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9-day autumn session of J&K Assembly to begin today

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 22: The nine-day autumn session of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly is expected to be stormy, with opposition parties gearing up to corner the ruling National Conference (NC)-led government over a range of issues.

The session, comprising six sittings, will begin tomorrow with obituary references for six former legislators who passed away after the last budget session held in Jammu.

The proceedings are expected to be stormy, with the opposition expected to target the government over gover-

nance failures, unfulfilled promises made in the NC's election manifesto, demands for statehood, and reservation-related concerns.

Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will demand accountability from the NC-led government for what he described as a “betrayal of electoral promises.” “The government has failed to deliver on its commitments made during the elections—whether it is the promise of 200 free units of electricity, 12 LPG cylinders per household, or other assurances given to the

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NC Holds Key Meet Ahead Of J&K Assembly's Autumn Session

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 22: A crucial meeting of the ruling National Conference (NC) began here on Wednesday, a day ahead of the nine-day autumn session of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

Top party leaders, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and party

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Maiden 'KHILAT-E-AMEER' Award being Presented by Prof Nasir Mirza on behalf of Lubaab Publications to Mohammad Yousuf Taing: HT Photo

Khilat-e-Ameer Award Conferred upon Living Legend Mohammad Yousuf Taing

Lubaab Publications Starts Annual literary honour/ Award for living Legends of Kashmir

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 21: In a remarkable initiative aimed at honouring stalwarts of Kashmiri language and culture, Lubaab Publications has instituted a prestigious annual honour titled “Khilat-e-Ameer Award”, in memory of the legendary poet and scholar

Syed Ameer Shah Kreeri (RA). The award, the first of its kind, celebrates the exemplary contributions of writers, poets, and scholars who have dedicated their lives to the preservation and promotion of Kashmir's linguistic and literary heritage.

The formal announcement of the

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J&K Speaker Admits PDP's Resolutions To Restore Waqf Board, Cadre Of Officers

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 22: Jammu and Kashmir Assembly speaker has admitted two private member resolutions by PDP leader Wahid-ur-Rehman Para, one of which seeks restoration of J&K Waqf Board and handing it over to a religious conglomerate headed by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq.

The second private member's bill is about restoration of J&K cadre of

IAS, IPS, KAS and KPS officers, an official said.

The nine-day autumn session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly will begin here on Thursday.

“In terms of the Rule... in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, I am to intimate that the Speaker has been pleased to admit your Resolutions — to restore J&K Waqf Board and entrust it custodianship to the

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CS, NITI Aayog Discusses Modalities For Establishing Tele-ICU Network Across J&K

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 22: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today held a detailed discussion with Member, NITI Aayog, Dr. V.K. Paul, to deliberate on the establishment of Tele-ICU facilities across the newly established Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) in the districts of J&K.

The meeting marked a sig-

nificant step towards defining the modalities for rolling out a robust, technology-driven critical care network aimed at strengthening peripheral healthcare institutions across the UT.

During the interaction, Dr. Paul shared valuable insights and highlighted successful Tele-ICU models being implemented by leading health technology providers such as Apollo TeleHealth, Medanta,



Cloudphysician, and HealthNet. He emphasized the importance of studying these models to identify best-fit strategies for J&K's healthcare ecosystem, considering its unique geography and institutional diversity.

Dr. Paul advised that the specific needs and infrastructure of each hospital must be carefully assessed prior to implementation.

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Nagrota Bypoll: BJP's Devyani Youngest Candidate, Vows To Fulfil Father Devender Singh Rana's Dream

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, OCT 22: From a young entrepreneur to a political hopeful, 30-year-old Devyani Rana has stepped into the electoral arena of Jammu and Kashmir's Nagrota Assembly constituency, determined to carry forward the legacy of her late father and senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana. Riding high on a wave of public sympa-

thy and goodwill, she has vowed to secure a resounding victory and transform Nagrota into a model constituency based on 360-degree development.

The Nagrota bypoll is slated to be held on November 11. It was necessitated following the demise of BJP legislator Devender Singh Rana on October 31 last year.

The BJP officially named Devyani as its candidate from Nagrota on Wednesday.

Filing her nomination papers as the youngest among 12 candidates contesting the Nagrota bypoll, Devyani described herself as the people's “sevadar”. She said that she had promised her father on his deathbed to fulfil his unfinished dreams.

“When Rana Sahib held my hand and took a vow from me to become the ‘sevadar’ of this constituency, he was confident I

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Ruhullah Alone To Decide If He Wants To Campaign For Me: Aga Syed Mehmood

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 22: National Conference candidate for the bypoll to the Budgam Assembly segment, Aga Syed Mehmood, on Wednesday said it was for the estranged party member, Aga Ruhullah, to decide whether he would campaign for him.

“It is for him (Ruhullah) to decide whether he wants to join the campaign or not. He is a party

man. He is my relative also, I cannot deny that. However, it is his choice whether he wants to campaign or not,” Mehmood told reporters while campaigning.

The polling for elections to the Budgam seat will be held on November 11, and counting of votes will be done on November 14.

Ruhullah, the National Conference Lok Sabha member from Srinagar, has been at

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Foundation for ‘Operation Sindoor’ was laid in 2016 after Uri terror attack: Army Chief

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, OCT 22: Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Wednesday said that the foundation for ‘Operation Sindoor’ was laid down in 2016 soon after Pakistan sponsored terrorists attacked an Army camp near Line of Control (LoC)

at Uri in North Kashmir's Baramulla District.

Speaking at the unveiling of “Civil Military Fusion as a Metric of National Power and Comprehensive Security” book and “Portraits of Valour: Timeless Military Art” coffee table book by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the Army Chief, accord-

ing to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, “Higher command course always talks about ‘why’. Three things which I picked up from him [Lt Gen Raj Shukla (Retd)] at that point in time... The second thing was the foundation for Operation Sindoor. At that time

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Delhi-Ladakh talks resume

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, OCT 22: In the first sign of a thaw, leaders of Ladakh, where four people died in police firing during the recent pro-statehood protests, met with Home Ministry representatives here on Wednesday for sub-committee level talks.

During the meeting, the Ladakh representatives demanded an immediate release of all arrested leaders,

including climate activist Sonam Wangchuck, the widely recognised face of the agitation.

The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) said that the next of kin of those killed should be given adequate compensation.

Talks between the Centre, LAB and KDA had broken down after four protesters were killed and several were

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BOTTOM

Doctors call for using iodised salt to combat iodine deficiency

Warn lapses in iodine intake can lead to serious health issues

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 22: “There is a need for consuming iodised salt to prevent iodine deficiency - a silent but serious nutritional disorder that continues to affect millions across the globe,” doctors in Kashmir said.

Although awareness about the

use of iodised salt has improved significantly in Jammu and Kashmir, experts warn that lapses in its use can still lead to grave health complications, particularly among women and children.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Dr Shabir Ahmad Dar from the Directorate of Health Services

Kashmir (DHSK) said that iodine is a vital micronutrient required for the production of thyroid hormones, which regulate metabolism, growth, and development.

“When the body does not get enough iodine, the thyroid gland enlarges in an attempt to capture more iodine from the bloodstream, leading to the formation of a goi-

tre—a visible swelling in the neck,” he said.

Dr Dar said that iodine deficiency is one of the leading causes of preventable brain damage in children. “In pregnant women, the deficiency can lead to miscarriages, stillbirths, and mental disability in newborns. Children born to iodine-deficient mothers often

suffer from developmental delays, stunted growth, and lower IQ levels,” he added.

Dr Bashir Ahmad Mir, a paediatrician, said that despite significant progress under the National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NID-DCP), there is still a need for

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NEP 2020 made education simpler: Dr Jitendra Singh

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, OCT 22: Asserting that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has made education simpler, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said that in PM Modi's regime there has been democratisation of opportunities.

While distributing free laptops among the top-performing female students of his constituency, Dr Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that the government led by PM Modi has introduced several dedicated schemes for women, and in the wake of Diwali, laptops could be the ideal gift for meritorious girl students.

“In the last 11 years, PM Modi has encouraged the education of girl students and introduced several dedicated schemes for them. In the Civil Services Exam, female students have consistently been the toppers. In 2014-15, 16 female students were toppers. Last year, two out of the first three toppers were females in the IAS exams. In Jammu and

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

9-day autumn.....

people,” Sharma said.
He further said that the BJP will question the government on its inability to create employment opportunities for the youth. “In the election, the government promised to create one lakh jobs for the youth, but they have done nothing. We will ask them what they have done for the youth in the past year,” he added.

Meanwhile, smaller Kashmir-based opposition parties such as the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Peoples Conference (PC), and Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) are expected to agitate over issues like statehood restoration, reservation rationalisation, and other challenges confronting the region.

As previously reported, the Assembly Secretariat has disallowed a resolution submitted by Peoples Conference president Sajad Gani Lone seeking the restoration of statehood, citing that the matter is sub judice.

The focal point of the session will be three government bills slated for introduction. The cabinet has already approved amendments to the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, and the Goods & Services Tax Act, 2017, along with the enactment of the Jammu and Kashmir Shops and Business Establishments Bill, 2025.

The Legislative Assembly Secretariat has received 450 questions, 13 private members' bills, and 55 private members' resolutions for the session. Additionally, 33 private members' bills submitted during the last Assembly session remain pending and will be given priority on October 28—the day designated for private members' business. However, many of these bills are unlikely to be introduced in the House.

Meanwhile, the Business Advisory Committee of the Assembly met today in the Speaker's office to discuss the allocation of time for legislative business during the session—(KNO)

NC Holds Key.....

president Farooq Abdullah, were present in the meeting that is underway at a private hotel here.

The legislature of the ruling party will finalise their floor strategy for the assembly session, which begins on Thursday.

The NC will also deliberate on the Rajya Sabha elections for four seats from Jammu and Kashmir, which will be held on Friday.

The NC had invited alliance partner Congress also to the meeting, but no one from the national party has turned up so far.

J&K Congress president Tariq Hamid Karra also convened a meeting of the Congress legislature party at the party headquarters.

The meeting was in progress when the NC meeting began less than a kilometre away.

The relations between the two alliance partners have been said to be strained after the regional party refused to give a “safe seat” to the national party for the Rajya Sabha elections.

Congress was reportedly offered the seat where it was expected to face a stiff contest from the BJP.

Congress refused to field a candidate and also did not take up the NC offer of contesting the bypoll in the Nagrota assembly segment, where polling will be held next month.

The NC has fielded its candidates for four Rajya Sabha seats as well as the Nagrota assembly Bypoll.

Khilat-e-Ameer.....

award was made during a grand book release ceremony held at the Seminar Hall of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, where literary figures, scholars, and cultural activists gathered to celebrate Kashmiri literature and thought.

The inaugural Khilat-e-Ameer Award was conferred upon Mr. Mohammad Yousuf Taing, the living legend of Kashmiri letters, in recognition of his lifelong and splendid contribution to Kashmiri language, literature, and cultural preservation. Taing Sahib who has been a towering figure in the intellectual and cultural life of Kashmir for decades, could not attend the public ceremony due to health reasons.

In a special follow-up session, the award was personally handed over to Mr. Mohammad Yousuf Taing at his residence in Rawalpora, Srinagar. The brief but heartfelt presentation was made by Professor Nasir Mirza, noted writer and scholar; Syed Sad-ud-Din Saidi, Noted Administrator and social worker Retd SSP, Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin Andrabi, CEO of Lubaab Publications and Editor Headlines Today, Syed Jahangir Bukhari and Young Journalist and Editor Kashmir viewer Faizan Qureishi.

Speaking on the occasion, Syed Jahangir Bukhari said that “Khilat-e-Ameer is more than just an award—it is a tribute to those who have kept the flame of Kashmiri culture alive through their pen and passion.” He added that Lubaab Publications will continue its mission to serve the cause of literature by supporting writers and poets, particularly those who face financial challenges, through free publication initiatives.

The initiative has been widely appreciated across literary and cultural circles, marking a new milestone in recognizing the unsung

guardians of Kashmir's literary tradition.

J&K Speaker.....

Muttahid-e-Malis-e-Ulema (MMU) and to restore J&K cadre of IAS, IPS, KAS and KPS officers,” the assembly secretariat said in a communication to Para.

Private member's resolutions are generally balloted before they can be scheduled for discussion in the House.

The MMU is a conglomerate of religious bodies headed by Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, which believes that the 2025 Waqf Amendment Act undermines Muslim control over religious trusts and is discriminatory.

In September 2025, the Supreme Court stayed certain provisions of the Waqf Act but did not address all the concerns of the MMU.

The private member bill seeking restoration of IAS, IPS and erstwhile cadres of the state comes in the wake of merger of the civil services officers of the former state into the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram, and Union Territories (AGMUT) cadre after the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.

This effectively ended the separate J&K cadre for IAS and IPS officers.

The Reorganisation Act also led to the dismantling of the Kashmir Administrative Service (KAS) and Kashmir Police Service (KPS), replacing them with new structures under the central government's control. (Agencies)

NC Will Win.....

enthusiasm that can be seen among the NC MLAs and other independents, I am hopeful that NC will secure all four Rajya Sabha seats,” he said.

Furthermore, the Chief Minister, while replying to a query about Congress's non-participation in the meeting, said that they did not join as they had their own meeting. “Congress has always maintained that they will not allow the BJP to emerge victorious. Congress has its own system. There is a difference between their party and ours. They have to wait for the party high command's decision, whereas we take decisions here,” he said.

“The Congress high command cannot be in favour of the BJP,” he said, referring to Congress's participation in the Rajya Sabha elections. He added that although, at the local level, Congress was ready to contest the bypolls, the high command decided to leave the seat for NC, and therefore, the candidate was announced.

Regarding PDP's support, the Chief Minister said, “Our leader, Shami Oberoi, met PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti today and requested, on behalf of the party, to support the NC candidate in the Rajya Sabha elections. Earlier, Dr. Farooq Abdullah also spoke with her. Although no decision has been made public by the party yet, they have promised us that a decision will be taken after internal discussions,” he said. On the LoP's statement, the Chief Minister said that he must clarify who made the offer to form a government with the BJP. “We have not made any such offer. We don't hide anything. The LoP must stop issuing these baseless statements,” he added. (KNO) **CS,**

NITI Aayog.....

He underlined the necessity of capacity building, continuous medical education, and hands-on staff training, noting that these are pivotal to ensuring the success and sustainability of the Tele-ICU framework in J&K.

Expressing gratitude for the guidance and technical inputs shared by Dr. Paul, the Chief Secretary reiterated the UT Administration's resolve to integrate advanced healthcare innovations into its public health system. He stated that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir is working towards establishing Tele-ICU facilities under a hub-and-spoke model, ensuring 24x7 critical care monitoring, expert consultation, and real-time clinical support for peripheral hospitals. Under this model, newly established GMCs will serve as spokes connected to a central command hub within the UT.

