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Illegal Occupation of State Property Can't be Legalized: CM Omar

Bill Seeking Ownership Rights Over State Land Rejected in Assembly by CM

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday firmly rejected a private member's bill moved by PDP legislator Waheed ur Rehman Para in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, which sought to grant proprietary rights over state and Kacharai lands to occupants. Terming the proposal legally untenable, Omar said the government could not endorse any measure that amounted to legitimizing encroachment on state property. "We cannot legalize illegal occupation of state land," the Chief Minister stated while urging the PDP MLA to withdraw the Bill.

However, Waheed ur Rehman Para refused to retract his proposal, alleging political motives behind the government's opposition. "You are rejecting it for your own policies. BJP calls it land jihad, don't be afraid of them," Para remarked, prompting a brief exchange between treasury and opposition benches.



Defending his move, Para argued that the Bill was intended to provide relief to families who have been residing or

Gol Stands by The States, UT's During Natural Disasters: Amit Shah

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Tuesday said the Government of India continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with State Governments during natural calamities, extending all possible financial and logistical support for relief and rescue operations.



Shah said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Centre has ensured prompt assistance to States facing floods, landslides, cloudbursts, and other disasters during this year's south-west monsoon.

During the financial year 2025-26, the Central Government has released ₹15,554 crore to 27 States under the

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Drug De-addiction centres functional in J&K: Sakeena Itoo

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today said that all Drug De-addiction centres are fully functional in J&K and directed for fee regulation at all centres for affordable reha-

bilitation of victims.

The Minister made these remarks while replying to a question of Legislator, Surjeet Singh Salathia on Drug Addiction, in Legislative Assembly today.

She highlighted that the Health and Education departments along-with law enforcement agencies are playing an active role to fight the menace of drug abuse in society. She added that strict instructions have been issued to head of all educational institutions (colleges and schools) to install CCTVs in and around their campuses to check any kind

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Rs 1632 Cr. Master Plan in pipeline for river Jhelum flood mitigation: Rana

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Minister for Jal Shakti Department, Javed Ahmed Rana today said that the government has Rs 1632 Crore Master Plan in the pipeline for river Jhelum flood mitigation.

The Minister informed this while replying to a



question raised by Legislator Sheikh Ahsan Ahmad in the Legislative Assembly today.

He said that a comprehensive flood mitigation plan including deep de-silting and increasing

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CM Omar Unveils Kashmir Marathon Gear, Invites All for Nov 2 Event

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today unveiled the official merchandise of Kashmir Marathon-2025 at the Royal Springs Golf Course. The merchandise - cap, medal, and racing kit specially designed for the participants of the event was displayed at a brief function with media and officers of tourism department present.



On the occasion, the Chief Minister extended an open invitation to all fitness enthusiasts to test their endurance and participate in the 2nd edition of the Kashmir Marathon-2025, scheduled to be held on November 2.

Speaking after the launch, the Chief Minister said that an encouraging number of registrations have already been received for the event, including a

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Supreme Court to Frame Guidelines on Compensation for Wrongful Arrests, Convictions

Calls it a vital issue of personal liberty under Article 21; seeks Centre, States' response

HT NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI, OCT 28: In a landmark move reinforcing the con-

stitutional guarantee of personal liberty, the Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to frame uniform guidelines for compensating individuals wrongfully arrested, prosecuted, or convicted.

A Bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta issued notices to the Centre and all States, seeking their response and requesting the assistance of Attorney General R. Venkatara-

mani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta in evolving a national framework for compensation in cases of wrongful incarceration.

The apex court was hearing a batch of petitions filed by Ramkirat Munilal Goud, Kattavellai, and Sanjay all of whom spent years behind bars, some even on death row, before being acquitted due to fabricated evidence and

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No unscheduled power cuts in Kashmir last winter: Govt.

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: The government on Tuesday informed the Legislative Assembly that no unscheduled power cuts were imposed in the Kashmir valley during the last winter, despite a substantial rise in demand due to heating load.

Responding to a question by NC MLA Abdul Majeed Larmi, the Power Minister said that even though the valley usually faces power shortages and unscheduled cuts during winters, the government successfully ensured uninterrupted power supply last season.

According to the minister's written reply, as reported by the

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Govt hikes DA for pensioners to 58% from July 2025

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has announced a 3 percent increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) for pensioners and family pensioners, raising it from 55 percent to 58 percent of the basic pension or family pension.

As per an order issued by the Finance

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CS Pushes AI, Tough Laws to Tackle Drug Menace

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired the 15th Narco Coordination Centre (NCC) meeting to review the ongoing efforts and coordinated measures being taken to curb the menace of narcotics trafficking and substance abuse across the districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education Department; Director Gen-

eral of Police (DGP); Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), CID; Principal Secretary, Home Department; and other senior officers from the civil and police administration.

Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs) from all districts participated through video conferencing.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary underscored the critical importance of strengthening the legal and institutional framework to ensure

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CS Reviews Progress on Digitization of Recruitment Rules

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress of a landmark initiative aimed at digitizing and streamlining the

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Jammu teachers denied promotion due to place of birth: LoP Sharma

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: LoP Sunil Sharma on Tuesday said the National Conference government in Jammu and Kashmir has discriminated against teachers from Jammu in promotions and transfers.

Sharma said that since the government took office over the past year, officials in the Education Department have given timely promotions and transfers to teachers, masters, lecturers, and principals, but teachers born in Jammu were excluded.

"Tell me, what fault does someone born in Jammu have? Because I was born in Jammu, I will not get promotion or transfer here based on merit," Sharma said. He questioned why officials treat teachers from Jammu differently. "I rise in merit, but since I was born in Jammu, I will not get promotion. What crime has a Jammu teacher committed?" he added.

Sharma also accused the National Conference of corruption, saying, "Ration thieves, job thieves, salaried thieves, promise breakers, and election thieves are all part of

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J&K Reports Over 2 Lakh Dog Bite Cases in 3 Years; Govt Launches Sterilisation Drive

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: Jammu and Kashmir has recorded more than two lakh dog bite cases over the past three years, prompting the government to intensify sterilisation and vaccination drives across the Union Territory, the Assembly was informed on Tuesday.

According to official data shared in response to a question by National Conference MLA Mubarak Gul, a total of 2,12,968



dog bite cases were reported between 2022 and 2025. Of these, 98,470 cases were registered in the Jammu division and 1,14,498 cases in the Kashmir division.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the Housing and Urban Development portfolio, said the administration is taking a multi-pronged approach to tackle the alarming rise in stray dog attacks, including sterilisation, vaccination, and the establishment of Animal Birth Control

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Illegal Occupation.....

cultivating on such lands for decades. The government, however, maintained that the issue of land ownership must be addressed strictly within the ambit of existing laws and procedures.

Reiterating his government's stance, Omar Abdullah said, "The question of land rights must be resolved lawfully. We cannot take steps that encourage encroachment or undermine the sanctity of state property."

Go! Stands.....

State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and ₹2,267.44 crore to 15 States under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF). In addition, ₹4,571.30 crore has been provided from the State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF) to 21 States and ₹372.09 crore from the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) to nine States.

The Ministry of Home Affairs said that apart from financial aid, the Centre has ensured extensive on-ground support through the deployment of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams, Army contingents, and Air Force assistance. This monsoon season saw the maximum-ever deployment of 199 NDRF teams across 30 States and Union Territories for rescue and relief operations.

Drug De-addiction.....

of irregular activities. The Minister also lauded the role of NGOs in dealing with this alarming situation across J&K, adding that their support is must for combating this social evil.

While giving reply to the question, the Minister said that 166 drug abuse cases have been reported in district Samba from the date of establishment of de-addiction centre at District Hospital Samba, with 114 Alcoholic and 62 Heroin & Cannabis affected, while as six patients have recovered till date. She added that the Government is taking concrete steps to curb this menace in the UT of J&K in general and Samba district in particular, like awareness Lectures and Educational Activities, Establishment of De-addiction Centre, Outreach Programs in Educational Institutions and Communities, Panchayat-Level Awareness Activities, Door-to-Door Survey and Identification as well as Camps in Hotspot Areas where a roster has been constituted for the organization of awareness and treatment camps in hotspot and other vulnerable areas. She added that these camps are led by psychiatrists and counsellors to provide both preventive education and initial treatment support.

The Minister also informed that Addiction Treatment Facility has been fully established at District Hospital, Samba since February 2024 sponsored by NDDTC (AIIMS New Delhi) under MOSIE, presently working on OPD basis with services like OPD by Psychiatrist, Counselling Services and Substance Substitute therapy.

While commenting on the subject, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather advised the Minister to take suggestions from a scientific document prepared by political representatives of a party, as it outlines effective and detailed measures for combating this social evil.

The Minister informed the house that Government has already started working on this report, besides the topics related to Drug Addiction have already been made part of the curriculum.

Legislators, Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi; Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani; Muzaffar Iqbal Khan; Pawan Gupta; Tanvir Ali Sadiq; Narinder Singh; Dr. Rameshwar Singh; Dr. Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri; Balwant Singh Mankotia, raised supplementary questions on the subject.

Rs 1632 Cr.....

carrying capacity of river Jhelum and its flood spilling channels is in the pipeline to enhance flood mitigation measures in the Valley.

The Minister said that nearly Rs 15 crores flood protection works have been undertaken in Srinagar to mitigate flood risk.

He informed that as part of long-term and permanent flood protection measures, under PMDP Phase-II, various bank protection works have been undertaken at critical locations adjoining the above areas at a cost of Rs. 12.30 crores.

Furthermore, to mitigate the risk of overflow, raising of embankments in vulnerable stretches has been carried out at a cost of Rs 2.49 crores, thereby enhancing the overall flood resilience of the area.

The Minister stated that the areas of Lasjan, Gandbal, Soiteng, Vethpara, Padshahi Bagh, Kursoo Rajbagh, Shivpora, Sonawar, Batwara, Rajbagh, Jawahar Nagar and adjoining localities are prone to flooding when the discharge exceeds approximately 40,000 cusecs, leading to overflow from the riverbanks.

He said that the habitations located on the left bank of River Jhelum exhibit relatively higher vulnerability due to their low-lying topography.

He said besides short-term measures to mitigate flood threats in these localities include the restoration of weak spots

identified during safety audits of river embankments through temporary protection works such as the laying of filled EC bags are also undertaken.

Additionally, as the flood season approaches, advance preparedness measures are undertaken by pre-positioning filled EC bags at vulnerable locations and keeping men and machinery under stage contracts in readiness to respond to any eventuality. These actions are executed in close coordination with the District Administration, DMRRR, and other line departments.

He further said that the flood threat can be minimized through structural and non-structural measures (Flood early warning and Flood plain zoning).

Supplementary were raised by Legislators including Tanvir Sadiq, Javid Riyaz Bedar, Hasnain Masoodi.

New fleet of buses arriving, border districts to be prioritised during their deployment: Transport Minister

Minister for Transport, Satish Sharma today said that new fleet of Buses is arriving and the government will deploy them as per the needs and requirements of people, besides border areas will be covered adequately.

The Minister said this while replying to a question raised by Legislator, Ajaz Ahmad Jan on SRTC Buses in Legislative Assembly today. He added that Border districts of Poonch and Rajouri will be prioritised as soon as the deployment of new fleet of buses is done.

While replying to a question, the Minister informed that JKRTC plies bus services in the Haveli Constituency on the Jammu-Poonch and vice versa route continuously, adding that due to cross border shelling, the said service was discontinued for one week and the same service was restored immediately after one week.

He further informed that JKRTC provided two vehicles for Poonch Haveli constituency on 10.05.2025 for shifting of affected people to safer zones. He added that JKRTC also plied bus services for shifting of stranded passengers to their home town Districts during the said period on the request of District Administration, Poonch.

The Minister also informed the house that during Operation Sindoor, 58 RTC Buses were deployed in several areas of J&K for shifting the stranded passengers coming back from other neighbouring States. He informed that in Poonch 2 buses, Mendhar 1 bus, Rajouri 3 buses, Jammu 4 buses, Bishnah 5 buses, Akhnoor/Khour 11 buses, Srinagar 2 buses, Doda 14 buses, Kishtwar 4 buses, Paddar/ Nagsani 1 bus and for Bhandarwah 4 buses were deployed during Operation Sindoor for facilitation of public.

Legislators, Muzaffar Iqbal Khan and Baldev Raj Sharma raised supplementary questions on the subject.

CM Omar.....

significant increase in foreign athlete participation, particularly for the full marathon category.

Highlighting Kashmir's unique appeal for hosting such sporting events, the Chief Minister said, "Kashmir is the only place in the country that offers such scenic beauty and ideal weather conditions for a marathon." He added that runners will traverse some of the most iconic landmarks of Srinagar including Jhelum riverfront, Lal Chowk, Dalgate, and the scenic Dal Lake shore in the half marathon category, while full marathon participants will run further towards Hazratbal and Kashmir University.

The Chief Minister noted that runners will compete in temperatures ranging between 6-8°C, a rare advantage compared to other marathon destinations across the country in warm weather. He expressed confidence that the Kashmir Marathon is fast evolving into a premier sporting event and will soon stand alongside renowned marathons like the Delhi Marathon, which has been held for over two decades.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary Tourism Ashish Chandra Verma, Director Tourism Kashmir Raja Yaqoob Farooq, MD JKTC Shreya Singhal, Secretary Royal Springs Golf Course, Haris Ahmed Handoo, Joint Director Tourism Waseem Raja, Additional Secretary Tourism Owais Mushtaq and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Supreme Court.....

tainted investigations. Goud, who spent 12 years in prison including six under a death sentence was acquitted in May this year after the court found police had "created witnesses by way of padding" and arrested him without credible evidence. His plea seeks compensation from the Maharashtra government for the violation of his fundamental rights under Article 21 of the Constitution.

Observing that wrongful arrests and prosecutions "devastate lives and erode public confidence in the justice system," the Bench said the absence of a legal mechanism for compensating such victims was a serious gap in India's justice framework.

The petitions also draw support from the Law Commission of India's 277th Report (2018) titled "Wrongful Prosecution (Miscarriage of Justice): Legal Remedies", which had recommended a statutory framework for

addressing such cases.

"We request the learned Attorney General and Solicitor General to assist this Court in these matters," the Bench said, issuing notices returnable on November 24, 2025.

If implemented, the move could lead to India's first-ever comprehensive legal framework ensuring restitution and rehabilitation for victims wrongfully deprived of liberty marking a major stride in upholding the sanctity of Article 21.

No unscheduled.....

news agency Kashmir Indepth News Service (KINS), the linkage of curtailment to seasons — which earlier justified excessive curtailment in Jammu during summers and in Kashmir during winters — has been abolished.

"Scheduled curtailment is now limited to zero, two, and four hours for essential/below 15% loss feeders, 15-40% loss feeders, and 40% plus loss feeders respectively, throughout the year for both Kashmir and Jammu divisions," the minister said.

He added that no additional or distress cuts are permitted in Kashmir during winters or in Jammu during summers. "Any additional distress cuts necessitated by power availability limitations are to be imposed only in Jammu from October to March, and in Kashmir from April to September," the reply stated.

The Power Minister further noted that the department has also ended the practice of increasing curtailment hours based on loss levels. Instead, disciplinary action is now taken against officers who fail to bill or recover energy charges, which has encouraged better efficiency in billing and collections.

"This policy shift has led to significant improvement in the recovery of power dues," the minister added. (KINS)

Govt hikes.....

Department, the revised rate will take effect from July 1, 2025.

The arrears for the months of July to September 2025 will be paid in cash in October 2025, and the revised DA will be included in monthly pensions thereafter, the order said.

Other existing rules related to the payment of DA will continue to remain in force, it said.

CS Pushes.....

higher conviction rates under the NDPS Act. He directed the Police and Law Departments to collaborate closely to devise a strategy for improving prosecution outcomes.

