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Army Hit Terror on Their Soil, Will Do It Again if Needed : Amit Shah

Warns Pakistan of ‘Cannons For Bullets’, Cites Operation SINDOOR as Message of New India’s Resolve

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 4: In one of his strongest warnings yet to Pakistan and its terror networks, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday declared that India will not wait to be attacked but will eliminate terrorists “in their own hide-outs across the border” if provoked again.

Speaking at an election rally in Jale
● Turn on Page 2



“Together We Can Build a Strong, Secure, Prosperous and Self-Reliant Jammu & Kashmir”: LG Manoj Sinha

LG Inaugurates Annual Jhiri Mela, Opens Key Public Facilities, lays Foundation for First CSR-Funded Indoor Sports Complex in Marh

■ MUKARAM ALI SARFARAZ

JAMMU, NOV 4: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday inaugurated the annual Jhiri Mela at Marh Sub-Division, calling upon people to reaffirm their commitment to the ideals of selfless service, social justice and collective progress as envisioned by the legendary farmer-saint Baba Jitto.

Addressing a gathering of devotees, farmers and public representatives, the Lieutenant Governor said, “Together we can build a strong, secure, prosperous and self-reliant Jammu Kashmir.” He said the spirit of unity, resilience and community participation is the true strength of the Union Territory.



Reiterating the need to protect the region's civilizational ethos, LG Sinha stressed that cultural heritage plays a decisive role in economic development. “Preserving cultural heritage is crucial for rapid economic growth. Our traditions, arts and crafts must be passed on to the younger generation through active participation and skill-based engagement. This will open up new livelihood avenues, especially for rural youth,” he said.

Lieutenant Governor underlined that governance must be rooted in public involvement. “Community participation in governance should be ensured to promote accountability, improve service delivery, and build a transparent

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LG, CM greet people on Guru Nanak Jayanti

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, NOV 04: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor said: "On the auspicious occasion of the Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, I extend my greetings and good wishes to all. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's life and message of equality, love, brotherhood, compassion and truthfulness is an inspiration for all humanity.

"Guru Nanak Dev Ji taught us to lead a virtuous and noble life. His Prakash Parv is an occasion to rededicate ourselves to the task of creating a just, fair and humane society and practice the revered Guru's noble teachings in our daily lives. Let us take a pledge to work with dedication and commitment to root out any divisive tendencies in our society and uphold the universal values of peace and harmony".

● Turn on Page 2

CS Reviews Progress On Key NHLML Infrastructure Projects In J&K

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, NO 4: Chief Secretary, Atal Dooloo, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress and implementation of major infrastructure projects being executed by the National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) across the Union Territory



of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting primarily focused on the status of ropeway projects under the Parvatmala Scheme, the Inter Modal Station (IMS) at Katra, and the Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) in Jammu, all of which are pivotal for enhancing connectivity, logistics efficiency, and tourism

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ACB registers FIR in illegal petrol pump construction case in Budgam

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 04: The Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau has registered a case under FIR No. 21/2025 at Police Station ACB Srinagar following verification of a complaint received from the inhabitants of village Arigam, Budgam.

The verification as per ACB statement issued to

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28 injured as mini bus overturns in Rajouri

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI/JAMMU, NOV 4: At least 28 persons, mostly students, were injured when a mini bus

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CM Omar, Farooq, Mehbooba, others mourn demise

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 04: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief, Mehbooba Mufti, Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Molvi Umar Farooq and the media fraternity on Tuesday expressed grief and shock over the demise of a senior Journalist and J&K Bureau Head of The Week Magazine, Tariq Ahmad Bhat.

Bhat passed away on Tuesday morning after suffering a massive cardiac attack. He was 54 and left behind a wife and three little children.

A large number of people, especially journalists, participated in the funeral of the senior journalist.

“Chief Minister has expressed deep sorrow on the passing of Tariq Ahmad Bhat, J&K Bureau Head of

● Turn on Page 2

Director Information, DIPR Employees condole demise of Accredited Journalist Tariq Bhat

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, NOV 04: Director Information, Nitish Rajora has expressed deep grief over the death of Veteran and Accredited journalist Tariq Ahmad Bhat, calling his demise an irreparable loss to Kashmir's journalistic fraternity.

