to strengthen law enforcement and public safety across the district.



# Div Com inaugurates 3rd Chrysanthemum Show at Lal Chowk Srinagar

Says Show will become as famous as Tulip season, increase influx of tourists

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18:** After Gul-e-Lala (Tulip) season of Spring, Gul-e-Dawood (Chrysanthemum) season of Autumn is gradually turning into another attraction for tourists & locals in Srinagar. On Saturday, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg inaugurated the 3rd Chrysanthemum Show at Clock Tower, Lal Chowk Srinagar organised collectively by SKUAST-K, SMC and Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL).

As the heart of city glows in hue of vibrant colours casted by a variety of Gul-e-Dawood flower beds, Div Com invited tourists, locals & students to visit the place and enjoy the show which shall continue to uplift-spirit of visitors till 20th of November.

Speaking on the occasion, Garg says the Chrysanthemum Show is a great initiative of SKUAST-K to decorate the city hub and to reach to the people.

Divulging the market essence of flower farming, Div Com said



that cut flowers is a big industry and an opportunity for the progressive farmers for income generation.

He said that for twenty years Kashmir has been famous for the Tulip season which attracts visitors from across the country & the

world. He added that Autumn season is equally colourful and famous season of Kashmir as Spring, Sum-

mer or Winter.

He hoped that the Chrysanthemum Show would be another attraction for the tourists to visit Kashmir & enhance the influx of visitors. Div Com divulged that Chrysanthemum gardens will be developed at different spots to adorn and beautify the city which will augment the vibrancy of Smart City.

VC, SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmad while speaking at the occasion remarked "we converted a bustling business hub into a Colorful garden" and urged the business community to take care of Gul-e-Dawood show for the rest of the period.

CEO, SSCL, Faz Lul Haseeb while speaking at the event highlighted the collaboration between SKUAST-Kashmir and Smart City to organize the show and its potential to increase footfall of tourists.

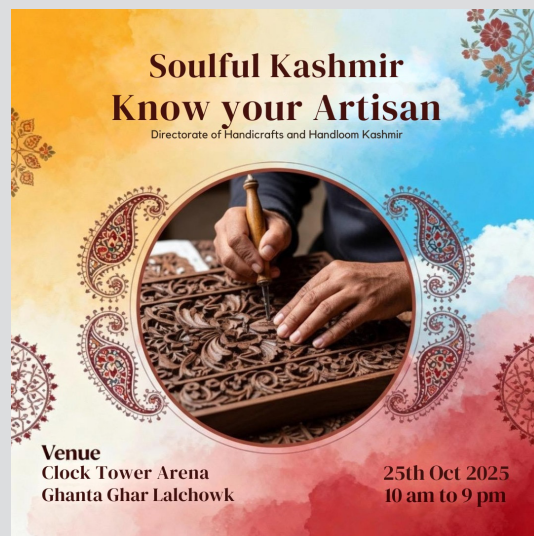
Among others, the event was attended by the business community, traders, locals, students and officers from concerned departments.

## Ghanta Ghar to tick craft bells on Oct 25 in 2nd edition of 'Know Your Artisan' series

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18:** Riding high on the resounding success of its inaugural outing, the Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, is all set to host the second chapter of the "Know Your Artisan" initiative under the vibrant Soulful Kashmir campaign.

Following the overwhelming response at the Jhelum River Front, where crowds flocked to witness live craft demonstrations, forge direct connections with master artisans, and snag authentic GI-tagged treasures, the spotlight now shifts to Ghanta Ghar (Clock Tower Arena), here in the city centre, on October 25.



In a press statement issued here today, a spokesman of the department, urged the people to come in large numbers to support the renowned artisans from Kashmir, whose exquisite handmade products have set the highest standards in global markets.

"Expect an afternoon brimming with immersive experiences, hands-on interactions with a fresh lineup of renowned artisans showcasing specialties like intricate woodwork, exquisite embroidery, and timeless weaving techniques; interactive storytelling sessions revealing the soul-stirring journeys behind each creation; and vibrant display-cum-sale stalls offering exclusive deals on Soulful Kashmir-branded masterpieces," he added.

Giving details, the spokesman stated that as many as 10 stalls will be installed in various GI crafts during the 'Know Your Artisan' campaign from 10.00 am to 9.00 pm. "The campaign will also have separate 'Try Your Hands' corner where visitors can have first-hand experience on pottery wheels, handlooms and spinning of Pashmina.

Issuing a fervent appeal to the visitors to become 'Vocal for Local', the spokesman hoped that the event will rekindle our shared pride in Kashmir's artisanal legacy while opening doors to sustainable livelihoods.

"The energy from the first event has been electric and now, we invite every Srinagarite, visitor, and culture enthusiast to join us in even greater numbers at Lal Chowk to make the event a resounding success a time," he added.

## PCCF J&K reviews Forestry Works in Pir Panjal Forest Division

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BUDGAM, OCTOBER 18:** The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force, S.K. Gupta, conducted an extensive field visit to the Pir Panjal Forest Division to assess the implementation of works under CAMPA and Demarcation works in the Doodganga Range.

During the inspection, the PCCF reviewed various developmental, plantation, and conservation initiatives being undertaken across the Division.

He emphasized the importance of completing all activities within stipulated timelines while maintaining the highest standards of quality.

Commending the sincere efforts of the frontline staff, he encouraged them to continue contributing diligently towards the department's green mission.



Marking the occasion, PCCF planted a conifer sapling at Nilnag under the banner of "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam", symbolizing the department's continued commitment to environmental stewardship and community engagement in plantation drives.

He also unveiled an informative pamphlet on Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), highlighting the Division's significant strides in sustainable resource management and the promotion of livelihood opportunities for forest-dependent communities.

The visit concluded with an interactive session with field officials, where PCCF commended their dedication to forest protection and urged them to strengthen community-based forestry initiatives and ecological restoration efforts.

The PCCF was accompanied by Chief Conservator of Forests, Irfan Rasool Wani; Divisional Forest Officer, Pir Panjal Division, Deputy Director Forest Protection Force, Divisional Manager Forest Development Corporation Budgam, Range Officers, and Range Officers and Assistant Directors FPF department.

## State Taxes Department supports Rural Women Entrepreneurs on Diwali

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, OCTOBER 18:** In true spirit of Diwali, a team from J&K State Taxes department, led by Additional Commissioner Enforcement and Administration Jammu, Namrita Dogra visited stalls set up by Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under the J&K Rural Livelihood Mission (Umeeed) at Excise and Taxation Complex here.

The officers enthusiastically interacted with the women entrepreneurs and purchased 'diyas, decorative items, candles, and other festive products, showcasing their solidarity and encouragement towards local talent and self-reliance.

Speaking on the occasion, Namrita Dogra expressed heartfelt appreciation for the creativity and determination of the SHG members. "These women are not just crafting beautiful



products; they are shaping brighter futures for their families and communities," the Additional Commissioner said. "This Diwali, I personally pledge to continue supporting Self-Help Groups by buying from them and encouraging others to do the same. Every small purchase from a local artisan lights up many homes."

The initiative, under the supervision of Additional Commissioner, highlighted the department's commitment towards promoting local entrepreneurship and women empowerment. The event reflected how collective efforts and conscious choices can bring festive cheer and sustainable growth to the grassroots level.

## 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah concluding ceremony held at Mahore

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**REASI, OCTOBER 18:** The concluding ceremony of the 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah was organized with great enthusiasm by Poshan Project Mahore.

District Programme Officer, Poshan was the Chief Guest, while the Tehsildar Chassana attended as the Guest of Honour.

During the event, various health and nutrition stalls were displayed, showcasing the collective efforts made to promote nutritional awareness, health education and community participation.

Special awareness sessions were held on centrally sponsored schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PM-MVY), Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP), and Health & Hygiene initiatives, highlighting the importance of maternal care, child nutrition and preventive healthcare.



Beneficiaries of different Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) also took active part in the programme. On this occasion, baby kits were distributed among nursing mothers and pre-school kits were provided to beneficiaries aged 6 months to 6 years, to encourage early childhood care, learning and

holistic development. Awareness on adolescent health, anemia prevention, balanced diet and importance of vaccination was also shared. Demonstrations and interactive sessions on handwashing, safe drinking water and preparation of low-cost nutritious recipes were conducted to promote

healthy habits at the grassroots level.

Speaking on the occasion, the District Programme Officer appreciated the efforts of Supervisors, Health and Nutrition Mobilizers, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) for their active participation and

dedication throughout the month-long campaign. She emphasized the need to sustain the efforts of Poshan Maah activities throughout the year to achieve the vision of a "Malnutrition-Free India."

The ceremony concluded with a Vote of Thanks presented by Child Development Project Officer (CDPO), Mahore, who expressed heartfelt gratitude to the District Programme Officer, Tehsildar Chassana, line departments, staff members and all participants for their valuable cooperation and contribution. She acknowledged the tireless work of field functionaries and urged them to continue spreading awareness about nutrition, health and hygiene in their respective areas.

The event ended on a positive note, celebrating the spirit of "Suposhit Bharat - Sashakt Bharat" and reaffirming the commitment towards building a healthy and nourished community.

## DIET Doda facilities smooth, transparent conduct of Summative, Annual Examinations for Classes 1st to 9th

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**DODA, OCTOBER 18:** The Summative Assessment/Annual Examination for Classes 1st to 9th (Session 2025) is being conducted smoothly and fairly across all established examination centres in District Doda, as per the date-sheet issued by the Directorate of School Education Jammu.

The examinations are being held under the overall supervision of Principal DIET Doda, Rajesh Kumar and under the guidance of Chief

Education Officer Doda, Iqbal Hussain with the coordinated efforts of Cluster Heads and the active cooperation of school staff across the district. The entire process has been marked by discipline, transparency and strict adherence to academic standards.

To ensure fair and uniform conduct, District-Level Monitoring Teams and Cluster-Level Teams have been actively inspecting various examination centres. These visits aim to maintain the sanctity of the



examination process and verify that the question papers framed by the school authorities are in accordance with the guidelines issued by SCERT, Divisional Office Jammu.

The examination process has been widely appreciated for its smooth management, punctuality and adherence to the standards of academic integrity. The joint efforts of DIET Doda, Cluster Heads and school management teams have ensured the seamless and transparent execution of the examinations.

In addition, all Cluster Heads have been instructed to evaluate the answer sheets on the same day to facilitate the timely declaration of results, enabling the commencement of new classwork from November 1st.

Principal DIET Doda, Rajesh Kumar expressed satisfaction over the smooth conduct of the examinations and appreciated the Cluster Heads, teachers and monitoring teams for their collective commitment to ensuring fairness, discipline and efficiency in the evaluation process.



# Kissan Mela a unique platform for empowering farming community: Javid Dar

## Inaugurates Kisan Mela-cum-Exhibition at Baramulla

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 18:** Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar today inaugurated a Kisan Mela-cum-Exhibition at Dak Banglow here, organized by department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Baramulla.