The Chief Secretary further called for developing an AI-enabled system to assist in the preparation of watertight charge sheets and directed IGP Jammu to lead the development of this module in coordination with the Prosecution and Law Departments.

He further instructed that all bails and acquittals granted in commercial quantity cases be promptly challenged, and directed the formulation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Investigating and Prosecuting Officers to avoid common procedural lapses that hinder successful convictions.

Highlighting the need for vigilance in the health sector, the Chief Secretary asked for a robust monitoring mechanism to track medicines prescribed to de-addiction patients to prevent misuse. He directed the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) to enhance the pace and quality of sample testing to ensure timely generation of credible reports.

He also called for a review of long-pending NDPS cases, identification of reasons for procedural delays, and necessary corrective measures. He emphasized capacity building of investigating officers, prosecutors, and legal personnel to enhance the overall effectiveness of the anti-narcotics drive.

Directing intensified surveillance around identified drug hotspots, particularly near coaching centres and private educational institutions, the Chief Secretary stressed safeguarding the youth from drug abuse. He reiterated the need for mapping both backward and forward linkages in every case to dismantle the entire narcotic supply network.

He also suggested cancellation of driving licences of habitual offenders and other preventive actions, asserting that there can be no scope for complacency in combating this social evil.

The Chief Secretary instructed all districts to convene NCORD meetings regularly, ensure attendance of senior officers, and upload the proceedings on the national portal without fail.

He also reviewed the Action Taken Reports (ATRs) on earlier directions, including monitoring of untraced cases, status of investigations, invocation of PITNDPS Act against peddlers, trials in absentia, and functioning of de-addiction and rehabilitation centres.

Calling for augmentation of manpower in de-addiction facilities, he directed the Health Department to train medical officers at IMHANS and hire psychiatrists on academic arrangements for smooth operation of these centres. He also stressed the need to initiate

in-patient (IPD) de-addiction facilities at other district hospitals.

The Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education, suggested stringent measures to keep educational campuses drug-free and called for sustained awareness drives among students.

The DGP assured full support in intensifying the campaign against narcotics and highlighted cross-border linkages, reiterating the police's commitment to dismantling such networks.

The Principal Secretary, Home, gave a detailed analysis of pending investigations, commercial quantity cases, district-level NCORD activities, and supervisory oversight mechanisms. The ADGP, CID, emphasized that the success of NDPS cases heavily depends on timely and accurate FSL reports, and called for focused attention in this area.

Providing operational data, ADGP, Crime, Sujit K. Singh, reported that up to September 2025, 1,342 NDPS cases were registered, out of which 1,305 were challaned, leading to 142 convictions, 197 acquittals, and 339 trials completed, including 12 high-conviction cases.

He further informed that 215 PITNDPS detentions were invoked this year, 222 hotspots identified (44 demolished), 1,350 individuals under surveillance, and 983 CCTVs installed across both the divisions. Only 71 FSL cases remained pending dated from October 6, 2025, the meeting was apprised.

It was also revealed that 103 backward and forward linkages were established, resulting in the arrest of 113 individuals. Moreover, 107 trials in absentia are nearing conclusion, paving the way for declaring offenders as proclaimed. On the financial front, 67 investigations led to the attachment of 81 properties worth 16.64 Cr. Nearly 99% of retail pharmacies have implemented computerized billing and CCTV surveillance systems, as was given out in this meeting.

The Secretary, Health & Medical Education, briefed the meeting on training programmes for teachers, SHG members, and frontline workers. He informed that over 32,000 patients have availed OPD services and 551 new admissions were recorded in IPD facilities at de-addiction centres since January this year.

The meeting also reviewed the compliance status of de-addiction centres, coordination between law enforcement and health institutions, and the strengthening of district-level enforcement mechanisms.

Reaffirming the government's zero-tolerance policy against narcotics, the Chief Secretary urged all departments to work in synergy and adopt innovative, technology-driven, and preventive approaches to achieve a drug-free Jammu and Kashmir.

CS Reviews.....

process for framing, amending, and revising Recruitment Rules (RRs) across all government departments of Jammu and Kashmir.

The reform, conceived to enhance efficiency, transparency, and uniformity in the recruitment framework, is set to transform the way service rules are managed and approved. The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) PWD, Anil Kumar Singh, Commissioner Secretary ARI & Trainings, State Informatics Officer (NIC), and other senior officers.

During the review, the Chief Secretary directed that the digital portal underpinning this reform be made fully operational by 10th November 2025. He stressed the need to integrate modules for conducting Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs), updating seniority lists, and completing all related formalities within the same platform to ensure end-to-end digitization.

Anil Kumar Singh, while outlining the core vision of the initiative, informed that the reform revolves around the establishment of a Single Window System, a centralized digital platform serving as the common interface for all Recruitment Rule proposals.

This unified system will replace the existing multi-tier approval mechanism involving several departments such as GAD, ARI & Trainings, Finance, Law, and the J&K Public Service Commission (JKPSC). The move will ensure a standardized, transparent, and time-bound approval process.

It was reiterated that the reform's overarching objective is to replace multiple office channels with a single, unified platform for faster decision-making and accountability. Clearly defined timelines and end-to-end digital workflows will help eliminate delays, ensuring prompt clearances and enhanced efficiency across depart-

ments.

Commissioner Secretary, ARI & Trainings, Shabnam Kamili, informed that the adoption of standardized templates, checklists, and vetting parameters will bring uniformity and procedural consistency to all departments.

She highlighted that real-time tracking features will enhance transparency and accountability, while automated compliance checks will ensure strict adherence to government policies and established rules, thereby strengthening administrative governance.

The meeting was further informed that the digital framework of the system will include an integrated online portal and dashboard enabling departments to submit Recruitment Rule proposals through standardized digital forms using secure departmental logins.

The proposals will automatically route through an integrated workflow to stakeholder departments including Finance, Law, ARI & Trainings, and JKPSC for seamless coordination and approvals.

A centralized digital repository will maintain a comprehensive archive of all approved Recruitment Rules, amendments, and related notifications. The platform will feature real-time status tracking, automated SMS/email alerts, and an escalation matrix to promptly address delays.

Additionally, built-in analytics and reporting tools will provide insights into processing timelines, pending cases, and bottlenecks to enable continuous process improvement.

A key feature of the reform is the introduction of non-negotiable timelines for processing proposals to ensure prompt action and accountability at every level. The proposed fixed timelines for clearances includes 30 days for the intending department (from receipt of proposal from HoD), 10 days each for ARI & Trainings, Finance, Law, GAD, Standing Committee, and JKPSC, before final approval by GAD post-clearances.

This structured, technology-driven approach is expected to drastically reduce the time required to finalize Recruitment Rules, paving the way for a more efficient, transparent, and accountable administrative system in Jammu and Kashmir.

Jammu teachers.....

the National Conference." He said that the situation reflects policies implemented by the PDP in the past. He said bills were introduced to regularize illegal encroachments with the aim of demographic change. "PDP has an anti-national mindset. They brought bills to glorify and regularize illegal encroachments," he said.

Sharma said the PDP's attempts were defeated in the Assembly and thanked officials who opposed the measures. He accused the National Conference of continuing policies that favored certain groups over others and said the issue raises questions about fairness and transparency in administrative decisions in the Education Department. (KNS)

J&K Reports.....

(ABC) centres across districts. The data reveals that Jammu district recorded the highest number of incidents at 54,889, followed by Srinagar with 36,406 cases. Anantnag (26,453) and Baramulla (18,563) districts also reported significant numbers. At the other end of the scale, Shopian recorded the lowest figure with 1,357 cases in the three-year period.

To curb the growing stray population, the government said a comprehensive sterilisation and immunisation drive was rolled out in mid-2023. Between June 2023 and September 2025, as many as 48,998 stray dogs were sterilised and vaccinated. The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) led the efforts with 27,237 procedures, followed by the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) with 13,730.

Abdullah said that while Srinagar currently has two functional ABC centres and a third under establishment, the Directorate of Urban Local Bodies, Kashmir, is in the process of setting up similar facilities across all nine districts of the division. Land for the centres has already been identified in Baramulla, Kulgam, and Sumbal, marking the first phase of the initiative.

Public health experts have repeatedly raised concern over the scale of dog bite incidents in the Union Territory, particularly in urban clusters like Srinagar and Jammu. The government's new measures are seen as a step towards balancing animal welfare with public safety, a challenge that has persisted in J&K's urban policy for over a decade.



DC Srinagar conducts onsite inspection of road upgradation, macadamization works at Bone & Joint Hospital

Also takes stock of possible traffic decongestion measures including parking facilities, link roads, alternate entry routes & connecting walkway

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: To assess the progress of ongoing infrastructure upgradation works aimed at easing traffic congestion around the Bone and Joint Hospital, Barzulla, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Tuesday conducted an onsite inspection of the road expansion and macadamization works being executed along the Bone & Joint Hospital, Barzulla. During the visit, the DC was accompanied by Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintendent Engineer R&B Tatheer Manzoor, Tehsildar South Sajjad, Medical Superintendent

Bone & Joint Hospital Dr. Adil, Executive Engineer KPDCL, and other concerned officers.

On the occasion, the DC took stock of the ongoing road upgradation measures along the Bund including macadamization works. He also took stock of the possible traffic decongestion measures in and around the hospital which included proposal of construction of ramps & small Link Road connecting the main road with the Parking facilities through the Bund side, and proper development of a new car parking facility for hospital staff and attendants aimed at decongesting the area and improving connectivity to ensure smooth vehicular move-



ment, particularly for ambulances in and around the hospital.

The DC also took on ground assessment of the plan to develop an alternate entrance to the Hospital along with the development of dedicated tubes for easy movement of the ambulances & Doctors & patient traffic.

Reviewing the pace and quality of work, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to expedite the completion of all remaining components of the ongoing macadamisation project. He emphasized the need for close coordination among executing agencies to minimize public inconvenience and

ensure uninterrupted traffic flow during the execution of the works.

DC Srinagar highlighted that the District Administration is focused around taking specific multiple steps to ensure decongestion of traffic in the city through a mix of short term, mid term & long term steps & projects and that Decongestion of Bones & Joint Hospital is also an important part of that initiative. Decongesting this important medical establishment shall lead to better response time for the incoming patients, ease of attendants, easy access of ambulances and convenience of the doctors and staff working at the Hospital.

Chrysanthemum Garden at NMBG a proud initiative of Floriculture Department

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: The Department of Floriculture, Gardens & Parks, Jammu & Kashmir, clarifies that the newly developed and inaugurated Chrysanthemum Garden at the Nehru Memorial Botanical Garden (NMBG), Srinagar has been entirely conceived, developed, and executed by this Department.

The department stated that some reports and social media posts suggesting collaboration with any other agency in the creation of the Chrysanthemum Garden are factually incorrect and misleading and no institutional collaboration, MoU, or joint execution has been undertaken with any agency



for its development.

The Department's officers, its own technical team and field staff have carried out entire planning, design, plantation and landscaping work under its regular development programme.

While the Department acknowledged and appreciated the contributions of other institutions or agencies towards the development of region's floriculture sector, it emphasized that due credit be given to the actual executing agency of Chrysanthemum Garden, the Department of Floriculture, Gardens and Parks for its vision and efforts in coming up with another great addition to floral landscape of Kashmir after Tulip Garden.

The Chrysanthemum Garden at NMBG stands as a proud initiative only of the Department of Floriculture, Gardens & Parks, J&K and is aimed at enhancing public spaces and promoting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir during autumn season.

The Department reaffirmed its commitment to continue developing more such unique floral attractions under its own exclusive initiatives.

Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Dar Reappointed as DMO Pulwama, Retains Additional Charge of Kulgam

Public Hails His Integrity and Leadership

MUSHTAQ UL ISLAM

PULWAMA, OCT 28: The people of Pulwama and Kulgam have warmly congratulated Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Dar on his reappointment as District Mineral Officer (DMO) Pulwama, while continuing to hold additional charge of DMO Kulgam. This dual responsibility reflects the administration's confidence in his unwavering commitment, professionalism, and proven track

record in the Department of Geology and Mining.

Local residents, public representatives, and stakeholders from both districts have lauded Dr. Dar for his transparent, disciplined, and result-oriented approach in curbing illegal mining and streamlining mineral management operations. His tenure has been marked by strict enforcement of mining regulations, efficient monitoring mechanisms, and a people-



friendly administrative style that has earned him widespread respect.

Citizens have praised Dr. Dar as a dedicated officer who leads by example — known for his honesty, accessibility, and relentless work ethic. Many noted that hard work and integrity never go unrewarded, and his continued charge is a well-deserved recognition of his sustained efforts to protect natural resources and ensure lawful mining practices in South

Kashmir.

The people of Pulwama and Kulgam expressed confidence that under his continued leadership, the department will achieve greater transparency, accountability, and efficiency in mineral regulation.

Heartiest congratulations to Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Dar on this well-deserved honor and continued trust — a testament to his commitment to good governance and public service.

Over 900 Students Participate in Essay Writing Competition at GDC Handwara

DR. AB GAYOOM

KUPWARA, OCT 26: In an inspiring initiative to promote creative expression and critical thinking among youth, the Tabinda Memorial Society Handwara, in collaboration with the National Book Trust (NBT), India, Ministry of Education, Government of India, organised a large-scale Essay Writing Competition at Government Degree College (GDC) Handwara on Saturday.

Themed "Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body," the event witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 900 students representing various educational institutions across the district. The competition was divided into three categories focusing on diverse and thought-provoking themes. College Students: Transformative Reforms for Viksit Bharat 2047, 11th & 12th Class Students: Technological Advancement and 8th, 9th & 10th Class Students: Environmental Sustainability.

Participants showcased remarkable writing skills and deep understanding of national development, technological progress, and environmental challenges, reflecting the



intellectual potential of the region's young generation. To recognize their efforts, the organisers announced cash prizes of ₹30,000, ₹25,000, and ₹20,000 for the first, second, and third positions respectively in each category. The felicitation ceremony for the winners is scheduled to be held at Environment Hall Handwara on November 02, 2025.

The event was sponsored by the National Book Trust, India, and received support from Municipal Council Handwara and Municipal

Council Kupwara. Several local and regional media organisations also partnered in promoting this initiative aimed at cultivating reading habits and nurturing intellectual growth among students.

Speaking on the occasion, the organisers expressed gratitude to all institutions, teachers, and participants for their overwhelming response and reaffirmed their commitment to continue such educational and literary activities in the future.

Kulgam Police Organise "Unity Run" in Memory of Police Martyrs

FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, OCT 28: As part of the ongoing Police Flag Day Week-2025, District Police Kulgam on Tuesday organised a "Run for Unity" from Sanguspora Crossing to District Police Lines (DPL) Kulgam to pay heartfelt tribute to the brave police martyrs who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

The event was flagged off by DySP DAR Kulgam, Shri Mohd Ayub Rather, symbolising solidarity and collective spirit. A large number of school students, local youth, and police personnel participated with great enthusiasm and patriotic fervour. At the culmination ceremony held at DPL Kulgam, winners securing the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions were felicitated with cash prizes, while all other participants received certificates of appreciation to acknowledge



their spirit and participation. Speaking on the occasion, SSP Kulgam, Shri Anayat Ali Chowdhary (IPS), appreciated the active participation of the youth and underscored the significance of such events in fostering unity, discipline, and physical fitness. He also urged participants, particularly the younger generation, to stay away from social evils like drug addiction and to channel their energy towards constructive pursuits. He further emphasized that the Unity Run serves not only as a tribute to the sacrifices of police martyrs but also as a means to strengthen the bond between police and the community, promoting harmony and collective responsibility for peace and progress. The event concluded with a renewed pledge to uphold the values of sacrifice, service, and unity, the core principles that define the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

KU-DKMS hold workshop on stem cell donation awareness

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: The Department of Social Work, University of Kashmir (KU), in collaboration with DKMS Foundation, India, organised a workshop on "Stem Cell Transplant Awareness and Potential Donor Drive" at the Main Campus to promote awareness about stem cell donation and encourage voluntary registration among students.