● Turn on Page 2

Govt committed to improve ease of living for women: PM Modi

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, NOV 4: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that the people of Bihar have made up their mind to ensure that the NDA breaks the record of its scale of victory in the last 20 years, while the “jungle raj people” would suffer their worst defeat at the hustings in the state.

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ONLINE GAMING LAW

SC ASKS CENTRE TO FILE COMPREHENSIVE REPLY

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, NOV 4: The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Centre to file a comprehensive reply on petitions challenging an online gaming law which prohibits “online money games”, and bars banking services

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3 MW Hydropower Project in Daksum to Illuminate 3,500 Households

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

DEESU, (ANANTNAG), NOV 04: Construction work on a 3-megawatt hydropower project is underway in the Dessu Daksum area of Kokernag in south Kashmir's Anantnag district. Once completed, the project is expected to generate power for around 3,000 to 3,500 households.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the construction company has already completed the laying of approximately 800 metres of the pipeline required for the project, and the remaining 400 metres are expected to be completed within the next two to three weeks.

After construction, the project will operate round the clock in three shifts, providing employment to 30 to 35 workers per shift.

Ghulam Hassan Dekka, a local,

said, “We have been working here for some time. This power project will benefit the local population a lot because this is a poor and far-flung area.”

Dekka said there is no harm from this project. “Many labourers are working here. Such projects are the need of the hour,” he added.

Another local said they had to face a lot of difficulties during

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HT TRIBUTE

Voice of Truth Falls Silent

Veteran journalist Tariq Ahmad Bhat passes away at 58

Kashmir Media loses a rare pillar of integrity

Kashmir's journalistic fraternity was today left shattered by the sudden demise of Tariq Ahmad Bhat, senior journalist and Bureau Chief of The Week, who passed away early this morning following a massive cardiac arrest at his residence in Chotta Bazar, Srinagar. He was 58. Soft-spoken, Highly principled, and widely respected across media circles, Tariq was known for his quiet wisdom, deep humility and uncompromising commitment to truth. In a profession too often driven by noise, he chose depth over drama, credibility over fame.

For over three decades, he reported Kashmir with rare balance and dignity telling stories without seeking the spotlight, mentoring young reporters with patience, and reminding colleagues that “credibility is a journalist's only real asset.”

A meticulous reporter and a kinder human being, he believed journalism was not about taking sides, but about serving the truth with fairness and courage. His calm presence, ethical clarity and gentle counsel will be deeply missed in newsrooms across J&K.

His passing is not just a personal loss to his colleagues, but a void in the moral fabric of journalism in the region. Tariq leaves behind a legacy of honesty, restraint and humanity values that define real journalism, and values the profession urgently needs to reclaim.

May his soul rest in peace.

AAMEEN....



CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Army Hit.....

constituency of Bihar’s Darbhanga district, Shah said the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack executed by Pakistan-sponsored militants and claiming 26 civilian lives, most of them tourists—was answered “swiftly and decisively” through Operation Sindoor, a cross-border military strike ordered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. “Our Army went inside Pakistan and neutralised the killers. This is not the India of 2008 or 26/11. This is the India that hits back on enemy soil,” Shah said to thunderous applause.

Issuing a direct warning to Islamabad, Shah said “If Pakistan or its puppets repeat even a single such mistake, goli ka jawab goley se diya jayega. The reply to their bullets will be cannons. And those cannons will be made in Bihar.”

‘Terrorists once escaped, now they are hunted’ Shah contrasted India’s present security posture with what he called the “timid era” of past governments, accusing the Congress of allowing terrorists to attack and flee with impunity.

“Earlier, terrorists struck India and hid behind Pakistan’s border. Today, under PM Modi, India crosses that border, finishes the job, and returns. Surgical strikes, Balakot air strike, and now Operation Sindoor each is a message: India will not absorb terror, it will crush it at the source,” the Home Minister said.

Shah Targeted Rahul’s, illegal immigration Turning his guns on the opposition, Shah accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of “standing with infiltrators instead of citizens”, describing his recent march as a “ghuspaithiya bachao yatra”.

“Rahul Gandhi and Lalu Prasad want to protect illegal immigrants. But the NDA will identify and remove every infiltrator from this country no compromise, no apology,” Shah declared.