Addressing the Mela, the Minister said that this Kisan Mela serves as a unique platform to connect farmers, agriexperts, agri entrepreneurs and institutions, showcasing modern technologies, government

schemes and success stories aimed at empowering our farming community. He added that the mela also demonstrated improved crop varieties and animal breeds, advanced farm and agricultural machinery, displays of innovative technologies as well as sustainable agricultural practices and improve crop yields.

Javid Dar expressed confidence that the Kisan Mela would go a long way in empowering farmers and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the region. He urged farmers to take advantage of the event and learn about the latest technologies



and schemes aimed at improving their livelihoods.

The Minister stated that the department will exercise strict control over the sale of sub-standard pesticides and fertilizers in the markets. "We will establish check post to regularly monitor and check the quality of pesticides and fertilizers being sold in the markets", he said. He warned that strict action will be taken against those found selling substandard pesticides and fertilizers.

Javid Dar urged upon the officers to work tirelessly to resolve all the issues of farming community. He also called for conducting awareness camps at all

block levels so that the farmers gets benefits from all schemes run by central as well as state government.

Earlier, Javid Dar also inspected the stalls established by Agriculture, Horticulture Sericulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, allied sector and other stakeholders.

MLA, Baramulla, Javed Hassan Beigh; MLA Pattan, Javid Riyaz Bedar; MLA Sopore, Irshad Rasool Kar; MIA Uri, Dr. Sajad Shafi; Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah; others District officers and larger number of farmers were present on the occasion.

## Jammu Tawi Golf Course hosts Monsoon Tee Off Diwali Cup 2025 – celebrating sport, spirit and festivity

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, OCTOBER 18:** The lush greens of Jammu Tawi Golf Course (JTGC) are set to come alive with festive fervor as the much-awaited Monsoon Tee Off Diwali Cup 2025 tees off on October 19, 2025, at 1:00 PM.

Organized under the aegis of C.P Verma, Secretary Tourism Department, in association with the Directorate of Tourism, Jammu, the event promises to be a vibrant blend of sport, celebration and community spirit.

Bringing together nearly 90-100 passionate golfers from across the region and beyond, this year's Diwali Cup will serve as a testament to the growing golfing culture in Jammu & Kashmir, symbolizing how the sport continues to unite people and foster camaraderie across all walks of life.

Following an exciting day of competition, the evening would culminate in a grand prize distribution ceremony, a sumptuous dinner, and a gala night featuring a renowned qawwali group, adding a soulful and festive touch to

the celebration.

Speaking about the event Secretary Jammu TAWI Golf Course, Manav Gupta remarked, "The Monsoon Tee Off Diwali Cup is more than just a sporting event – it's a celebration of unity, enthusiasm, and the spirit of Jammu. Golf is fast becoming a bridge that connects communities, and JTGC is proud to be at the heart of this cultural and sporting evolution in J&K."

The Monsoon Tee Off Diwali Cup 2025 stands as a shining example of how Jammu is emerging

as a premier golfing destination in North India, nurturing both seasoned players and budding enthusiasts alike. The tournament aims not only to celebrate Diwali in style but also to promote sports tourism and strengthen social bonds through the shared love of the game.

With its perfect blend of sport, culture and festivity, the Diwali Cup at JTGC promises an unforgettable experience – where every swing and every note will resonate with the joy and togetherness of the season.

## SBI RSETI Ramban organises entrepreneurship awareness programme at Neel Batoo, Neel Top

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**RAMBAN, OCTOBER 18:** State Bank of India Rural Self Employment Training Institute (SBI RSETI) Ramban today organized an Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme (EAP) at Neel Batoo and Neel Top to promote self-employment and skill development among the rural populace.

The programme, held under the guidance of Director, S. Harvinder Singh and led by Senior Faculty Member Amrik Singh Raju, witnessed enthusiastic participation of more than 50 local residents, including youth, women, and aspiring entrepreneurs. Ex-Sarpanch Gulam Rasool, who graced the occasion as Guest of Honour, appreciated the proactive outreach of SBI RSETI Ramban for extending its initiatives to far-flung areas and motivating rural youth to pursue entrepreneurship as a means of sustainable livelihood.

During the session, the Faculty Member enlightened participants about various free skill development training programmes offered by SBI RSETI, aimed at enhancing employability and encouraging self-reliance. Detailed information was shared about Government



Sponsored Schemes such as PMEGP, JKREGP, and MUDRA, which provide financial assistance to start new ventures.

Awareness was also created about Mission YUVA, a government initiative that focuses on youth empowerment through skill-based training, mentoring, and access to credit facilities. In addition, participants were sensitized about important social security schemes like Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) to ensure financial inclusion and future security.

The locals expressed gratitude to SBI RSETI Ramban for organizing the programme and acknowledged the institute's continuous efforts in promoting financial literacy, entrepreneurship development, and livelihood opportunities in remote and hilly regions of the district.

## Commissioner SMC reviews Progress of ongoing Projects under NCAP

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18:** In a continued effort to strengthen air quality management in the city, Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, today conducted a comprehensive review of all ongoing projects under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

The review meeting, held at the SMC Headquarters, focused on the status, progress, and timelines of various interventions aimed at mitigating air pollution and improving environmental sustainability across Srinagar. Senior officers from different departments and executing agencies briefed the Commissioner on the current implementation status of NCAP projects, including green space enhancement, mechanical road sweeping, dust suppression measures, installation of air quality monitoring systems, and public awareness campaigns.

The Commissioner emphasized strict adherence to project timelines and directed concerned officers to ensure quality execution of all works. He further underscored the importance of inter-departmental coordination to achieve measurable improvements in the city's air quality index.

Commissioner reiterated SMC's commitment to implementing the NCAP roadmap effectively to make Srinagar cleaner, greener, and healthier for its citizens.

## Health Screening Camp organized at Khellani Top - Bhaderwah

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**BHADERWAH, OCTOBER 18:** On the directions of Chief Medical Officer Doda, Dr. Om Kumar, and under the guidance of Block Medical Officer Bhaderwah Dr Versha Sharma, a health screening camp was organized at Khellani Top - Bhaderwah under the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) initiative.

During the camp, the team from Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) Bhaderwah, assisted by MMU staff, conducted comprehensive health screening of 53 individuals. Free medicines were also distributed among the general public as part of the outreach effort to ensure healthcare accessibility in remote areas.

## Symposium-cum-Awareness Programme on POSH Act held at GDC Akhnoor

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**JAMMU, OCTOBER 18:** A Symposium-cum-Awareness Programme on Sexual Harassment Policies and the POSH Act (Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, 2013) was organised today by the Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH) of Government Degree College Akhnoor, under the patronage of College Principal Dr. Romilla Malla Bhatt.

The event aimed to sensitize students and faculty members about the importance of fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment within educational institutions. The programme began with a formal welcome address

by Dr. Monika Malhotra, Convener of CASH, who outlined the objectives of the event and emphasized the significance of the POSH Act in ensuring that women can work and study with dignity, free from any form of harassment. She also spoke about the various challenges women and girls continue to face in workplaces and educational spaces and stressed the need for awareness and collective responsibility.

Six students – Komal, Tamanna Sharma, Ritika Sharma (Semester 3), and Nisha Sharma, Radhika Sharma, Ritika Sharma (Semester 1) – representing different departments of the college, presented insightful speeches on the theme. They highlighted



key provisions of the POSH Act, the role of Internal Committees, and the importance of standing up against inappropriate behaviour.

The programme witnessed active participation from 52 stu-

dents and 15 faculty members. An interactive session followed the presentations, where participants engaged in open discussion, shared their perspectives, and suggested preventive measures to promote gender equal-

ity and respect in academic settings.

Committee members Dr. Shashi Sharma, Dr. Deepali Mahajan, Dr. Rajiv Katoch, Dr. Pinky Manhas, Prof. Anjela Qureshi, Prof. Shreya Sharma, Prof. Suresh Kumar, and Dr. Rimjhim also interacted with the audience, addressing questions and reinforcing the message of zero tolerance towards harassment.

Other faculty members present included Prof. Neeru Dalla, Dr. Anju Bala, Dr. Seema Kumari, Dr. Neha Uttam, and Dr. Esha Kumari Verma. The event concluded with a collective pledge to build a campus culture rooted in mutual respect, equality, and empowerment.

## AYUSH Department celebrates 10th Ayurveda Day – the Dhanwantari Jayanti at Ramban

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**RAMBAN, OCTOBER 18:** The Department of AYUSH Ramban, under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan, today celebrated the 10th Ayurveda Day, which coincides with Dhanwantari Jayanti, by engaging the local community in activities aimed at honouring India's ancient system of health and healing.

The event, observed on Dhanteras, paid rich tribute to Lord Dhanwantari, the divine healer and the founder of Ayurveda, while highlighting the growing global recognition of traditional Indian medical systems. The celebration was marked by a spirit of reverence and awareness towards preventive and holistic healthcare practices.

Chief Planning Officer Dr. Sha-

keeb Ahmed Rather graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The programme witnessed participation from officers, officials, medical staff, and local citizens, reflecting the collective commitment towards promoting wellness through Ayurveda.

In his address, Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather emphasized Ayurveda's enduring relevance in modern healthcare, noting its scientific basis in maintaining balance between body, mind, and environment. He urged the community to incorporate Ayurvedic lifestyle principles – such as balanced diet, yoga, and natural remedies – into their daily routines to enhance immunity and prevent diseases.

The event also featured informative lectures and demonstrations by AYUSH doctors and health workers, who highlighted the role of Ayurve-

da in managing lifestyle disorders, stress, and seasonal ailments through natural and preventive measures. They also encouraged citizens to adopt herbal medicines and home-based remedies for sustainable wellness.

District Yoga Coordinator and Senior AYUSH Officer, Dr. Masood Iqbal Zargar, expressed gratitude to all participants for their enthusiastic involvement and reiterated AYUSH's dedication to promoting traditional health systems across the district.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Masood Zargar, who underscored that Ayurveda Day is part of a nationwide movement to revive and mainstream Ayurveda as a reliable, safe, and sustainable healthcare approach in line with the "Ayurveda for One Health" theme of the year.

## DC Kathua reviews progress of PMAY (U) 2.0 implementation

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**KATHUA, OCTOBER 18:** Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma, today chaired a meeting to review the progress under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) 2.0 here in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Kathua, Surinder Mohan Sharma; Chief Planning Officer Kathua, Ranjit Thakur; Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council Kathua, and Executive Officers of Municipal Committees Basohli, Billawar, Hiranagar, Lakhampur and Parole.

While reviewing the physical and financial progress of cases under PMAY 2.0, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers



to expedite the verification and approval process of pending applications. He emphasized that all cases should be processed strictly on merit and in accordance with the scheme guidelines.

The DC further instructed the officers to ensure that deficient applications are promptly scrutinized and rejected with due justification so that

genuine beneficiaries are not deprived of the benefit. He called for maintaining transparency at every stage of implementation and ensuring timely disbursement of installments to eligible beneficiaries.