The workshop aimed to highlight the importance of stem cell transplants in saving

lives of patients suffering from blood cancer and other serious blood disorders, while fostering community engagement in health awareness initiatives.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, in her address, said that, "Awareness about stem cell donation is an important step towards building a compassionate and health-conscious society. The University remains committed to supporting initiatives that integrate scientific knowledge with social responsibility. Together, we aim to inspire

empathy, break barriers, and nurture a community that stands with those navigating the challenges of life-threatening illnesses."

Dr. Nitin Agarwal, Head, Donor Recruitment Management (DRM), DKMS Foundation, India, informed that over 1,600 individuals from Jammu & Kashmir have registered as potential blood stem cell donors, including nearly 900 from Srinagar. He said that small contributions from individuals can help save lives of patients battling blood cancer and related disorders.

Head, Department of Social Work KU, Prof. Shazia Manzoor, in her welcome address, said that such awareness programmes are essential to sensitise youth about the life-saving potential of stem cell donation.

The event also featured personal accounts of three stem cell donors from Jammu & Kashmir — Dr. Aakarsh Gupta, Amul Aggarwal, and Abdul Raheem Cheche — who shared their experiences of donation and recovery, inspiring participants to come forward as potential donors.

The event concluded with an interactive Q&A session, where students and faculty clarified doubts and registered through an on-spot cheek swab drive.

The event was attended by faculty members; scholars; and students. The workshop was coordinated by Dr. Aadil Bashir, Department of Social Work KU.

The event proceedings of the inaugural session were conducted by Dr. Sarafraz Ahmed, faculty at the Department of Social Work KU and vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Javaid Rashid, faculty at Department of Social Work KU.

Ensure befitting, meticulous execution of arrangements for "Run for Unity" & Celebration of UT Diwas: Div Com Kashmir to officers

Directs for conduct of dry run of series of programmes

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28: Ensure befitting and meticulous execution of entrusted responsibilities for the smooth and successful conduct of "Run for Unity" and celebration of UT Foundation Diwas/ Ekta Diwas directed Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg to officers while chairing a meeting at SKICC, today.

While taking the final review of preparations with officers, the Div Com issued slew of directions for comprehensive arrangements to ensure no space for loophole or lackadaisical approach.

The Div Com directed for conduct of step-by-step proceedings in a synchronized manner for vibrant celebrations of the day.

He directed departments for the enthusiastic and overwhelming participation in the programmes and instructed participants to arrive at the venue before 8:30 AM.

The Div Com issued detailed directions regarding arrangements, including erection of pandals in the SKICC back lawn, singing of the National Anthem before the flag-off of the "Run for Unity" and at the conclusion of the UT Diwas celebration in the auditorium. He further instructed for stage



decoration, distribution of caps, pick-and-drop facilities, VIP and participant seating, parking management, and distribution of refreshment. He directed Information

Department for finalization of documentary to be screened during the event, installation of video walls and standees and creation of creative backdrop highlighting the theme of unity and progress.

Div com directed Traffic Police to issue advance traffic advisory for effective and meticulous traffic regulation.

He also reviewed compilation of success stories by departments and performance of cultural programmes.

Meanwhile, he took stock of the readiness of a photo exhibition showcasing vibrancy of UT of J&K besides achievements by the departments.

Moreover, he issued directions to civil departments for ensuring comprehensive arrangements for basic amenities including availability of drinking water, uninterrupted electricity, mobile toilet facility, medical staff, ambulances, and fire tenders.

Besides Deputy Commissioner Srinagar & DIG Police, the meeting was attended by HoDs and officers of Health, Education, JKEDI, Information, Horticulture, Agriculture, ICDS, JalShakti, KPDC, Handloom and Handicraft, Hospitality and Protocol, police, BSF, Sanitation Welfare, RTC, SMC, Floriculture and other concerned departments.

ACB holds Awareness session for Health Department at Bandipora

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 28: As part of the ongoing Vigilance Awareness Week 2025 being observed from 27th October to 2nd November on the theme "Vigilance: Our Shared Responsibility," the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday conducted an awareness session with officers and officials of the Health Department Bandipora at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

The event was chaired by Chief Medical Officer Bandipora, Dr. Ishtiyaq Naik, while a team from Anti-Corruption Bureau North Kashmir, led by DySP ACB Baramulla, Fayaz Ahmad, along with Inspector, Arif Gul; NT, Manzoor Ahmad, and ASI Mukhtar Ahmad, sensitized the participants on preventive vigilance and ethical conduct in public service.

The programme began with the administration of the Integrity Pledge by an officer from ACB, followed by a detailed presentation on vigilance practices, corruption prevention measures, and accountability mechanisms. The ACB team also held an interactive Question and Answer session, addressing queries and sharing practical insights.

During his address, DySP, Fayaz Ahmad highlighted the role and functioning of the ACB and emphasized the importance of individual and collective responsibility in promoting integrity and transparency. He underscored the need for strict adherence to codal formalities, financial prudence, and ethical conduct in all departmental operations.

Special focus was laid on key areas such as procurement of equipment, goods and services, observance of General Financial Rules, avoidance of post-facto approvals, and prevention of procurement at exorbitant rates.

Officers were also cautioned against prescription of specific brands for personal gains, unnecessary referrals and surgeries at private institutions, and irregularities in issuance of fitness and disability certificates or falsification of duty rosters.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ishtiyaq Naik expressed gratitude to the ACB for organizing such a thought-provoking and informative session. He remarked that, "If everybody performs their duty sincerely and with good character, corruption will automatically vanish. Integrity and honesty must become the foundation of our professional conduct."

Among others, the event was attended by Medical Superintendent District Hospital Bandipora, Medical Officers, Para-Medical Staff, Clerical Staff, ASHA Workers, MLHPs from various health institutions across the district and other officials of the Health Department.

Orientation and Career Counselling Programme on Civil Services Examination Held at GDC Budgam

DC Budgam Inspires Students to Pursue Excellence with Focus and Discipline

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 28: The Institution Innovation Cell (IIC) and Career Counselling & Guidance Cell of Government Sheikh-ul-Alam Memorial Degree College, Budgam, in association with Exceptional IAS academy and in collaboration with District Administration budgam today organized an Orientation and Career Counselling Programme on Civil Services Examination.

The programme aimed to create awareness and provide guidance to students and faculty members from the host and allied colleges regarding various aspects of Civil Services preparation and opportunities.

The event commenced with the launch of the college magazine "Rooh" by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, along with Principal of the College, Dr. Amin Malik.

The highlight of the event was

an inspirational address by DC Budgam, who shared valuable insights from his own experience in successfully clearing multiple competitive examinations including JKAS, IFS, and IAS.

The DC emphasised that focus, discipline, and self-motivation are the cornerstones of success in Civil Services. He advised aspirants to strengthen their fundamentals, stay consistent, and approach preparation with a clear strategy.

He also encouraged students to cultivate a habit of reading newspapers, staying informed about current affairs, and maintaining ethical integrity as future administrators.

"Success in competitive examinations is not about shortcuts but about sustained effort, clarity of purpose, and belief in oneself," DC budgam remarked.

He further inspired students by highlighting how perseverance, sincerity, and time management can turn aspirations into achieve-



ments. Principal Sheikh-ul-alam degree college budgam, Dr. Amin Malik underscored that students' growing enthusiasm toward civil services marks a transition from personal development to nation-building. Drawing on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, he

stated that a civil servant not only achieves self-fulfillment but also contributes meaningfully to societal progress.

Prof. Rukhsana Jabeen of Degree college budgam in her welcome address shared motivational insights on achieving success, urging students to cultivate a clear

vision and structured plan of action. She highlighted the importance of persistence, goal-setting, and self-belief in achieving excellence.

Later, the DC interacted extensively with the students, responding to their queries on exam preparation strategies, effective time management, and balancing academics with competitive exam study. His practical suggestions and personal anecdotes deeply motivated the participants.

Following the inaugural session, technical sessions were conducted by experts and recent qualifiers of UPSC and JKPCS Combined Competitive Examinations, who shared their preparation journeys, study techniques, and insights into the evolving patterns of competitive exams.

The programme concluded with an interactive discussion, where students expressed enthusiasm and appreciation for the initiative, terming it both informative and inspiring.

DC Shopian emphasised on strengthening fight against substance abuse

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 28: District Level Narco Coordination (NCORD) committee meeting was held today at Shopian under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta in order to review the measures being taken against the drug and substance abuse.

On the occasion, the DC took appraisal of department-wise action taken reports and emphasised on taking coordinated action against the drug and substance abuse.

Respective department heads intimated on the progress, action being



taken including police action, awareness camps, treatment facility at DH, supervision in educational institutions, inspection of pharmacies, etc.

The DC called for comprehensive enforcement of drug dispensing norms by pharmacies with focus on conducting prescription audit and strengthening the fight against drug abuse.

Stress was also laid on conducting more IEC activities in hotspot areas,

initiating the highest degree of penal action on drug peddlers and keeping close vigil on educational institutions and coaching institutions.

The alarming situation of substance abuse was highlighted and stakeholders were instructed to take more result oriented action on wild cannabis destruction drives and creating awareness along with other measures.

SSP, Mushtaq Ahmad Choudhary, ACR, SDM Zainapora, Tehsil Sardars, concerned district officers from Health, YS&S, Agriculture, Education, Colleges, Drugs, Excise, ATF, Information, Social Welfare and others attended the meeting.

DDC Kulgam reviews progress of District Capex Works

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KULGAM, OCTOBER 28: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Meeting Hall of the Mini Secretariat Kulgam to assess the progress of developmental works being executed under the District Capex Budget 2025-26 and Constituency Development Fund (CDF) across various sectors.

The meeting was attended by key officers and sectoral heads to evaluate physical and financial achievements, identify bottlenecks, and ensure timely execution of developmental projects in the district.

A detailed review was held regarding the status of works sanctioned, tendered, allotted, and taken up for execution under both the District Capex Budget and Constituency Development Fund (CDF). The meeting also deliberated upon the financial progress of ongoing projects and the status of works uploaded on the E-Compendium portal. During the meeting, the DDC directed officers to ensure 100% utilization of available funds and timely completion of ongoing projects, particularly by the RDD and allied departments. He also directed all concerned officers to achieve 100% tendering and allotment of works under both District Capex and CDF within three days, emphasizing strict adherence to the timeline.

The Joint Director Planning, Kulgam, presented a comprehensive overview of the district's progress through a detailed presentation, highlighting sector-wise achievements and targets. Emphasizing the need for transparency, timely tendering, and strict quality monitoring, the DDC underscored that effective resource utilization and adherence to deadlines are crucial for faster delivery of public assets. The DDC further instructed departments lagging behind schedule, to expedite execution, prioritize people-centric and community-demanded works, and ensure third-party quality monitoring for accountability.

A block-wise review of CDF works was also conducted with respective BDOs, alongside an examination of physical and financial progress reports pertaining to the Capex Budget 2025-26. Reiterating that no compromise on quality will be tolerated, the DDC directed all executing agencies to complete all pending projects within the stipulated timelines. Senior officials present in the meeting included Joint Director Planning Malik Suheel, Executive Engineers from PWD and KPDC, and sectoral officers from Agriculture, Education, Youth Services & Sports, Medical, and Engineering wings of various departments.

SKUAST-Kashmir holds Animal Health Camp for Footrot-Affected Sheep in Budgam

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 28: In continuation of its outreach and livestock health initiatives, the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir) organized a special Animal Health Camp for footrot-affected sheep in the Ranger area of Chadoora, Budgam.

The camp was aimed at providing on-spot diagnosis, treatment, and preventive advisory services to sheep farmers affected by this economically significant disease.

A team of scientists and veterinarians from SKUAST-Kashmir treated around 200 sheep suffering from footrot, a contagious

bacterial disease that leads to lameness and productivity loss in small ruminants.

The initiative was jointly organized by KVK Budgam, the Division of Veterinary Microbiology, the Division of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry (FVSc & A.H.), Shuhama, and the Department of Sheep Husbandry Kashmir.

During the camp, Assistant Professor, (Division of Veterinary Microbiology), Dr. Mir Nadeem Hassan, educated farmers on the etiology, transmission, and preventive measures of footrot, emphasizing farm hygiene, regular footbaths, and early detection.

Head, Division of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Zubair Akhoun, dis-



cussed treatment protocols and the importance of timely veterinary intervention using appropriate antibiotics and antiseptics.

Scientist, Animal Science, KVK Budgam, Dr. Kavita, highlighted managerial and nutritional strategies to enhance flock immunity and minimize disease

outbreaks.

On the occasion, advisory literature, awareness materials, free medicines and disinfectants were distributed among the participating farmers to facilitate immediate treatment and containment of the disease.

The camp also featured inter-

active sessions, where farmers shared their concerns related to animal health, nutrition, and vaccination.

The initiative received enthusiastic participation from the local farming community, who appreciated SKUAST-Kashmir's continued efforts to improve livestock health and productivity in the region.

Such extension activities form an integral part of SKUAST-Kashmir's mission to bridge the gap between research and field application, ensuring that scientific knowledge directly benefits farmers and contributes to the sustainable development of the livestock sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

ACB, GMC Srinagar hold joint programme to promote vigilance and integrity

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28 - The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) Srinagar, in collaboration with Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, organized a joint vigilance awareness programme to promote integrity, transparency, and anti-corruption vigilance.

The event brought together prominent officials from both institutions, emphasizing the critical importance of vigilance and anti-corruption measures as a collective responsibility.

The programme was attended by Administrator GMC Srinagar, Mohd Ashraf Hakak; Head of Biochemistry Depart-



ment, Prof. Dr. Sabiya, and Chairman of the College Anti-Corruption and Surveillance Society (CASS).

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Sabiya emphasized the role of educational institutions in fostering ethical behavior and awareness about corruption.

Speakers from the Anti Corruption Bureau, including SSP ACB SBG, Javid Hassan Bhat; SP ACB SBG, Shahzada Kabir Matoo and Dy Sp underscored the significance of vigilance and participation in anti-corruption mechanisms.

Financial Advisor of GMC, highlighted the need for financial integrity and transparency in public institutions.

A documentary was screened to educate attendees about corruption prevention strategies, the impact of corruption on society, and the vital role every citizen and institution plays in building a corruption-free environment.

The event reinforced that vigilance is a shared responsibility requiring the involvement of government officials, educational institutions, financial advisors, law enforcement officers, and the general public.

It aimed to inspire collective action towards fostering accountability, transparency, and ethical practices to strengthen governance and public trust.

Pension Adalat held at Anantnag to address pensioners' grievances, promote digital transparency

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

ANANTNAG OCTOBER 28: The Principal Accountant General (A&E), in coordination with the District Treasury Anantnag, organized a Pension Adalat at Town Hall, Anantnag to address the grievances of pensioners and family pensioners.

The event aimed to ensure the early settlement of pending or unsettled pension cases and to create awareness among Pension Sanctioning Authorities (PSAs), Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs), and



other stakeholders.

More than 500 participants, including pensioners, DDOs, and PSAs, attended the event.

Addressing the gathering, Principal Accountant General (A&E), J.P.N. Singh, urged all participants to fully utilize the benefits of the IT-driven transparency initiatives introduced by the department. He emphasized the need for DDOs and PSAs to process retirement cases promptly and assured that the Principal Accountant General's office would ensure timely processing of all pension-related matters, including the issuance of Pension Payment Orders (PPOs), Gratuity Payment Orders (GPOs), Commutation Payment Orders (CPOs), revision cases under SRO-222, and issues related to additional quantum benefits.