“Article 370 ‘shielded for 70 years’ Shah also said Congress and the RJD “kept Article 370 alive for political greed”, adding that it was Prime Minister Modi who “finally shut the last door of Pakistan’s interference in Kashmir” on August 5, 2019. “For 70 years they pampered separatism. Modi finished it in one stroke—no special status, no special treatment, and no space for terror politics,” Shah said.

With the Bihar campaign heating up, Shah’s speech marked a renewed headline pitch on national security placing cross-border terrorism, Pakistan, and illegal immigration at the heart of the BJP’s electoral messaging.

“Together We.....

system that understands citizens’ needs before framing new policies,” he said.

Paying homage at the shrine of Baba Jitto and Bua Kour, LG Sinha described Baba Jitto as “a universal symbol of public welfare who transcended social divisions and stood for truth, equality and farmers’ rights.” The real tribute to him, the LG said, is to ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach every farmer without discrimination.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor inaugurated a dedicated Pilgrim Community Hall and four modular bus stops at Jhiri Chowk, Rajpura Chowk, Bawa Talab and Kanachak. The amenities aim to improve public convenience, transport connectivity and facilities for devotees visiting the mela.

The LG also laid the foundation stone for the first Indoor Sports Complex under CSR at Marh Sub-Division, to be completed within four months. The multi-sport facility will include two badminton courts, judo and taekwondo rings, shooting ranges, table tennis tables, chess and carrom zones, along with a reading and recreation space. “This initiative marks a new chapter in sports promotion, rural talent development and youth engagement,” the LG said.

Praising the farming community for their contribution and resilience, the LG reiterated the administration’s priority towards farmer welfare. He also urged officials to create better market linkages for local artisans, craftsmen, and traders, especially during cultural festivals like Jhiri Mela.

The Lieutenant Governor inspected stalls of government departments, SHGs, agri-entrepreneurs and interacted with farmers before felicitating progressive cultivators. The event also featured traditional folk performances celebrating Jammu’s artistic heritage.

The inaugural function was attended by DDC Chairman Bharat Bhushan, Marh MLA Surinder Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar, DIG Shiv Kumar Sharma, DC Jammu Dr Rakesh Minhas, senior civil and police officers, besides thousands of devotees and visitors.

LG, CM greet.....

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has extended warm greetings to the Sikh community and the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Guru Nanak Jayanti.

In his message, the Chief Minister said that the timeless teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji—rooted in compassion, equality, and selfless service—continue to illuminate the path of humanity and inspire people across the world. He underlined the importance of embracing these universal values to build a society founded on mutual respect, harmony, and inclusivity.

Omar Abdullah expressed hope that the divine message of Guru Nanak Dev Ji would continue to guide Jammu and Kashmir towards

greater unity, peace, and prosperity.

CS reviews.....

infrastructure in the region.

The meeting was attended by ACS, PWD; CEO, NHLML; Commissioner Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD); Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce (I&C); Divisional Commissioner Jammu/Kashmir; Director General, Budget; Director, Industries Jammu; representatives from NHLML, and other senior officers.

Reviewing the progress of ropeway projects, the Chief Secretary underlined that the UT administration is prioritizing improved connectivity to key tourist destinations through sustainable transport solutions.

The meeting was informed that bids have been invited by NHLML for the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for seven priority Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects, with bid submission scheduled for November 2025. These ropeway projects includes Sonmarg–Thajwas, Dodhpathri–Diskhal, Bhaderwah–Seojhdar, Baltal–Amarnath, Pahalgam–Amarnath, Nasri Tunnel–Sanasar, Shankaracharya ropeway project

The Chief Secretary emphasized the importance of timely DPR finalization, stating that these projects hold immense potential for promoting tourism and providing last-mile connectivity to major pilgrimage and scenic destinations.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the progress of the Inter Modal Station (IMS) at Katra, a flagship project of strategic importance for pilgrims visiting Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine. The project aims to provide seamless integration of various modes of transport to enhance passenger convenience and travel efficiency.

The meeting discussed the financial model of the project, covering both Phase-I and the ongoing development plan, and the ongoing consultations between NHLML, H&UDD, and the Finance Department to finalize the modalities.

The Chief Secretary called for accelerated action to resolve all pending financial and administrative issues to ensure timely commencement of the project.