The DC urged all executing agencies to work in mission mode to achieve 100% saturation under PMAY 2.0 in urban areas of Kathua district.



HT EDITORIAL

## Make Gulmarg Davos of India

Over the past few years Davos in Switzerland has come up as a favourite conference destination during winters. In Kashmir there is a famous tourist place that can be used for the same purpose. The tourist place in consideration is Gulmarg in North Kashmir. Gulmarg can be developed on the lines of Davos following which conferences during winter can be held at this picturesque health resort.

Jammu & Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah in a recent function referred to this and said that a world class convention centre is coming up at Gulmarg. Omar said that this would give a new dimension to the MICE tourism in Jammu & Kashmir and ease pressure on SKICC in Srinagar. He also said that the visitors would love to visit Gulmarg since they would witness world class beautiful landscapes and also get a chance to feel the beauty of the place from the Gondola cable car project.

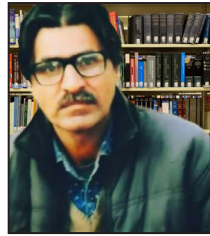
Since scores of conferences are held in Kashmir in a year Gulmarg can be a favourite place among the organizers of such conferences. Yet another advantage with Gulmarg is that there would be less pressure on security agencies and they would feel relieved. Whenever a conference or a seminar is held at SKICC the multiple security agencies are on toes since they have to ensure that everything passes off peacefully. As such there is tension in the air and the movement of people is restricted.

There is a general complaint from the people especially those living in areas like Brien, Nishat, Shalimar, Harwan and others that they are kept hostage as and when some high profile event or conference is held at SKICC. These people say that they have to change their route via the foreshore road or Teilbal road passing through the Hazratbal area so as to reach their respective destinations. Once Gulmarg is chosen as a conference or event destination there would be fewer problems for people living in the outer areas of Srinagar city.

Given the fact that the weather is wonderful during summer in Gulmarg the people coming to different conferences and events would love to come and take part in such programmes. Since the conference centre is all set to be inaugurated at Gulmarg the union territory government should take other measures. It is important that connectivity is improved to this health resort and all the bottlenecks are removed so that the journey is hassle free.

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# Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA): The Philosopher and Preacher of Monotheism



Tariq Shabnum



Translated  
by: Imran Rather

It is narrated that when Mir Muhammad Hamadani (RA) once met Sheikh Noor-ud-Din (RA), he found him extremely frail and weak. Upon inquiring about his condition, Sheikh-ul-Alam humbly replied, "I was not a worthy horseman, and therefore I was frightened by the thought of taming the wild horse." This symbolic response reflected his deep humility and spiritual detachment.

At the age of thirty, the Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) renounced extreme asceticism and adopted a balanced, moderate path of devotion in harmony with Islamic teachings. He distanced himself from the practices of monks and Brahmins and embraced the life of a true Reshi (Sufi sage). He even refrained from eating wheat bread for six years as a form of spiritual discipline.



In the paradise like valley of Kashmir, when the darkness of disbelief and polytheism faded by the grace of Almighty Allah, and the radiant sun of Islam rose over the land, a new era of spiritual awakening and intellectual enlightenment began. Along with the rise of knowledge, literature, and virtue, the valley blossomed with saints, ascetics, and mystics who raised the banner of Tawheed (the Oneness of God). Through their devotion, they dedicated every moment of their lives to spreading the message of divine unity, attaining nearness to the Creator, and achieving eternal success.

Among these great spiritual luminaries was Sheikh-ul-Alam Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA) revered as Alamdar-e-Kashmir (The Standard-Bearer of Kashmir). He was not only a saint of the highest order but also a reformer and preacher whose spiritual light illuminated every corner of the valley. His teachings enriched the inner beauty of Kashmiri culture and spread the universal message of Islam across the land. People of all faiths and sects lovingly remember him as Sheikh-ul-Alam, Alamdar-e-Kashmir, Nund Reshi, and Koshur Waz Khawn (the spiritual feast of Kashmir).

Historical accounts record that Sheikh Noor-ud-Din (RA) was born on Eid-ul-Adha, 777 AH (1375 CE). His father's name was Sheikh Salar, and his mother was Sadra. From his early childhood, signs of purity, piety, and devotion were evident. The discerning eyes of the wise foresaw that the child possessed extraordinary spiritual potential.

During his youth, Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) practiced severe austerities engaging in continuous spiritual retreats, fasting, and meditation in caves and wilderness for many years. He devoted his life to worship and self purification, detaching himself from worldly desires and dedicating himself entirely to divine love.

It is narrated that when Mir Muhammad Hamadani (RA) once met Sheikh Noor-ud-Din (RA), he found him extremely frail and weak. Upon inquiring about his condition, Sheikh-ul-Alam humbly replied, "I was not a worthy horseman, and therefore I was frightened by the thought of taming the wild horse." This symbolic response reflected his deep humility and spiritual detachment.

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According to Baba Nasib-ud-Din (RA), Sheikh Noor-ud-Din's transformation began with a divine dream in which he saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) accompanied by his companions. When asked his name, the Sheikh-ul-Alam replied, "Ya Rasul Allah, (PBUH) my name is Nunda." The Prophet (PBUH) then said, "Your name is good; be good yourself so that your name may not become a stain upon you." He then placed his blessed hand on Sheikh-ul-Alam's shoulder and prayed for his closeness to Allah. Upon awakening, the Sheikh-ul-Alam felt spiritually enlightened his inner and outer vision expanded, marking the beginning of his spiritual revolution.

He later confessed, "In the beginning, I believed asceticism and seclusion to be the pinnacle of spiritual life, but I eventually realized that there is no monasticism in Islam." He famously remarked:

Living in caves and jungles is the work of monkeys and mice. The truly righteous are those who, while living among their families, remain steadfast in prayer

and purify their hearts."

Sheikh Noor-ud-Din (RA) dedicated his entire life to preaching Islam and guiding the people of Kashmir. He traveled across the valley, residing in various places for years, nurturing both the elite and the common people. Through his words and example, many notable individuals of his time embraced Islam and adorned their lives with piety.

A well-known anecdote describes that once, while approaching a wealthy man's home for a feast, the gatekeeper mistook him for a beggar and refused entry. Sheikh-ul-Alam left silently but soon returned, dressed neatly. This time, he was received with great respect and honor. During the meal, instead of eating, he dipped his sleeves into the dishes. When asked why, he replied, "This invitation was not for me but for my fine garments." This story reflects his deep insight into human vanity and social hypocrisy.

After Lalla Ded, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din (RA) stands as one of the most important poets of Kashmiri literature. His verses, widely known as Kashir Quran (The Kashmiri Quran), are imbued with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. Through his poetry, he eloquently expressed the essence of monotheism, divine love, and moral discipline. One of his renowned verses proclaims:

"Awwal alif kune Allah,  
Awwal path, akhir zawal na tas."  
"In the beginning was the Alif — Allah.  
He is the First and the Last, without decline."  
In another verse, he beautifully conveys the experience of divine unity:

"La ilaha illallah saā i korum,  
Wahi korum panun pan,  
Wujud traavath maujood myulum,  
Har mokh vuchum panun pan."  
"I declared with certainty, 'There is no god but Allah';  
I found the revelation within myself.  
The created merged with the Creator  
In every face, I saw only my own reflection."

Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) used poetry as a means to convey profound truths. His verses are a treasure of divine wisdom, urging reflection upon the Qur'an, obedience to Allah and His Messenger (PBUH), awareness of the Hereafter, and avoidance of hypocrisy and vanity. Regarding prayer, he wrote that neglecting Salah hardens the heart, and those who abandon worship engage in unfaithful acts, facing punishment greater than that of disbelievers.

In his final years, Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA) resided in Rupwan, Charar-e-Sharif, where he passed away during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (Budshah) in 842 AH (1438 CE) at the age of sixty-three. His funeral prayer was led by his closest disciple, Baba Nasib-ud-Din (RA), and attended by numerous scholars, saints, and the Sultan himself. He was laid to rest at Charar-e-Sharif, where his shrine remains a center of spiritual devotion. Pilgrims continue to visit throughout the year, and gatherings of Ziker (remembrance) and recitation illuminate the sacred site.

As the poet aptly says: "Do not underestimate these wearers of coarse robes;

They conceal the radiance of Moses' hand within their sleeves."

Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA) thus remains not only the spiritual guardian of Kashmir but also the eternal voice of monotheism, enlightenment, and love for humanity.

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# Assam Rifles providing healthcare and medicines to the remote village



By M S Nazki

Har koyee chahata hai, ik mutthee aasman, har koyee dhundhata hai, ik mutthee aasman, jo sine se lagale, ho aisa ik jahan, har koyee chahata hai, ik mutthee aasman har koyee, Chand sitaro ka mela hai, yeh dil phir bhee akela hai, chand sitaro ka mela hai, yeh dil phir bhee akela hai, mehfil me hai shehnayee, phir bhee dil me hai tanahayee, hai sanso me jaise kayee tufan, har koyee, har koyee, Milata nahee kya yaha ai dil, phir kyon na mile gito kee manjil! (For a child a toffee is enough and a packet of hundred a sky)

Indian Army medical camps are free healthcare initiatives organized for remote and border communities, often under programs like Operation Sadbhavana. These camps provide a range of services, including general health check-ups, consultations, distribution of free medicines, and specialist care, with a frequent focus on women and children's health. They aim to improve healthcare access, build trust, and foster community well-being in underserved areas.

The idea behind writing a story is that you need details! Though I was born in North East (Kolkata) to be precise, I have lived my age till now only thinking tomorrow comes (if it does come)... but love to write! Here is another one for Assam Rifles!.....In any case, I love it!

The history of Northeast India is marked by its existence as a collection of distinct kingdoms and tribal territories before British rule, followed by integration into the British Raj and the creation of modern states post-independence.

During the colonial era, the British established the separate province of Assam in 1874 and introduced the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, which led to the isolation of the region.

After 1947, the modern states were formed through a series of reorganizations, with Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram separating from Assam, and Manipur and Tripura gaining statehood in 1972.

Pre-colonial and colonial periods: Before the 19th century, the area was a collection of different kingdoms and tribal areas, with limited written records for most groups, except for the Ahoms of Assam and Meiteis of Manipur.

The Ahom and Manipur kingdoms were taken over by Burmese invasions in the early 19th century.

The British fought the First Anglo-Burmese War and gained control, marking the start of the colonial period.

During the British Raj, Northeast India was often treated as an extension of Bengal Province. The separate province of Assam was created in 1874.

Regulations were introduced to restrict outside entry and settlement, which contributed to the region's isolation from its neighbors.

Under the British, many communities in present-day Mizoram, Nagaland, and Meghalaya converted to Christianity.

Post-independence period: After India's independence, the Northeast comprised Assam, and the princely states of Manipur and Tripura.

Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram were part of the larger territory of Assam.

The North-Eastern Areas Reorganisation Act of 1971 led to the creation of states and union territories.