To ensure effective implementation, the Chief Secretary proposed deputing an expert team from J&K to leading healthcare institutions across the country to study the design and operational modalities of existing Tele-ICU hubs and command centres. He emphasized that while J&K faces challenges arising from difficult terrain and human resource limitations, the administration is committed to developing a customized, scalable model that addresses regional needs and strengthens healthcare delivery at the grassroots level.

Highlighting the next steps, the Chief Secretary directed the Health & Medical Education Department to work out the technical, administrative, and financial contours of the initiative. He stressed the importance of creating a state-of-the-art Tele-ICU hub within J&K equipped with expert professionals and technology partners to provide continuous clinical guidance, training, and quality assurance. The hub would also serve as a training and mentoring centre for medical staff across the UT, eventually leading to the creation of additional regional hubs for wider Tele-ICU

coverage.

Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department, Dr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah, informed that the Department has proposed the establishment of at least a 10-bedded Tele-ICU unit in each of the new GMCs. He outlined the preparatory groundwork completed so far and presented a roadmap for phased implementation, including infrastructure readiness, technology procurement, and training modules.

The participants shared insights based on the their experience in administering the critical care medicine and suggested mechanisms for seamless integration of Tele-ICU facilities with existing hospital systems. Principals of various GMCs also shared their perspectives on operational feasibility, interconnectivity, and potential clinical benefits of the initiative.

Others who were present throughout this session includes MD, NHM; MD, JKMSCL; Principals of GMCs, Dental Colleges and other concerned officers.

The deliberations underscored the J&K Administration's focused approach towards leveraging telemedicine and digital health technologies to bridge gaps in healthcare access, particularly in remote and underserved areas. The proposed Tele-ICU network is expected to significantly enhance the Union Territory's capacity for critical care delivery, ensuring timely medical intervention, expert supervision, and improved patient outcomes across all tiers of the healthcare system.

Nagrota Bypoll....

would take care of the people. I will continue his mission with the same spirit,” she said.

Despite being a debutant in politics, Devyani enjoys strong public sentiment and a broad support base across communities, aided by her father's legacy as a bridge between Hindus and Muslims.

“I am fortunate to have the blessings and support of the people of Nagrota. They stood by Rana Sahib, and I am confident they will bless me too on November 11 and make me victorious with a record margin,” she said.

An economics graduate from the University of California, Devyani manages her family's media and automobile businesses. She said she intends to bring a “fresh, professional approach” to politics while upholding the BJP's principles of service and integrity.

“I believe in a 360-degree view of development — inclusive, participatory, and empowering. My focus will be on strengthening villages, panchayats, and the entire constituency to ensure growth that benefits every section of society,” she asserted.

In her election affidavit, Devyani declared movable assets worth Rs 91.23 lakh, no immovable property, and reported annual incomes of Rs 29.54 lakh (2024–25) and Rs 33.26 lakh (2023–24).

Her late father, Devender Singh Rana, had twice represented Nagrota — in 2014 and 2024 — winning the last election with a record margin of 30,472 votes against his NC rival Joginder Singh. He was known for advocating a Dogra chief minister for Jammu and Kashmir.

Devyani is the niece of Union Minister Jitendra Singh and the granddaughter of former bureaucrat Rajinder Singh Rana.

As the November 11 polling date draws closer, Devyani says her campaign is not merely about contesting an election but continuing a “bond of trust” built over decades.

“For me, this is not politics; it is a responsibility, a promise to my father and to the people of Nagrota,” she said.

He said Nagrota, represented by the BJP thrice and NC twice since 1996, still lacks real development and needs a leader committed to genuine progress.

As a member of the INDIA bloc, Singh added that his supporters expect the Congress and others to back him instead of fielding their own candidates.

Since the 1996 Assembly elections, the BJP has won the Nagrota seat three times — in 2002, 2008, and 2024 — while the National Conference secured victories in 1996 and 2014. (Agencies)

Ruhullah Alone.....

loggerheads with the party leadership over the reservation policy as he sided with protesting students against the Omar Abdullah government last year.

The students were demanding a review of the quota system, which provides for only 30 per cent of seats for the general category candidates who account for nearly 70 per cent of the population.

Mehmood sought to clarify his earlier statement about Ruhullah, blaming the media for distorting his comments.

“I did not say that it does not matter whether he comes to campaign or not. Ruhullah belongs to a dynasty. He has a (strong) backing,” he said.

Mehmood, however, stood by his assertion that Ruhullah was an MLA three times and now an MP because of the National Conference.

“He is in the Parliament or was in the assembly earlier because of the National Conference. He became a Parliament member only after the National Conference

gave him a mandate. He could not have won on his own. He has become MLA three times since 2002 and MP last year due to NC. Aga Syed Mehmood is contesting because of the party,” he asserted.

After filing his nomination papers on Monday, Mehmood had claimed that Ruhullah would campaign for the National Conference.

However, within minutes, the Lok Sabha member poured cold water on the claim.

“My loyalty is to my conscience and principles. While I hold respect for my elders in my family, I request them not to belittle my fight (our fight). If they can't comprehend it and be part of it, at least don't drag me and my struggle to this level,” Ruhullah posted on X. (Agencies)

Foundation for.....

(in 2016) Uri had happened and he conducted a detailed discussion and various options, how should we go about this situation which comes in future.”

Referring to ‘Operation Sindoor’ that was launched to avenge April 22 Pahalgal terror attack that left 26 civilians dead, the Army Chief said that when the situation was discussed with him it was nothing new as when the Uri attack had happened all the options were discussed to deal with the situations that could arise in future. “So, I must concede very frankly, when this situation came to me, it was a very normal thing for me because I had already seen this earlier.”

Pertinently, earlier this month the Army Chief had issued a fierce warning to Pakistan. “If the neighbouring country continues to support terrorism it will lose its geographical presence. If Pakistan wants to retain its place on the map, it must stop state-sponsored terrorism,” the Army Chief had said speaking at an Army post in Rajasthan's Anupgarh.

He had maintained that the Indian forces won't show any restraint this time, hinting that a second version of ‘Operation Sindoor’ wouldn't be far away if Islamabad refuses to med its ways.

“This time we will not maintain the restraint that we had in Operation Sindoor 1.0. This time we will do something that will make Pakistan think whether it wants to retain its place in geography or not,” General Dwivedi had said

He had also asked the soldiers to stay prepared. “If God wills, you'll get an opportunity soon. All the best.”

It may be recalled that ‘Operation Sindoor’ the mega military operation was undertaken by India to give a fitting reply in the aftermath of the Pahalgal terror attack. Nine terror camps were hit in Pakistan and PoK (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) by Indian forces using long-range precision weapons on May 7, 2025.

The attack on terror camps led to skirmishes between the two countries for four days. A ceasefire followed on May 10 after the Pakistani commanders pleaded with their Indian counterparts to stop the offensive—(KNO)

Delhi-Ladakh.....

injured during widespread violence in Leh on September 24. Both the Ladakh organisations stayed away from the dialogue with the high-powered committee of the MHA slated for October 6.

The invitation for the talks had been made by the Centre on September 20. The last round of talks between the two sides was held in May.

Lok Sabha MP from Ladakh Mohmad Haneefa, who took part in the meeting, said the Ladakhi leaders participated in it with an open mind for a positive outcome of their demand for statehood to Ladakh.

“This was our first meeting, and we can't expect much from it. But we raised the issue of immediate release of all those who were arrested on or after September 24, including Sonam Wangchuck,” he told reporters after the meeting here.

Wangchuck, arrested under the stringent National Security Act (NSA), is currently lodged in Jodhpur jail. The NSA empowers the Centre and states to detain individuals to prevent them from acting in a manner “prejudicial to the defence of India”.

The maximum detention period under the NSA is 12 months, though it can be revoked earlier.

Sajjad Kargili of the Kargil Democratic Alliance said the representatives of Ladakh sought the immediate release of all those who were arrested and compensation for those killed in police firing.

“We are hopeful that the government will respond positively to our demands,” he said. On October 17, the MHA announced a judicial inquiry commission headed by a retired Supreme Court judge into the violent clashes of September 24 in Leh.

According to a notification issued by the MHA, the judicial probe, to be headed by Justice B S Chauhan, a former judge of the Supreme Court, is mandated to investigate the “circumstances leading to the serious law and order situation, the police action and the resultant unfortunate deaths of four people”.

Retired district and sessions judge Mohan Singh Parihar will function as judicial secretary, while IAS officer Tushar Anand will be the administrative secretary of the inquiry commission.

The September 24 clashes between security forces and protesters — who were demanding statehood and Sixth Schedule status for the Union territory — left four civilians dead and 90 injured, escalating a months-long agitation.

The appointment of a retired Supreme Court judge to head the inquiry directly addressed the demand by local groups for a high-level, impartial judicial investigation.

The announcement of the probe comes as an attempt to restore dialogue with the representatives of the ongoing movement, the Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance, which suspended talks with the home ministry's high-powered committee (HPC) following the violence.

The main issues that were on the agenda for discussions with the HPC remain the core demands of the LAB and KDA, seeking constitutional safeguards and greater political autonomy for the Union territory created in 2019.

Their demands include full statehood with its own legislative assembly to ensure greater political representation and self-governance, to protect the unique culture, fragile ecosystem, and land rights of the predominantly tribal population by granting Autonomous District Councils, two Lok Sabha seats, and the formation of a dedicated recruitment body to tackle high unemployment among the local youth, and ensure job reservations for Ladakh residents. (Agencies)

NEP 2020.....

Kashmir, girls are becoming IAS from places like Kishtwar and Rajouri,” he said, adding, “After PM Modi came to power, there has been democratisation of opportunities, democratisation of information available for preparation. Those students who are dedicated do not need any coaching, as everything is available on laptops and mobiles. The National Education Policy has made education simpler.”

Dr Jitendra Singh said, “Among the other schemes of PM Modi, in 2014, there used to be nearly 400 start-ups, but now it is 1 lakh 75000. Nearly 50,000 to 60,000 start-ups are women-led. Women are leading projects in space, Aditya, Chandrayaan-3. In the Mudra scheme, no gratuity or mortgage is required. Fifty four and half crore loan has been distributed in Mudra scheme, and 68 percent loans in that have been given to women.”

Dr Singh said, “There is an aspirational surge in the youth, especially the women. On the occasion of Diwali, what better gift could there be for meritorious girl students. We have given this present to the topper girl students today. May they achieve their goals, and may we become a small means to that.”

He stated that this is the same government that has extended maternity leave to six months and introduced mid-career schemes for women—(KNO)

Doctors call.....

continuous awareness and monitoring. “The use of iodised salt is one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent iodine deficiency. Every household must ensure that the salt they use is adequately iodised,” he said.

Recent health surveys, including NFHS-5, have shown encouraging trends, with around 98 per cent of households reportedly using iodised salt. However, officials caution that proper storage and usage are equally important, as iodine can evaporate if the salt is exposed to moisture or heat for prolonged periods.

Doctors said that preventive measures include the iodised salt for daily cooking and ensuring it is stored in an airtight container away from moisture and sunlight, educating communities about the importance of iodine in the diet, conducting regular health check-ups and awareness programs, especially in remote and rural areas and encouraging monitoring of iodine levels in commercially sold salt to ensure compliance with health standards.

They have urged the people to be vigilant and consistent in using iodised salt, stressing that the cost of prevention is negligible compared to the lifelong impact of iodine deficiency disorders.

“A pinch of iodised salt each day can save generations from avoidable physical and mental disabilities,” doctors advised—(KNO)



Observers for Bye-Assembly Elections to 27-AC Budgam review election preparedness

Inspect MCMC, Control Room, Strong Room established for the bye-elections

HT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, OCT 22: General Observer, Bhor Singh Yadav; Expenditure Observer, Ravinder Kumar and Police Observer, Nachiketa Jha for 27-Assembly constituency Budgam held a joint meeting at the Conference hall here to take review of the preparedness for upcoming Bye-Assembly election 2025 to 27-AC Budgam of the District.

The observers took an extensive appraisal of Returning Officer to 27-AC Budgam and Assistant returning officers for arrangements made by them for smooth conduct of Bye-Assembly election to 27-AC Budgam.

They held a detailed discussion about enforcement of MCC, expenditure monitoring, security plan, transport and communication plan, besides functioning of VST, flying squads, training of poll staff, AMF at polling stations, and other measures undertaken for smooth

and peaceful conduct of the upcoming Bye-Assembly polls in 27-Assembly constituency Budgam.

On the occasion, the General Observers enjoined the officers to work with added zeal and unwavering dedication to uphold the sanctity of the election process and safeguard the democratic spirit.

They also urged them to ensure strict enforcement of MCC and other guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ensure smooth, fair, and transparent conduct of polls in the District.

They stressed on proactive approach from all the stakeholders to encourage maximum voters so that enhanced voter turnout is registered during upcoming bye-elections in 27-AC Budgam of the District. They also stressed on completion of the EPIC distribution process in 27-AC Budgam.

The Expenditure Observer emphasised the need for coor-



dination among various monitoring teams for effective expenditure overseeing and stressed the prompt reporting of any ECI violations concerning election expenditure booking.

He also underscored the efficient media monitoring to contain any misuse of election expenditure by the contesting candidates in the district and underscored timely reporting and uploading of any seizures or violations as per ECI norms.

The Police Observer stressed on the officers to work with utmost coordination to ensure incident-free and smooth conduct of the polls in 27-AC Budgam.

Earlier, the DEO Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat apprised the observers regarding the preparations for the free, fair, and peaceful conduct of polls in 27-AC budgam of the District.

He said that 173 polling stations had been set at designated 111 locations across 27-assembly constituency Bud-

gam.

The DEO said that model polling stations had also been set up at various locations in 27-AC Budgam to facilitate the voters on the polling day and welcome them to experience a festive-like environment.

He said that dedicated facilities for voters including clean drinking water and ramps for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are also meticulously arranged to enhance the voting experience.

Later, the observers visited the Control room, Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) at the DC office complex. They also inspected a strong room established at Boys Higher Secondary school Budgam.

The meeting was attended by the SSP Budgam, Nikhil Borkar; ADC Budgam, ASP Budgam, Returning Officer (RO) of 27-Assembly constituency Budgam, Dy. District Election Officer and all Nodal officers.

Four Medical Establishments Sealed in Shopian for Regulatory Violations

FAROOQ RATHER

SHOPIAN, OCT 22: In a decisive action to enforce regulatory compliance and protect public health, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Zainapora, Bilal Ahmed (JKAS), on Tuesday led a joint operation in collaboration with the Drug Control Authorities Shopian, resulting in the closure of four medical establishments, including a wholesale dealer.