He also commended the District Treasury Anantnag for organizing the Pension Adalat, training programs, and workshops aimed at addressing pensioners' concerns and improving administrative efficiency.

District Treasury Officer, Anantnag, Mohd Akram Thakkar, delivered a detailed presentation highlighting the issues faced by pensioners, DDOs, and PSAs. He also elaborated on various initiatives undertaken by the Finance Department, such as the digital processing of pension cases, from the stage of retirement to submission at the Principal Accountant General's office. He also elaborated on other key initiatives, including the Pension Suvaidha App and the facility of submitting Digital Life Certificates through the Jeevan Pramaan Patra App.

Deputy Accountant General, Pawan Kumar Rathi, Senior Accounts Officer, and other officers and officials from the Accountant General's Office and Treasuries Department also participated in the event and delivered presentations and discussions on key pension-related issues.

SKUAST-K holds Vigilance Awareness Programme on "Vigilance Our Shared Responsibility"

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28: A Day-long Vigilance Awareness Programme on the theme "Vigilance Our Shared Responsibility" was organized by the Department of Students Welfare (DSW), Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) in collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) at the Shalimar campus.

Registrar SKUAST-K, Prof. Azmat Alam Khan was the Chief Guest, while SSP (EOW), ACB, J&K, Zahoor Ahmad Wani, was the Guest of Honour on the occasion.

In his address, Registrar of SKUAST-Kashmir,



stressed that corruption is not limited to financial wrong doing, but includes even small acts of dishonesty such as granting undeserved marks to students or prescribing unnecessary medicines to patients by a doctor both being forms of ethical compromise. He congratulated the efforts of Department of Dean Students Welfare and Anti-Corruption Bureau for organizing such a meaningful program.

SSP (EOW) ACB delivered an insightful presentation on the ethics of vigilance, underlining the importance of collective responsibility in combating corruption at all levels. He stressed that the awareness among youth about the moral values, ethics and integrity is the need of the hour.

Dean Students Welfare, Prof. S.A. Gangoo, also spoke on the occasion and underscored the need for collective responsibility in promoting transparency and ethical conduct.

As a part of observance, all participants took an integrity Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to uphold honesty and transparency in their personal and professional lives.

A documentary on vigilance awareness was also screened to sensitize the audience about real-time cases and preventive mechanisms.

DC Bandipora inaugurates first-ever Sports Festival at GDC Sumbal

Stresses Importance of Sports for Youth

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 28: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today inaugurated the first-ever Sumbal Sports Festival at Government Degree College Sumbal, marking a new milestone in promoting sports, fitness, and youth engagement in the district.

The festival, first of its kind, witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, youth clubs, and local sports enthusiasts.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of sports as a medium of discipline, teamwork, and physical well-being. She highlighted that such initiatives foster positive energy among youth and help them channel their potential in the right direction.

She further stressed the need to make sports an integral part of daily life and encouraged youth to pursue both academics and athletics with equal passion.

On the occasion, the DC appreciated Principal, GDC Sumbal, PROF. (DR.) Shabeena Iqbal Shawl, for organizing such an inspiring event that not only promotes a sporting culture but also strengthens community participation.

She reiterated the administration's commitment to supporting similar initiatives and improving sports in-



frastructure across Bandipora to nurture local talent.

The festival aims to provide a vibrant platform for young athletes from across the subdivision to showcase their talent in multiple disciplines including volleyball, cricket, badminton, and athletics. The three-day sports extravaganza is being held from October 28 to 30, featuring a wide range of

events including athletics, martial arts, cultural performances, and other inter-college competitions.

Among others, the event was attended by the Principal GDC Sumbal, faculty members, officers from the Department of Youth Services and Sports, police officials, and a large number of students and sports persons.

District Level Committee approves 365 cases under HADP and JKCIIP in Bandipora

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 28: The District Level Committee (DLC) meeting on the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and Jammu & Kashmir Comprehensive Investment Plan (JKCIIP) was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, at the Chief Agriculture Office, Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

During the meeting, the department heads, including the



Chief Horticulture Officer and Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, submitted 365 cases for consideration, which were scrutinized for permissibility. After detailed verification, deliberations, and confirmation as per the prescribed rules, the committee approved all 365 cases for financial assistance and technical support under different agriculture and allied sectors.

Under the Agriculture sector, 210 cases under HADP were sanctioned with a focus on seed multiplication, integrated farm-

ing systems, area expansion, creation of water management systems, and promotion of protected cultivation. Similarly, 32 cases under JKCIIP were approved, promoting area expansion under vegetables and shallots, and development of water management systems (borewells).

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner stressed upon the officers to facilitate beneficiaries and expedite field-level activities to ensure effective implementation and timely achievement of objectives under both HADP and JKCIIP.

Agriculture Department seizes spurious DAP fertilizer in Kulgam

Director orders strict action, heightened vigilance across districts to protect farmers' interests

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KULGAM, OCTOBER 28: The Department of Agriculture Kashmir has taken swift and comprehensive action following reports regarding the spurious DAP (Di-Ammonium Phosphate) fertilizer consignment in the Kakran area of district Kulgam.

Immediately after the matter came to notice, a team of enforcement officers from the Agriculture Department were directed to assess the situation and verify the authenticity of the reported material. The team conducted a detailed

field inspection, during which samples of the suspected fertilizer were collected and forwarded to the notified laboratory for scientific analysis to ascertain its composition and quality.

Findings of the tests report from the quality control laboratory Srinagar indicated that the said material does not meet the standards prescribed under the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO) for DAP fertilizer. On receiving the report Director Agriculture Kashmir along with Deputy Director law enforcement and team of enforcement officers rushed to



the spot and initiated proceedings under the relevant provisions of law, and directed the concerned officers to take strict action against the defaulter and seized the material on the spot.

The Director Agriculture Kashmir has directed all Chief Agriculture Officers and enforcement wing to maintain heightened vigilance and investigate the matter in a coordinated manner across all districts to prevent the circulation of any spurious or misbranded fertilizers. He reiterated that the department is fully committed to ensuring

that only genuine and quality inputs reach the farming community.

The Department has advised farmers to procure fertilizers exclusively from authorized dealers and to immediately inform the nearest Agriculture office in case of any suspected substandard material.

The Department reaffirmed its dedication to protecting the interests of the farmers and maintaining transparency and accountability in the supply of agricultural inputs across the Kashmir Division.

HT EDITORIAL

Improve infrastructure; introduce skill based courses in colleges

Few days back taking part in a function organized in connection with National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 chief minister Omar Abdullah questioned the rationale behind the opening up of new colleges in the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Omar said that the decision of opening new colleges was not a wise one and it has failed to serve the purpose since the enrolment in such colleges is very less.

Omar said that there are some colleges where the number of students is less than that of a government higher secondary institute. It is an established fact that colleges have come up in good numbers across Jammu & Kashmir over the past few years and as on date the students don't have to travel a lot while reaching their respective colleges. In other words we can say that there has been a mushroom growth of the colleges across the union territory even though one can question the benefits of such a step.

Mere opening of new colleges would not serve any purpose and the same has to be supported by other steps. It is imperative that top notch infrastructure is put in place in such colleges and efforts should be taken to impart all the important subjects at the colleges. There should not be any lack in this regard and the students should not suffer. The picture as on date is not so rosy and a lot needs to be done to improve the infrastructure at the new and the existing colleges in Jammu & Kashmir.

At the same time the policy makers should also understand that mere imparting of traditional subjects to the students would not serve any purpose in the modern era. It is important that skill based subjects and courses are taught to the students in the colleges. Once this is done then a skilled workforce would graduate from the colleges and they would not be a burden on their parents. For this the curriculum needs to be changed and the issue needs to be taken up on an emergent basis.

Innovations have taken place in the different fields and how can the field of education remain aloof from the same. Since traditional courses are being taught to students in colleges not many students get decent jobs once they come out of the colleges. This scenario needs to be changed for posterity with the hope that things would change in the future.

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Examination Syndrome among Little Children: A Growing Concern



Imran Raina



Examination syndrome refers to the intense fear, anxiety, or stress that children experience before or during examinations. It may manifest through both psychological and

physical symptoms such as headaches, nausea, trembling, sweating, loss of appetite, and sleeplessness.

Emotionally, children may feel panic, hopelessness, or guilt for not studying enough. This fear often results from excessive pressure to perform well, constant comparisons with others, and fear of punishment or criticism. For little children, who are still developing emotionally, such experiences can be deeply traumatic. Instead of viewing exams as opportunities to showcase learning, they begin to see them as threats to their self-worth.

Emotionally, children may feel panic, hopelessness, or guilt for not studying enough. This fear often results from excessive pressure to perform well, constant comparisons with others, and fear of punishment or criticism. For little children, who are still developing emotionally, such experiences can be deeply traumatic. Instead of viewing exams as opportunities to showcase learning, they begin to see them as threats to their self-worth.

In recent years, the term examination syndrome or exam phobia has become a familiar expression in schools and homes alike. What was once considered normal pre-exam anxiety has now transformed into a widespread psychological concern, especially among young children. From sleepless nights to stomach aches, tears, and even refusal to attend school, the symptoms of exam fear are becoming increasingly visible. Examinations are essential for assessing a child's learning and progress, but when they start to threaten a child's emotional balance, we must pause and reflect on the system, the environment, and the expectations surrounding them. The growing cases of exam-related stress among primary and middle school students call for a serious rethinking of how children perceive examinations and how parents and teachers can help them cope better.

Examination syndrome refers to the intense fear, anxiety, or stress that children experience before or during examinations. It may manifest through both psychological and physical symptoms such as headaches, nausea, trembling, sweating, loss of appetite, and sleeplessness. Emotionally, children may feel panic, hopelessness, or guilt for not studying enough. This fear often results from excessive pressure to perform well, constant comparisons with others, and fear of punishment or criticism. For little children, who are still developing emotionally, such experiences can be deeply traumatic. Instead of viewing exams as opportunities to showcase learning, they begin to see them as threats to their self-worth.

One of the main causes of this phobia lies in the pressure exerted by parents. Many parents, often unknowingly, push their children too hard to achieve high marks. Remarks such as "You must come first" or "Look at how well your friend did" create unnecessary competition and anxiety. In their eagerness to please their parents, children begin to associate love and approval with academic success. Teaching practices also contribute to the problem. A rigid classroom environment, overemphasis on rote learning, and an obsession with test results rather than understanding make students afraid of making mistakes. Teachers, burdened by curriculum pressure and admin-

istrative expectations, sometimes focus more on marks than on learning, further intensifying the anxiety.

Peer comparison and social expectations add another layer of stress. When children are constantly compared with classmates or siblings, they start feeling inferior if they fail to meet those expectations. Moreover, many children lack emotional support, which prevents them from expressing their worries freely. Their distress often goes unnoticed until it appears as physical illness or avoidance behaviour around exam time. The media and society also play a role by glorifying high achievers and rank holders while ignoring creativity and effort. As a result, success becomes narrowly defined by marks and grades.

Parents have a crucial role in reducing this growing menace. They must understand that examinations are only one way of assessing learning and not a measure of a child's worth. Encouragement and appreciation of effort can go a long way in reducing fear. Creating a positive home environment, ensuring proper rest, nutritious food, and a balanced routine help children stay mentally and physically healthy. Comparisons should be avoided because every child is unique with different strengths and learning speeds. Parents should also maintain open communication, listen to their children's worries patiently, and guide them through understanding rather than pressure. Children learn by observing their elders, so when parents handle challenges calmly and positively, children naturally learn to manage stress better.

Teachers, too, hold immense responsibility in helping children overcome exam anxiety. They must shift the classroom focus from memorization to understanding and curiosity. Learning should be a joyful process that builds confidence rather than fear. Periodic informal tests can familiarize children with exam patterns and reduce the fear of the unknown. Praising effort and improvement rather than just marks can motivate students to keep learning without pressure. Teachers should also be sensitive enough to detect early signs of stress, such as restlessness, loss of concentration, or withdrawal, and provide timely support or counselling. Regular communication between teachers and parents

ensures that the child's emotional and academic needs are addressed consistently at home and in school.

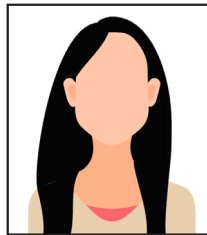
To deal effectively with examination phobia, a combined effort from parents, teachers, and educational institutions is necessary. Schools should organize counselling sessions and stress management workshops before examinations. These can help children learn simple relaxation techniques and develop confidence. The inclusion of co-curricular activities such as sports, art, and music in the daily routine also helps maintain emotional balance and keeps the school environment lively. Education must aim to develop life skills—time management, problem solving, and resilience—so that children are better prepared to handle challenges both in and out of the classroom. Parent awareness programs can further educate families about the harmful effects of over-expectation and teach them how to guide their children constructively.

On a larger level, examination reforms are essential. Educational boards and policymakers should move towards continuous and comprehensive evaluation instead of relying solely on high-stakes annual exams. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 rightly emphasizes joyful learning and competency-based assessment, which is a positive step in reducing stress. The media, too, must act responsibly by celebrating creativity, effort, and values rather than merely highlighting top scorers and record-breakers.

Examination syndrome is not just an individual child's problem; it reflects our society's approach to education and success. When little children tremble at the thought of tests, it is not their failure—it is ours. Parents and teachers must come together to ensure that learning becomes an enjoyable journey rather than a fearful race. Exams should be seen as opportunities for growth, not as verdicts on a child's abilities. The ultimate aim of education is not to produce toppers but to nurture confident, balanced, and curious minds capable of facing life's real tests with courage and optimism.

The writer is a teacher by profession hailing from Kangan Ganderbal. He is a regular contributor to The Headlines Today

Biography of Sahil Manzoor Bhatti



Parveena Hassan



Manzoor Bhatti is an emerging writer, poet, teacher, and social worker from Kashmir who continues to inspire the youth of the Valley through his thought-provoking writings on education, sports, health, personality development, and social awareness. His compassionate nature and commitment to growth have earned him admiration across different fields of community life. Born on January 4, 1992, in Bhatti Mohalla, Tangnar Raiyar-Ich, Tehsil Khansahib, District Budgam, Sahil spent part of his early life in Srinagar, where his family relocated for personal reasons.

He received his early education at Vibgyor Educational Institution, Maharajpora Batamalo, excelling in his matriculation exams. He completed his higher secondary education in the medical stream from S.P. Higher Secondary School, M.A. Road, Srinagar. After finishing school, he qualified for several competitive examinations such as B.Sc IT, BUMS, Diploma Engineering, and B.Pharmacy. Eventually, he pursued graduation from Amar Singh College, Gogji Bagh, Srinagar. He later obtained a B.Ed. and a Master's degree in Environmental Science from Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). Since 2015, Sahil has been serving in the Department of School Education, Kashmir, as a General Line Teacher, where his dedication and motivating approach toward students reflect his deep sense of responsibility toward education and nation-building.



Sports and Bodybuilding From a young age, Sahil has been deeply passionate about sports and physical fitness. His fitness journey began in 2005 during his school years, and since then, he has consistently promoted the value of physical well-being among youth. He has participated in various athletic and bodybuilding events and has earned recognition for his efforts. In 2007, he completed PRITHAM, DITYA, and TRITYA stages of the Bharat Scouts & Guides, receiving the prestigious Governor's Award from the then Governor of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir. Poetry and Literature As a poet, Sahil has composed hundreds of Urdu ghazals and poetic verses that express profound emotions, compassion, and awareness of social realities. His poetry reflects a blend of sincerity, empathy, and love for humanity, earning him respect among literary enthusiasts in the region. Writings and Awareness Campaigns Through his articles and columns, Sahil addresses issues affecting society and youth, particularly the rising drug menace, mental health, and the role of physical fitness in character development. He advocates for the establishment of gym centers and community fitness spaces in both urban and rural areas, encouraging young people to adopt healthy lifestyles and positive habits. Social Work and Community Service Sahil's dedication extends beyond writing and teaching. His active involvement in social work has contributed to genuine improvements in his native village. He has played a key role in promoting educational opportunities, improving road and power infrastructure, and organizing youth motivation programs. To encourage community participation, he often recognizes and rewards young achievers with medals and certificates.