Meghalaya was separated from Assam and became a state in 1972.

Manipur and Tripura became states in 1972 after being union territories.

Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh were created as union territories in 1972, gaining full statehood in 1987.

Sikkim was an independent country after 1947 and was annexed by India in 1975, later joining the North-Eastern Council in 2001.

Today we will cover up first five battalions of Assam rifles:

The "First Assam Rifles" is not a current unit but refers to the Cachar Levy, the militia formed in 1835 that was the predecessor to the modern-day Assam Rifles. Raised by the British, it was initially a force of about 750 men tasked with protecting tea estates from tribal raids. It underwent several name changes over the years before officially becoming the "Assam Rifles" in 1917.

Initial Name and Purpose: The force was established as the "Cachar Levy" in 1835 to protect British tea gardens and settlements.

Role Expansion: Its role was expanded to include punitive operations beyond Assam's borders, and it was reorganized into the Assam Frontier Force.

Further Reorganizations: It was reorganized again into the Assam Military Police in 1870, with its members later serving in World War I.

Official Name Change: Recognizing its contributions during World War I, the force was officially renamed the "Assam Rifles" in 1917.

The Second Assam Rifles:

The "Second Assam Rifles" is not a historical unit; it refers to the history of the Assam Rifles, which began as the Cachar Levy in 1835. The force was initially created to protect tea estates, and its role expanded over time to include punitive actions and border security. It was later reorganized, renamed the "Assam Military Police," and then officially became the "Assam Rifles" in 1917 after its distinguished service in World War I.

Early years and evolution: Cachar Levy (1835): The force originated as the Cachar Levy with about 750 men to protect British tea plantations from tribal raids.

Assam Frontier Force: Its role expanded to conduct operations beyond Assam's borders, leading to its reorganization as the Assam Frontier Force.

Assam Military Police: By 1870, the force was reorganized into three battalions: Lushai Hills, Lakhimpur, and Naga Hills. Another battalion, Darrang, was raised before World War I.

World War I and renaming: Wartime service: During World War I, the Assam Military Police was deployed to Europe and the Middle East to support the British Army.

Renamed Assam Rifles: In recognition of its service, the force was officially renamed the "Assam Rifles" in 1917.

The force continued its role in the northeast and was deployed in various conflicts, including the Sino-Indian War of 1962.

Modern role: Today, the Assam Rifles remains one of India's oldest paramilitary forces, serving as a counter-insurgency force and responsible for guarding India's borders, particularly in the northeast.

The Third Assam Rifles:

The 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion of the Assam Rifles is the oldest and was originally formed in 1835 as the Cachar Levy. It was tasked with guarding the eastern frontier of Assam and has fought in World War II against the Japanese. Today, it is located in Kohima, Nagaland.

Oldest Battalion: The 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion is the



oldest in the Assam Rifles, which are known as the "Sentinels of the North East".

Original Role: It was established in 1835 as the Cachar Levy to guard the eastern frontier from the Brahmaputra river to the Cachar Hills.

World War II: The battalion fought against the Japanese in World War II, helping to stop their advance into India.

Current Location: Its present-day headquarters are in Kohima, Nagaland.

Affiliation: The unit is often referred to as the "Naga Hills BN".

The Fourth Assam Rifles:

The "Fourth Assam Rifles" can refer to a specific unit within the Assam Rifles paramilitary force, which has a history of service in the North East region of India, including involvement in flood relief and security operations.

It also most recently gained attention for hosting the annual "4th Assam Rifles Half Marathon" in Shillong, Meghalaya.

The unit, like other Assam Rifles battalions, was recognized in 2024 for its performance with the DGAR Banner.

As a military unit Role and History: The 4th Assam Rifles is a battalion-level unit of the Assam Rifles, an Indian paramilitary force that acts as a "right arm of the civil and left arm of the military". This specific unit has been involved in proactive efforts like joint training for flood relief operations in areas like Khowai, Dhalai, and Haora River in Tripura.

Casualties: The unit has also suffered casualties in the line of duty, such as the ambush in Manipur in 2020 where four personnel were killed.

Awards: In 2024, the unit won the Directorate General of Assam Rifles Banner for its performance.

As an event The 4th Assam Rifles Half Marathon: The unit is also the name of a popular annual half-marathon held in Shillong, Meghalaya.

The Fifth Assam Rifles: The "fifth Assam Rifles" most commonly refers to the 5th Battalion of the Assam Rifles, which is famously known for its role in escorting the 14th Dalai Lama to safety in India in 1959. Raised in 1920, the battalion has a long history of service and played a significant role in the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. While it's a specific battalion, the term can be confused with the 5th Assam Police Commando Battalion, which is a different security force recently inaugurated in October 2025, notes this Facebook post.

Historical significance: This battalion is most famous for escorting the 14th Dalai Lama and his entourage from the border in Arunachal Pradesh to India in 1959.

Deployment: Since 1958, the battalion's posts have been in the Kameng Frontier Division of Arunachal Pradesh.

Other conflicts: During the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962, the battalion fought in forward posts against overwhelming Chinese forces, holding their ground on orders from their commanders.

Other duties: In earlier years, the battalion was employed to restore law and order in Assam and assisted in containing Nople rebels in Madras and Chittagong.

Other mention: 5th Assam Police Commando Battalion: This is a separate entity recently inaugurated in October 2025, focused on strengthening the internal security of Assam.

And the league of braves will continue!

The story was Assam Rifles organised a Medical Camp at Khasa Village, Arunachal Pradesh on 06 Oct 2025 under the Assam Rifles Civic Action Programme 2025-26.

Located in a remote and isolated region, Khasa Village has long faced challenges in accessing basic healthcare facilities.

Acknowledging this need, Assam Rifles extended vital medical assistance directly to the villagers' doorstep, providing essential healthcare services and medicines.

The ...Khása is a village in the Longding district of

Arunachal Pradesh, located in a remote area near the Indo-Myanmar border. It is part of the Pangchao circle and is known for its traditional Wancho culture and architecture. The village is also recognized for its geographical features, including the nearby Longho Sath waterfall.

Khása is situated in the Longding district, within the Pangchao circle, close to the border with Myanmar.

Administration: It is administered by a Sarpanch (Head of Village) elected under the Panchayati Raj Act.

Traditional homes are built with local materials like wood, bamboo, and palm leaves.

The village has a tradition involving log drums, as seen in local rituals.

Environment: The area is characterized by its natural landscape.

The Longho Sath waterfall is a natural feature located near the village.

Recent events: In October 2025, the Assam Rifles conducted a medical camp in Khása as part of their Civic Action Programme, providing healthcare and medicines to the remote village.

Har koyee chahata hai, ik mutthee aasman, har koyee dhundhata hai, ik mutthee aasman, jo sine se lagale, ho aisa ik jahan, har koyee chahata hai, ik mutthee aasman har koyee, Chand sitaro ka mela hai, yeh dil phir bhee akela hai, chand sitaro ka mela hai, yeh dil phir bhee akela hai, mehfil me hai shehnayee, phir bhee dil me hai tanahayee, hai sanso me jaise kayee tufan, har koyee, har koyee, Milata nahee kya yaha ai dil, phir kyon na mile gito kee manjil! (For a child a toffee is enough and a packet of hundred a sky)

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Key features of the camps: Location: They are typically held in remote villages, particularly in border areas, to provide essential healthcare where it is otherwise limited.

Services: The camps offer a variety of services, such as: Free health check-ups

Medical consultations and general treatment

Distribution of free essential medicines

Specialized care in fields like general medicine, pediatrics, and gynecology

Screening for conditions like diabetes and hypertension

Health awareness and educational lectures on hygiene and preventive care

Mental health support

Beneficiaries: The camps serve the general civilian population, with a common focus on women, children, and the elderly. Some camps are specifically dedicated to the welfare of veterans and their families (Veer Naris).

Collaboration: The medical teams often include both Army personnel and local health authorities to provide comprehensive services.

Objectives: Beyond immediate medical aid, the camps serve to strengthen the bond between the Army and local communities, build trust, and contribute to the nation's overall well-being and development.

I had to end it somewhere.....thus I decided..... chalute jana yu hee raho me, bhar hee laga koyee baho me, jhamesha rahega na dil viran, har koyee, har koyee, Mujhko jine ka koyee sahara mila, gam ke tufan me koyee kinara mila, sunee sunee thee jo rahe, ban gayee pyar kee bahen, lo khushiyo se meree hueyee pehchan, har koyee, har koyee Chahta hai ek Mutthi bhar asmaan!



## Dr Itoo invited to Join International Diabetes Federation Global Expert Network



Call for Experts – Invitation to IDF Fellows



Fellowship 3 days ago

Dear IDF Fellows,

We are pleased to share an exciting opportunity with you.

The IDF School of Diabetes has just launched a **Call for Global Experts** to join the **IDF Global Expert Network**. As valued members of our Fellows community, you have the privilege of accessing this call before it is shared more widely.

This is an unique chance to contribute your knowledge and expertise to strengthen diabetes care, education, research, and policy worldwide. By joining this network of experts, you will play a key role in shaping the work of the IDF School of Diabetes and advancing our shared mission.

Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo, distinguished Kashmiri doctor, educator, public health advocate, and Fellow of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) has been invited from the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) to join the prestigious IDF Global Expert Network under the IDF School of Diabetes.

The invitation was extended only to selected IDF Fellows worldwide recognizing their outstanding contributions to diabetes care, research, edu-

cation, and advocacy.

The IDF Global Expert Network aims to bring together leading experts who will collaborate to advance diabetes knowledge and education, research and policy worldwide.

By joining this network of experts, Dr Itoo will play a key role in shaping the work of the IDF School of Diabetes in alignment with the IDF's global mission.

"I am honored to be considered by the International Diabetes Federation for this global expert initiative. Diabetes is a growing global health challenge, and collaborative expert-driven education is vital to improving patient outcomes. I look forward to contributing meaningfully to global diabetes awareness and capacity building through this platform." Dr Itoo said.

## Health First: Annual Medical Check-Ups at Ramzaan College Ensure Students' Holistic Well-Being



■ Mohammad Arfat Wani

At Ramzaan College of Nursing and Paramedical Sciences, Galander Pampore, welfare of the students is given equal importance to their academic growth, indicating a holistic education policy. The college conducts comprehensive health check-ups for all students, demonstrating its commitment not only to academic excellence but also to the physical, mental, and emotional health of its students. These assessments are crucial in identifying potential health issues early, ensuring that students remain fit and capable of handling the rigorous demands of medical and paramedical education.

The medical student's life is tense with study for hours on end, clinic duty and test-anxious exams. Such a lifestyle may hide health issues, increase stress, and lead to fatigue or poor nutrition. Yearly routine check-ups identify such latent issues, providing the opportunity for early treatment. No aspect of a student's health is left to chance, reflecting the belief that learning and health go hand in hand.