The enforcement drive was conducted to ensure strict adherence to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, with particular emphasis on maintaining NRx Scheduled H1 records, implementing new GST labelling, and ensuring compliance with GST rates. During the inspections, several violations were detected, including poor record maintenance, lack of computerized billing, and non-functional



CCTV systems, leading to immediate closure of the establishments found in breach of norms. The SDM and Drug Control Officer reaffirmed their commitment to upholding the highest standards of regulatory compliance and accountability within the healthcare sector. They cautioned that such enforcement drives will continue rigorously to ensure transparency and legality in the sale and distribution of medicines.

All medical establishments have been advised to strictly comply with the prescribed rules and regulations to avoid similar punitive action and to safeguard patients' interests as well as the integrity of the pharmaceutical supply chain.

This enforcement operation was carried out under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, issued during a recent NCORD meeting aimed at strengthening the monitoring mechanism against drug misuse and regulatory violations.

Rahil Amin Assumes Charge as Assistant Labour Commissioner Kupwara

DR. AB. QAYOOM

KUPWARA, OCT 22: Rahil Amin (JKAS) today assumed the charge of Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) Kupwara. After taking charge, the newly appointed ALC convened an introductory meeting with the officials and staff of the Labour Department to review its functioning in the district.

During the meeting, Rahil Amin emphasized the importance of teamwork and coordination among all officers and officials to ensure the smooth implementation of various labour welfare schemes. He urged the staff to work with dedication, commitment, and in complete synergy to achieve the department's objectives.

He further stressed the need for proactive outreach to the targeted beneficiaries so that eligible workers can avail benefits under different welfare initiatives of the Labour Department. The meeting con-



cluded with an assurance from the staff to extend full cooperation and support in strengthening the labour welfare framework across the Kupwara district.

Two Held for Illegal Mineral Extraction and Transportation in Kulgam

FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, OCT 22: As part of its ongoing crackdown on illegal mining activities, Kulgam Police on Tuesday arrested two individuals involved in the illegal extraction and transportation of minerals and seized two vehicles used in the act.

A police team from Police Station Kulgam, during a routine naka checking at Mutalhama, intercepted and seized two tippers found transporting illegally extracted minerals. Both the drivers were arrested on the spot. A case under FIR No. 117/2025 has been registered at Police Station Kulgam under the relevant sections of law, and further investigation has been initiated.

Police have reiterated their commitment to act firmly against those found indulging in illegal mining, extraction, or transportation of minerals, warning that such activities will be dealt with strictly as per law.



NIF-India and KVK Kupwara Promote Grassroots Innovations Among Farmers

DR. AB. QAYOOM

KUPWARA, OCT 22: The National Innovation Foundation-India (NIF), an autonomous institution under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kupwara, organized an interactive farmers' meeting at the KVK premises to promote grassroots innovations and technological solutions emerging from the informal sector. The event aimed at disseminating innovative technologies supported by NIF and encouraging local farmers to adopt cost-effective and sustainable practices for enhanced productivity and livelihood generation.

Almost more than 30 progressive farmers from different areas of Kupwara district participated in the programme, along with scientists from KVK Kupwara. Prof. Kaiser Mohi-ud-Din Malik Qaiser Head KVK Kupwara, urged farmers to come forward with their creative ideas and innovations for possible support through NIF-India. He emphasized the importance of local ingenuity in addressing region-specific agricultural challenges. During the session, participants were briefed about various innovation and dissemination activities of NIF, particularly technologies developed and supported by grassroots innovators across the country. Mir Parvaiz Ahmad from NIF-India delivered a detailed presentation showcasing several innovations and



technologies designed to improve agricultural efficiency and rural livelihoods. Among the showcased innovations were the Spade-cum-Hoe, Walnut Peeler, Walnut Cracker, Sanitary Napkin Machine, Multi-Processing Machine, and several improved crop varieties such as Sandip Piyaz (an improved onion variety), Nath Jumboo Seedless Grapes, Durga-4 Improved Carrot, HRMN-99 Improved Apple, and HZKB-1 Brinjal Variety. The presentation also highlighted herbal-based innovations developed by local innovators. The farmers displayed keen interest in technologies like the Spade-cum-

Hoe, Jumboo Nath Seedless Grapes variety, and Walnut Peeler, appreciating their potential to enhance productivity and reduce manual drudgery. The event concluded with an interactive session where farmers shared their feedback and suggestions. The initiative by NIF-India and KVK Kupwara is expected to create a strong linkage between grassroots innovation and agricultural advancement in the Kupwara district, fostering a culture of creativity and self-reliance among the local farming community.

Roads in Patlibagh Pampore Macadamized; Wave of Joy Among Locals

HT NEWS DESK

PULWAMA, OCT 22: Patlibagh area of Pampore witnessed a wave of happiness among residents as the long-awaited road macadamization project was completed. The development has significantly improved local infrastructure and connectivity, bringing relief to the people of the region.

The project was made possible through a generous allocation of ₹6.5 crore by BJP leader and DDC member from Kakapora block, Minha Lateef Bhat. Locals expressed their gratitude to the BJP leader for addressing a long-pending demand and improving transportation facilities in the area.



Residents also extended their thanks to Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, and the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department for their active role in executing the project efficiently. Mohammad Lateef Bhat was appreciated for his efforts in mobilizing the R&B department and ensuring that the developmental work was carried out in a timely manner.

This infrastructural upgrade is expected to boost overall development in the region and improve day-to-day life for commuters and residents alike.

District Admin Budgam organises Voters' Fair under SVEEP at Behisht-e-Zehra park

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 22: A Voters' Fair (Matdata Mela) was today organised at Behisht-e-Zehra park Budgam under the directions of the District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat under the theme 'Promoting Inclusive, Ethical, and Informed Voting'.

The event was coordinated by the District Administration Budgam in collaboration with District Nodal Officer SVEEP/Chief Education Officer Budgam, Rifat Irfan Qadri, as part of the ongoing Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme.

The fair witnessed enthusiastic participation from young and first-time voters, female voters, senior citizens, and Persons with Disabilities (PwD), reflecting the ideals of inclusive and participatory democracy.

A series of engaging activities, awareness sessions, and demonstrations were conducted to educate the public about various aspects of the electoral process.



During the event, speakers emphasized the significance of

every vote in shaping a strong democracy and urged participants to cast their votes responsibly.

Awareness sessions were held on ethical voting, the role of each voter in ensuring fair elections,

and the functioning of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) systems, ensuring that voters are fully informed about the voting process.

The event was graced by the presence of General Observer, Bhore Singh Yadav and Police Observer, Nachiketa Jha for 27-AC Budgam bye-Elections, who appreciated the efforts of the District Administration for organizing such innovative and inclusive outreach initiatives under the SVEEP programme.

The Voters' Fair was aimed to motivate maximum voter turnout in the upcoming bye-elections to the 27-Budgam Assembly Constituency, ensuring that every eligible citizen participates in the electoral process with awareness, confidence, and commitment.

The District administration reiterated that it remains fully committed in conducting free, fair, participative, and transparent elections, in line with the vision of the Election Commission of India.

SWD Srinagar Organizes Training/ Sensitization Programme on Various Welfare Schemes

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: Social Welfare Department (SWD) Srinagar today organized a Training-cum-Sensitization Programme on various Welfare Schemes for Women, Senior Citizens, and Persons with Disabilities at the Conference Hall, ADR Centre, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar.

The programme was held with the Supervisors of Mission Poshan to enhance their understanding and capacity to disseminate information about different welfare initiatives among local communities.

The programme aimed to equip participants with detailed knowledge of various welfare schemes so they can effectively inform and assist community members in availing benefits, improving livelihoods,



and accessing their rights.

Speaking on the occasion, District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Srinagar, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, highlighted the importance of organizing such programmes with frontline workers of Mission Poshan. He emphasized their pivotal role in reaching out to the community and ensuring the successful implementation of welfare schemes at the local level.

During the programme, District Mission Coordinator, Ruqaya Ashraf, delivered a detailed presentation on various welfare schemes being implemented by the Department of Social Welfare for different sections of society, including Women, Senior Citizens, and Persons with Disabilities.

Additionally, the District Mission Coordinator of SANKALP – Hub for Empowerment of Women, Srinagar, gave a comprehensive overview of welfare and livelihood schemes from various departments, including Social Welfare, Mission Vatsalya, Labour, Mission Yuva, Mission Youth, JKEDI, J&K Women's Development Corporation, Agriculture, Sheep Husbandry, and Animal Husbandry.

The significance of organizing such Programmes is to improve access and awareness, to develop skills for self-sufficiency, to promote entrepreneurship, to handle administrative procedures, to address specific needs, to ensure quality and outcomes.

MD DJAY-S Establishes help desks for Enumeration & Socio-Economic Profiling of Urban Poor in Srinagar, Jammu

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: Mission Director, Deendayal Jan Aajeevika Yojana–Shehri (DJAY-S), has announced the commencement of the Enumeration and Socio-Economic Profiling survey of urban poor households in the cities of Srinagar and Jammu.

This crucial exercise is being undertaken under DJAY-S to identify and register eligible urban poor households for facilitating their access to various Centrally Sponsored Social Security Schemes.

The enumeration process is being carried out by dedicated field teams through door-to-door visits, covering all wards of Srinagar and Jammu Municipal Corporations to ensure comprehensive coverage of eligible beneficiaries. The collected data will be uploaded on the Convergence Portal of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India.

In order to assist and facilitate the urban poor, Help Desk's have been established at Srinagar city in the Office's of the Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Agency Kashmir (UDAK), Habitat Centre, Bemina Srinagar (Contact Numbers: 7006444930, 7006956457) Email id djay-srinagar@gmail.com.

Similarly, Help Desk for Jammu city has been established at Jammu Urban Development Agency (JUDA), Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Chowk, Narwal Road, Jammu Contact Number (8825061185, 9697203858) Email id: helpdeskdjays@gmail.com.

The Mission Director has urged all eligible urban poor households to actively participate in the survey and make use of the Help Desks for any queries or support related to the enumeration process. The Help Desks will remain operational during office hours on all working days.

DM Baramulla chairs 21st NCORD meeting, Directs Strict Anti-Drug measures

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 22: District Magistrate (DM) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired the 21st meeting of the Narco Coordination Committee (NCORD) at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Baramulla to review the district's ongoing efforts to curb drug abuse and strengthen enforcement under the NDPS Act.

During the meeting, the DM directed all law enforcement agencies to ensure strict implementation of NDPS laws and to intensify awareness programmes on the harmful effects of drug abuse, particularly among youth and students. He also emphasized taking strict action against persons found smoking in public places, especially around educational institutions.

The DM further instructed for 100% installation of CCTV cameras in all educational institutions and identified



hotspots to enhance monitoring and surveillance.

He also directed the Police, Revenue, and Excise Departments to carry out joint drives for the destruction of bhang (cannabis) cultivation, ensuring close coordination for effective results.

While reviewing overall progress under NCORD, the DM stressed the importance of community participa-

tion, urging Public representatives, religious leaders, and educational institutions to actively support the administration's anti-drug initiatives.

The meeting was attended by ADC Sopore, ADC Baramulla, SDM Uri, SDM Pattan, ASP Baramulla and representatives from Excise, Education, Health, Social Welfare, and other concerned departments, who shared updates on ongoing anti-narcotic measures in the district.

Medical Establishments Sealed in Zainapura for Regulatory Violations

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 22: In a decisive move to enforce regulatory compliance and safeguard public interest, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Zainapura, Bilal Ahmed today led a joint operation in collaboration with the Drug Control Authorities Shopian, resulting in the closure of four medical establishments, including a wholesale dealer.

The enforcement drive was undertaken to ensure adherence to the Narcotic Drugs and Psycho-

tropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act), and the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, with specific focus on the maintenance of NRx Scheduled HI records, implementation of new GST labelling, and compliance with GST rates.

The inspections revealed instances of non-compliance, including inadequate record-keeping, absence of computerized billing, and non-functional CCTV cameras, prompting immediate action.

The SDM and Drug officer have underscored their commitment to upholding the highest standards



of regulatory compliance within the healthcare sector, emphasizing that such enforcement actions will continue unabated.

All medical establishments are advised to adhere strictly to the prescribed rules and regulations to avoid similar action, ensuring the protection of patients' interests and the integrity of the pharmaceutical supply chain.

This enforcement drive was in line with the directions issued by Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, in the recent NCORD meeting.

VWC Members of Zainapora flagged Off to Exposure Visit to Model Spring Shed in Seer Hamdan

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 22: In a significant step towards promoting climate resilience and sustainable development, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Zainapora, Bilal Ahmad, today flagged off an exposure visit of 29 Village Watershed Committees (VWCs) members of Zainapora area to Seer Hamdan, Anantnag, under the NABARD-supported Spring Shed development project initiative.

This visit aims to enhance the understanding of watershed management practices, sustainable livelihood models and natural resource conservation among VWC members with a focus on adapting to the challenges posed by climate change.

The visiting team from various Village Watershed Committees, will tour Seer Hamdan, a model Spring Shed area, in Anantnag to gain first-hand experience of successful interventions implemented there,



including innovative approaches to water harvesting, soil conservation and agroforestry. These initiatives have not only improved the local ecosystem but also enhanced the community's resilience to climate-related stressors.

Speaking on the occasion, SDM Zainapora emphasized the importance of such initiatives in building local capacities and promoting community-led sustainable development, particularly in the context of climate change and appreciated NABARD for its continued support in rural development. He encouraged participants to replicate best practices in their respective areas tailoring them to the specific needs and challenges of their local environments.

The flag-off ceremony was attended by officials from the Agriculture, Horticulture, Revenue, SDM office, NABARD representatives and members of various VWCs, all of whom are committed to working together to promote climate-resilient development in the region.

Two-Day Orientation on Professional Development Begins at SKUAST-K

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: A two-day orientation programme on Professional Development and Office Procedures for Administrative Staff began today at the Vice Chancellor's Secretariat, Main Campus Shalimar, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K).

The programme has been organized with the objective of strengthening administrative competencies, improving procedural efficiency, and fostering a culture of professionalism and innovation among the non-teaching staff of the university.

Designed to equip participants with practical knowledge and modern office management techniques, the sessions focus on diverse areas such as office procedures, communication skills, data management, record maintenance, confidentiality protocols, and understanding of the University Act and Statutes. Participants are also being sensitized about J&K CSR/Leave Rules, J&K Government Employees Conduct Rules, 1971, and the ethical and behavioral standards expected in public service.