Personal Life Sahil Manzoor Bhatti is married to Parveena Hassan, a postgraduate in science from Raiyar-Ich. The couple share a supportive and harmonious life centered on education, compassion, and mutual respect. For correspondence:

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Professor Nishi Chawla Emerges as A Poetic Cartographer for 'Others'



Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee

Chawla has earlier published eight poetry collections. **Random Circles of Belief (2024)**, focused on race, religion, and gender. Earlier collections include From: Immigrant Diaries (2018) (8), A Himalayan Poem (2017), The Ganga (2010), and the two-volume Confluences series (1998, 2007).. She co-edited two anthologies with K. Satchidanandan: Singing in the Dark (2020), a collection reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic and Greening the Earth (2023). Her work has been presented at events including the Jaipur Literature Festival, Kerala Literature Festival, Hyderabad Literary Festival, and programs organized by the Sahitya Akademi, the Indo-American Arts Council, and the Asia Society

An Indian writer, novelist, poet and filmmaker of global renown of our times, Professor Nishi Chawla has of late blazed the poetic world with her 164 page poetic volume *Indigenized/Tribalized* published by Human Error Publishing in 2025. This poetic volume graphically highlights the concepts of indigenization and tribalization of normal human beings. Basically a poet by temperament the versatile Dr. Nishi Chawla an academican with stunning accomplishments engages immediate attraction of the admirers of her poetic oeuvre. Each of the seventy above poems of brimstones and fire in this poetic volume can be called a graphic record of the harrowing experience faced by the 'Others' which we may call the Fourth World people. Any reader will find it difficult to resist the desire to read the book from its first poem to the last without taking the next breath. *Indigenized/Tribalized* (2025), explores issues faced by Indigenous or tribal communities whom we met earlier in the novel of Mahashweta Devi *Mother of 1084*. Dr. Nishi gave a poetic cartograph for them. The graphic description amazes the readers in each line of each poem. In the poem 'First Rights' she writes: "The land does not speak in words/ But in the language of ash and sap/ Its vowels the curve of an elk's antler/ Its consonants the hum of stones/ Worn smooth by countless knees." In 'The Cartographers of Loss' she wrote: "They mapped the land with footsteps / names unbroken like river veins / whispering syllables of rain and bone / until the ink of conquest rewrote the sky." In 'The Dismantling' she wrote, "A language unspoken does not die/ It frays / in the mouth of a child / who answers in the language of the school/ in the silence of a grandmother/ who understands but no longer teaches." 'Erosion' is another poem where Dr Nishi wrote "They call it progress, / a road carved through the spine of a mountain/ a school where the children no longer speak/ in the rhythm of their ancestors". 'The Last Song of the Earth' can be called a masterpiece in poetic creativity. She wrote "In the desert's heart where sun sculpts silence/ The cactus carries stories in its spines/ Its roots sunk deep into forgotten realms/ Sand remembers dance of rain that never came."

T.S. Eliot probably imagines such a situation in *The Wasteland* on a different context. For Nishi Chawla the mountains are not innocent but they watch everything. For her a horizon of sawgrass sings low/ its voice a rippling ache/ the tremor of feet that ran / when treaties became kindling / their promises curling into ash " (The Seminole's Echo)". Dr. Nishi knows "History bleeds in whispers/ Their footprints were not erased/ but layered over." ("Tuskaloosa's Forgotten Breath"). I love reading the concluding lines of the poem "Dine Bloodlines Under Desert Sky" "Under the Milky Way/ they walk the path of the Holy People / their footsteps soft/ their songs louder than history". She knows in this world of the indigenous and the tribalized

"Rain is not just rain here. It is the blood of clouds. A blessing drawn thin in the desert air." She knows that for them Mountains rise around them /not as walls /but as cinders /their spines cracked with wisdom"(Zuni: River Knows Their Name). In one poem Dr. Nishi imagines, "The mountain does not stand still/ It inhales/ pulling clouds into its ribs/ its breath stitching snow / to the shoulders of the earth." The people in this world of the Others 'speak to the deer/ not with words/ but with soft gesture of offering/ a bow to the balance". The poem 'Principal People' nicely describes them, "They are the breath of mountain rivers/ folding through mossy arms of trees/ whisper what remains of a language once flowing." In the poem 'Silent Exodus of Laguna' the poet imagines, "Earth trembles, weight of forgotten footsteps /Sun's gaze turns away, the land's ancient embrace/ Sky, once a canvas of ancestral songs/ Now bears the scars of imposed silence"

Chawla has earlier published eight poetry collections. *Random Circles of Belief* (2024), focused on race, religion, and gender. Earlier collections include From: Immigrant Diaries (2018) (8), A Himalayan Poem (2017), The Ganga (2010), and the two-volume Confluences series (1998, 2007).. She co-edited two anthologies with K. Satchidanandan: Singing in the Dark (2020), a collection reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic and Greening the Earth (2023). Her work has been presented at events including the Jaipur Literature Festival, Kerala Literature Festival, Hyderabad Literary Festival, and programs organized by the Sahitya Akademi, the Indo-American Arts Council, and the Asia Society. While indigenization is a decolonizing process that empowers Indigenous peoples, tribalization often describes the splintering of larger societies into exclusionary, identity-based factions. Through her imaginative vision of real sordidness of life we can see how "earth trembles with weight of forgotten footsteps "or "River's songs muted "or Mountains stand as silent witnesses" (Silent Exodus of Laguna). In picturing the land's ancient embrace she alerts us to the "weight of the tortured centuries." She reminds us "Where clouds are sparse, and rain a charm / the Hopis turn to ancient ways /To coax the earth in its sunlit haze."

Indigenization is the process of incorporating Indigenous knowledge, practices, and perspectives into different aspects of society, such as education, governance, and resource management. It is inherently a constructive and empowering movement that challenges colonial narratives. Dr. Nishi in her poem focuses on cultural revitalization to promote the preservation and celebration of Indigenous cultures, histories, languages, and traditions. She curses decolonization which is the process of undoing the cultural and social suppression caused by colonialism and restoring Indigenous self-determination. But at the same time she focuses on the need of empowerment of the 'Other'



to create a more equitable society by ensuring Indigenous voices are heard and valued in decision-making processes. Tribalization generally refers to the social and political fragmentation of a larger group into smaller, more insular factions, or "tribes". In modern political contexts, the term often carries a negative or critical connotation. In a political sense, tribalization describes societies where disagreements are not just about policy but involve deep emotional and ideological divides. Political opponents are seen as the "other" rather than as fellow citizens. Dr Nishi uses Social media and other platforms to make us aware how the greedy class of people try to accelerate tribalization by creating filter bubbles for the tribal and indigenous people to get exposed to information that confirms their existing beliefs.

Dr Nishi Chawla is the third Indian poet ever to be invited for a reading and a discussion of the US Library of Congress organized, 'The Poet and the Poem' program. She has also co-edited two global anthologies of poetry published by Penguin Random House: 'Greening the Earth' and 'Singing in the Dark.'

Professor Nishi Chawla holds a doctorate in English from the George Washington University, Washington D.C., and her post-

doctorate from the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland. After teaching for nearly twenty years as a tenured Professor of English at Delhi University, India, she had migrated with her family to a suburb of Washington D.C. She has taught English Literature for forty years at the University level. She is also one of the few Indian playwrights to have two plays in Manhattan, NY. A versatile Dr Nishi Chawla is also a filmmaker. She has also written and directed four award winning art house feature films. She has come out with *Silent Walls, Speaking Stones* which is a 2025 novel set in Ayodhya, where she explores themes of interfaith family dynamics, cultural memory, and the human impact of religious and political conflict. It is Chawla's third novel, and it was published by an American publisher. Her other novels include *Twist of Truth* (2001), which addresses terrorism; *A Human Silicon Chip* (2003), which examines sibling rivalry in the context of the dotcom boom; and *Silent Walls, Speaking Her* works also include *The Mahatma versus Gurdudev*, about debates between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore; *Indira*, focused on Indira Gandhi; *Kasturba versus Gandhi*; *Draupadi's Arranged Marriage*; *Churchill Among Savages*; *The Peace Activists*; *The Matriarch's Apples*; and *The Unspoken Room*. Her play *The Mahatma versus Gurdudev* premiered at the New York Theatre Festival in 2025. Her *Mixed Up* (2020) won the Best Debut Filmmaker Award at the Druk International Film Festival and the Tagore International Film Festival. *The Strange Case of Normal Chawla* has written and directed four feature films on social and cultural issues. *Mixed Up* (2020), about interracial relationships, was released on Amazon Prime. *The Strange Case of Normalcy* (2022) deals with mental health, *TechNous* (2023) explores technology and migration, and *The Peace Activists* (2024) examines parallels between Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

For her astounding contribution to literature and culture studies Dr. Nishi is honoured with a citation from Aruna Miller, then a Maryland State legislator, in recognition of her contributions to the arts and theatre (2018). She got Multiple Arts and Humanities Grants from the Montgomery County Government and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Maryland. British Council Fellowship (1989). *The Strange Case of Normalcy* (2022) received awards including Best Postmodern Film at the Mumbai International Film Festival and Best Dialogues at the Jaipur International Film Festival. She is the Member of the Association of Writers & Writing Programs and the Academy of American Poets; former board member of the Actors' Center in Washington, D.C.

The Author is a International Tagore Awardee Poet Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee is a former Affiliate Faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University USA and a multilingual Columnist and Author. Email profdratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com

Muzamil Mehmood – A Committed Social Reformer and Youth Leader from Kashmir



Ubaid Mehdi

In the scenic yet struggling landscape of Kashmir, where conflict often clouds young dreams, a story of quiet determination is unfolding. From the small village of Manchhama in Beerwah, a young man named Muzamil Mehmood has turned personal loss into a lifelong mission of service, sports, and social transformation. Losing his father at a young age could have silenced his spirit, but Muzamil chose a different path. Educated in government schools and a proud graduate of Govt. Degree College Beerwah, he transformed

adversity into action. His journey began between 2014 and 2016 as a National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteer, where he learned that leadership begins with empathy and service to others.

Since then, Muzamil's initiatives have touched lives across the Valley. From blood donation and medical camps that reached the unreachable, to women empowerment programmes giving voice to those long unheard – his work reflects a deep commitment to inclusive growth and social welfare.

To protect youth from the growing menace of drugs, he has organized anti-drug and cybercrime awareness rallies, promoting the importance of education, self-discipline, and moral awareness. His cleanliness campaigns, cannabis eradication drives, and source segregation initiatives have restored dignity to public spaces, while his tree plantation drives have contributed to a greener, cleaner Kashmir – spreading the message that protecting nature is also a form of social service.

Under "Sewa Parv 2025" and "Swach-



hata Hi Seva 2025", Muzamil organized a range of community welfare programmes – including blood donation camps, anti-drug initiatives, cleanliness drives, and plantation campaigns – earning a Certificate of Appreciation from the Director, Urban Local Bodies Kashmir. Over the years, he has been honored with more than 150 awards and certificates from government departments, NGOs, and trusts for his relentless efforts.

Muzamil also believes in the transformative power of education and literature. Through Book Launch Events and educational gatherings, he connects students, authors, and community leaders to celebrate creativity and learning, inspiring the youth to think critically and dream fearlessly.

For Muzamil, sports are another bridge to transformation. Through cricket tournaments, martial arts events, and cycling races, he channels youthful energy away from drugs and anti-social activities toward teamwork, discipline, and fitness. His sports initiatives don't just build players

– they build character.

Even during the darkest days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Muzamil remained active on the ground – distributing masks, medicines, and essentials to those in need. His commitment to public service never paused, even when the world did.

Today, Muzamil Mehmood stands as one of Kashmir's most inspiring youth icons – a symbol of resilience, compassion, and purpose. His guiding message remains simple yet powerful:

"Replace drugs with dreams. Replace silence with strength."

Inspired by sports stars like Umran Malik, Parvez Rasool, and Abdul Samad, he calls upon Kashmir's youth to rise with courage, integrity, and hope – proving that real change begins with self-belief.

In a time when the Valley longs for authentic heroes, Muzamil Mehmood isn't just a name – he is a movement.

A movement reminding us that one person's compassion can revive the conscience of an entire generation.

Battling the silent epidemic: Heart Health at risk in J&K



Mohammad Hanief

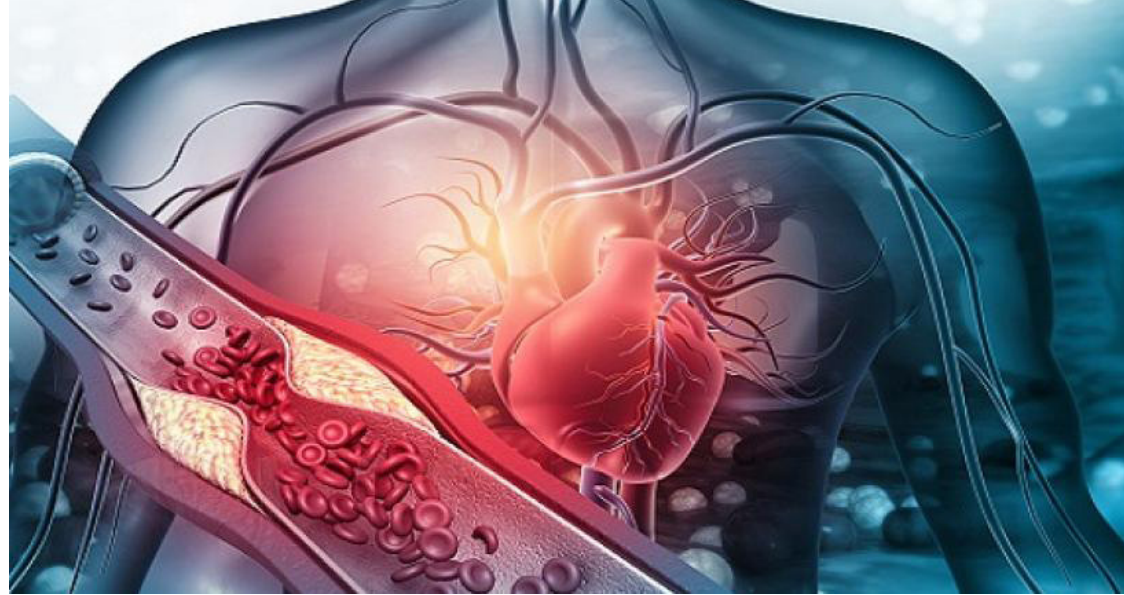
Heart disease has quietly become one of the most serious public health challenges across Jammu and Kashmir, emerging as a silent epidemic that is touching lives in every part of the Union Territory — from the bustling plains of Jammu to the mountain hamlets of Kashmir and the remote valleys of Chenab and Pir Panjal. Once viewed as a condition linked mainly to old age, cardiovascular diseases are now affecting younger people, raising deep concern among doctors, policymakers, and families alike. The steep rise in cardiac ailments over the past decade reflects a troubling shift in lifestyle, environment, and public awareness — a combination that calls for urgent attention and collective response.

Across the region, hospitals are witnessing a marked increase in cases of heart attacks, hypertension, and high cholesterol. What makes this trend particularly worrying is the growing number of younger individuals — many in their thirties and forties — reporting cardiac complications. The change mirrors the transformation in lifestyle patterns, work habits, and diets that have reshaped daily life throughout Jammu and Kashmir. Sedentary routines, long working hours, and dependence on technology have dramatically reduced physical activity. Traditional outdoor recreation and physical labour, once part of everyday life, have given way to more static, indoor habits.