On check-up in this year, the students were given a comprehensive series of tests that included height and weight measurement for tracking progress, measurement of blood pressure and pulse rate for cardiovascular health, temperature tests for infection check, hemoglobin tests for anemia screening, blood sugar testing, complete blood counts, vision screening, routine complete physical examination, and cardiovascular check. The nurses provided personalized care, observing even small signs of tension, anxiety or stress, an indicator that emotional and mental well-being were as important as physical well-being.

The usability of the check-ups was glaring. For instance, a strained pulse rate in a student confirmed an existing medical condition that was given immediate attention for their health. The majority of students had small problems like mild anemia, minor eye issues, or stress indicators, which could be corrected with ease if addressed within time. Apart from discovery, these screenings educate students on healthy living, maintaining balanced diets, exercise, sufficient rest, and stress mitigation.

The actual benefits of such check-ups are real and imminent. In this year's examination, one student was



detected to have a pulse rate of 115, which necessitated further examination that revealed a pre-existing health issue. Early intervention enhanced the general health and energy levels of the student, illustrating how yearly assessments serve as early-warning systems to avert minor concerns from becoming severe medical issues. Also, minor indicators like vision deficiencies, mild anemia, and periodic stress were tackled, enabling students to embrace corrective strategies in time. These tests promote the development of healthy habits, such as well-balanced diets, regular physical activity, adequate rest, and proper stress management, developing habits for a lifetime of wellness.

Apart from medical advice, the students are also guided and mentored by teachers and coordinators. Our coordinator Ajaz Sir provides extremely helpful advice beyond text books, and teachers make sure to share their experience and knowledge each time, resulting in education, professional growth, and personal growth. Principal Jamsheeda Zaroo provides yet another buttress of strength to this well-balanced installation by commemorating every medical-related day such as Nurses' Day, Drug Addiction Day, World AIDS Day, and Mental Health Day in college. Her adherence to very

high standards and never agreeing to compromise keeps students and teachers ever striving for excellence.

In addition to them, some committed faculty members were equally instrumental in making the health check-up sessions smooth, organized, and pleasant for all students. The genuine hard work of Ubaid Sir, Zahid Sir, Zeeshan Sir, Aabid Sir, Auqib Sir, Rabiya Maam, Rimsha Mam and Mehak Maam must be particularly appreciated. Their professionalism, empathy, and patient-centric attitude ensured that the whole process remained smooth and comforting. Personally speaking, I have to say that I didn't even notice when Rabiya Maam took my blood, a moment which clearly depicted her skill and tender care. This kind of experience instills confidence among the students and the faculty members, making what otherwise would be a tense medical process a soothing and experience-gaining one.

Such a practice also encourages a sense of responsibility among the faculty and staff, who are charged with helping students facing physical or mental illnesses. It is indicative of the college's concern for each student's overall well-being, not merely academic achievement. Being included in this year's check-up, I got firsthand experience of professional-

ism, dedication, and attention provided by our medical personnel and faculty. It was reassuring to see a learning environment where health is considered on par with education so that students can thrive academically, physically, and emotionally.

In conclusion, yearly health check-ups are not routine; they are essential for early detection of diseases, protection of mental and physical well-being, and encouraging healthy lifestyles for life. Ramzaan College of Nursing & Paramedical Sciences is a model institution that places student health at the top of their priority list. In the guidance of coordinators, teachers, and Principal Jamsheeda Zaroo, not only are students receiving medical care but are also guided, motivated, and spurred on to do their best. The philosophy is holistic in nature, paving the way for a healthier, more productive, and satisfying life in the future, proving that knowledge and health together form the seeds of true success.

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

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# KU signs MoU with Voluntary Medicare Society as Advisory Committee for PwDs holds its maiden meeting

Varsity hosts training workshop on assistive tools, technologies for inclusive education

## HT News Desk

**SRINAGAR, OCT 18:** The University of Kashmir (KU) convened the first meeting of its newly constituted Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), marking a significant step toward strengthening inclusivity on campus.

The meeting, chaired by Vice-Chancellor KUProf. Nilofer Khan, was attended by Registrar Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Dean Students' Welfare Prof. Pervez Ahmed, Prof. (Dr.) Mohammad Maqbool, President, Voluntary Medicare Society (VMS); Prof. Masooda Yaseen, Vice Presi-

dent, VMS; Prof. Shazia Manzoor, Head, Department of Social Work KU; Prof. Amina Parveen, Head, Department of Education KU; and representatives of students and parents of PwDs. A key highlight of the meeting was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the University of Kashmir and the Voluntary Medicare Society (VMS).

The agreement envisions skill-based workshops and training programmes for persons with disabilities, with a focus on enhancing human resources, improving infrastructure accessibility, providing technical support, and

exploring the introduction of a Bachelor's Programme in Special Education through the University's academic bodies.

On the sidelines of the meeting, a two-day training workshop on "Beyond Barriers: Reading and Learning with Assistive Tools and Technologies" was organised by the Allama Iqbal Library (AIL) in collaboration with the Special Cell under the aegis of the Department of Students' Welfare (DSW), KU.

The workshop aimed to promote inclusive education by sensitising participants to assistive tools and technologies that facilitate effective learning for persons with disabilities (PwDs),



The workshop featured demonstrations of modern assistive technologies and AI-based learning tools designed to enhance reading, writing, and classroom participation for students with disabilities.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the workshop Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said that the University

is committed to ensuring equitable access to education for all learners.

"We are trying our best to make sure that students with special needs are provided every possible facility and support to pursue their education with comfort and dignity," she said.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer

Iqbal, said that accessibility and inclusion are integral to the University's academic environment, and such initiatives bridge the gap between technology and inclusive learning.

Dean DSW KU, Prof. Pervez Ahmed, said that the campus must be accessible to every student and this workshop will go a long way in creating awareness about assistive technologies and inclusive practices.

Padma Shri Javed Ahmad Tak highlighted the need for continuous engagement and the role of institutions in building barrier-free educational spaces.

Earlier, in his welcome

address, Dr. Fayaz Lone, Librarian, AIL KU, informed that several facilities have been established in the library to ensure smooth and comfortable learning for students with disabilities.

On the occasion, the start of a pick-and-drop service for PwD students on the campus was also announced.

The technical sessions were conducted by resource persons from SAKSHAM- Umar Sadiq and H.U. Hubby.

The event proceedings were conducted by Dr. Shahid Ali Khan, Cultural Officer, DSWKU, while the vote of thanks was presented by Shaheel Mohamad, DSW KU.

## Synergise, Share Databases To Make Extradition Efforts For Fugitives More Effective: CBI Director

### HT News Network

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** CBI Director Praveen Sood has emphasised the need for greater coordination and seamless data-sharing among the country's law enforcement agencies to strengthen efforts to extradite fugitives from abroad.

The CBI chief was addressing the state police chiefs and senior officers of the central agencies on Friday during the two-day conference on 'Extradition of Fugitives-Challenges and Strategies' organised by the agency.

Sood stressed the need for different agencies to come together and share their databases to bring more synergy in efforts against wanted criminals, the agency's spokesperson said, sharing details of the events.

Chairing the valedictory session of the conference on Friday, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan emphasised that the deliberations of the two-day conference would lay the road map for future strategy.

He said that there is a need to improve the documentation so that the country's requests for assistance can withstand international legal

scrutiny.

"He also elaborated on the steps and initiatives being taken by the Home department to ensure that wanted fugitives are brought back to India," the statement said.

Director General National Investigation Agency Sadanand Date said the provisions of new criminal laws, especially those relating to Trial in Absentia, can be used against the absconding offenders.

The two-day conference on 'Extradition of Fugitives-Challenges and Strategies' was organised by the CBI and was inaugurated by Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Thursday.

Shah had emphasised the need for a coordinated approach to bring back wanted fugitives from abroad.

"During the two days, more than 200 officers from 45 State and Central Law Enforcement agencies, including officers from MHA and MEA, participated in the discussions and deliberated on legal and practical issues in tracking wanted fugitives and coordinating efforts to bring them back to India," the spokesperson said.

A total of 25 officers from different

agencies, including the MEA, MHA, ED, NCB, FIU, NIA, NTRO, DRI, CBDT, Mumbai Police, INTERPOL and the CBI, made presentations on issues related to the extradition of fugitives.

"Effective use of channels available for seeking cooperation from abroad, use of technology in locating fugitive criminals, a strategic approach for extradition of these fugitives and analysis of the financial trail of fugitives were discussed," the statement mentioned.

The deliberations focused on narco, terror, cybercrime, organised criminals and financial offenders.

"The provisions of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act were also discussed for exploring the possibilities of taking action against the global assets of wanted fugitives. In one of the sessions, the focus was on targeting fund flows of fugitives and using the Anti Money laundering framework to trace fugitives and their assets," it said.

Besides tracing of illicit funds using state-of-the-art platforms and networks, the newly introduced Silver Notice by the Interpol was also discussed during the conference. (PTI)

## Office of the Executive Engineer Public Works (R&B) Division Awantipora

No: T-1/EEA/5499-5504 | Dated: 15/10/2025

### Extension Notice

- Subject: 1. Repair and Renovation of AEE Residential Quarter Pampore.  
2. UDDDC2526100009-(Repairment of Drain from House of Ajaz Ahmad Sofi to House of Mohammad Shafi Khan at Tanchibagh Pampore near Darul-Uloom Lane No 2).  
3. PDDSS2425100071-Setting and Upgradation of Divisional Work Shop for ED Awantipora.(CIVIL PART ONLY).  
4. Providing Consultancy and other allied services with all working drawings (Digital Layout Plan, /BOQ, Structural, Architectural Design) incld. technical vetting of drawings from DICQ/NIT/IIT and Conducting of all required soil investigations for the construction of Snow clearance Control Room at Trai.  
5. Providing Consultancy and other allied services with all working drawings (Digital Layout Plan, /BOQ, Structural, Architectural Design,) incld. Technical vetting of drawings from DIQC/NIT/IIT and Conducting of all required soil investigations for Construction of Truss and Hall of Eight class room Science Laboratory Block at GDC Pampore.

#### Reference:

1. This office e-NIT NO. 57/EEA/RNB of 2025-26/4237-47 Dated 15-09-2025
2. This office e-NIT NO. 66 /EEA/RNB of 2025-26/4686-96 Dated 25-09-2025
3. This office e-NIT NO. Fresh-67/EEA/RNB of 2025-26/4758-68 Dated 26-09-2025
4. This office e-NIT NO. Fresh-73/EEA/RNB of 2025-26/4924-34 Dated 30/09/2025
5. This office e-NIT NO. Fresh-74/EEA/RNB of 2025-26/4935-45 Dated: 30/09/2025

The critical dates for the above noted NITs are hereby extended as under:

- |   |                                                   |                           |
|---|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Bid Submission End Date                           | 20-10-2025 upto 4.00P.M   |
| 2 | Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online) | 22-10-2025 upto 12.00 P.M |

All other terms & Conditions shall remain same as per above mentioned NIT.