Besides the technical components, the

programme also includes sessions on soft skills, emotional intelligence, time management, leadership, and teamwork – aimed at fostering a positive and productive work environment.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai inaugurated the programme as the Chief Guest. In his address, he lauded the initiative and highlighted the indispensable role of administrative and non-teaching staff in ensuring the smooth functioning of the university. He urged the staff to embrace a mindset of continuous learning and adaptability in line with emerging technological trends.

Prof. Ganai underscored the importance of adopting AI-based tools and digital platforms to streamline workflows, enhance transparency, and promote efficiency across all administrative units. He added that in the era of digital transformation, administrative staff must evolve as key facilitators of academic and research excellence.

The inaugural session was also attended by Dr. H.R. Naik, Director Research; Prof. Altaf Ahmad Bhat, Director Education; the Registrar; and other senior university officers, who appreciated the initiative and encouraged participants to derive maximum benefit from the sessions.

Department of Agriculture Jammu celebrates Vishwakarma Day

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22: The Department of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Jammu today celebrated Vishwakarma Day with great enthusiasm and reverence at the Government Agriculture Workshop and Seed Processing Unit, Talab Tillo. The event was graced by the Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta who highlighted the pivotal role of agricultural mechanization in ushering in a new era of agricultural advancement. Addressing the officers and

workers, the Director emphasized that farm mechanization is essential to enhance both productivity and quality in the cultivation of food and non-food crops. He underscored the need to adopt modern tools and equipment for sustainable and efficient farming practices, which will contribute significantly to the next agricultural revolution.

Later, a special Puja ceremony of Bhagwan Vishwakarma—the divine architect and patron of artisans and engineers—was organized by the Directorate of Agriculture.



The ceremony included the worship of tools and machinery along with prayers for the safety and well-being of all operators and workers. The event concluded with the distribution of

Prasad among the participants.

The Director interacted with the workers and inspected various machines installed at the workshop and seed processing unit, including the Sheet Cutting Machine, Sheet Bending Machine, Beading Machine, Power Hammers, Sheet Rolling Machines and Swaging Machines. He appreciated the efforts of the workshop staff for their contribution in maintaining and fabricating essential agricultural implements used across the region.

Simultaneously, Vishwakarma Puja was also held at the

Seed Processing Plant, Seed Multiplication Farm Chinore and Seed Multiplication Farm Chakrohi, where officers and workers participated in the rituals with devotion.

The event was attended by Joint Director Agriculture (Inputs) Dr. Ashwani Sharma; Joint Director Agriculture (SLUB/Farms) Dr. Aman Jyoti Sharma; Accounts Officer Vishnu Kant Sharma; Agriculture Research Engineer (ARE) Firdous Ahmad Tak, DSCO Nirmal Prakash and other senior officers and staff members of the department.

Director Horticulture Jammu reviews implementation of development schemes

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22: Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Sayed convened a review meeting with Chief Horticulture Officers of Jammu Province, today.

The meeting was held here in the Conference Hall of the Directorate of Horticulture and attended by Joint Director, Deputy Director Central, Deputy Director Planning, Accounts Officer, Assistant Director, Chief Horticulture Officers of all Jammu Province, Chief Canning Instructor, Nursery Registration Officer and Horticulture Information & Publicity Officer.



The meeting reviewed the physical and financial achievements under the departmental schemes including MIDH, CAPEX, CSS, Rejuvenation, P15H, P13H, P21H, P9H and JKIP for the financial year 2025-26 and to finalize strategies for achieving 100% targets as per the approved Action Plans.

The Director emphasised timely execution of field activities, effective monitoring and optimum utilization of funds to ensure that all developmental objectives under these schemes are achieved within the stipulated time frame. The officers were directed to accelerate the implementation process and maintain regular reporting for better coordination and transparency.

Director Agriculture Jammu distributes One Lakh Hybrid Vegetable Seedlings under HADP

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22: Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta today distributed one lakh hybrid vegetable seedlings to farmers of Sub-Division Marh under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP). The seedlings, raised by the Agronomist, Vegetable Improvement Scheme (VIS) Jammu and are disease-free, healthy and of high quality. So far, around 2 to 3 lakh vegetable seedlings have already been distributed to farmers under this initiative.

Interacting with the farmers, the Director Agriculture informed that these seedlings are available at a highly subsidized rate. He appealed the farmers to avail ben-

efit of this facility and adopt quality vegetable cultivation practices for enhanced productivity and profitability.

During the visit, the Director Agriculture also inspected the Naturally Ventilated Polyhouse where red and yellow bell peppers, seedless cucumber and tomato are being raised under protected cultivation. These crops are being maintained for demonstration purposes and will serve as live models during the farmers' training programmes from across the Jammu Division.

Highlighting the scope of urban farming, the Director Agriculture informed that 2000 growbags are being distributed under the IPDP to encourage vegetable cultivation in urban and peri-



urban areas. He further reviewed the ongoing works at the Centre of Excellence, which is expected to become operational within a

month. The centre will facilitate round-the-year production of vegetable and floriculture seedlings, thereby strengthening

the region's nursery infrastructure.

Agronomist (VIS), Vikas Padha, apprised the Director Agriculture about the ongoing activities and informed that the sowing of breeder seed of spinach has commenced at the JP AE Farm for further multiplication and distribution to farmers to ensure the availability of quality vegetable seed.

Among others present on the occasion were Joint Director Agriculture (SLUB/Farms) Dr. Aman Jyoti Sharma, Agriculture Chemist, Vinod Kumar Sharma, Agronomist (VIS) Jammu, Vikas Padha, Assistant Botanist, Ajit Singh, SDAO Marh, Khalid Hassan and other senior officers and staff of the department.

Secy ITD reviews progress of projects under Capex Budget 2025-26

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22: Secretary, Information Technology Department (ITD), Dr. Piyush Singla today chaired a meeting of senior officers to discuss and review the physical and financial progress of different projects of the department under Capex Budget 2025-26 at Civil Secretariat here.

Chief Executive Officer, JKEGA; Special Secretary, ITD; Director Finance, ITD; Additional Secretary, ITD, Deputy Director (Planning), ITD; Head SeMT J&K; Incharge IT Cell; besides, other officers and officials attended the meeting through virtual mode.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held on various issues regarding the present status of current year projects under Capex Budget 2025-26 and shelf of projects for next year budget.

The meeting also discussed other issues pertaining to differ-



ent projects like establishment of Centre of Excellence, upgradation of IT skills, new e-governance

initiatives in UT of J&K, digitalization of office Records development of IT Hub/Park at Jammu & Srinagar

and others.

Secretary IT emphasized upon the concerned officers to clear all

bottlenecks for early completion of all ongoing projects of IT department. He also directed the officers to take proper workout on under process DPRs and other issues so that the works on the different projects could be completed in time-bound manner.

During the meeting, Director Finance and other concerned officers briefed the Secretary and gave a power point presentation about the status of various projects, besides action taken on physical and financial status of Capex Budget 2025-26.

The meeting was also informed about present status of physical and financial progress of total number of ongoing and new projects including upgradation of State Data Centre, setting up of wired LAN for Civil Secretariat Jammu, setting up of dedicated 2Gbps internet Lease Line for both Secretariats at Jammu & Srinagar and setting up of MPLS for e-office.

Restoration of Derailed Network and Essential Supplies is Our Cherished Commitment: Pathania

■ HT NEWS DESK

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 22 : Continuing his hands-on approach to public service and infrastructure renewal, Ranbir Singh Pathania, MLA Udhampur East, today kickstarted the restoration work of denuded and damaged roads at Rakh Badali area of Udhampur, which were severely affected due to the recent spell of incessant rains and flash floods.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Pathania reaffirmed his commitment to restore every suspended and derailed network in the constituency — including drinking water supplies, electricity lines, and other essential public utilities — within the shortest possible time.

“Our cherished goal is to bring the entire system back on track. Every household and every essential service disrupted by the recent calamity will be restored with urgency and compassion,” said Pathania.

He informed that for families whose houses were damaged or washed away, he will vouch on the ensuing Assembly session for providing 5 marla plots of land where they can rebuild their homes with dignity. Supplementing



government efforts, Mr. Pathania announced that funds from his Constituency Development Fund (CDF) will also be channelled to aid restoration works and immediate relief.

While reviewing on-ground works, he emphasized that Udhampur's development roadmap is not limited to temporary restoration but aims for long-term resilience and modernization.

“We are working to build Udhampur as a model constituency — with strong infrastructure, robust health and education facilities, sustainable water and power systems, and improved connectivity to every far-flung ham-

let,” Pathania added.

He further stressed on adopting disaster-resilient engineering practices, revamping rural roads, and strengthening public infrastructure so that such calamities in the future cause minimal disruption to daily life.

The MLA was accompanied by Mr. Puran Chand (DDC Member), Mr. Ashraf, Mr. Romi, Mr. Harbaksh Singh, Mr. Yashpal, Mr. Parveen Singh, Mr. Ravinder, Mr. Janu, Mr. Dharmveer, and a galaxy of local people and party workers, who expressed gratitude for the MLA's proactive response and round-the-clock monitoring of relief measures.

Role of Yuva in Swadeshi Movement is crucial: Rekha Mahajan

■ HT NEWS DESK

AKHNOOR, OCTOBER 22 : The role of youth in driving the Swadeshi movement and building an Atmanirbhar Bharat is indispensable, said BJP Jammu & Kashmir Vice President and State Co-Incharge of AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, Advocate Rekha Mahajan, while addressing a vibrant Yuva Sammelan in District Akhnoor.

The event was organised under the presidency of BJP District President Kuldeep Banotra.

District Prabhari Vinay Gupta, DDC Bhalwal Brahmana Bhushan Bral, District General Secretary Shakti, Mandal President and Programme Incharge Sahil Bral, speaker Gurpal Singh, Mandal Presidents also spoke on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Rekha Mahajan emphasized the importance of youth in shaping India's future. “The youth of today are not only the torchbearers of tomorrow but also the driving force behind the Swadeshi movement. Their energy, innovation, and commitment are

crucial in realising the vision of a self-reliant India,” she said.

She urged the youth to adopt the principles of Swadeshi by promoting indigenous products and supporting local industries. “Every small step towards using locally made goods strengthens our economy and empowers our nation. Youth must become ambassadors of this change,” Mahajan asserted.

Highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, she added, “Atmanirbhar Bharat is not just a slogan — it is a mission to make India economically strong, technologically advanced, and socially empowered. The youth must lead this mission from the front.”

She appreciated the organisers for mobilising the youth and encouraged regular such interactions to inspire young minds.

BJP District President Kuldeep Banotra, in his address, lauded the enthusiasm of the youth and highlighted the importance of their participation in strengthening the

party's grassroots network. He said that young minds, when channelised in the right direction, can bring revolutionary changes in society.

District Prabhari Vinay Gupta in his address said that youth are the backbone of the nation and must work collectively to promote the message of Swadeshi and Vocal for Local. He also appreciated the efforts of the organisers for their commitment to youth empowerment.

Sahil Bral and Gurdeep Singh shared their views, emphasizing the need for youth to blend modern education with traditional values to create a balanced and progressive society.

The proceedings of the programme were ably conducted by Shakti Singh.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks to all dignitaries and participants, with renewed enthusiasm among the youth to contribute actively to the Swadeshi movement and national development.



HT EDITORIAL

Manage operation of e-rickshaws in organized manner

The introduction of e-rickshaws in the Srinagar city and other districts has added yet another dimension to the public transport system of Kashmir valley. These rickshaws have eased the travel of the people and they can be seen availing the service of this mode of transport in reaching their respective destinations. In other words we can say that e-rickshaws have provided yet another option vis-a-vis public transport system of Kashmir valley.

Even though the e-rickshaw service is a hit among many people still then there are many things that need to be improved in this regard. It has been observed that most of these e-rickshaws operate on routes where multiple means of transport are already running their services. As a result of this there are many areas which are yet to be covered by this mode of public transport system. The residents of these areas have been demanding the introduction of e-rickshaw services for a long time now.

The Office of the Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir should take a call in this regard and stern instructions should be issued to the e-rickshaw owners as well as drivers to run services in areas which have not been covered by the public transport system. Once the e-rickshaw services are started in these areas the people would feel relieved. This would also facilitate their connection with the main options of the public transport system at a nearest destination. As such they would be able to avail the services of the public transport system in a better manner.

It makes no fun in operating services of e-rickshaws in areas where people are entitled to other means of public transport. The e-rickshaw owners and drivers should understand they would be able to earn more if they operate the rickshaw in unattended areas. In such a manner there would be economic progress for these people and they would be able to contribute towards the development of this place. In other words it can be said that there will be a win-win situation for the e-rickshaw owners and drivers.

The concerned authorities should also take note of the issue of rates for the e-rickshaws operating on different routes. At times there are altercations and arguments between the e-rickshaw drivers and the commuters with the situation sometimes turning ugly. The issue needs to be addressed at the earliest so that there are minimum incidents of conflict between the commuters and the e-rickshaw drivers.

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Horticulture: The New Backbone of Kashmir's Economy



Sahil Manzoor Bhatti

Smart, educated, and health-conscious individuals understand the importance of eating right. A simple yet effective way to maintain good health is by consuming nutritious foods, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables. These natural blessings keep us fit, active, and energetic throughout the day

After tourism and education, the horticulture sector now plays a vital role in Kashmir's economy. This sector has made immense contributions in uplifting employment and continues to do its best in supporting thousands of livelihoods across the Valley. Unfortunately, this year the rates of apples dropped drastically — from ₹1200 and ₹1000 per box to just around ₹500 — a price that is neither fair nor adequate for growers.

It is rightly said that "an apple a day keeps the doctor away." Indeed, our health is more important than anything else, as it determines our fate and shapes our lives. In today's world, health has become a global concern, and much of it depends on our lifestyle and dietary choices.

Smart, educated, and health-conscious individuals understand the importance of eating right. A simple yet effective way to maintain good health is by consuming nutritious foods, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables. These natural blessings keep us fit, active, and energetic throughout the day.

Almighty God has blessed us with countless fruits on this earth, which we have been enjoying for centuries. However, it is essential for everyone to have basic knowledge about what they eat. Our diet should align with our body's requirements, depending on our daily activity and energy expenditure. Regular health check-ups are equally important for maintaining a balanced lifestyle.

Health Benefits of Apples



Apples are among the most loved and delicious fruits in the world, known for their immense nutritional value. Packed with vitamin C, minerals, antioxidants, and fibre, apples support digestion, strengthen immunity, and help prevent chronic diseases such as cancer.

Key Benefits of Apples:
Rich in Antioxidants: Help protect against deadly diseases like cancer.

Aid in Weight Loss: High fibre content slows digestion, stabilizes blood sugar, and helps prevent over-eating.

Diabetes-Friendly: Soluble fibre slows sugar absorption and improves blood sugar levels, reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes.