Reviewing the status of the MMLP Jammu, the Chief Secretary stressed the need to expedite the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the project to facilitate the start of DPR-related works, including topographical and geo-technical surveys and demand assessment.

It was informed that a financial model based on normative costing has been submitted by NHLML to the Industries & Commerce Department, which is presently under examination for its viability and implementation framework.

The Chief Secretary directed the concerned authorities to ensure early finalization of land availability to enable NHLML to initiate on-ground activities without delay.

Reiterating the administration’s commitment to fast-tracking transformative infrastructure projects in the UT, the Chief Secretary directed all concerned departments to maintain close coordination with NHLML and ensure time-bound grounding and execution of all works.

He further stressed that these projects are of socio-economic importance, significantly contributing to improved connectivity, tourism, and logistics development in Jammu and Kashmir.

ACB registers.....

news agency KINS revealed that “Ali Mohammad Khan, son of Sonaullah Khan, resident of Arigam, Budgam, had constructed a petrol pump on Kahcharaie land at Arigam in June 2020, on the basis of a license issued by the competent authority on manipulated and misleading facts”.

“It was found that during 2018, No Objection Certificates (NOCs) were issued by the then Patwari Arigam, Naib Tehsildar Arigam, and Tehsildar Khansahab for proprietary land under Survey Nos. 531 and 533 Min. However, these officers deliberately omitted to record that access to the said land was only through State/ Kahcharaie land (Survey No. 535) and failed to mention that the land was separated from the main road by Kahcharaie land vulnerable to encroachment”.

“Further, it surfaced that the concerned Patwari concealed the existence of Survey No. 532 (Shamilat land) while preparing the Khaka Dasti, thereby misrepresenting the actual position of the site. Despite a clarification sought by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Budgam in March 2018, the field staff falsely reported that the site was feasible for the transportation and storage of fuel”.

“On the basis of these misleading NOCs and reports, the then Deputy Commissioner Budgam issued a petrol pump license (No. DCB/2020/10 dated 22.05.2020) in favour of the beneficiary on Survey Nos. 531 and 533, which were not adjacent to each other. The then Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Khansahab also forwarded the reports to higher authorities without conducting an independent spot verification or scrutiny of records”.

“In this manner, the concerned revenue officers and officials, by abusing their official positions and acting in criminal conspiracy with the beneficiary, facilitated encroachment on State land and conferred undue pecuniary benefit upon the said individual.

Accordingly, offences under Section 7 of the

Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018) and Section 120-B of the IPC have been established against the accused public servants and the beneficiary. Consequently, Case FIR No. 21/2025 has been registered at Police Station ACB Srinagar.

Further investigation into the case has been taken up”.(KINS)

28 injured.....

overturned on a highway in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, officials said.

The bus was on its way to Rajouri town when the driver lost control resulting in the accident near Thandikassi, the officials said.

Rescuers immediately swung into action and shifted 28 injured persons, including 26 students to the Government Medical College (GMC) Associated Hospital, Rajouri.

Two of the critically injured students — 15-year-old Aliza and 11-year-old Saqib — were later referred to the GMC Hospital Jammu, the officials said. (Agencies)

CM Omar, Farooq.....

The Week, who left for his heavenly abode following a cardiac arrest. He prayed for strength to the bereaved family in this difficult time,” Office of Chief Minister, J&K in a post on X, said.

The Chief Minister said that his contribution to journalism in J&K will always be remembered, the post reads.

In a condolence message, Dr Farooq described Tariq Ahmad Bhat as a respected and principled journalist, whose work reflected integrity, dedication and commitment to truth. He said his insightful reporting earned him great respect within the media fraternity and among the public.

He prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and conveyed heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family.

JKPDP in its post on X, quoted the party chief Mehbooba Mufti as expressing shock over his sudden demise.

“PDP President & Former J&K CM @MehboobaMufti expresses her shock over the sudden demise of senior journalist Tariq Bhat sahab & condoled his passing. Remembering him as a respected voice who captured J&K’s nuances with depth & sincerity, she prayed for his magfirat and for strength to his family, friends & colleagues to bear this irreparable loss,” JKPDP wrote.

Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President, Tariq Hameed Karra on Tuesday expressed profound grief over the passing of veteran journalist Tariq Bhat, Bureau Chief of the “Week Magazine”.