At the same time, dietary habits have changed. Balanced, home-cooked meals — rich in vegetables, pulses, and whole grains — are increasingly being replaced by fast food and packaged items loaded with salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats. The growing culture of eating out and reliance on processed foods have fuelled obesity, diabetes, and hypertension — all major risk factors for heart disease. This shift in lifestyle has not spared even the rural population, where the influence of urban food habits and declining physical activity are becoming more visible.

Tobacco use remains another major driver of the crisis. Despite widespread awareness campaigns, smoking and other forms of tobacco consumption remain common among both youth and adults. The easy availability of cigarettes and the increasing use of drugs and other addictive substances have compounded the health burden. Equally damaging are rising levels of stress and mental health challenges caused by unemployment, financial strain, academic pressure, and social uncertainty. Chronic stress triggers biochemical changes that adversely affect heart health, and when combined with unhealthy coping mechanisms like smoking or overeating, the results can be devastating.

The climate of Jammu and Kashmir further aggravates this problem. The severe winter conditions in



Kashmir and parts of the Chenab and Pir Panjal regions often lead to a spike in cardiac emergencies. Cold temperatures cause the blood vessels to constrict, raising blood pressure and putting additional strain on the heart. In areas where heating arrangements are poor, sudden exposure to cold can trigger heart attacks, particularly in the early morning or late-night hours. On the other hand, the intense summer heat in the plains of Jammu can also put stress on the heart, especially among the elderly and those already battling cardiac conditions. Both climatic extremes — freezing cold and sweltering heat — intensify the burden on an already vulnerable population.

Compounding the crisis is limited public awareness about the early symptoms of heart disease and the importance of preventive care. Many people continue to ignore warning signs such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath, or unexplained fatigue. In several cases, patients seek medical attention only when symptoms become severe, losing precious time in the process. Although healthcare facilities have improved in recent years, advanced cardiac care remains concentrated in a few urban hospitals. For people living in far-flung or mountainous areas, reaching a well-equipped medical centre during an emergency often proves impossible within the critical “golden hour.”

Efforts have been made in recent years to strengthen the healthcare system. The introduction of telemedicine services, digital consultations, and referral networks has improved access to specialists, particularly for patients in remote areas. Government health departments, non-governmental organisations, and medical institutions have launched awareness drives, organised health camps, and promoted regular screenings for blood pressure and cholesterol. These initiatives are steps in the right direction, but they remain limited in reach and continuity. To make a real difference, awareness campaigns and preventive care programmes need to extend to every block, school, and community across Jammu and Kashmir.

The impact of heart disease extends far beyond the individual. It is not merely a medical issue but a social and economic one. When people in their most productive years develop heart conditions, families face emotional trauma and financial strain. Long-term

treatment, medication, and hospital visits are expensive, and the loss of earning capacity can push entire households into hardship. Preventive healthcare, therefore, is not only about saving lives — it is also about protecting livelihoods and strengthening the social fabric.

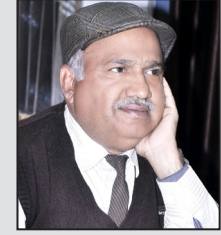
Addressing this growing crisis requires more than medical treatment; it demands a cultural shift toward health consciousness. Strengthening rural healthcare infrastructure, ensuring regular screening at primary health centres, and promoting preventive habits must become public priorities. Schools, colleges, workplaces, and community institutions can play an important role by educating people about the importance of a healthy diet, regular exercise, and tobacco cessation. Encouraging outdoor activities, sports, and walking can help people rediscover physical habits that once defined life in the region.

Community involvement is central to reversing this trend. Religious leaders, local organisations, and media outlets can help spread awareness and advocate for heart-friendly lifestyles. Traditional Kashmiri and Dogra cuisines, when consumed in moderation and balanced with fruits, vegetables, and physical activity, can remain part of a healthy lifestyle. Reconnecting with local food wisdom and active living can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease.

The rising tide of cardiac ailments across Jammu and Kashmir is a stark reminder that health cannot be taken for granted. It calls for collective responsibility — from individuals to institutions — to safeguard heart health and promote a culture of wellness. The growing number of heart attacks and related diseases is not an inevitable outcome of modern life; it is a preventable tragedy that demands awareness, discipline, and community action. The time to act is now. Investing in preventive healthcare, strengthening early diagnosis, and fostering healthy living habits can save countless lives. Protecting the hearts of the people of Jammu and Kashmir is not just a medical imperative — it is a moral one, vital to securing the region's collective well-being and future.

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

Air Pollution Harming Brain, Raising Disease Burden in India



VIJAY GARG

An astounding two million lives were lost to air pollution related diseases in India in 2023, according to the State of Global Air 2025 report released by the Health Effects Institute (HEI) and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), United States. This is a staggering rise from 1.4 million deaths in 2000, a 43 per cent increase. Nearly nine out of 10 of these deaths were linked to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, lung cancer, diabetes, and even dementia.

Globally, air pollution is responsible for eight million deaths annually — about one in eight deaths world-wide. More than half of these deaths (about 4.9 million) are due to outdoor air pollution, 2.8 million due to household air pollution and the rest due to ozone pollution.

A big shocker this time is the firmer evidence on the link between air pollution and growing risk of dementia, causing as many as 626,000 deaths and 40 million healthy years of life lost globally. Air pollution death rates in India are now over 10 times higher than in high-income countries with 186 deaths per 100,000 people, compared to 17 deaths per 100,000 in wealthier nations. States such as Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, and West Bengal have recorded the largest impacts, each reporting more than 100,000 deaths in 2023.

This report highlights the growing incidence of NCDs due to air pollution. As much as 89 per cent of all air pollution deaths in India in 2023 were attributable to NCDs including heart and lung disease, lung cancer, diabetes, and dementia. According to the report, air pollution is responsible for seven out of 10 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) deaths, one in three lung cancer deaths, more than one in four heart disease deaths and nearly one in five diabetes deaths. More than two-thirds of all COPD deaths are attributable to air pollution exposure. This points towards a growing risk for India's ageing population.

Even globally, 95 per cent of air pollution-related deaths in adults over the age of 60 are due to NCDs. Between 2000 and 2023, global NCD deaths linked to air pollution rose by 13 per cent, increasing from 5.99 million to 6.8 million.

However, deaths from household air pollution (from use of solid fuels for cooking) have continued to decline in India. But deaths due to both ambient PM2.5 and ozone have increased significantly. The magnitude of the risk is evident in the fact that 75 per cent of the country's population lives in areas where annual PM2.5 exposure exceeds the WHO Air Quality Interim Target of 35 µg/m3.

A key highlight of this year's report is the inclusion of dementia as a new indicator of air pollution's health toll. In 2023, air pollution contributed to 626,000 dementia deaths worldwide and an estimated 40 million healthy years of life lost. Scientists warn that long term exposure to fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) may damage brain tissue and accelerate cognitive decline.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

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IHRO Holds Elections for Department Heads, Reaffirms Commitment to Human Rights and Social Welfare

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: The International Human Rights Organization (IHRO) conducted elections today for the Heads of various Departments. The election process was carried out in a fair, transparent, and democratic manner, with active participation from members and representatives across different regions.

In a statement issued by Yaqoob Dunoo, Media Incharge of IHRO, the following candidates were elected as Heads of their respective Departments: Education & Skill: Ms. Waheeda; Women Empowerment: Ms. Suriya; Sports: Mr. Muneer; Tourism: Mr. Yaqoob Dunoo; Environment: Ms. Sunidhi; Agriculture: Moulana Imtiaz; Health: Ms. Nighat Mir; Handicrafts: Ms. Rajni; Art & Culture: Ms. Rather Roshan Ara; and Law: Adv. Saika.

The IHRO extended its warm congratulations to all the newly elected Heads of Departments and



News Flash

wished them success in fulfilling their respective responsibilities with dedication and integrity. The organization expressed confidence that the new leadership team will work collectively to strengthen IHRO's mission of promoting Human Rights, Equality, Justice, and Social Welfare across all sectors of society.

Yaqoob Dunoo further stated that the election marks an important milestone in IHRO's ongoing efforts to empower professionals and social workers committed to protecting human dignity and fostering community welfare. He emphasized that each department will play a crucial role in addressing pressing issues such as education, women empowerment, environmental protection, and public health. Dunoo also reaffirmed IHRO's dedication to transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability, ensuring that every initiative under the organization contributes meaningfully to building a more just and compassionate society.

Launch of "Panchwan Mausam" and "Zindagi Cha Kmaal" at Tagore Hall

Cultural Academy and Maraz Adabi Sangam jointly organise a remarkable literary event

■ JAMEEL ANSARI

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: In continuation of its efforts to promote literature, art, and cultural, the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, in collaboration with Maraz Adabi Sangam, organised a literary event at the Conference Hall of Tagore Hall, Srinagar.

The event marked the formal release of two significant books "Panchwan Mausam", a poetry collection by renowned Kashmiri Poet Ali Shaida, and "Zindagi Cha Kmaal", a short story collection by fiction writer Prof. Roop Krishan Bhat.

The event was presided over by noted writer, poet, and critic Aiyaz Rasool Nazki, while prominent cultural scholar G.R. Hasrat Gadda, editor of Sheeraza Kashmiri, Javed Iqbal Khan, and president of Maraz Adabi Sangam Mohammad Shafi Ayaz graced the presidium.

In his welcome address, Javed Iqbal Khan highlighted the Academy's pivotal role in preserving linguistic diversity and nurturing cultural harmony. He emphasized



that the Academy remains a custodian of languages and literature, weaving together varied linguistic traditions into a shared cultural thread.

A detailed review of Prof. Roop Krishan Bhat's "Zindagi Cha Kmaal", written by Ejaz Mohammad Sheikh, was presented by Izzar Mubashir, while S. Mashooq presented an appraisal of Ali Shaida's "Panchwan Mausam", lauding the poet's deep sensibility and contemporary relevance.

Speaking on the occasion, Ali Shaida described his poetry collection as a reflection of his creative journey—a blend of emotion, experience, and observation. He expressed gratitude to both the Cultural Academy and Maraz Adabi Sangam for their continued contribution to the literary and cultural life of the Valley.

Prof. Roop Krishan Bhat, in his address, said that his stories echo the everyday realities, dreams, sorrows, and hopes of people. "Lit-

erature," he remarked, "is not mere entertainment but a mirror that helps society see itself more clearly. In "Zindagi Cha Kmaal", I have tried to explore the human struggle, inner conflict, and existential questions through storytelling."

The second session of the event featured a poetic symposium (Mushaira), presided over by Ali Shaida, with noted poet Ghulam Hassan Ghamgeen as a distinguished guest. Several poets including Javed Jameel, Riyaz

Khaki, Basheer Dilbar, Raees Jan Nisar, Parvaiz Gulshan, Azam Farooq, Riyaz Anznoo, Iftikhar Anjum, and Muzaffar Hussain Dilbar recited their verses, captivating the audience.

The proceedings were conducted by Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather, Assistant Editor at the Academy, while Mohammad Shafi Ayaz, President of Maraz Adabi Sangam, extended a formal vote of thanks, acknowledging the contribution of all participants and guests.

Noted personalities including Mohammad Hussain Zaffar, Shakeel Azad, Fayaz Tilgami, Dr. Afaq Aziz, Dr. Mahfooza Jan, Rukhsana Jabeen, Mushtaq Mehdi, Nasir Munawar, Dr. Nazir Fida, Mohammad Amin Bhat, Shafi Ahmad, Syed Saduddin Saidi, Tauseef Raza, Ejaz Ahmad Kakroo, Ghulam Khurshid Qureshi, Maqbool Sajid, Ghulam Mohammad Dilshad, Shafiq Qureshi, Dr. Maroof Shah, Farooq Fida, Maqbool Shaida, Saleem Salik Jameel Ansari, Gh. Nabi Shahid, and others attended the event, making it a truly distinguished literary gathering.

Police Flag Day Week 2025: Kulgam Police Visit Families of Martyred Personnel

■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, OCT 28: As part of the ongoing Police Flag Day Week-2025 celebrations, Kulgam Police, under the directions of SSP Kulgam, Shri Anayat Ali Chowdhary (IPS), organized a series of programmes across the district to honour the sacrifices of police martyrs. Police officers visited the villages and hometowns of martyred police personnel to express solidarity with their families and to pay homage to their supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. During the visits, officers interacted with the families of martyrs, listened to their



concerns with empathy, and assured them that all genuine grievances would be addressed on priority. As a

mark of respect and remembrance, portraits of the martyrs from Kulgam were displayed in their respective primary schools—the very institutions where they received their early education. The bravery and sacrifices of these heroes were also highlighted in schools and community gatherings, inspiring students and residents to uphold the values of courage, service, and dedication.

The initiative reflects the Jammu and Kashmir Police's unwavering commitment to stand by the families of its martyrs and to keep their legacy alive in the hearts of the people.

Public Notice

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded as ALTAH AHMED KHANDAY, which contains incorrect spellings.

The correct name as per my other valid documentary records including the Date of Birth Certificate is:

ALTAH AHMAD KHANDAY
I am now applying for correction of my name in my Aadhaar Card accordingly.

Any person having any objection to the said correction may kindly file his/her objection in writing with valid proof to the undersigned or to the concerned authorities within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained and the correction shall be deemed final.

Hilal Ahmad Malik

F/o Haya Hilal R/o Drangbal Baramulla

Public Notice

I want to correct the Date Of Birth of my daughter in his school record from 12-07-2015 to 30-11-2014. Anybody having any objection in this regard may contact Principal Govt. Middle School Drangbal Baramulla within a week, after that no objection will be entertained.

Hilal Ahmad Malik

F/o Haya Hilal R/o Drangbal Baramulla

Public Notice

I want to change the name of my electricity Bill having Consumer ID:0203010005430 Installations ID:13440_R1 from Late:Ghulam Mohd Labroo R/O: Rampora chattabal to Mohd Abdullah Labroo S/O: Late:Ghulam Mohd Labroo R/O: Rampora Chattabal.

if any body having any objection in this regard he/she can approach His/Her Objection with the officials of Sub Division Watal Kadal within the period of 7 days after that no no objection will be considered.

Name : Mohd Abdullah Labroo S/O Late:Ghulam Mohd Labroo R/O Rampora Chattabal.

SRINAGAR POLICE ORGANIZES PIPPING CEREMONY FOR NEWLY PROMOTED POLICE OFFICERS

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: In recognition of dedicated services of Jammu & Kashmir Police personnel, Srinagar Police organized a pipping and felicitation ceremony to honour four newly promoted officers at District Police

Headquarters, Srinagar.

The ceremony was presided over by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Dr. G.V. Sundeep Chakravarty, IPS, who felicitated Assistant Sub-Inspectors namely Khazir Mohammad, Showket Ahmad Shah, Ghulam Mohammad and Mukhtar Ahmad

for their professionalism and dedicated service.

The event was attended by SP Headquarters Sh. Shah Umar, DySP Headquarters Ms. Syed Sleet Shah, and other officers from District Srinagar.

In his address, SSP Srinagar highlighted the critical role of

Police personnel in ensuring public safety and maintaining law and order. He stressed the values of integrity, empathy, and excellence in Policing and encouraged the newly promoted officers to carry forward their duties with renewed dedication and responsibility. SSP Srinagar presented

new rank badges and certificates to the promotees, recognizing their meritorious contributions to the department.

The event served as a testament to the commitment of Srinagar Police towards recognizing and rewarding the dedication of its personnel.

Anganwadi Workers, Helpers Must Be Paid Monthly and Covered Under Minimum Wages Act: Tarigami

■ FAROOQ RATHER

SRINAGAR, OCT 28: The 6th State Conference of the J&K Anganwadi Workers and Helpers Union was held in Srinagar with delegates from across the UT participating. The event was attended by Comrades Usha Rani (President, All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers) and Veena Gupta (Vice President), who urged unity among workers to fight for their rights and regularisation.