Improve Digestion: Eating 2-3 apples daily promotes bowel movement and prevents constipation.

Keep You Hydrated: High water

content helps maintain body hydration.

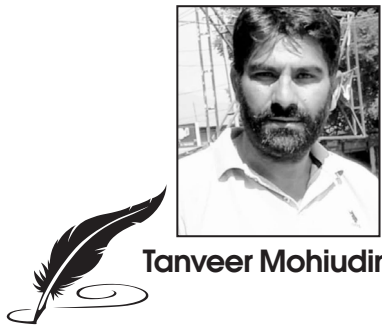
Kashmiri Apples – Pride of the Valley

The Kashmir Valley is world-famous for its apple production, contributing significantly to India's fruit industry and exports. Kashmiri apples are cherished globally for their unique taste, texture, and quality. Growers across the region continue to work tirelessly to enhance production and maintain standards.

Seasonal fruits and vegetables are truly nature's medicine, helping us build immunity and resist diseases. We should not only consume them ourselves but also inspire our friends and family to adopt healthy eating habits.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

The Triumph of Simplicity over Extravagance



Tanveer Mohiudin

The tragedy of the modern Muslim wedding is that the Nikah, which is an act of worship and a Sunnah, has been sacrificed at the altar of lavish expenses in grand hotels, expensive banquet halls, and unnecessary rituals. This is mostly driven by social pressure and ostentation (Riya), resulting in millions of dollars being squandered. As a direct consequence, many girls from poor families remain unmarried, and countless others are forced into debt to meet these excessive societal expectations. This practice mocks the fundamental teachings of Islam



Nikah (Islamic marriage) is a profoundly blessed, simple, and straightforward act in Islam. Its primary purpose is to unite two families and promote purity within society. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "The most blessed marriage is the one with the least expenses." This statement is a clear condemnation of the extravagance (Israf) that has unfortunately become an epidemic in wedding ceremonies today.

Extravagance (Israf) is a Social Blight

In the Holy Quran, Allah Almighty explicitly warns Muslims against excessive spending and extravagance in all matters, including food and drink. He describes those who are extravagant as "brothers of the devils."

The tragedy of the modern Muslim wedding is that the Nikah, which is an act of worship and a Sunnah, has been sacrificed at the altar of lavish expenses in grand hotels, expensive banquet halls, and unnecessary rituals. This is mostly driven by social pressure and ostentation (Riya), resulting in millions of dollars being squandered. As a direct consequence, many girls from poor families remain unmarried, and countless others are forced into debt to meet these excessive societal expectations. This practice mocks the fundamental teachings of Islam.

The Virtue of Nikah in the Mosque

One of the best ways to avoid extravagance and make the Nikah blessed is to hold the ceremony in the mosque. Some narrations indicate that the Prophet (PBUH) instructed: "Announce this marriage and perform it in

the mosque." The majority of scholars consider performing the Nikah in the mosque to be highly recommended (Mustahabb).

Seeking Blessings: The mosque is the purest and most honored place on Earth, and performing the sacred act of Nikah there naturally attracts greater blessings.

Promoting Simplicity: The underlying goal of a mosque wedding is to deliberately avoid non-Islamic customs, unnecessary rituals, and wasteful spending, thereby ensuring the Nikah is conducted in the simplest and most Sunnah-compliant manner.

However, it is crucial to maintain the mosque's sanctity. If there is a risk of noise, chaos, or any actions that violate the respect of the mosque, it is better to avoid holding the ceremony there.

Simplicity is the Core Principle

While performing the Nikah in the mosque is highly recommended, the core element of the marriage contract is the offer and acceptance (Ijab-o-Qubul). This can be performed at home or any suitable, pure venue, as long as the gathering is free from any indecency or extravagance.

In conclusion, the focus is not merely on the location—be it the mosque or the home—but on simplicity. The most favored wedding is the one that aligns with the simplicity of the Prophet's Sunnah, ensuring it is easy and blessed. Muslims must reject the curse of extravagance, embrace moderation, and make Nikah simple again, lifting the heavy financial burden from the community.

The Author from Kanispora Baramullah

A Tribute to My Beloved Chachu, Saifi Sopori

On his 8th death anniversary on 19th October

■ **RAFEEQ MASOODI**

As I sit down to write this tribute to my dear Chachu, Saifi Sopori, on the occasion of his 8th death anniversary, I am overwhelmed with emotions. His passing on October 19, 2017, left a void in my life that can never be filled. Today, I want to share my cherished memories of this extraordinary individual who not only shaped my life but also left an indelible mark on the lives of everyone he touched.

The Mentor Who Shaped My Life..but i hated him then

I still remember the day he took me to school for the first time, I was just five years old, and he enrolled me in school, despite my resistance. That moment has stayed with me forever, and I realize now that it was a defining moment in my life. His unwavering commitment to education and his passion for learning inspired me to pursue my dreams.

A Literary Legacy

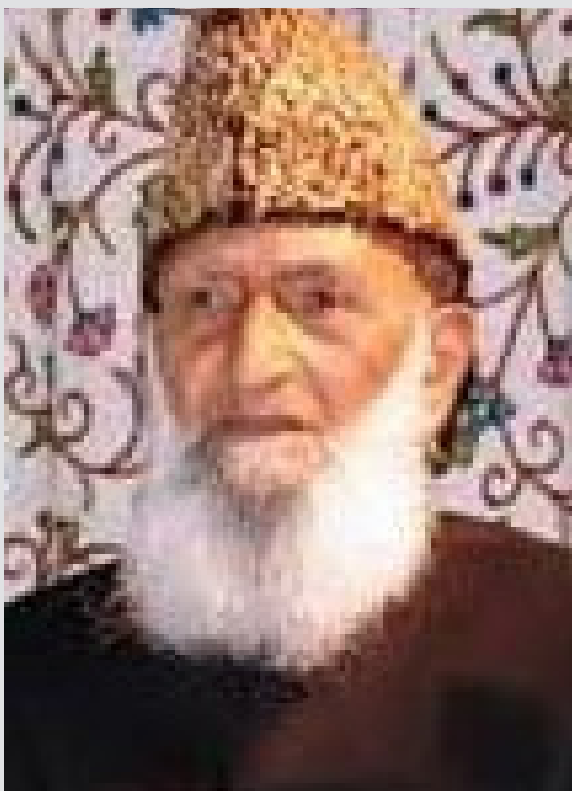
Chachu was a prolific writer, poet, and translator who penned poetry and books on various subjects in Urdu, Persian, and Kashmiri. His literary works are a testament to his mastery over languages and his deep understanding of the human condition. His poetic collection, "Sehra Sehra," is a masterpiece that showcases his skill and craftsmanship.

A Life of Service & sacrifice

Beyond his literary pursuits, Chachu dedicated his life to serving others. As a Tehsil Education Officer and later as Joint Director of Non-Formal Education, he worked tirelessly to promote education and cultural preservation in Jammu and Kashmir. His selflessness and kindness inspired countless individuals, and his legacy continues to inspire future generations.

Memories That Never Fade

I recall the last time I met him, just three days before



his passing. He asked me about the day, and when I told him it was Sunday, he counted the days until Thursday, his passing day. That moment is etched in my memory forever, a poignant reminder of his sharp mind and spirit.

The Incident That Stays with Me

The incident that still resonates with me is when he took me to school at the age of five. I remember he asked

the teacher, Pir Shams ud din Shah e Gaffar, to enroll me. I did not like him at that time because he was taking away my freedom to play with my friends Qayum (now Dr. A Q Shah, a renowned surgeon), Shabir (now Shabir Ahmad Shabir, an acclaimed scholar and writer), and many others. But now, I realize that he had an X-ray and MRI machine fitted in his eyes, and he did a full-body scan of little me, and here I am now, humbled by his greatness.

Saifi Sopori: An Organization in Himself

Saifi Sopori was indeed an organization in himself, a true luminary who left an indelible mark on the literary and educational landscape of Kashmir. He was a proud Soporian, and his love for Sopore was evident in the way he added it to his pen name, Saifi Sopori. He would often say, "Meray Sopore ko kuch na kehna: Sopore jo mera shehar thehra" (Don't you dare undermine my Sopore, Sopore my city of dreams).

The People He Wanted to Meet

He wanted to meet some of the finest minds and literary figures of our time, including Bashir Dada, Shahnaz Rasheed, Aziz Hajini, Rukhsana Jabin, Shehzad Manzur, and Wahid Jilani. I managed to get some of them to visit him, and we celebrated his 94th birthday together. We sang his poetry, and he enjoyed every moment of it. Before our departure, he told me, "Hehe Masoodi, you made my day. I feel the warmth of your love for me, though outside it's minus, and perhaps it's snowing too."

Farewell, Dear Chachu

As we commemorate his 8th death anniversary, I recall every moment from our ancestral place Hatishah to Dangiacha to Model Town to Al-Noor colony Sopore of my Love- Chachu, with lots of prayers for him in a heavy heart. May his soul rest in peace, and may his legacy continue to inspire us to pursue our dreams and make a difference in the world. Love you Chachu...

INNA LILLAH E VA INNA ELAIH E RAJIOON



Rafiq Masoodi

Cultural Memory in the Short Fiction of Alice Munro



Ratan Bhattacharjee

Munro's psychological realism is grounded in the minutiae of thought—hesitations, rationalizations, and suppressed emotions. In "Runaway," Carla's identity is shaped not only by her present circumstances but by the cultural memory of female sacrifice and endurance. Her inability to leave her husband is not merely personal weakness but a reflection of inherited narratives about marriage and duty. In "Royal Beatings" (The Beggar Maid), the narrator recalls her father's violent discipline, which she later learns was a reenactment of his own childhood trauma

Fiction of Alice Munro, the Nobel Prize-winning Canadian author, is renowned for her psychologically rich short stories that explore the intricacies of memory, identity, and cultural inheritance. As Jedrzej Burszta notes, Munro's narratives are "intimate and psychological portraits... embedded in the dynamic clash between individualism and community" (Burszta). Similarly, "The Moons of Jupiter" explores the strained relationship between a writer and her dying father. The protagonist's memories of childhood are refracted through adult disillusionment, revealing how cultural scripts of fatherhood and filial duty shape emotional perception. Munro's use of fragmented chronology mirrors the instability of memory itself, suggesting that identity is always in flux. She is deeply concerned with the formation of psychological identity, particularly in women. In her fiction, her protagonists often struggle to reconcile internal desires with external roles—daughter, wife, mother, lover. This tension is most vividly portrayed in stories like "Runaway," where Carla, a young woman trapped in an abusive marriage, vacillates between escape and submission. In "Walker Brothers Cowboy" (Dance of the Happy Shades), the narrator recalls a childhood outing with her father, which gradually reveals the economic hardship and emotional repression of Depression-era Ontario. The story's power lies in its subtle evocation of class memory and familial silence.

Munro's psychological realism is grounded in the minutiae of thought—hesitations, rationalizations, and suppressed emotions. In "Runaway," Carla's identity is shaped not only by her present circumstances but by the cultural memory of female sacrifice and endurance. Her inability to leave her husband is not merely personal weakness but a reflection of inherited narratives about marriage and duty. In "Royal Beatings" (The Beggar Maid), the narrator recalls her father's violent discipline, which she later learns was a reenactment of his own childhood trauma. The story illustrates how psychological identity is transmitted across generations, often through pain. Munro's exploration of intergenerational memory challenges the notion of autonomous selfhood, emphasizing the porous boundaries between past and present. Munro's stories are often set in rural Ontario, a landscape that functions as both setting and symbol. The small towns, farms, and lakes are repositories of memory, where characters confront the ghosts of their past. Munro's attention to place is not nostalgic but forensic—she excavates the emotional sediment of geography. In "Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage," the pro-



tagonist Johanna navigates a world shaped by social class and gender norms. Her psychological identity is forged through acts of quiet rebellion, such as traveling alone or marrying unexpectedly. The story's setting—a remote town and a train journey—mirrors Johanna's internal transformation, suggesting that movement through space can catalyze shifts in self-perception. Time in Munro's fiction is non-linear, often looping back to earlier moments or jumping forward unexpectedly. This temporal fluidity reflects the workings of memory, which is rarely chronological. In "Dear Life," Munro blends autobiographical fragments with fictionalized recollections, blurring the line between lived experience and narrative construction. The result is a meditation on how memory shapes identity, and how storytelling becomes a form of self-making.

Munro's stories frequently engage with trauma—emotional, physical, and psychological. Yet she resists sensationalism, opting instead for quiet revelations and elliptical disclosures. Trauma in Munro's fiction is often encoded in silence, in what is not said or remembered. In "Dimension," a woman visits the psychiatric hospital where her husband is incarcerated for murdering their children. The story unfolds through her internal monologue, revealing how trauma distorts memory and reshapes identity. Munro's portrayal of grief is restrained yet devastating, emphasizing the ethical complexity of remembering. Munro also explores the trauma of social exclusion. In "Red Dress—1946," a young girl experiences humiliation at a school dance, which becomes a formative memory of shame and alienation. The story captures how cultural norms—beauty, popularity, femininity—imprint themselves on the psyche, shaping identity through

emotional injury.

Alice Munro's fiction offers a profound exploration of cultural memory and psychological identity. Her stories illuminate how individuals are shaped by familial legacies, social expectations, and the quiet violence of memory. Through her nuanced portrayals of women, her forensic attention to place and time, and her ethical engagement with trauma, Munro constructs a literary world where identity is always in negotiation. Munro's work challenges readers to reconsider the boundaries between self and society, between memory and narrative. In doing so, she affirms the power of storytelling as a means of understanding who we are, where we come from, and how we carry the past within us. Munro's fiction is deeply rooted in place, particularly the rural landscapes of Ontario. These settings are not merely backdrops but active participants in memory transmission. The towns, farms, and lakes are repositories of familial and cultural memory, where characters confront the ghosts of their past.

In "Home," the narrator returns to her childhood house, now inhabited by her stepmother. The physical space triggers memories of her father, her mother, and her own emotional development. Munro uses the house as a metaphor for the layered nature of memory—each room holds a different story, a different version of the self. In "Fiction," a woman discovers that a young writer has fictionalized her life. The story raises questions about ownership of memory and the ethics of storytelling. Munro implies that memory is communal, shaped by both teller and listener. The transmission of memory across generations is not passive but active, involving interpretation, negotiation, and sometimes conflict. Place also serves as a bridge between generations. In

"Working for a Living," Munro recalls her father's fur-trapping business and the economic struggles of her family. These memories are tied to the land, to the rhythms of rural life. Munro suggests that identity is shaped not only by people but by the environments they inhabit. Munro's characters often use memory to resist cultural norms and to reclaim agency. In "Friend of My Youth," the narrator revisits her mother's stories about a woman named Flora, who defied expectations by refusing to marry. The narrator's interpretation of Flora's life changes over time, reflecting her own evolving identity. Munro portrays memory as a site of contestation, where different versions of the past compete for legitimacy. The narrator's attempt to understand Flora becomes a way of understanding her mother, and ultimately herself. Munro suggests that reclaiming memory is an act of empowerment, allowing individuals to rewrite inherited narratives.