In a condolence message, JKPC President Tariq Hameed Karra described the sudden passing of Tariq Bhat heart wrenching and shocking & said the sudden demise of Bhat has left him speechless.

“I have no words to express my grief. My thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved family. I express my heartfelt condolences to family, friends and relative of the deceased,” Karra said.

Bhat was a veteran journalist, he will always be remembered for his professional ethics, transparency and honesty, JKPC President added and prayed for eternal peace to departed soul.

Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir, Molvi Umar Farooq in a post on X, expressed shock over his demise and described Bhat one of the respected journalists of Jammu and Kashmir.

“Shocked and deeply saddened by the sudden demise of senior journalist Tariq Ahmad Bhat. Tariq was among the most respected journalists of Jammu and Kashmir, known for his integrity and commitment to truthful reporting. Throughout his career, he remained a voice of accuracy and impartiality, upholding the highest standards of journalism even in difficult and trying circumstances. His dedication to the pursuit of truth earned him the respect of colleagues and readers alike. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, colleagues, and friends I pray to Almighty Allah to grant Jannat-ul-Firdous to the departed soul and patience and strength to the family to bear this irreparable loss,” the post reads.

PDP MLA from Pulwama also expressed grief. “Still can’t believe Tariq Bhat Sahab is gone. A dear friend and a man of truth, humility, and compassion. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji’un. May Almighty bless his soul with magfirah and grant him a place in Jannat-ul-Firdous. My heartfelt prayers for his family,” Parra wrote. Apni Party President, Syed Altaf Bukhari wrote, “Saddened to hear that veteran journalist Tariq Ahmad Bhat passed away this morning due to a cardiac arrest. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji’un. His untimely demise at such a young age is truly heartbreaking. May Almighty Allah grant his soul eternal peace and give strength to his family to bear this irreparable loss. My heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones.”

Meanwhile, the Kashmir Video Journalists Association (KVJA) expresses deep sorrow over the passing of Tariq Ahmad Bhat, a senior and highly respected journalist from Srinagar.

Tariq Ahmad Bhat was widely admired for his affable, cheerful, and sociable nature. He exemplified integrity, professionalism, and a strong sense of duty throughout his career, carrying out his responsibilities with unwavering dedication and sincerity.

Members of the Association paid glowing tributes to the departed journalist, acknowledging

ing that his absence will be deeply felt and his contributions long remembered.

The KVJA prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. “May Almighty grant them strength and patience to bear this irreparable loss.”

Director Information.....

In his condolence message, the Director Information said that Bhat was an Accredited Journalist with DIPR and his professionalism and integrity is known across the journalistic circles.

He added that the passing of Bhat has created a deep void in media fraternity of Kashmir which cannot be filled so easily.

The Director also expressed deep sympathy with the family members of Tariq Bhat and prayed for peace for the departed soul.

Meanwhile, the employees of Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) also expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of Accredited Journalist, Tariq Ahmad Bhat. The employees remembered the long association of Bhat with DIPR and said that he was torchbearer for many budding journalists.

The employees also expressed deep sympathies with the bereaved family members, prayed for highest place in Jannah for Tariq Bhat and forbearance for family members in this moment of grief.

Govt committed.....

Modi said he is addressing rallies in Bihar and every rally is breaking the record of the previous one, with women coming in very large numbers.

“The women workers of the Bihar BJP are doing splendid work with the resolve of ‘Mera Booth, Sabse Mazboot’,” Modi said, interacting with women BJP-NDA workers in Bihar via NaMo App.

“I have been observing the polls closely and it is confirmed that the NDA is winning and it is winning big. So I have no questions about the victory but (I want) there should be more and more polling,” the prime minister said.

Interacting with a BJP worker who said there is tremendous enthusiasm among the people for the NDA, Modi said her words echo the feeling prevailing among the poor, Dalits, Maha Dalits, backward and extremely backward.

“People of Bihar have made up their mind to break the record of the scale of victory of the NDA in the last 20 years while the ‘jungle raj people’ will suffer their worst defeat in the state,” he said.

The prime minister has been using the “jungle raj” analogy to attack the Mahagathbandhan. ‘Jungle raj’ is an apparent reference to the time when Bihar was under the rule of RJD chief Lalu Prasad and his wife Rabri Devi.