Sd/- Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora

DIPK: 7321/25 | Dated: 18-10-2025

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION SOPORE

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS | TWO COVER SYSTEM

NIT No: 110 /2025-26/RnB/Sopore | Dated: 17.10.2025 (E-tendering)

For and on behalf of the President of India, e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works. The Contractors should mandatorily be registered on JKPWDOMS for making online payment to the agency as per Govt. Order No.: 186-PW(R&B) of 2023 dated 08-05-2023:-

| S. No | Name of work.                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs) incl. GST | Cost of T/Doc. (Rs. In Lacs) | E/ Money (2% of Adv. Cost) | Time of completion | Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid) | Class of contract |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1     | Development of College Landscape with inertial rods parking slots Botanical Garden and Development of play fields ( Football/ Volley ball ,cricket, Basket ball Hockey Lawan, Badminton courts etc at GCW Sopore | 389.015                           | 0.055                        | 778300/-                   | 18 Months          | 07 .11.2025                                      | AAY               |

Project Authority: Director Education

Major Head of Account: Capex Budget

Position of Funds: Available

Position of AAA/ TS: Accorded by Principal GCW vide his No: WCS/ 023/35 dtd: 20.09.2025

(Position of TS: CE/PWD(R&B)NK /TS/ 174 of 2025-26 dtd: 14.10.2025

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                    |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Date of Issue of Tender Notice                                                                                                                                                              | 17-10-2025                                                                                         |
| 2. | Period of downloading of bidding documents                                                                                                                                                  | From 18.10.2025 to 06.11.2025, 4.00 P.M                                                            |
| 3. | Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting                                                                                                                                                     | 22.10.2025 From 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla. |
| 4. | Bid submission Start Date                                                                                                                                                                   | 23-10-2025 From 10.00 A.M .                                                                        |
| 5. | Bid Submission End Date                                                                                                                                                                     | 06.11.2025 upto 4.00 P.M                                                                           |
| 6. | The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla . | As per time specified in SBD.                                                                      |
| 7. | Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)                                                                                                                                           | 07.11.2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla .  |
| 8. | Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)                                                                                                                                           | To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed                                         |

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

Note:- The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT/SBD carefully before uploaded soft-copy any short fall found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected.

1.1 Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in shape of Treasury Challan/e-challan/Demand Draft in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore. (The Date of Treasury Challan/Demand Draft must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date).

1.2 At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 3% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance

Security of 3% of the contract cost, which will be released after successful completion of the work.

2. The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Superintending Engineer PW(R&B) circle Baramulla within 15 days after the date of receipt of letter of acceptance and shall be released after successful completion of DLP. The Bank Guarantee should be valid for 45 days beyond bid validity.

9. All key construction material (i.e. cement, steel, bitumen, pipes etc) shall have to be arranged by the contractor strictly as per specifications with the approval of Engineer-in-charge.

10. Qualification criteria for the work and other terms and conditions are contained in the bidding document available on website.

18, Any Typographical error in specification/ units/ rates shall be corrected and paid as per SSR of 2022.

No: 6800-09 Dated: 17.10.2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore

DIPK: 7307/25 | Dated: 18-10-2025

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# J&K Bank's half-yearly net profit up at Rs 979 Cr, Q2 net at Rs 494 Cr

Despite tough challenges, we are on track to achieve our annual guidance numbers: MD & CEO

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18:**

While maintaining higher provisioning requirements owing to regulatory compliance, J&K Bank posted a net profit of Rs 494.11 Cr for the July-September Quarter (Q2) of current financial year (CFY), remaining well on course to meet its annual market guidance. The Bank's net profit for half-year (H1) witnessed an increase to Rs 978.95 Cr from Rs 966.41 Cr recorded for H1 last FY.

The Bank announced financial numbers after its Board-of-Directors reviewed and approved the quarterly and half-yearly figures during a meeting held at the Bank's Corporate Headquarters.

**Key Highlights**

Moderated by the provisioning of Rs 92 Cr towards its investment in the Regional Rural Bank — Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank — following the amalgamation of Ellaquai Dehati Bank with the erstwhile J&K Grameen Bank under Central Government's "One State, One RRB" direction, the Bank today recorded a net profit of Rs 494.11 Cr for the Q2 and Rs 978.95 Cr for H1 of the CFY.

Reflecting steady core operations, the Bank's Net Interest

Income (NII) for the half-year (H1) is marginally up by 3.4% Year-on-Year at Rs 2899.43 Cr, while for Q2 NII stood at Rs 1433.99 Cr. In line with its market guidance, the Bank has maintained its NIM at 3.64% for the half-year (H1). The Bank's other income for H1 was at Rs 405.19 Cr while the Cost to Income Ratio for the half-year stood at 60.80%.

Commenting on the Bank's Q2H1 numbers, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "In spite of widespread disruptions during the first quarter following the Pahalgam incident and the extensive damage caused by floods in the second quarter, the overall growth we have recorded is both encouraging and reassuring."

"Even though profitability for Q2 was moderated due to an additional impairment provision of Rs 92 Cr made during the quarter in compliance with regulatory requirements, the performance is better than what was anticipated under the challenging circumstances," he added. Notably, the Bank has made a total provisioning of Rs 180 Cr towards Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank during the first two quarters of the current financial year. Excluding the



impact, the Bank's H1 profitability would be upwards of 15% YoY.

**Asset-Quality**

Despite difficult situation arising out of Pahalgam attack in Q1 and floods, landslides thereafter in Q2, the Bank has

gained further stability in asset quality. During the quarter, the Bank's Gross NPA Ratio has declined 18 basis-points QoQ to 3.32% and decreased by 63 bps YoY from 3.95% recorded in September, 2024.

The Net NPA ratio has also

moderated by 9 bps YoY to 0.76% from 0.85%, while declining 6 bps from 0.82% recorded for the June quarter of current financial year. Meanwhile, Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) of the Bank continued at above 90% level, while the Return on Assets (RoA) stood at 1.17% for the half-year.

On the Bank's asset-quality, MD & CEO expressed optimism, saying, "With GNPA around 3.30% half-way through the year, I think on asset quality front, our progress is steady. And with our robust and focused risk-management practices in place, I remain optimistic about meeting our annual guidance of below 3% GNPA by the financial year-end. Besides, our PCR is also healthy at 90.39%."

**Business Growth**

During the quarter, the Bank's deposits witnessed growth of 10.23% Year-on-Year basis reaching Rs 152030 Cr, while as the net advances increased by 9.38% YoY to Rs 105153 Cr from Rs 96139 Cr recorded last year. Up by 18 bps in sequential terms from 45.71% recorded in Q1, the Bank's CASA stood at 45.89% for the Q2 and continues to be one of the highest in the industry.

Regarding business growth, MD & CEO said, "Marking a

nearly 10% year-on-year growth in business numbers reaching Rs 2.57 Lac Cr, our Q2 performance demonstrates the Bank's operational discipline."

"Our deposit growth is at par with the industry average, while advances primarily driven by Agri/corporate segments have shown good credit growth both in sequential and YoY terms. Our CASA ratio also exhibited a slight uptick to 45.89% on sequential basis, underscoring our commitment to sustained, quality growth", he added.

He further said, "Despite tough challenges, this steady performance in the first half of the financial year affirms my confidence that we are very much on track to achieve our annual guidance growth numbers."

**Capital Adequacy**

The Bank's Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) for the July-September quarter stood at 15.27% as against 14.99% recorded last FY. In his remarks on capital position, the MD & CEO said, "With a CRAR of over 15%, we remain well-capitalized and positioned to support future growth opportunities while maintaining financial discipline. Significantly, the

CAR is exclusive of half-yearly profit of Rs 978.95 Cr, which would otherwise result in taking the ratio to above 16%."

**Building Business Momentum**

Commenting upon the Bank's growing operational focus in rest of the country, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee asserted, "We continue to execute our policy of expanding operations beyond J&K, strategically partnering with top-tier corporates across India. Simultaneously, through increased engagement of the Bank's leadership with the clientele across these geographies, we are in the process of sharpening our focus on building a gainful niche in the retail landscape outside J&K, particularly in the personal banking/finance segment."

Concluding his remarks, he said, "All these initiatives are tangible markers of the transformation currently underway at our Bank. However, the foundation of our progress rests on a firm triad: our people, our processes and our technology. And we are steadily strengthening all these pillars, ensuring that efficiency, resilience and excellence remain at the core of every facet of our operations."

## ADDC Reviews Implementation of Social Security Schemes in Shopian

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 18:** Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone today convened a meeting to review the implementation and progress of various social security and financial inclusion schemes in the district.

The meeting reviewed the progress achieved under various schemes including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and other welfare initiatives aimed at providing social and financial security to the weaker sections of society. A detailed discussions were held on beneficiary coverage, account saturation, seeding of Aadhaar with bank accounts and awareness activities being carried out at the block and panchayat levels.

ADDC directed officers from Rural Development, Social Welfare and other line departments to ensure effective coordination with banks and financial institutions for the smooth implementation of these flagship schemes.

He stressed the importance of reaching out to every eligible individual, particularly those in remote and far-flung areas, to ensure they avail the benefits of these schemes.

ADDC also directed Block Development Officers (BDOs) to mobilize MGNREGA field staff and village-level functionaries to assist in awareness generation and beneficiary enrollment under PMJDY, PMSBY and PMJJBY.

While highlighting the Government's focus on inclusive growth, ADDC said that these schemes are vital in providing a safety net to the poor and unorganized sector workers by ensuring access to banking, insurance, and pension facilities. He called for regular monitoring, timely updating of beneficiary data and ensuring transparency in the implementation of these schemes.

Among others, ACD, LDM, BDOs and other concerned were present in the meeting.

## SDM Chowki Choura visits Kasandar, Village Salyote

Reviews ground situation, resolves public grievances, issues on-spot directions for restoration works

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**CHOWKI CHOURA, OCTOBER 18:** Sub-Divisional Magistrate Chowki Choura Anush Hans today conducted an extensive day-long tour of the most severely affected area, Kasandar, Village Salyote—a remote habitation that has remained cut off from the mainland for the past two months following incessant rains, flash floods and landslides.

The SDM was accompanied by Tehsildar, BDO, BMO, ZEO, AE PMGSY, AE Jal Shakti (PHE), Tehsil Supply Officer Chowki Choura, Officials of the Health, Veterinary and Education Department, ex-PRI members and Village Lambardar.

During the visit, the SDM interacted with residents and took stock of the damage caused by the recent natural calamity, which has affected 17 families in the area. Several public grievances were heard and redressed on the spot.

The residents highlighted the urgent need for the restoration of road connectivity to the village. Responding to the demand, the SDM directed the Block Development Officer Chowki Choura and Assistant Engineer PMGSY to ensure early restoration of the road link to Kasandar on a priority basis.

A medical camp was also organised by the team of the Health Department, during

which health check-ups and distribution of medicines were carried out. Simultaneously, officials from the Veterinary Department examined livestock, administered vaccinations and provided necessary medicines free of cost.