Addressing the gathering, CPI(M) leader and CITU President M.Y. Tarigami said Anganwadi workers and helpers are vital to the ICDS scheme but continue to face neglect. He demanded monthly payment of honorarium, implementation of Minimum Wages Act, timely rent for centres, re-engagement of helpers disengaged in 2018, and revision of the ₹30 fuel allowance. He also sought a ₹350 monthly mobile allowance for each worker.

Abdul Rashid Pandit (CITU) criticised the government for delaying salaries of promoted supervisors, while Abdul Rashid Najjar (Employees



Federation) called for social security benefits—gratuity, pension, maternity leave, and insurance—as per Supreme Court directives.

Lateefa Ganai (Democratic Women's Federation) demanded higher rent for rural centres and parity in benefits with states like Karnataka, Telangana, Kerala, and Delhi. Haneefa Mir, Union President, appealed for immediate redressal of long-pending

issues and recognition of their crucial role in child and maternal welfare.

The conference unanimously elected Hanifa Ji as President, Suraya Ji as General Secretary, Zamrooda Ji as Treasurer, Mudrasira Ji and Mehbooba Ji as Vice Presidents, Masooda Mageed as Secretary, Shafiq as Assistant General Secretary, along with 12 working committee members for a three-year term.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir (U T)

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Corrigendum 06 For Date Extension

- Name of work: -**
- Restoring functionality through repairs / maintenance of Bore Well No. 103 of department of Agriculture in District Pulwama under implementation of National Mission of Saffron (under Culuster-1).
 - Restoring functionality through repairs / maintenance of Bore Well No. 42 of department of Agriculture in District Pulwama under implementation of National Mission of Saffron (under Culuster-1)

Reference: This office e-NIT No: - MDSK/TS /2025-26/20 Date:16-07-2025.
(Tender Id: - 2025_PWDJK_281548_3)
(Tender Id: - 2025_PWDJK_281548_4)

Due to no response, the critical dates of the above referred e-NIT are extended again as under: -

S.No.	Description	Previous Dates	New Dates.
01.	Last date of downloading/ submission of bids	27-10-2025 upto 06:55 PM	10-11-2025 upto 06:55 PM
02.	Date of opening of bids online	28-10-2025 at 02:00 PM	11-11-2025 at 02:00 PM

All other terms, conditions and specifications as stipulated in the e-NIT shall remain unchanged.

No: MDSK/TS/3410-13 Date: 28 -10-2025.

DIPK: 7576/25
Dated: 28-10-2025

Sd/
Executive Engineer
Machinery Division, Kashmir.

MLAs raise key public issues in Legislative Assembly

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28: Several members of the Legislative Assembly today raised pressing public issues of their respective constituencies during the Zero Hour in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, urging the Government to take prompt action.

MLAs Shakti Raj Parihar (Doda West), Advocate Vijay Gupta (Hiranagar), and Pawan Gupta (Udhampur West) urged the Education department to expedite the Annual Transfer Drive (ATD) for teachers posted in far-flung areas of the Jammu division and immediately conduct Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) for teachers and lecturers awaiting elevation.

Responding to the concerns, Minister in-charge, Education Department, Sakeena Itoo informed the House that the matter is already under process and a committee has been constituted for carrying out ATD timely.

Raising the issue of harassment faced by tribal populations, MLA Handwara, Sajad Gani Lone and MLA Kangan, Mian Mehar Ali urged the government to ensure that forest officials refrain from unnecessary inter-

ference and to safeguard the rights of forest-dwelling communities.

During this session MLA Bandipora, Nizamuddin Bhat emphasized on the need to uphold the Business Rules of the House to maintain decorum and ensure smooth legislative proceedings.

MLA Ramban, Arjun Singh Raju called the attention of the House towards the need for posting an Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) in the PHE Sub-Division of Ramban constituency to ensure smooth functioning of the department.

MLA Banihal, Sajad Shaheen drew attention to a recent fire incident in Banihal constituency and urged the government to provide adequate relief, rehabilitation, and compensation to the affected families.

MLA Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi expressed concern over rampant encroachments along the Tawi River and cautioned that such illegal constructions could face severe damage during future floods.

MLA Baderwah, Daleep Singh Parihar sought adequate funds for the restoration of flood-damaged infrastructure and relief measures for affected people in his constituency.

MLA Ramgarh, Dr. Devinder



Kumar Manyal highlighted the plight of farmers who have been allotted custodian land in Jammu but are yet to receive benefits under different government schemes. He urged the government to extend such benefits to these cultivators as well.

MLA Uri, Dr. Sajjad Shafi demanded a dedicated fire tender for Boniyar and sought

rehabilitation support for the Darul Uloom institution recently damaged in a fire incident.

MLA Pampore, Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi called for a detailed discussion on the detention of MLA Mehraj Malik and sought urgent de-silting of river channels to prevent recurrent flooding in Pampore.

MLA Lolab, Qaysar Jamshaid Lone urged the administration

to devise early snow-clearance plan for his constituency and establish a transformer bank to ensure uninterrupted power supply during winter months.

MLA Zainapora, Showkat Hussain Ganai sought the introduction of Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for B and C grade apple produce to protect the interests of fruit growers.

MLA RS Pora South, Naren-

dra Singh Raina raised the issue of hardships faced by members of the ST-2 category in obtaining certificates in Jammu district and sought a streamlined process for them.

MLA Shangus-Anantnag East, Reyaz Ahmad Khan proposed making it mandatory for post-graduate doctors to serve in rural areas for a fixed tenure through a service bond mechanism to address rural healthcare gaps.

MLA Kupwara, Mir Mohammad Fayaz sought one-time amnesty for economically weaker power consumers unable to clear their long-pending dues.

MLA Wagoora-Kreeri, Irfan Hafiz Lone requested the Speaker to consider suspending certain business rules to allow a detailed discussion on the arrest of MLA Mehraj Malik.

MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Ali Sadiq drew attention to the difficulties faced by residents of lake areas in Srinagar in obtaining permissions for building or renovating their houses and sought policy intervention to address the issue.

MLA Thannamandi, Muzaffar Iqbal Khan sought compensation for farmers whose crops were recently damaged in floods and also urged inclusion of his area's consumers under the proposed one-time power am-

nesty scheme.

MLA Dooru, Ghulam Ahmad Mir requested equitable time allocation for all members to effectively represent their constituencies during Assembly proceedings.

MLA Jammu West, Arvind Gupta urged the government to ensure completion and optimal use of the infrastructure at the B&J Hospital, Jammu, besides improving civic amenities in his constituency.

MLA Khan Sahib, Saif-ud-Din Bhat called for sanctioning an additional degree college and establishment of a Controlled Atmosphere (CA) storage facility to support the horticulture sector in his area.

MLA Akhnoor, Mohan Lal Bhagat sought sufficient funds for the restoration of flood-damaged infrastructure in his constituency and demanded a comprehensive flood mitigation plan to be implemented in the upcoming winter season to protect vulnerable areas there.

MLA Gurez, Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurez took this occasion to highlight the performance of the government during the past year and appreciated various developmental initiatives undertaken across the Union Territory.

DC Kulgam Reviews Progress of 'Catch the Rain programme' Jal Shakti Abhyan Campaign 2025

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KULGAM, OCTOBER 28: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today chaired a review meeting at the Meeting Hall of the Mini Secretariat to assess the targets achieved under the 'Catch the Rain' Campaign 2025, implemented through the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP).



The meeting reviewed key interventions including the construction of water harvesting tanks, gabion structures, irrigation khuls, plantations, and strengthening of Nallah bunds. The DC directed officials to expedite the pace of execution to ensure timely completion of all ongoing works.

Stressing the importance of inter-departmental coordination, the DC called for effective convergence with MGNREGA, besides active involvement of the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments to enhance the overall impact and outreach of the programme.

The DC further instructed all concerned departments to scale up activities under the campaign and ensure that progress is regularly updated on the designated portal to facilitate effective monitoring and transparency.

Highlighting the significance of the initiative, the DC emphasized that the 'Catch the Rain' Campaign plays a vital role in water conservation, groundwater recharge, and strengthening irrigation infrastructure, particularly in water-scarce areas of the district.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Joint Director Planning Malik Suheel, ACD Bilal Kamgar, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti and Flood Control, and district officers from Agriculture and allied departments.

DC reviews ground impact of Environment protection initiatives in Doda District

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

DODA, OCTOBER 28: Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh today chaired a meeting in his office chambers to review environment protection initiatives, including water conservation, waste management and plantation.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Doda, Superintendent Engineer Hydraulics, DFOs (virtually), Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti and I&FC Divisions, Divisional Officer PCC, ACR and other concerned officers.

The meeting took a detailed review of action taken pursuant to the decisions of the Government and the Supreme Court regarding forest demarcation, boundary fixation, encroachment removal and ecological protection.

Discussions also covered the monitoring of non-biodegradable waste management as per the Jammu and Kashmir Non-Biodegradable Material (Management, Handling and Disposal) Act, 2007 and progress on the fencing of forest and wildlife-protected areas.

Other important points in-



cluded the status of enforcement of Air and Water Acts, bio-medical waste management in health institutions, implementation of the Green India Mission and Nagar Van Scheme and identification of forest land as per Supreme Court directives.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized strict enforcement of environmental laws, with special focus on eliminating single-use plastics and strengthening waste management mechanisms in both urban and rural areas. He di-

rected the Pollution Control Committee and the Forest Department to intensify field inspections and awareness campaigns to ensure full compliance with environmental regulations. The DC instructed all departments to submit weekly progress reports on action taken, ensuring transparency and accountability.

The DC Doda directed the ACR to ensure proper verification and documentation of Gair Mumkin Jhaad in forest areas and to take necessary action to protect state land. He stressed on the conserva-

tion of specified tree species on state land and directed for enforcement of orders within the stipulated timeline. The DC also instructed the concerned officers to verify the functioning of stone crushers and to take appropriate measures to ensure compliance with environmental norms.

During the meeting, the issue of biomedical waste generated by the health sector was also discussed in detail. The DC directed the Health Department to furnish a detailed report on the quantity of biomedical waste generated and its

disposal as per established guidelines. He also emphasized the need for strengthening the waste segregation system at the source level.

Reviewing the Catch the Rain Initiative, the Superintending Engineer Jal Shakti presented an overview of ongoing and completed works. The DC directed the concerned officers to expedite water conservation activities, desilting of ponds and afforestation efforts. He further instructed for geo-tagging of all water bodies and springs across the district by November 15, ensuring accuracy through digital mapping.

The DC also emphasized the construction of check dams in areas having water springs to prevent wastage of water. He directed the departments to focus on rejuvenation of dried and low-yielding sources.

Highlighting the ecological importance of the Chenab Valley, the DC called for community participation in sustainable development and environmental conservation. He urged all departments to coordinate effectively under a joint action plan to achieve the vision of a clean, green and ecologically resilient Doda.

SSP Ramban encourages women trainees at SBI RSETI's certificate distribution event

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 28: The State Bank of India Rural Self Employment Training Institute (SBI RSETI), Ramban today organized a Certificate Distribution Ceremony for the pass out trainees of the Women's Tailoring and Beauty Parlor Training Programmes. The event marked the culmination of intensive skill development courses aimed at empowering rural women through self-employment opportunities and sustainable livelihood generation.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Arun Gupta was the Chief Guest. In his address, he congratulated the trainees for successfully completing their respective training programmes and urged them to utilize their newly acquired skills to become self-reliant and contribute positively to society. He further encouraged the women participants to serve as role models, inspiring other girls to pursue vocational education and embrace

self-reliant livelihoods.

"Skill is the true strength of a person; by using your knowledge and talent effectively, you can bring a positive change not only in your family but also in your community," the SSP remarked.

Earlier, the Director RSETI, Harvinder Singh, briefed the Chief Guest about the diverse range of training programmes offered by the institute to promote employability and entrepreneurship in rural areas. He also apprised the participants about credit linkage support and post-training assistance available through SBI and government-sponsored schemes for establishing income-generating ventures.

The event was hosted by Course Coordinator Amrik Singh Raju, who outlined the objectives of the training programmes and highlighted RSETI's mission of fostering skill development, entrepreneurship and financial independence among rural youth and women.

Annual Exams for 1st to 9th Class conclude in District Doda

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

DODA, OCTOBER 28: The Summative/Annual Examinations for Classes 1st to 9th concluded today across District Doda under the overall supervision of Principal DIET Rajesh Kumar. The examinations were co-ordinated by Chander Parkash, Master GHSS Bhagwah, and Irshad Ahmed, Sr. Assistant & Incharge Middle Standard, in close collaboration with all Cluster Heads of the district. Out of a total 7,431 students enrolled in Class 8th, 7,399 students appeared in the examination, reflecting an excellent participation rate across government and private schools of the district.

Expressing satisfaction over the successful culmination of the examination process, Principal DIET Doda extended his sincere appreciation to all Cluster Heads, Heads of Institutions and school staff for their dedication and commitment in ensur-



ing fair, transparent and efficient conduct of the examinations across all centers.

He further directed all concerned to finalize and declare the results before 31st October 2025, as per the directions of higher authorities, so that new classwork commences from 1st November 2025 without delay. The successful completion of these examinations reflects the collective efforts and academic commitment of the education fraternity towards maintaining discipline, transparency and timely implementation of the academic calendar in District Doda.

Two US Navy aircrafts crash within half-an-hour of each other in South China Sea, no casualties reported

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, OCT 28: Two US Naval aircraft — a helicopter and a fighter jet — crashed within half an hour of each other during separate routine operations over the South China Sea, with all crew members safely rescued, according to the US Pacific Fleet.

The Navy has opened an investigation into the cause of both accidents, which occurred on Sunday over one of the world's most strategically sensitive waterways — an area often seen as a potential flashpoint between global powers, as per the US Navy.

The South China Sea — bordered by China and several Southeast Asian nations — has become a hotbed of diplomatic tensions, as Beijing has arbi-

trarily announced its claims to over 95% of the waterway, and defying international rulings which rejected its claims.

China has been further strengthening its grip on the waterway by constructing artificial military islands in the contested region, further increasing its tensions with the US.

Washington, which maintains a regular naval presence in the area, has repeatedly stressed the importance of the freedom of navigation and supporting regional allies in the face of Beijing's territorial assertions, as per US media.

President Donald Trump, speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, described the consecutive crashes as "very unusual."



Enroute from Malaysia to Japan on Monday, Trump suggested that it was likely a case of fuel contamination, denying any deliberate case of sabotage. "They think it might be bad

fuel. We're going to find out. Nothing to hide, sir," Trump said.

The Navy said that an MH-60R Seahawk helicopter went down at around 2:45 p.m. local time while carrying out routine operations from the USS Nimitz aircraft carrier. All three crew members were rescued by search and rescue teams.

About 30 minutes later, an F/A-18F Super Hornet fighter jet also crashed during operations from the same carrier. Both pilots ejected safely and were recovered by rescue crews.

The incident marks at least the fourth Super Hornet crash this year, with each aircraft valued at roughly \$60 million.

Earlier in the year, two of the fighter jets were lost in the Red

Sea — one after sliding off a carrier deck and another due to a landing malfunction — while a separate crash occurred off Virginia during a training mission in August.

The crashes coincided with President Trump's diplomatic tour of Asia, ahead of his scheduled meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping this week.

The talks are expected to centre on trade and regional security, following months of friction that saw both sides impose sweeping measures against one another.

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said on Sunday that Washington and Beijing had reached a framework trade agreement, signalling a possible easing of tensions before the Trump-Xi meeting. UNI

VP Radhakrishnan meets Seychelles President Patrick Herminie, pledges Indian Ocean stability

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

VICTORIA, OCT 28: Vice President CP Radhakrishnan met Seychelles President Patrick Herminie on Monday at the State House in Victoria, where the two leaders discussed ways to strengthen and expand bilateral cooperation between India and Seychelles.