Munro's fiction engages with cultural memory and psychological identity, particularly through the lens of gender, place, and time. Drawing on selected stories from collections such as The Moons of Jupiter, Runaway, and Dear Life, the paper argues that Munro's narratives function as intimate excavations of the self, shaped by familial legacies, social expectations, and the quiet violence of memory. Alice Munro's fiction is often described as "novelistic" in its depth and complexity, despite its brevity. Her stories are rooted in the rural landscapes of southwestern Ontario, yet they transcend geography to explore universal themes of memory, identity, and emotional survival. Munro's protagonists—often women—navigate the tensions between personal desire and cultural expectation, between past trauma and present consciousness. Munro constructs psychological identity through the prism of cultural memory, revealing the subtle interplay between individual experience and collective inheritance. Cultural memory, as theorized by Jan Assmann, refers to the shared pool of knowledge and experience that shapes a community's identity over time. In Munro's work, cultural memory is embedded in domestic rituals, family histories, and the social codes of small-town life. Her stories often begin in the present but spiral into the past, uncovering buried truths and unresolved tensions.

The author is a Former Affiliate Faculty, Virginia Commonwealth University, USA is an International Tagore Awardee poet and multilingual Columnist. Email prof.ratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com

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Kashmiri doctor Joins Prestigious IDF Global Expert Network

Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo, prominent Kashmiri doctor, medical writer, educator, and public health advocate, has been named to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Global Expert Network. Dr. Itoo, who is an IDF Fellow, joins this exclusive initiative under the IDF



School of Diabetes Global Experts.

The IDF Global Expert Network brings together leading professionals from around the world to collaborate on advancing diabetes knowledge, education, research, and policy. By joining this distinguished group, Dr. Itoo will play a key role in guiding the work of the IDF School of Diabetes and furthering the IDF's vital global mission.

Dr. Itoo's expertise is widely recognized; he is a Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health (FRSPH, UK) and holds memberships in several prominent international medical organizations, including the American College of Physicians (USA), the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI), and the Endocrine Society (USA).

Pertinently, the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) headquartered in Brussels, Belgium -- is a global alliance of over 250 national diabetes associations from more than 160 countries and territories. Established in 1950, the IDF is dedicated to improving the lives of people with diabetes and those at risk, and to promoting diabetes care, prevention, and a cure worldwide.

Instant Glow' Skin Care Tips From Kitchen



■ SHAHNAZ HUSSAIN

Glowing skin is typically seen as a sign of health and vitality. However, achieving radiant skin doesn't always require expensive treatments or fancy skincare products.

Only if we can give a little attention to our skin can it become lively, soft and supple. All we have to do is devote a little time to listening to our skin's needs.

While several beauty products claim to boost skin radiance, simple kitchen ingredients such as curd, honey, papaya, and aloe vera can be used in different combinations to make our skin bright and beautiful.

Curd And Honey Face Pack

This face pack deeply moisturises and revitalises your skin, utilising the hydrating qualities of honey combined with the exfoliating properties of curd.

Ingredients:
2 tablespoons of curd
1 tablespoon of honey

Instructions:
Blend the curd and honey in a glass bowl until you have a smooth mixture.

Cleanse your face and apply the mixture evenly to your face and neck, avoiding the eye area

Apply the mixture

Allow it to sit for 15-20 minutes.

Rinse it off with lukewarm water and pat your face dry

Raw Milk Face Pack

Take: 2 tablespoons of raw milk and 1 teaspoon of turmeric powder. Apply the mixture on the face and wash it after 15 minutes. Use it twice a week, and it will lighten your skin and give a radiant look.

Turmeric is known for its anti-inflammatory and brightening properties. When combined with the moisturising effect of raw milk, this face pack becomes a potent solution for reducing blemishes and dark spots. Take two to three tablespoons of cold raw milk, add half a tablespoon of glycerine to it and mix it up. Apply to the face and lips with a cotton ball, and let it dry for 30 minutes. Wash your face with fresh water. It will result in smooth and glowing skin, and your skin will remain moisturised throughout the day.

Papaya Face Pack:

Papaya suits all skin types. It also contains powerful enzymes, valuable vitamins, minerals, and trace elements, which nourish and revitalise the skin.

Papaya is very useful for acne-prone skin. The enzymes in papaya, combined with the antimicrobial properties of honey and astringent properties in lemon juice, help to cleanse the skin and



unclog pores, killing harmful bacteria.

Take 1/2 cup ripe papaya, 1 tsp honey, 1 tsp lemon juice and 1 tsp sandalwood powder. Cut the papaya into small pieces and mash them. Add the honey, lemon juice, and sandalwood powder, and mix well. Ensure the sandalwood has no lumps.

Apply this face pack evenly to your face and neck. Leave the mask on your face for at least 15 minutes. The longer you let the mask dry and harden, the better. Rinse it off with cold water, and repeat this home remedy once in three or four days

Honey Mask Face Pack

Mix one tablespoon of honey, Two tablespoons of almond powder (finely ground) and half a teaspoon of lemon juice to create a fine paste, apply it on the face and scrub in gentle motions. Rinse off. Use this scrub and face pack twice a week for the best results.

Mix 1 tablespoon of the honey with 1 teaspoon of curd to make a smooth mixture of a uniform texture. Add one teaspoon of olive oil.

Apply this homemade mask to your face and leave it for 30 minutes. Rinse with clean water. It will nourish your skin

Aloe Vera Face Masks

Aloe vera can promote the formation of new cells and has therapeutic effects. Additionally, it hydrates and calms without clogging pores.

Using aloe vera daily after washing your face can give your skin radiant health.

Aloe vera gel is packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that deeply hydrate the skin, restore moisture, and promote a youthful appearance.

It has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties that help improve skin texture.

Combine one tablespoon of aloe vera gel, two tablespoons of milk cream, and a pinch of turmeric in a bowl and mix well. Apply the mixture evenly across your face and neck.

Allow the mask to sit on your skin for about 30 minutes. Rinse off the mask with lukewarm water.

Mix fresh aloe vera gel with hydrating ingredients like honey and rose water to form a paste. Apply the mixture to your face, leave it for 20 minutes, and then rinse with water.

Blend one unpeeled cucumber in a blender until the consistency is like a watery paste. Separate the cucumber juice with the help of a strainer. Add two tablespoons of aloe vera gel. Apply all over the face, neck & chin area. Let it sit for 30 minutes. Rinse off well with cold water.

Avocado pulp can be mixed with aloe vera gel and applied to the face to nourish and moisturise the skin. Wash off with plain water after 20 minutes. Fresh and raw avocado should be used. Avocado contains about 20 vitamins and minerals. It is rich in antioxidants, which help to delay visible signs of skin ageing

Cocoa Powder & Oats Face Packs

Mix three teaspoons of cocoa powder and 2 teaspoons of oats with egg white and one teaspoon each of honey and curd. Adjust the ingredients so that it is a thick paste, which does not drip. If it is too thin, add more cocoa powder. To make it thinner, add more curd or milk. For dry skin, add egg yolk instead of egg white. First cleanse the skin and then apply the mask, avoiding the lips and area around eyes. Wash it off after 20 to 30 minutes with plain water.

The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

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Rasul Mir's Legacy Celebrated in Two-Day Cultural Festival at Dooru Shahabad

■ FAROOQ RATHER

DOORU, OCT 22: The serene town of Dooru Shahabad came alive on October 22 with the opening of a two-day cultural extravaganza titled "Jashn-e-Rasul Mir", organized by the Rasul Mir Cultural Foundation. The festival aims to celebrate the life, poetry, and cultural legacy of Rasul Mir, one of Kashmir's most beloved and influential poets, often hailed as the John Keats of Kashmir. The event witnessed a vibrant gathering of scholars, poets, writers, and students who paid rich tributes to Rasul Mir's profound impact on Kashmiri language and literature. The Director General of the School Education Department, Dr. G. N. Itoo, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while Professor Shad Ramzan, District Judge Mr. Mir Wajahat Salam, and Mr. Mohammad Rouf Rahman (JKAS), CEO of the Tourism Development Authority Kokernag/Verinag, attended as distinguished guests. In their addresses, the dignitaries threw light on the enduring literary and



cultural contributions of Rasul Mir, whose romantic verses and lyrical compositions gave Kashmiri poet-

ry a unique identity and aesthetic depth. They underscored the need to preserve and promote the Kash-

miri language and culture, calling it the moral responsibility of every Kashmiri to pass this priceless

heritage on to future generations.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Mohammad Rouf Rahman emphasized that cultural festivals like Jashn-e-Rasul Mir play a vital role in reviving the region's linguistic and literary traditions while also promoting cultural tourism. He assured full support from the Tourism Development Authority for such initiatives, stating that "Cultural and linguistic exchanges not only strengthen social harmony but also boost the tourism potential of the region."

The inaugural day of the celebration featured poetic recitations, musical performances, and literary discussions dedicated to Rasul Mir's life and works. Students and local artists presented soulful renditions of his timeless verses, filling the atmosphere with the fragrance of Kashmiri tradition and art. The festival will continue tomorrow with more sessions focusing on Kashmiri literature, art, and heritage, reaffirming Rasul Mir's eternal place in the cultural consciousness of Kashmir.

Srinagar to celebrate 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with great enthusiasm: Ashok Koul

Holds booth level meetings to strategize election campaign

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 22: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, organized a preparatory meeting at S1 Church Lane, Srinagar, to discuss and finalize the programmes to be held in connection with the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Iron Man of India and the architect of national unity.

Ashok Koul, General Secretary (Organization), BJP J&K, chaired the meeting and outlined the series of activities planned by the party to commemorate the occasion. He said that various programmes including Unity Marches (Ekta Yatras), seminars, debates, and nukkad natakas will be organized across the Union Territory to spread the message of unity, nationalism, and integrity championed by Sardar Patel.

"Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's vision and courage laid the foundation of a united India by integrating over 560 princely states. The India we live in today stands on his dream of oneness and national integration. It is our duty to continue his mission and strengthen the spirit of unity," said Ashok Koul.

He further added that under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country has revived and celebrated the legacy of Sardar Patel, exemplified by the construction of the world's tallest statue, the Statue of Unity, a tribute to the great statesman's unmatched contribution to nation-building.

J&K BJP Secretaries Mudasir Wani and Arif Raja, Programme Incharge Bhat Imtiyaz, State Co-Media Incharge Sajid Yousuf Shah, Co-Incharge of All Cells Bilal Parray, District Presidents, and other senior functionaries were present during the meeting.

Mudasir Wani emphasized that these programmes will encourage youth participation and foster a sense of collective responsibility towards the nation's integrity.

Arif Raja said that the life and legacy of Sardar Patel continue to inspire millions, and BJP's commitment to his ideals is reflected in every initiative aimed at strengthening unity and nationalism.

Later, Ashok Koul also addressed booth-level meetings as part of the ongoing election campaign for the Budgam Assembly constituency by-election. Addressing party workers at Booth No. 164 Thokerpora, he lauded their enthusiasm and dedication, stating that the campaign is progressing effectively and the party is moving steadily towards victory.

Police District Handwara Honors Supreme Sacrifices of Martyrs on Police Commemoration Day



■ DR. AB. QAYOOM

HANDWARA, OCT 22: Police Commemoration Day was observed with great reverence and solemnity at District Police Lines (DPL) Handwara to honor the supreme sacrifices made by police personnel across the country in the line of duty.

The event was presided over by SSP Handwara, who was accompanied by DySP PC Headquarters Handwara, DySP DAR Handwara, CAPF officers, and other police officials. Members of the civil society, retired police officers, and families of police martyrs also participated in the ceremony to pay their heartfelt tributes to the fallen heroes.

The ceremony began

with floral tributes being offered at the Martyrs' Memorial in remembrance of the brave police personnel who laid down their lives while safeguarding the integrity and security of the nation. This was followed by two minutes of silence, observed as a mark of respect for their supreme sacrifice. A ceremonial salute was presented by contingents of the Jammu and Kashmir Police and CRPF, symbolizing collective respect and remembrance for the martyrs. On the occasion, the SSP Handwara read out the names of police martyrs from across the country who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty and paid rich tributes to their courage, dedication, and selflessness. The function

concluded with wreath-laying and showering of flowers at the Martyrs' Memorial by officers, officials, guests, and the family members of the martyrs. As a gesture of solidarity and gratitude, SSP Handwara distributed gifts among the Next of Kin (NOK) of police martyrs and interacted with them, patiently listening to their concerns. He

assured that all their genuine issues would be addressed on a priority basis. Reiterating the department's unwavering commitment, Handwara Police reaffirmed its resolve to continue honoring the sacrifices of its brave personnel and to extend every possible support to the families of those who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

Public Notice

It is hereby notified that my daughter Name DOB has been wrongly mentioned in adhar regards bearing aadhar no 654501016548 as Tabish Amin DOB 07/09/2008 instead of Tabiya Jan DOB 15/10/2010 as for school regards now I have applying for it's correction of the same if any person have any objection in this regards may file the same to the office of aadhar seva/ concerned authority within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice After that no objection shall be entertained.

TABIYA JAN, DOB. 15/10/2010
D/O MOHAMMAD AMIN BHAT
R/O BADAKOT MACHIPORA TEHSIL HANDWARA
DISTRICT KUPWARA

Public Notice

It is informed to the General public that the name of my child has been wrongly mentioned as Anaya fatima in the birth certificate, whereas the correct name is Minsa zainab .if anybody has an objection, he /she may file his /her objection in the office of the district hospital budgam within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice

Father's Name :Imran Malik
Mother's Name : Shaista Jan , R/o: Sebdan Budgam

Public Notice

I, Aayan Mukhtar S/o Mukhtar Ahmad Aalie, resident of Banpora Logripora Pahalgam, hereby inform that my date of birth in Aadhaar Card is 13-12-2008, whereas as per the school record, my correct date of birth is 06-09-2011.

My Aadhaar No. is 4479*****.
Kindly update my date of birth in Aadhaar as per the school record.

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of BILQEESA AKHTER D/O FAYAZ AHMAD MIR R/O KREERI Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 25/03/2008 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection.

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL AND HOSPITALS DIVISION SRINAGAR

Subject: Overhauling and repairs to steam boiler along with allied works in laundry section at govt LD hospital
Ref: This office NIT No: M&HDS/TS /2025-26/75/e-tendering Dated: 04.10.2025

CANCELLATION

In view of minimum number of bidders not qualifying for the opening of Cover-II, the NIT referred above is hereby cancelled.