Considering the forthcoming winter season, the residents requested the temporary relocation of the affected families to a safer place. Acting on the request, the SDM instructed the Education Department to make adequate rooms available in the Government High School, Salangar for temporary accommodation of the affected families.

Officers from PMGSY were further

directed to expedite road restoration work, while officials from the Jal Shakti (PHE) Department were asked to ensure an uninterrupted supply of clean drinking water.

To meet the ration requirements, the Tehsil Supply Officer Chowki Choura was directed to provide one month's advance ration to all affected families before Diwali.

The SDM assured the residents that every possible measure is being taken by the administration to provide timely relief and restore normalcy in Kasandar, Village Salyote.

## MLA Banihal kick-starts blacktopping work on Haroq-Karara Road

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**GOOL, OCTOBER 18:** Member Legislative Assembly Banihal Sajjad Shaheen today inaugurated the blacktopping work on the Haroq-Karara via Ashmar Road, in the presence of DDC Chairperson Ramban Dr. Shamshad Shan. The much-awaited project spans a total length of 8 kilometers and has been sanctioned at an estimated cost of ₹ 91.89 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) scheme.

Executive Engineer PMGSY Arth Gupta and AEN Naveen Aslam and many others were present.

Speaking on the occasion, the MLA



emphasized that the government is committed to improving rural connectivity and augmenting the quality of road infrastructure in far-flung areas. He said that better road connectivity not only ensures ease of travel but also plays a crucial role in promoting economic development, improving access to education and healthcare and improving the standard of living of rural residents.

The MLA directed the executing

agency to adhere to quality standards and ensure timeline completion of the blacktopping work.

The DDC Chairperson also lauded the government for prioritizing infrastructure development in remote regions like Gool and Banihal. She said that such developmental works reflect the administration's resolve to bring equitable growth and progress across all parts of the district.

Local residents expressed gratitude to the MLA and the District Administration for fulfilling their long-pending demand, noting that the project will significantly ease commuting and boost local economic activities in the area.

## GMC Doda Organises TEDx Event- "One Stage, Infinite Possibilities - Witness The Art of Possibility"

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**DODA, OCTOBER 18:** Government Medical College (GMC) Doda organised a TEDx event under the inspiring theme "One Stage, Infinite Possibilities - Witness The Art of Possibility." The event served as a vibrant platform for innovators, thinkers and changemakers to share their unique ideas and life experiences, inspiring creativity, resilience and positive transformation among the audience.



The session featured a diverse lineup of eminent speakers from various walks of life, including: Col. Virendra Kumar Sahi (Vir Chakra Awardee), Sandhya Dhar, Founder of Jiger and Nari Shakti Awardee, Meet Zaveri, Founder of Dignifier and Studio Odkhaan, Dr. Rakesh Bhal, Principal, GMC Doda, Dr. Parvaiz Alam, (Charles Pinto Awardee Psychiatrist).

Each speaker inspired the audience by sharing their personal journeys—highlighting moments of perseverance, lessons from failure and their commitment to achieving meaningful goals.

Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh graced the occasion as guest speaker and appreciated the efforts of GMC Doda for providing such a platform where individuals can exchange transformative ideas and experiences. He also commended the faculty for their dedication in organising impactful events that promote intellectual growth and innovation.

## Paddy Procurement Mandi inaugurated at Ramgarh

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

**SAMBA, OCTOBER 18:** Member Legislative Assembly Ramgarh Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, along with Director, Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department Jammu Anil Gupta today jointly inaugurated the Paddy Procurement Mandi (Registration-cum-Facilitation Centre) at Ramgarh-Samba.

The initiative aims to ensure smooth and transparent procurement of paddy from local farmers at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of ₹ 2,369 per quintal for Paddy (Common) and ₹ 2,389 per quintal for Paddy (Grade-A), thereby providing farmers with fair, assured and timely returns for their produce.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal reiterated

ated the government's unwavering commitment to the welfare of farmers through improved procurement facilities, enhanced transparency, and timely disbursement of payments. He emphasized that such centres will play a vital role in strengthening the rural economy, reducing the role of middlemen and empowering local farming communities.

Dr. Manyal further informed that only a few days earlier, he had inaugurated another Paddy Procurement Mandi at Rajpura. With the establishment of two Paddy Mandis in the Ramgarh Constituency, he noted that the long-standing demand of local farmers has been met, ensuring better accessibility and convenience for paddy procurement in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil



Gupta, highlighted that the Agriculture Department, in coordination with the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is committed to ensuring efficient procurement opera-

tions and timely payments to farmers. He directed field officers to extend full support to farmers during the procurement process and to ensure that no farmer



## Police Commemoration Day:

# Rajnath to pay tribute at National Police Memorial on Oct 21

### ■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will lay a wreath at the National Police Memorial here on October 21 to honour the brave policemen on Police Commemoration Day.

The day commemorates the sacrifice of 10 valiant policemen who laid down their lives in an ambush by heavily armed Chinese troops at Hot Springs, Ladakh, on October 21, 1959. Since then, the day is observed as Police Commemoration Day every year, an official statement said.

A joint parade of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and

Delhi Police will be held as part of the event.

In recognition of the sacrifices made by police personnel and their paramount role in preserving national security and integrity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had dedicated to the nation the National Police Memorial at Chanakyaपुरi, on Police Commemoration Day 2018. The museum is conceptualised as a historical and evolving exhibition on policing in India.

It is open to public on all days except Mondays. CAPFs organise band display, parade and retreat ceremony at the National Police Memorial on every Saturday and



Sunday in the evening, starting one hour prior to sunset.

The memorial gives police forces a sense of national identity, pride, unity of purpose, common history and destiny, besides reinforcing their commitment to protect the nation even at the cost of their lives.

It comprises a central sculpture, a wall of valour and a museum. The central sculpture, which is a 30 feet high granite monolith cenotaph, stands for strength, resilience and selfless service of police personnel. The wall of valour on which the names of martyrs are engraved stands as a steadfast acknowledgement of

the bravery and sacrifice of police personnel who have laid down their lives in the line of duty since Independence.

As a part of the remembrance, CAPFs and CPOs organise various commemorative events at National Police Memorial from October 22 to 30, which include visits of family members of the one who laid down their lives, police band display, motorcycle rallies, run for martyrs, blood donation camps, essay or painting competitions for children and display of video films showcasing the sacrifice, valour and services of police personnel. UNI

## CM Rekha Gupta celebrates Diwali at BJP office; focuses on development

### ■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta today attended the Diwali celebrations held at the BJP headquarters in Delhi, marking the start of the festive season with a message of unity, cultural pride and continued development efforts across the nation's Capital.

Addressing party workers and attendees, CM Gupta reflected on her government's work over the past seven months, emphasising outreach to all communities and focused development efforts.

"In the last seven months, we have tried to work for every section of Delhi," Gupta said. She further



mentioned that with Chhath Puja approaching, the ongoing efforts to clean the Yamuna are a long-standing demand of the Purvanchal community in Delhi.

"Yamuna is being cleaned for Chhath in a way that our brothers from Purvanchal expect from us," she said, noting that all necessary arrangements were being put in place to ensure a safe and respectful celebration.

Speaking about Diwali, Gupta said the national Capital is set to witness grand festivities this year. "All arrangements are made to celebrate Diwali with grandeur. Lakhs of lamps will be lit on Kartavya Path," she said, pointing to the large-scale lighting events being organised as part of the government's cultural outreach. UNI

# Chhattisgarh High Court verdict on Hasdeo Aranya sparks alarm over forest rights rollback

### ■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** A recent verdict by the Chhattisgarh High Court overturning forest rights granted to a village community in the Hasdeo Aranya region has ignited sharp criticism from Congress leader Jairam Ramesh.

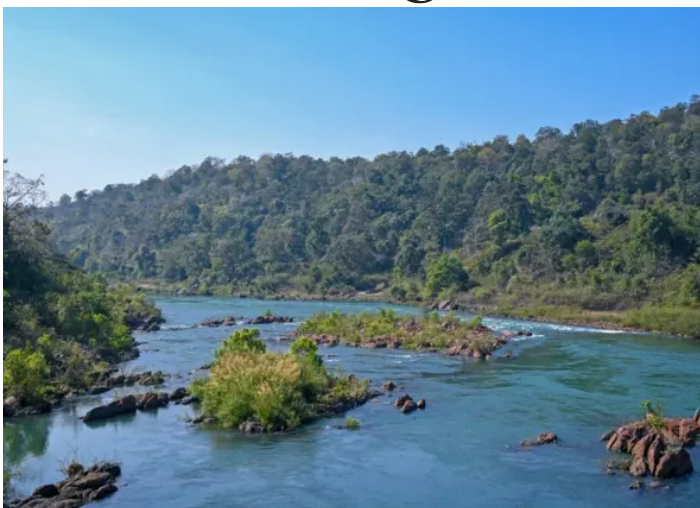
The judgment, which cited prior land diversion for mining and claimed that the Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006 does not override state control over mineral resources beneath forest land, has raised fears about the erosion of indigenous rights.

Addressing the ruling on social media platform X, Ramesh voiced his strong disapproval: "In the

latest of a series of unacceptable and unprecedented events since the Modani Government took power in Chhattisgarh, a single-judge Bench has set aside forest rights granted to the Ghatbarra village community under the Forest Rights Act, 2006."

He questioned the court's reasoning, asserting, "The FRA guarantees villagers access to forest produce, a right that cannot be sustained without land rights. Making this conditional on government policy undermines the entire foundation of the FRA. This is a dangerous precedent."

The case centers on community forest rights recognized for the Ghatbarra villagers—Scheduled Tribes and traditional forest



dwellers with generational ties to Hasdeo Aranya's forests. The

FRA was enacted to protect such rights, vesting legal ownership

and occupation to communities living in forests.

Critics warn this decision risks prioritizing mining and industrial interests over the socio-economic and environmental well-being of indigenous populations. The verdict could trigger displacement, disrupt livelihoods, and cause irreparable damage to the fragile forest ecosystem.

As the debate intensifies, the ruling raises urgent questions about balancing developmental ambitions with the constitutional rights of forest-dwelling communities—highlighting the fragile state of environmental justice in resource-rich regions like Hasdeo Aranya. UNI

## ED arrests key accomplice in fake passport racket run by Pakistani national

### ■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) announced today that its Kolkata Zonal Office has arrested Indubhushan Halder, also known as Dullal, for his involvement in a case concerning Azad Hussain—a Pakistani national using the fake identity 'Ajad Mallik'.

Halder was produced before the Special Court at Bichar Bhavan in Kolkata, which granted the ED five days of custody for further investigation.

The ED initiated its investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) based on a First Information Report (FIR) regis-

tered by West Bengal Police against Ajad Mallik under the Foreigners Act.

Investigations revealed that Azad Hussain, a Pakistani national, was living illegally in India under the assumed identity of 'Ajad Mallik, son of Mona Mallik'. He was involved in fraudulently obtaining Indian identity documents for illegal immigrants from Bangladesh in exchange for money. Hussain was arrested on April 15, 2025, and is currently in judicial custody.