Conveying warm greetings on behalf of the Government and people of India, Radhakrishnan congratulated President Herminie on his assumption of office. Both leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to promoting peace, stability, and prosperity across the Indian Ocean region and the broader Global South, the Vice President's office said in a statement.

Earlier in the day, the Vice President also called on Seychelles Vice President-elect Sebastien Pillay at the State House and exchanged views on enhancing cooperation across diverse sectors. Radhakrishnan conveyed his best wishes to Pillay for a successful tenure.

In a post on X, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said, "Both leaders discussed the multi-faceted India-Seychelles relationship, rooted in shared heritage, culture, and people-to-people ties."

Radhakrishnan attended the swearing-in ceremony of President Herminie at the Unity Stadium in Victoria on Sunday. "Delighted to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Patrick Herminie as President of the Republic of Seychelles, conveying my greetings and best wishes on behalf of the Government and people of India," the Vice President wrote on X.

The visit underscores India's steadfast dedication to expanding its strategic partnership with Seychelles. The two countries maintain a robust defence and development relationship, with India supporting several critical infrastructure and capacity-building projects in the island nation.

The discussions between Radhakrishnan and Herminie emphasized their mutual resolve to enhance regional stability and shared prosperity. The Vice President's presence in Seychelles reaffirms India's enduring friendship with the island nation and its ongoing commitment to the Global South.

During his visit, Radhakrishnan also interacted with members of the Indian community in Seychelles, highlighting the long-standing and multi-dimensional partnership between the two nations. UNI

Jordan King says countries may back out of Gaza force, if it was 'enforcing peace'

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

AMMAN, OCT 28: Commenting on the international security force to be created for maintaining security in Gaza, Jordan's leader King Abdullah II has said that most nations who were willing to participate would likely reject any deployment of their troops to the task force if their role involved "enforcing" peace rather than maintaining it.

"What is the mandate of security forces inside Gaza? We hope that it is peacekeeping, because if it's peace enforcing, nobody will want to touch that," said King Abdullah.

Speaking in an interview with the BBC, the King said that Arab and international partners would only support a mission aimed at

peacekeeping — not one that risked placing foreign troops in active conflict with Palestinian groups.

Under US President Trump's 20-point peace plan, Arab states and international partners are to commit a stabilisation force that "will train and provide support to vetted Palestinian police forces in Gaza, and will consult with Jordan and Egypt who have extensive experience in this field."

The plan also requires Hamas to disarm and relinquish political control of the enclave.

The Jordanian leader said while Amman and Cairo were both willing to train Palestinian security forces, as part of the international security force in Gaza, it will take time.

"Peacekeeping is that you're sitting there supporting the local



police force, the Palestinians, which Jordan and Egypt are willing to train in large numbers, but that

takes time. "If we're running around Gaza on patrol with weapons, that's not a situation that any country would like to get involved in."

He made his comments amid the growing fear about being dragged into a war between the US, Hamas, Israel, or any other Palestinian militias groups.

One of the main mediators, officials in Amman have been part of an international effort trying to deliver aid to Gaza and evacuating sick and wounded children. The King has flown over the territory on three missions parachuting aid supplies.

Explaining the situation's political complexity, King Abdullah reiterated his reluctance to send any of Jordan's forces to Gaza, stating he would not send Jordanian forces into the war-torn

enclave as his own country was "too close politically" to the Palestinian cause.

More than half of Jordan's population is of Palestinian descent, and over decades, the country has taken in 2.3 million Palestinian refugees fleeing earlier wars with Israel — the largest number in the region.

Asked if he trusted Hamas to keep its promise to give up any political role in Gaza, he replied: "I don't know them, but those that are working extremely close to them -- Qatar and Egypt -- feel very, very optimistic that they will abide by that."

"If we don't solve this problem, if we don't find a future for Israelis and Palestinians and a relationship between the Arab and Muslim world and Israel, we're doomed." UNI

Trump says Washington-Moscow don't play games with each other

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, OCT 28: Commenting on the Sunday missile test of Russia's Burevestnik cruise missile, US President Donald Trump — in a rather vague statement — said Moscow and Washington "don't play games with each other."

Russian President Vladimir Putin had announced that the missile had cleared its final test, and lauded it, calling it "a unique weapon."

According to Russian Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov, the missile flew around 14,000 km during its October trial, as per state media.

The Burevestnik is designed to fly at very low altitudes, change direction mid-flight to avoid interception, and hit underground or heavily fortified



targets. Russian officials have hinted its warhead could be around a megaton in yield.

"They are not playing games with us, we are not playing games with them either," Trump told reporters.

Trump also commented on the possibility of introducing new sanctions against Russia that he will announce his decision in due course. "You will find out," Trump said.

Additionally, Trump also referenced his own decision to move two US nuclear submarines closer to Russian waters, sarcastically commenting "we don't need to go 8,000 miles (14k km)" — in a jab at the distance covered by the new Russian missile during its final testing.

Mocking the test, Trump said that the announcement was not "appropriate," given its time and said "A war that should have taken one week is now in its soon fourth year. That's what (Putin) ought to do instead of testing missiles."

The US President pointed out he is not participating in discussions about the EU, using frozen Russian assets to pay for military aid to Ukraine.

"You have to ask the EU, I am not involved in that," Trump said. UNI

Russian FM Lavrov holds talks with North Korean FM Choe Son Hui, says bilateral ties boosted

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

MOSCOW, OCT 28: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Monday that the bilateral relations between Moscow and Pyongyang have gained significant momentum over the past three and a half months, in the wake of the agreements reached between President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un at the Pyongyang Summit in June 2024.

"Over the past three and a half months, our relations have received additional and very powerful impetus in developing the fundamental agreements reached by our leaders during the Pyongyang Summit," Lavrov said during talks with his DPRK counterpart Choe Son Hui in Moscow, reports Russian state media.

Lavrov said the discussions between the two officials would cover bilateral cooperation as well as issues on the international agenda, noting that both nations



were deepening their bilateral relations, amid the ever-expanding tide of sanctions imposed on both nations by the West.

Choe reiterating Pyongyang's stance on the Russia-Ukraine war, declared that the DPRK "fully sup-

ports Russia's efforts to protect its sovereignty and defend its territorial integrity."

"The DPRK government's unwavering foreign policy position is to consistently support the Russian leadership's policy aimed at

upholding state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and international justice — building a strong Russia and fulfilling its obligations under the articles of the interstate treaty," she said.

The meeting comes amid in-

terfering defence and economic cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang, with both governments signalling a desire to expand strategic ties amid their respective standoffs with the West.

Lavrov, in turn, praised the "historic friendship" between the two nations, lauding the 'heroism' of the North Korean soldiers who fought alongside Russian forces in the Kursk region, and commended their actions, terming them "a testament" to both nations' "shared struggle for justice."

Choe also said that the Sept 3 meeting in Beijing between Kim Jong-un and Vladimir Putin marked "a significant event that raised the entire previous strategic partnership between North Korea and Russia to a new height."

"The DPRK consistently supports Russia's policy of safeguarding territorial integrity," she added, reaffirming Pyongyang's solidarity with Moscow on global security issues. UNI

Sudan's paramilitary forces announces full control of El Fasher city

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

KARTOUM, OCT. 28: Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on Sunday announced that they have taken full control of the city of El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur State in western Sudan.

"Today's victory represents a pivotal moment, given the symbolic, strategic, and military significance of El Fasher," the paramilitary group said in a statement released on the social media platform Telegram.

The Sudanese army has not issued any official comment on the developments, while reports from the ground indicate conflicting accounts of the situation in the city, which has been under siege since



May 2024.

The El Fasher Resistance Committees, a local voluntary group, said in a separate statement that "battles in El Fasher are still ongoing, and the fighters remain steadfast."

Earlier in the day, the RSF claimed to have captured the headquarters of the Sudanese army's Sixth Infantry Division — the army's last stronghold in the Darfur region — and posted videos on X showing fighters celebrating in front of the compound's gate.

El Fasher was the last major administrative center in Sudan's Darfur region still under the control of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). It has been under an intensive siege by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) for several months, resulting in heavy casualties and a worsening humanitarian crisis.

Sudan remains gripped by a devastating conflict between the SAF and the RSF, which erupted in April 2023. The war has claimed tens of thousands of lives and displaced millions, plunging the country deep into a humanitarian crisis.

Temba Bavuma To Return As South Africa Captain For India Tests

■ FIRDOSE MOONDA

LORD: Temba Bavuma will be back to lead South Africa's Test side in their two-match series against India next month after recovering from a calf strain. Bavuma missed the start of their World Test Championship title defence against Pakistan after sustaining the injury in England in September.

He will not play in any of the white-ball matches that start in Pakistan this week but will be in a South African A side to play India A in a first-class match in Bengaluru before joining the Test squad.

Bavuma's inclusion is the only batting change from South Africa's squad that drew 1-1 in Pakistan and comes at the expense of middle-order batter David Bedingham, who did not play either of the matches.

Bedingham has played 15 Tests for South Africa and scored one hundred and four fifties, but before his 82 against Zimbabwe in Bulawayo he had gone 12 innings without a fifty. With Tony de Zorzi, Tristan Stubbs, Dewald Brevis and Zubayr Hamza in the squad, there is no room for Bedingham.

"The guys that did duty in Pakistan in the Test matches have shown what they're capable of, and a case can be made for all of them to be re-selected.

The reason why they got selected ahead of David was because I feel that in these conditions they'll be more effective," Shukri Conrad, South Africa head coach, said on Bedingham. "It doesn't mean that it's the end of the road for David. It wasn't so long ago that he was one of our star performers at Lord's so really horses-for-courses. For what we're potentially going to face, I believe the guys that we got are ahead of David in that respect.

"You leave a player out and it's never easy, especially if they've done as well as they have done. But again, I've got to take the emotion out of all of it. We've made some tough decisions along the way so every time you make a decision like that, it's particularly tough, but you've got to take the emotion out of it.

"You basically look at the raw facts and say, 'right, what do we believe is going to be effective on these surfaces? And who best to stack up against said opposition on those surfaces,' you know? And look, in eight months' time, however long, when we play a Test match back home again, I'm sure David will be in that line-up. But purely for Pakistan and India, what we're expecting, the guys that we've selected, we believe, are better

equipped."

On Hamza's selection for the India Tests, Conrad said that he's a "really good player of spin, it's as simple as that." Hamza had recently scored a century for South Africa A against New Zealand A in Potchefstroom last month.

"He [Hamza] was close to playing in Pakistan when we considered balance of side and he is the next batter up," Conrad said. "In these conditions, I must continually add that, in these conditions, we've always said that everything we do is conditions-based and condition-specific."

South Africa have stuck with three specialist spinners as all of Keshav Maharaj, Simon Harmer and Senuran Muthusamy performed well in Pakistan. Offspinner Preenelan Subrayen, who played in the first Test while Maharaj was recovering from a groin strain, has not been included.

Kagiso Rabada, Corbin Bosch and Marco Jansen make up the pace pack, with Lungi Ngidi not included after also missing out on the Pakistan tour.

The two-match series starts in Kolkata on November 14 before the second Test in Guwahati from November 22. South Africa will also play three ODIs and five T20Is on the tour.

ESPNCricinfo



South Africa are selecting based on character rather than just stats now

■ TEMBA BAVUMA

RAWALPINDI: Professional cricketers get used to missing matches through injury but it's never easy when you miss out on moments like our eight-wicket victory in the second Test, in Rawalpindi to level the series against Pakistan. You are obviously super-happy and proud of the guys and their achievements, but selfishly, as a player, you want to be there. You want to have contributed to the cause in some form.

Being out of action with a grade-two calf tear is frustrating but the interval has been enjoyable in terms of readjusting and tinkering with my training programme. Over the last few weeks I have generally started my day with a session with the biokineticist in the morning, followed by a batting session. I have then done strength and conditioning sessions with my trainer based at the Wanderers Stadium.

My rehab has been a collaborative effort between Lions and the national side. Ziyaad Mahomed, Lions' physiotherapist, and Proteas' physiotherapist Sizwe Hadebe have been administering my rehab and plenty of communication has flowed between them. Tumi Masakela, CSA high-performance strength and conditioning coach, took over from the physiotherapists once they were happy that I was able to train pain-free. I'm at that point now where everything I'm doing is pain-free whether it's batting or running.

In my absence, Aiden Markram has captained the side and led well, especially in the second Test. For us as South Africans, we are not super-acustomed to the subcontinent, so it will take us a little longer to adapt to the conditions and start getting the feel from a field-setting and bowling-changes point of view. I think Aiden had a stronger sense of that in the second Test, which was seen in the way he used his bowlers, found the balance between attack and defence, and placed fielders at the right angles. I thought his handling of the spinners, especially, which is never easy to get right, was good and they were a lot more effective for those conditions.

Keshav Maharaj and Simon Harmer were superb. Kesh is doing Kesh things and is really cementing himself as one of the best spin bowlers we've produced as a country. He is a wily character and he knows how to read you as a batter and is able to adapt his skill to what the opponent is doing. When playing against him, I feel like you have to make the play. That is generally the case when facing good bowlers. They don't often give you bad balls and you sometimes have to score off their good balls. Kesh gets the ball to drop and angle, utilises the crease, and he is always in the game.

Simon, who took his 1000th first-class wicket during the second Test, is a silent warrior. He actually reached out to me after the Test Championship final and said that he's still available to play South African cricket. He expressed that's still his goal, and it was exciting to hear that. I then had a conversation with the coach, Shukri Conrad, to get him back involved. I'm glad he's returned to the fold, and looking at the Tests we're going to have on the subcontinent, it made a lot of sense. The partnership between Simon and Kesh will become a formidable one, especially in subcontinental conditions.

ESPNCricinfo

Injured Pratika Rawal ruled out of World Cup semi-final against Australia

■ ESPNCRICINFO

MUMBAI: In a significant blow to India, opener Pratika Rawal has been ruled out of the Women's ODI World Cup semi-final against Australia. Rawal, the tournament's second-highest run-getter, injured herself during Bangladesh's batting innings in India's final league-stage game and could also miss the final if India get there.

The injury occurred in the 21st over of the rain-hit game in Navi Mumbai, when Sharmin Akter swiped Deepti Sharma across the line. As Rawal ran towards her left from deep mid-wicket, her foot appeared to get stuck in the turf and her ankle twisted as she fell to the ground. While the ball went to the boundary, Rawal winced in pain and held her ankle. Though a stretch-



er was sent out for her, she got up with the physio's help and hobbled off. She did not bat later, with Amanjot Kaur opening alongside Smriti Mandhana. Amanjot scored an unbeaten 15 in India's 8.4 overs of batting

before rain ended the contest.

Rawal, 25, has scored 308 runs in six innings during the tournament, averaging 51.33 at a strike-rate of 77.77. She made 75 against Australia in Visakhapatnam and then hit a match-winning

122 against New Zealand in Navi Mumbai. Against New Zealand, she also became the joint-fastest to 1000 runs in women's ODIs. Only Mandhana, her opening partner, has scored more runs than Rawal in this World Cup.

Rawal has also been involved in two of the top five batting partnerships of the tournament - 212 against New Zealand and 155 against Australia, both with Mandhana. Apart from Amanjot, Harleen Deol is another potential opener to line up alongside Mandhana in the semi-final. Uma Chetry can also be an opener; she opened the batting in the World Cup warm-up game against New Zealand and also in three T20Is previously. Jemimah Rodrigues has opened in ODI cricket previously too.

There is no information yet on whether Rawal is ruled out of the final too, should India get there, or whether any replacements are being considered. Tejal Hasabnis is the only batter among their reserves. The semi-final against Australia on October 30 will be played in Navi Mumbai.

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