No: M&HDS/TS/5326-29 | Dated: 22.10.2025

DIPK: 7399/25 | Dated: 22-10-2025

Government of (UT) Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt. Ground Water Division Srinagar

Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar

Extension Notice 1st

Subject: This office e-NIT No. 45-JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2025-26, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./ 8043-60, dated: 27-09-2025. Bearing Tender ID No. 2025_PHE_290057_1 to 18.

In view of the application put forth for the above mentioned e-NIT under bearing tender ID's by various Firms/Agencies It has been decided by the competent authority that the revised critical dates are as under are extended as per the details given below: -

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	24-10-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	24-10-2025 04.00 PM

NOTE:

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endstt: nos.

No: JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./9717-35

Dated: 14-10-2025

DIPK: 7384/25 | Dated: 22-10-2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

Office Of the Child Development Project Officer Poshan Achabal

TENTATIVE SELECTION LIST OF THE CANDIDATES APPLIED FOR OF THE POST OF Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helper) IN RESPONSE TO ADV.NOTICE NO:- 132 OF 2025 DATED:- 14.07.2025 OF CDPO Achabal FOR ANGANWADI CENTER Checharipora B Panch Ward 02 ,Bulbulnowgam PC Ward 04 and Kamad PC Ward 04 ARE SHOWN BELOW

S. No	Appl. S.No	Name of the Candidate	Parentage/ W/O	Residence	PC/ Ward No.	Qualif.	Board	Additional Qualif.	DOB	Married/ Unmarried	Marks (10th)			Addl 02 Points as per HR Policy	Total Merit
											Max Marks	Marks Obtained	% of Marks		
1	3	Assiya Jan	Gh. Mohi ud Din Dar	Chichirpora	02	10th	JK Board	Nill	18.04.1896	Unmarried	500	245	49%	02	51%
1	5	Asmat Nisar	Asaf Suhail Salam	Bulbulnowgam	04	10th	JK Board	nill	13.12.1988	Married	500	238	47.60%	nill	47.60%
1	2	Masooda Akhter	Irshad Ahmad Bhat	Kamad	04	10th	JK Board	Nill	10.10.1991	Married	500	188	37%	Nill	37%

Objections if any shall reach to the office of Child Development Project Officer Poshan Achabal within 10 days from the date of publication of this list.

DIPK: 7370/25 | Dated: 22-10-2025

Sd/- Child Development Project officer,
Poshan Project Achabal,
(Member secretary)





Civil Society delegation from Rajouri calls on Javed Rana

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22: A delegation of civil society members from District Rajouri today called on Minister for Jal Shakti Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana at Civil Secretariat here, to raise key issues of public importance concerning the district.

During the meeting, Javed Rana patiently heard a wide range of public grievances and assured timely redressal through appropriate govern-

ment channels.

He highlighted that Omar Abdullah led government remains accessible and responsive to the needs of people and our priority is to bring governance to the doorsteps of common masses.

The civil society from Rajouri raised issues related to development, better health care, road infrastructure and service delivery.

The members demanded the operationalization of the Maternal & Child Hospital at Gujjar Mandi, Rajouri, emphasizing the



need to improve healthcare services for residents. They highlighted that starting of hospital operations is necessary to ensure accessible, quality medical care for women and children to the Pir Panjal residents.

The delegation also highlighted the deteriorated condition of the Rajouri-Thanna Road, pointing out that the blacktopped surface has significantly worsened over time, causing daily hardships for commuters. They urged immediate action for its upgradation to ensure smooth and safe travel for the public.

Minister assured the delegation that the Government is fully aware of these issues and necessary directions have already been issued to the concerned officers for their early resolution.

The Minister also spoke to the Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri, to ensure prompt attention to these matters.

The Minister further assured the residents of improved facilities and better infrastructure in the district, reiterating the Government's commitment to public welfare and development initiatives in Rajouri.

J&K BANK ASSURES SUPPORT UNDER REHABILITATION PACKAGE

■ HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22 : A meeting was held between the Chamber of Tourism Trade & Industry Katra (CTTIK) and officials of J&K Bank at the Bank's Main Bazaar, Katra branch to discuss The Rehabilitation Package 2025 for borrowers hit by disturbances announced by the bank in the wake of recent disruptions. The meeting was attended by Raj Kumar Padha, President CTTIK, along with members Raj Kumar Dubey and Munish Kapoor. The J&K Bank was represented by Sh. Lalit Parkash, zonal manager, Sh. Amit Balgotra, cluster manager; and Ms. Sakshi Sharma, manager advances.

At the outset Raj Kumar Padha welcomed the J&K Bank officials and appreciated the Bank's initiative in introducing the Rehabilitation Package 2025 aimed at supporting borrowers adversely affected by the recent disturbances. During the deliberations, the CTTIK delegation highlighted that businesses in J&K particularly hoteliers, guest house owners, travel agencies, traders, and transporters are passing through a difficult phase following the Pahalgam attack and Operation Sindoor, which led to the total wash out of the April May season. The situation has been further aggravated by continuous rains, landslides, and tragic incidents at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji and Machail Temple during August, which have compounded the already fragile state of the business sector.

It is pertinent to mention that under this package the repayment period of all existing term loans of eligible borrowers shall be extended by one year giving them additional time to stabilize operations and manage cash flow. The accrued interest on both existing term loans and working capital accounts up to the eligible date shall be converted into a separate Funded Interest Term Loan (FITL), repayable over an extended period as per bank guidelines. In addition, the bank shall provide an additional credit facility of 15% on the existing working capital limits to enable business units to meet short-term operational and liquidity requirements in the wake of the current disruptions.

CTTIK appeals to all eligible borrowers particularly those from the tourism, trade, industry and transport sectors to approach their respective J&K Bank branches to avail the benefits under the rehabilitation package 2025. This timely initiative offers much-needed financial relief and support to businesses affected by recent disturbances and disruptions.

Mr. Padha urged the bank to consider accounts having more than two overdue installments after the stipulated date of 21st April 2025 as eligible under the rehabilitation package so that maximum number of businesses can avail this facility. Raj Kumar Dubey emphasized the need for the bank to extend an additional 15% credit facility on term loans similar to that provided to working capital and SOD accounts while Munish Kapoor made request to offer short term loans at reduced interest rates to new accounts to help the business community to tide over the current challenges.

In response Sh. Lalit Parkash, Zonal Manager took note of all the issues raised by the CTTIK delegation and assured them that the bank would work towards finding suitable solutions. He reaffirmed J&K Bank's commitment to supporting businesses by offering diverse and flexible credit products. The meeting concluded with mutual appreciation and an understanding to maintain close coordination for the effective implementation of the package for the overall benefit of the business community.

NC Launches Campaign for Nagrota Bye-Elections, Vows to Uphold Legacy of Good Governance

■ HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22 : The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference today formally launched its campaign for the upcoming Nagrota bye-elections, vowing to seek a fresh mandate based on its proven track record of good governance, development, and inclusive politics.

The campaign kick-off took place at Panj Garain, where key Provincial leaders of the Jammu region rallied party workers and supporters, urging them to reach out to the people with a clear message of hope, progress, and stability under NC's leadership.

Addressing the gathering, Ad-

ditional General Secretary Ajay Sadhotra highlighted the inclusive and hands-on approach of the Omar Abdullah-led government, particularly in responding to the needs of the people of Jammu during times of crisis like the recent calamity. "Omar Sahib's personal outreach and responsiveness during the floods reflected the party's deep-rooted commitment to every region and every community," he said.

Provincial President Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta, emphasized the importance of the restoration of the Darbar Move, calling it a significant economic lifeline for Jammu. He said, "National Conference stands for secularism, regional balance, and pro-people

governance. It was our party that brought the first people-centric budget, and we continue to champion the cause of the common man."

The party's candidate for the Nagrota seat, Shamim Begum, outlined her vision for the constituency. She recalled the transformative development witnessed in Nagrota under previous NC governments—upgraded road connectivity, improved healthcare infrastructure, and significant investment in the education sector. "We will build on that legacy and ensure that Nagrota continues on the path of development and empowerment," she said.

The National Conference

reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive growth, secular values, and transparent governance, calling on the people of Nagrota to give a resounding mandate in favour of progress and stability.

Among others Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, Ayub Malik Provincial Secretaries Jammu, Bimla Luthra former MLA, S. Tejinder Pal Singh Aman Provincial President Jammu YNC, Satwant Kour Dogra Provincial President Women Wing Jammu, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Joginder Singh Kaku DDC Nagrota, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Raghbir Singh Manhas District President Jammu Rural A, Dilshad

Malik Vice President Central Zone, Rajni Devi Working Provincial President Women Wing Jammu, Ch. Rahmat Ali Former BDC Chairman, Master Aslam Secretary Central Zone, Thoru Ram Block President Nagrota, Siraj Din Nagrota, Balwant Singh, Davinder Singh Block President Mathwar, Ashwani Charak Block President Jammu East, Joginder Kour District President Jammu Urban Women Wing, Randhir Singh Chib, Ashanand, Som Raj Taroch, Ashok Singh, Rakesh Sharma District President Jammu Rural A YNC, Arun Pal Singh, Sukhjeet Singh, Zamir Quersh, Mudit Sethi, Majid Iqbal Naik, M.K. Dawarka Nath and others.

Srinagar to celebrate 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with great enthusiasm: Ashok Koul

Holds booth level meetings to strategize election campaign

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 22 : The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, organized a preparatory meeting at S1 Church Lane, Srinagar, to discuss and finalize the programmes to be held in connection with the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Iron Man of India and the architect of national unity.

Ashok Koul, General Secretary (Organization), BJP J&K, chaired the meeting and outlined the series of activities planned by the party to commemorate the occasion. He said that various programmes including Unity Marches (Ekta Yatras), seminars, debates, and nukkad natak will be organized across the Union Territory to spread the message of unity, nationalism, and integrity championed by Sardar Patel.

"Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's vision and courage laid the foundation of a united India by integrating over 560 princely states. The India we live in today stands on his dream of oneness and national integration. It is our duty to continue his mission and strengthen the spirit of unity," said Ashok Koul.

He further added that under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister



Narendra Modi, the country has revived and celebrated the legacy of Sardar Patel, exemplified by the construction of the world's tallest statue, the Statue of Unity, a tribute to the great statesman's unmatched contribution to nation-building.

J&K BJP Secretaries Mudasir Wani and Arif Raja, Programme Incharge Bhat Imtiyaz, State Co-Media Incharge Sajid Yousuf Shah, Co-Incharge of All Cells Bilal Parry, District Presidents, and other senior functionaries were present during the meeting.

Mudasir Wani emphasized that these programmes will encourage youth participation and foster a sense

of collective responsibility towards the nation's integrity.

Arif Raja said that the life and legacy of Sardar Patel continue to inspire millions, and BJP's commitment to his ideals is reflected in every initiative aimed at strengthening unity and nationalism.

Later, Ashok Koul also addressed booth-level meetings as part of the ongoing election campaign for the Budgam Assembly constituency by-election. Addressing party workers at Booth No. 164 Thokerpora, he lauded their enthusiasm and dedication, stating that the campaign is progressing effectively and the party is moving steadily towards victory.

Black Day: SOS International honours PoK martyrs, slams govt neglect

■ HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22 : S.O.S. International – An Organization for PoK Displaced Persons – observed Black Day with participants from Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Poonch, and Gilgit districts paying homage to martyrs who made supreme sacrifices defending Jammu & Kashmir against Pakistani Army and tribal invaders aiming for demographic change.

The event, led by Chairman Rajiv Chuni, featured speeches by VK Datta, Ved Raj Bali, Bhai Ram Singh, Amarjeet Singh, Jagjit Singh, Daleep Singh Chib, Dharam Vir Gupta, and others.

Proceedings began with floral tributes to genocide victims, two minutes of silence for those who saved the state, and a Sarva Dharma Prarthana. On October 22, 1947, the first bullet struck a PoK DP, halting invaders; 70,000 unarmed civilians were butchered, women abducted and raped in horrific atrocities – marking this as Jammu & Kashmir's darkest day.

Addressing the gathering, Chuni declared: "We take pride as saviors of Jammu & Kashmir from Pakistani clutches, yet our progeny languish in unhygienic camps for eight decades without aid – the third generation suffers in history's worst neglect."

He detailed S.O.S. International's efforts securing a relief package under the Omar Abdullah government: Rs 25 lakh ex-gratia per 1947 family, professional college reservations, and 8,500 jobs for educated PoK DP youth. Shockingly, the Centre ignored the last two components. Of Rs 9,096 crore recommended, only Rs 2,000 crore was sanctioned in 2016; just Rs 1200 crore distributed, Rs 600 crore pending. Chuni called this "slow poisoning" of DPs.

Mocking India's PoK claims, he said: "Officials repeatedly declare PoK integral to India yet fail to stop CPEC railways and roads on our ancestral lands. China-Pakistan built dams earlier too. If PoK is ours, ban their constructions." Retrieving Gilgit-Baltistan, he added, would secure half the nation; blocking CPEC would avenge 1947.

Chuni accused the Centre of shabby treatment: "PoK DPs are bona fide J&K citizens; Articles 370-35A never harmed us. We backed their abrogation for equal rights like Valley migrants – instead, discrimination doubled." In 'Back to Village Programs' several central schemes reached Valley migrants' doorsteps; zero for PoK DP camps. LG and secretaries visited Valley camps – none came to ours.

He demanded full package implementation, satellite towns like Valley migrants, and reversal of land grabs by the tillers despite High Court orders. Chuni urged eight reserved assembly seats in J&K, a PoK DPs Development Board, and Poonch-Mirpur-Muzaffarabad-Gilgit scouts for LoC/LAC duty and youth jobs.

Jagjit Singh stressed upgrading PoK DP education to harness their intelligence for nation and society, honoring their patriotism.

Dharam Vir Gupta called for smart ID cards, cultural clubs to preserve fading heritage, and leveraging the community's valor to strengthen India.

Vishwakarma Day celebrated with religious fervour at Vishwakarma Sabha

■ HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, OCTOBER 22 : Vishwakarma Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm and religious devotion at the Vishwakarma Sabha Temple Complex, Vishwakarma Chowk, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu. The celebrations began with a traditional Hawan, invoking the blessings of Lord Vishwakarma – the divine architect and creator of the universe.

The day-long event witnessed participation from members of the Vishwakarma community as well as individuals from various sections of society, who came together to pay their respects and



seek blessings from Lord Vishwakarma Ji.