The ED probe further found that Hussain referred Bangladeshi clients seeking Indian passports to Indubhushan Halder, a resident of Chakdah in Nadia. Halder played a

pivotal role in facilitating the issuance of Indian passports for these nationals by creating forged documents for their applications, thereby generating proceeds of crime.

Halder, through his close association with Ajad Mallik, has been linked to facilitating passports through illegal means in approximately 250 cases so far. His anticipatory bail applications, filed before the Special PMLA Court in Kolkata and the Calcutta High Court, were both rejected.

A Prosecution Complaint under the PMLA has already been filed against Azad Hussain in 2025.

Further investigation into the matter is ongoing. UNI

## ED files supplementary chargesheet against naxal leader in terror funding case

### ■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Ranchi Zonal Office, today filed a supplementary chargesheet before a special PMLA court against Dinesh Gope, the self-styled chief of the proscribed Naxal organisation, the People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI), and 19 others.

The chargesheet involves a case of terror funding and money laundering, where the total proceeds of crime generated through systematic extortion and levy collection by the PLFI are estimated to be about Rs 20 crore. The ED investigation has so far traced and identified a money laundering trail of Rs 3.36 crore.

The ED initiated its PMLA investigation based on multiple FIRs and chargesheets filed by the Jharkhand Police and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) against Dinesh Gope and his associates.

The predicate offences include a wide array of organised criminal activities such as murder, attempt to murder, extortion, and acts of terror under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The investigation revealed that Dinesh Gope, as the supremo of PLFI, commanded a criminal enterprise that systematically extorted levies from contractors, businessmen, and transporters in Jharkhand and adjoining states through violence, arson, and intimidation.

The probe unearthed a complex, multi-layered money laundering operation masterminded by Dinesh Gope. The modus operandi involved funneling the extorted cash into a network of shell companies fronted by his two wives, Shakuntala Kumari and Hira Devi.

These entities, having no legitimate business, were used to deposit large amounts of illicit cash into the banking system.

The funds were then layered through various complex mechanisms, including hawala transactions, a network of local money transfer operators, and third-party businesses, to obscure their criminal origin. The laundered funds were integrated into the legitimate economy through the acquisition of high-value assets, including luxury vehicles and fixed deposits, and were also used to fund the family's personal expenses.

The ED had earlier filed a prosecution complaint against Nivesh Kumar, a key PLFI aide, for laundering money to the tune of over Rs 4 Crore, which included Rs 2 Crore received from Dinesh Gope for procuring arms and ammunition. Following this, Dinesh Gope was arrested by the ED on August 20.

In the present complaint, the ED has sought the prosecution of all 21 accused for the offence of money laundering and the confiscation of assets (comprising seized cash, bank balances, and vehicles) identified as POC. Further investigation into the matter is ongoing. UNI

## PM MODI'S GST CUTS FUELS SHOPPING FRENZY AHEAD OF DIWALI

### ■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strategic GST rate cuts have unleashed an unprecedented wave of consumer spending, transforming this year's Navratri into one of the most spectacular shopping festivals in recent memory, and fueling anticipation for a historic Diwali bonanza. With inflation cooling to an eight-year low—CPI at a mere 1.54 percent and food inflation plunging into negative territory at -2.3 percent—households across India found their wallets breathing easier.

This financial relief paved the way for an exuberant festive spirit and soaring expenditure. The impact was immediate and dramatic. Festive and wedding season turnovers are projected to surpass a staggering Rs 7 lakh crore, marking India's largest consumer spending spree in years. Digital payments skyrocketed overnight, soaring from Rs 1.18 lakh crore on September 21 to a jaw-dropping Rs 11.31 lakh crore on September 22, as shoppers rushed to seize the savings sparked by GST cuts.

Delhi alone witnessed festive sales estimated at Rs 75,000 crore, while Ahmedabad saw a nearly 10 percent surge in cotton fabric demand after GST reductions on garments priced

under Rs 2,500.

These policy moves have not only slashed costs but revitalized local supply chains and empowered the "Make in India" movement to reclaim market dominance. The automobile sector roared to life with its best Navratri in a decade. Maruti Suzuki doubled last year's sales, moving 1.65 lakh vehicles in just eight days, including a record-breaking 30,000 cars sold on Ashtami, the highest single-day tally in 35 years. Mahindra & Mahindra saw a 60 percent jump in SUV sales, spearheaded by the XUV700 and Scorpio N. Tata Motors surpassed 50,000 vehicles sold, while two-wheeler giants Hero MotoCorp and Bajaj Auto reported double the showroom footfall compared to last year.

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) hailed a historic 34 percent year-on-year growth in Navratri auto sales, attributing the surge to GST reforms and renewed consumer confidence. Consumer electronics also basked in the festive glory.

Sales of televisions, refrigerators, and washing machines surged sharply post-GST cuts, with premium product categories growing 40–45 percent. Haier boasted an 85 percent growth, nearly selling out its stock of

large-screen TVs. Reliance Retail, Vijay Sales, LG, and Godrej Appliances all recorded robust double-digit growth.

E-commerce platforms emerged as prime beneficiaries of the GST-driven shopping rush. Amazon India logged over 276 crore customer visits this season, with 70 percent of shoppers hailing from tier 2 and tier 3 cities.

Prime memberships swelled in smaller towns, while same-day and next-day deliveries rose 29 percent year-on-year in metro areas, and two-day deliveries increased 37 percent in smaller cities. Meesho set new records, registering 206 crore customer visits and 117 million hours of shopping during Dussehra week alone.

Bolstered by this consumption wave, India's stock market surged with the Nifty 50 reaching a 52-week high of 25,709, buoyed by strong foreign investment inflows and a strengthened rupee. PM Modi's carefully timed GST cuts ahead of the peak festive season have done more than just lower taxes—they have empowered consumers, invigorated businesses, and reinforced India's economic resilience. This festive season, India's growth narrative shines as brightly as the Diwali diyas, illuminating the path towards a truly Viksit Bharat. UNI

## GST rate cuts benefit reaching the common man: Nirmala Sitharaman

### ■ United News of India

**NEW DELHI, OCT 18:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today said that GST rate reduction has resulted in an increase in purchases and the government is closely monitoring 54 items where the prices are reduced and tax benefit is reaching the consumer.

"GST 2.0 reforms have given a major boost to the country's economy, leading to record sales across key sectors such as electronics, automobiles and consumer goods during the festival season," Sitharaman said while addressing a joint press conference with Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal here.

"Out of 54 daily use items we have been closely monitoring, we find that in every one of them, the tax benefit due to the GST Reforms has been passed to the end-consumer," Sitharaman added.

Highlighting the impact of GST rate reforms, the Finance Minister informed that three-wheeler dispatches grew by 5.5pc YoY and two-wheeler sales by 21.60 lakh units.

Moreover, passenger vehicle dispatch has been 3.72 lakh in September alone.

On the other hand, LG India noted exponential growth in sales during the Navratri season, and sales of the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) sector too have gone up.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman have brought the blessings of Goddess Lakshmi into every home. Whether it's the rich, the middle class, or farmers, 2025 is shaping up to be memorable for all. The major income tax relief announced on February 1 has already sparked a festive spirit across the nation."





## Axar: 'It's perfect that Rohit and Virat are here to help with the transition'

■ **Tristan Lavalette**

**NEW DELHI:** The symbolism was striking. During India's main training session ahead of the first ODI against Australia, Virat Kohli was having a typically intense hit with Rohit Sharma to his left in the next net at Optus Stadium.

Shortly after, India's last two Test and ODI skippers were joined in the nets by their successor Shubman Gill, who started preparation ahead of his ODI captaincy debut as a new era begins. Having set such a commanding tone launching his Test captaincy against England, where he finished as the highest run-scorer with 754 runs at an average of 75.40, Gill has suddenly become the face of Indian cricket.

Although his predecessors, especially Kohli, still hog most of the attention publicly as gleaned by a strong Perth media presence and smatter-

ing of fans around Optus Stadium following their every move.

It could be viewed as an awkward balancing act amid a transition for this India team after Kohli and Rohit dominated the leadership over the past decade, a particularly fruitful period across formats.

But their presence will undoubtedly deflect some spotlight off Gill, who can ease into the role with the support of his sage team-mates as India make their first steps towards the 2027 World Cup.

"This is a great experience for Shubman too. Rohit bhai and Virat bhai and everyone is here, this is part of the transition process," left-arm spinning allrounder Axar Patel told reporters in Perth.

"You have older players, and if the young players come with their experience, then they can learn from the seniors and understand how to play at this level, what they can do

and what they can't do.

"It's perfect that Rohit bhai and Virat bhai are here and Shubman is doing the captaincy. It will help in Shubman's growth as a captain. It's good if young and experienced play together."

While typically steady in the nets, Kohli has been notably jovial during the first couple of days of the Australian white-ball tour.

After his 40-minute net session on Friday, Kohli clearly enjoyed himself bantering with several team-mates leading to much laughter all around. India's training sessions have had a relaxed vibe around them, perhaps a sign of things to come in this new era.

But much focus of this three-match ODI series will be on the performances of Rohit and Kohli, almost certainly their farewell on Australian soil, at the top of the order.

ESPNCricinfo

## Inter-College Volleyball & Weightlifting Tournaments conclude at KU

■ **HT Sports Desk**

**SRINAGAR, OCT 18:** The University of Kashmir successfully concluded its Inter-College Volleyball and Weightlifting Tournaments, organized by the Directorate of Physical Education and Sports (DPE&S). More than 320 athletes from various colleges participated across men's and women's categories.

Held under the University's Annual Sports Calendar, the tournaments showcased outstanding talent, sportsmanship, and competitive spirit, providing a platform for students to qualify for All India and North Zone Inter-University Championships under the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), New Delhi.

### Women's Volleyball

In the women's volleyball event, 23 teams from across the Kashmir Division competed over ten days. The final featured a thrilling five-set battle between the Post Graduate team and Government College of Physical Education (GCOPE), Ganderbal. After a strong comeback by the Post Graduate team, GCOPE, Ganderbal clinched the championship in the decisive final set.



### Weightlifting Championship

The University hosted the Inter-College Weightlifting Championship for the first time, promoting Olympic and Commonwealth disciplines. Over ten colleges participated, with GDC Shopian, Srinagar Women's College, and the Post Graduate contingent securing the top three positions in the overall

medal tally. A prize distribution ceremony held at Ground "A" of the Varsity saw medals and certificates presented by Prof. Showkat Ahmad Shah (Department of Psychology) and Dr. Surjeet Singh (Coordinator, Directorate of Physical Education and Sports).

Prof. Shah congratulated the participants and stressed the role

of sports in fostering resilience and mental alertness.

Dr. Singh reiterated the Directorate's commitment to expanding sporting disciplines and providing broader competitive opportunities.

The event proceedings were conducted by Mr. Tausif Bhat (Assistant Director) and Mr. Muneer Alam (Volleyball Coach).

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