The program was organized by the Vishwakarma Sabha and graced by several distinguished guests, including Member of Parliament Jugal Kishore Sharma, MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta, former

Minister Sat Sharma (CA), former Vice Chairman (OBC) Kuldeep Raj Verma, Ex-Corporators Gourav Chopra (Ward 28), Surinder Singh Choudhary and Th. Manmohan Singh (Ward 29), and Shashi Verma, President Pradesh Vishwakarma Sabha. Also present was

Zorawar Singh Jamwal, Chairman of Team Jammu, along with other dignitaries who extended warm greetings to the Vishwakarma community on this auspicious occasion.

The guests highlighted the life and legacy of Lord Vishwakarma, lauding his contributions as the master craftsman and divine engineer. They also commended the efforts of the Sabha in organizing such a spiritually uplifting event and reiterated their commitment to supporting the Vishwakarma community in their just and rightful causes.

Speaking on the occasion, Rakesh Chalotra, President of Vish-

wakarma Sabha, and Jagdish Karotra, General Secretary, shed light on the significance of Lord Vishwakarma's teachings. They expressed heartfelt gratitude to the guests and the large gathering for making the celebration a grand success.

Prominent attendees included Kuljeet Rai (Chairman, Vishwakarma Sabha), Vijay Kumar (Vice Chairman), Rattan Lal Changotra, Ashok Kumar, Om Parkash, Sanjay Kumar, Ajay Chalotra, Romesh Lal, Pawan Salgotra, Vinod Jaral, Naresh Kumar, Neelam Mahotra, Sanjay Sagar, Tarsem Lal, and others who contributed to the smooth conduct of the event.





Mandhana Admits Emotions Led To Sunday Heartbreak

■ **SUDARSHANAN**

NEW DELHI: Smriti Mandhana has taken the blame for India's batting collapse against England on Sunday night at their women's World Cup match in Indore, where they went from needing a-run-a-ball 57 with seven wickets in hand to a four-run defeat.

Chasing 289 for a win, Mandhana was dismissed for 88 off 94 balls in the 42nd over, and from there they slipped to 262 for 6 by the 47th and just couldn't get the final impetus with left-arm spinners Sophie Ecclestone and Linsey Smith bowling six of the last nine overs. "We could have done better with our shot selection," a subdued-looking Mandhana said at the press conference. "It started from me, so I will take it on myself that the shot selection should have been better. We just needed six runs per over. Maybe we should have taken the game deeper. I'll take it [upon] myself because the collapse started from me."

Smith bowled to Mandhana from around the wicket with deep square-leg, deep midwicket, long-on and long-off in place. Mandhana looked to go inside out over

the covers but the ball drifted away a little, making Mandhana mistime it straight down long-off's throat.

"I thought I could take her on, I was trying to aim more over covers," Mandhana said. "I mistimed that shot. Maybe the shot wasn't needed at that time. I just needed to be more patient because throughout the innings I was trying to tell myself to be patient and not to play aerial shots."

"The emotions took over for that one, which never helps in cricket. But walking back, I was pretty confident that we'll be able to get the win. But it's cricket, you can't ever think too far ahead. If you lose, I don't think [a good innings] means anything. I had to be a little more patient than I've been in the last two-three months."

Four overs after Mandhana fell, Richa Ghosh tried to hit Nat Sciver-Brunet over the off-side infield but chipped a catch to Heather Knight at cover. In the next over, Deepti Sharma slog-swept Ecclestone straight to deep midwicket.

"Richa has been good for us, but I wouldn't say that it's only dependent on her," Mandhana said. "We just needed 6.5 runs per over; it's not like we needed nine per over that the finishing

part was a lot to ask. We have seen Aman [Amanjot Kaur] do that in WPL and Sneha [Rana] has been brilliant in the last four-five overs with the bat for us in the first three-four matches. So, I wouldn't say that, especially this one, that it was only dependent on one player. We'll take it upon ourselves that we could have actually done better in the last six-odd overs."

India had played each of the previous four matches with five bowlers, and they ended up having to defend targets on each occasion, failing twice, against South Africa and Australia. Against England, they benched Jemimah Rodrigues for an extra bowler in Renuka Singh. As it happened, India were asked to chase and the move to change the team balance came under the spotlight.

Renuka, though, was India's least expensive bowler, conceding runs at 4.62 in her eight overs. In fact, the bowling unit pulled their weight, conceding just 36 runs in the last five overs to stop England at 288 when 300 looked on the cards. But the batting later came unstuck despite half-centuries from Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur and Deepti.

CRPF 161 Bn Promotes Girls' Sports, Distributes Badminton Kits at HSS Palpora

■ **HT SPORTS DESK**

SRINAGAR: In a significant step towards encouraging sports and fitness among young girls, badminton kits were distributed to the students of Government Higher Secondary School, Palpora, Srinagar today. This initiative aims to foster interest in badminton and provide the necessary equipment to support the students especially girls in pursuing the sport actively.

The event was held at the school premises, under the aegis of Sh Bahi Singh, Commandant, 161 Bn, CRPF handed over badminton kits com-



prising rackets, shuttlecocks, and sports gear to the enthusiastic participants. Earlier, on 15th August this year 161 Bn, CRPF donated complete sports equipment set of Volleyball and conducted Tiranga Yatra with the students of the same school. The program reflects the commitment to empowering girls through sports and promoting a healthy, active lifestyle. The students were excited and motivated to make the best use of the kits and excel in badminton.

This initiative is part of 161 Bn CRPF, as a larger effort to encourage sports participation among young girls and build a strong foundation for future players.

Erling Haaland, Harry Kane and Kylian Mbappe battle to be Europe's best

■ **AFP**

MANCHESTER: Erling Haaland, Harry Kane and Kylian Mbappe are all scoring at better than a goal-a-game rates in a blistering start to the season from Europe's top three marksman.

Ahead of their return to Champions League action this week, the trio are already battling at the top of the charts to be the competition's top scorer and making the early running in a World Cup campaign for next year's Ballon d'Or.

AFP Sports looks at the astonishing stats all three strikers are producing for both club and country.

Erling Haaland (Man City and Norway)

Haaland leads the way with 23 goals in 13 games to haul City back into contention for the Premier League and Norway to the brink of their first World Cup since 1998. Only once has Haaland failed to find the net this season and he has struck in all of his last 11 matches.

The 25-year-old scored twice against Everton on Saturday to

take his Premier League tally for the campaign to 11.

Haaland now boasts the three quickest occasions any Premier League player has reached 10 goals in a season after doing so in six matches in 2022 and five games last season.

"If you are building from scratch what you want as the ideal centre-forward, look at Haaland," said the Premier League's all-time top goalscorer Alan Shearer.

"He has goals, pace, strength, is good in the air. Doesn't mind being roughed up, it doesn't bother him if he doesn't have many touches. He is almost perfect."

Previously he has been questioned in his homeland for not reproducing his prolific club form for Norway. Those complaints have been washed away as Haaland has struck 12 times in six qualifiers to finally take a golden generation towards his first major international tournament.

Harry Kane (Bayern Munich and England)

Kane headed in his 22nd goal of the season to put Bayern on course for victory in Der Klas-



siker against Borussia Dortmund on Saturday.

The England captain has three goals in as many games for his country as the Three Lions became the first European team to qualify for the World Cup with a flawless qualifying record through six matches.

Kane has racked up incredible numbers since swapping his homeland for Bayern in 2023, even if it took until his second season to end a long wait to win a trophy. The 32-year-old has 104 goals in 107 games for the German giants, including 19 in 11 at club level this season.

Bayern already look set to defend their Bundesliga title, making a first ever Champions League crown for Kane even more of a priority.

He has scored four times in wins over Chelsea and Pafos to begin their quest for European glory and will expect more when Club Brugge visit Bavaria on Wednesday.

Kylian Mbappe (Real Madrid and France)

Mbappe's frustrating first few months following his dream move from Paris Saint-Germain last year are now long forgotten in the Spanish capital.

The Frenchman racked up 44 goals in 59 games across all competitions last season and adapted to playing as the central striker in Carlo Ancelotti's system.

Xabi Alonso has maintained Mbappe's position and the 26-year-old has been Madrid's key player during the opening weeks of the season.

Lightning quick, slick on the ball and capable of finishing lethally from outside the area, Mbappe has 15 goals in 11 matches between La Liga and the Champions League.

He is the Spanish top flight's leading goalscorer with 10, while netting five goals in just two Champions League appearances. Mbappe has also netted three times for France this season in three appearances.

In only one of 14 appearances for club and country this season has Mbappe failed to find the net, and he has netted in his last 11 consecutive matches.

Mbappe has finished as his league's top scorer in each of the last seven seasons, six with PSG and then in his first year at Real Madrid.

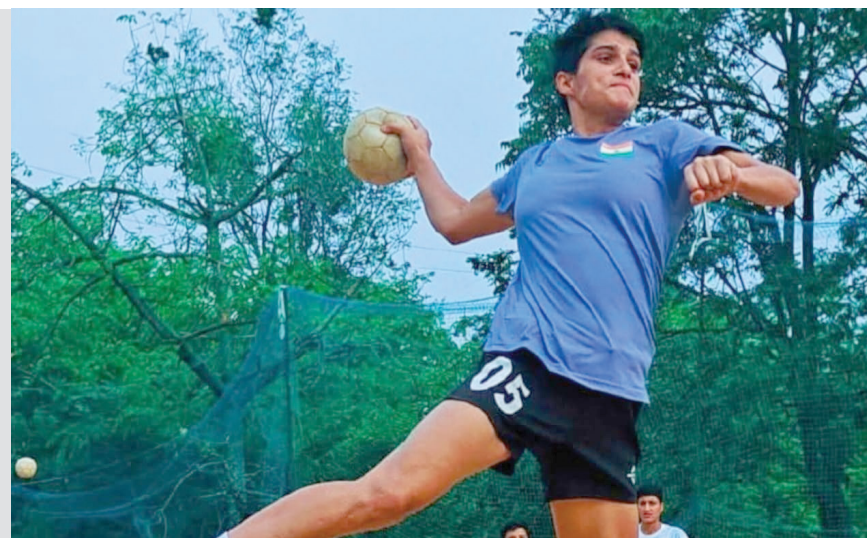
District Handball Championship Baramulla 2025 to be held on Oct 30-31

■ **HT SPORTS DESK**

BARAMULLA: Handball Association Baramulla in collaboration with J&K Sports Council is going to conduct District Handball Championship Baramulla 2025 Boys/Girls at Indoor Sports Stadium Baramulla from 30 to 31 October 2025.

All the Handball Clubs/institutions of District Baramulla are hereby informed that they can register their teams upto 26 Oct. 2025

After that no entry forms will be accepted



"Noor-e-Nooraan" A Beacon of Devotion and Art

Lubaab Publications Srinagar in Collaboration with Adbi Markaz Kamraaz and ALMURAD Foundation held grand book-release ceremony;

Award "Khilat-e-Ameer" announced to honour senior writers.

Noted Poet and Legendary Writer, Muhammad Yousuf Taing Felicitated With The Maiden Khilat-e-Ameer Award

HT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Oct 19 : A spiritually elevating and culturally rich literary event was held today at the Seminar Hall of Jammu & Kashmir Cultural Academy, Srinagar, where the much-awaited Naat collection "Noor-e-Nooraan" written by the eminent poet and scholar Syed Sad-ud-Din Saidi was formally released.

The grand ceremony, organised by Lubaab Publications Srinagar, in Collaboration with Adbi Markaz Kamraaz and ALMURAD Foundation held a grand book-release ceremony Which turned into a confluence of faith, art, and intellect, drawing a galaxy of Kashmir's leading poets, writers, scholars, and literary enthusiasts.

The dais was graced by distinguished literary figures including Dr. Rafiq Masoodi, Mohammad Amin Bhat, Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi, Rukhsana Jabeen, and The event was presided over by celebrated poet, critic, and scholar Ayaz Rasool Nazki, while noted intellectual and former Parliamentarian Sharif-ud-Din Shariq was the chief guest.

A Ceremony Steeped in Spiritual Essence

The programme began with the recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an, followed by Naat-e-Rasool-e-Maqbool ﷺ, creating an ambience of serenity and reverence.

Speakers unanimously lauded "Noor-e-Nooraan" as a masterpiece of devotion and poetic craftsmanship, describing it as "a radiant document of love and reverence that enlightens the soul."

Prof. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi, while presenting a scholarly paper, said that Saidi's Naat poetry derives its inspiration from the divine message of the Qur'an and represents a pure reflection of Hub-e-Rasool ﷺ.

Ayaz Rasool Nazki, in his presidential address, remarked that writing Naat is not merely an act of poetry but a living expression of love for the Prophet ﷺ — something that Saidi has executed with sincerity, artistic maturity, and spiritual finesse. He proposed



that a separate seminar be dedicated to exploring the past and present of Kashmiri Naat literature.

Rukhsana Jabeen, in her remarks, said that composing Naat is one of the most delicate forms of expression, requiring both deep faith and literary discipline. Fayaz Tilgami also emphasised that Kashmiri language possesses a rich heritage of Naat writing which deserves further promotion and preservation.

Chief Guest's Reflections

Addressing the gathering, Sharif-ud-Din Shariq congratulated the author and described "Noor-e-Nooraan" as "a valuable addition to the contemporary tradition of Naat poetry in Kashmir." He said, "Poets and writers are the true architects of a nation. Their creativity defines our identity and sustains the moral and cultural fabric of society."

New Literary Award Announced "Khilat-e-Ameer"

At the conclusion of the event, Mr. Jahangir Bukhari, CEO of Lubaab Publications, made two significant announcements that added to the grandeur of the occasion. He declared the institution of an annual literary honour titled "Khilat-e-Ameer", instituted in loving memory of the legendary poet and writer Syed Ameer Shah Kreeeri (RA). This prestigious award will be conferred every year upon a senior and distinguished writer for his or her outstanding contribution to literature and culture. And the Maiden Award for 2025 was given to living legend Mr Mohammad Yousuf Taing Sahib, who couldn't attend the function due to health reasons. The award will be presented to Taing Sahib on 21st of October at his residence in Srinagar. Former HoD of MERC University of Kashmir Mr Nasir Mirza will present the award to Taing sahib on behalf of Lubaab Publications CEO Mr Jahangir Bukhari.

Promotion of Kashmiri Language through Free Publishing Initiative:

In another major initiative, Mr. Bukhari announced that Lubaab Publications will publish books free of cost for financially weak poets and writers, as part of the organisation's literary service mission. He said the move is aimed at encouraging literary creativity and promoting the Kashmiri language by helping talented writers overcome economic constraints.

Vote of Thanks

Expressing heartfelt gratitude, Syed Jahangir Bukhari, son of the author, thanked all dignitaries, writers, and participants for gracing the event. The ceremony concluded with the formal unveiling of the book, amidst applause and admiration from the literary fraternity.