In his remarks, Modi said the NDA government is committed to improving the ease of living for women and empowering them.

Bihar will go to polls in two phases on November 6 and 11. The counting of votes will be taken up on November 14.

The INDIA opposition bloc has declared Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav its chief ministerial candidate for the Bihar polls. (Agencies)

SC asks Centre.....

and advertising related to them.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and K V Viswanathan was informed that the Centre has filed its reply on the interim prayer made in the pleas.

“We want the Additional Solicitor General appearing for the Union to file a comprehensive reply to the main petition itself,” the bench said.

It said copy of the reply be served in advance to the advocates appearing for the petitioners and if they want to file any rejoinder, they may do so at the earliest.

The bench posted the matter for hearing on November 26.

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 is the first central legislation banning real-money online gaming, including fantasy sports and e-sports played for stakes and has faced challenges before the Delhi, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh high courts.

Senior advocate C A Sundaram, appearing in the matter, told the bench that the business was completely shut for over a month. During the hearing, one of the advocates told the bench that a fresh writ petition was filed in the matter but it was not listed for hearing.

“(petitioner) am a chess player and its a source of livelihood. I was also about to launch an app,” the lawyer said.

“India is a strange country. You are a player. You want to play. It’s your only source of income and therefore, you want to join the proceedings,” Justice Pardiwala observed.

The counsel said the petitioner participates in online tournaments organised by the companies and he pays a participation fee also.

The bench said his plea be also tagged with the pending petitions.

The top court was hearing a batch of transferred petitions challenging the online gaming law.

The bench said a separate petition, which has sought directions to the government to prohibit online gambling and betting platforms that allegedly operate under the guise of social and e-sports games, would also be heard on November 26.

The top court on Monday had sought response of the Centre on the plea filed by the Centre for Accountability and Systemic Change (CASC) and Shourya Tiwari.

The petitioners argue that the Act imposes a blanket ban even on judicially recognised skill-based games, violating Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to practice any profession or carry on lawful trade.

The Karnataka High Court had recently issued notice in another related petition.

On September 8, the top court had allowed a plea by the Centre to transfer the petitions challenging the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 from three high courts to the apex court to avoid conflicting verdicts.

It had transferred the petitions pending before the Delhi, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh high courts, to the apex court.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) filed the plea for transfer of three pending cases from the high courts to the apex court.

“Due to multiple litigations pending before various high courts involving same or substantially similar question of law and challenging the vires of the same impugned Act, it is imperative that the same is transferred to this court or any high court to avoid any divergence of opinions or multiplicity of proceedings,” the plea said.

It said after the law got the President’s assent, multiple petitions were filed in the high courts challenging the validity of the Act.

The law prohibited offering or playing online money games, regardless of whether they are games of skill or chance, and categorised violations as cognisable and non-bailable offences.

The bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 20.

It was passed within two days by voice vote in both Houses of Parliament and received presidential assent on August 22. (Agencies)

3 MW Hydropower.....

winter and power curtailment, and now they are expecting 24-hour electricity. “Electricity is important in this modern era. The water bodies should be used for these projects, and after generating electricity, the same water can be used again,” he said.

Junaid Mohammad Makroo, Managing Director, Kashmir Valley Energy Private Limited, told KNO, “This is a 3 megawatt power project which we have taken from the Jammu & Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA), and with overload capacity, it will function up to 3.6 megawatt. We have already laid around 800 metres of pipeline, and the remaining 400 metres will be completed within the next 2 to 3 weeks.”

He said that at present, around 150 local workers are engaged in this project. “Once construction is completed and the plant reaches the commissioning and operational phase, around 30 to 35 people will work in each shift, and the plant will operate in three shifts round the clock,” Makroo said

The MD said the major benefit of this project is electricity generation for the government, and equally important is the employment it provides. “Local people working with us will learn new skills and will be able to enhance their capabilities for future opportunities as well,” he said. “Labour here is mostly local; only specialised skilled labour has been hired from outside where necessary.”

Makroo added, “This project becomes a national asset. Such projects usually operate under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, ‘Build-Operate-Transfer’ (BOT), where a private entity builds and operates the project for a fixed term, after which it is handed over to the government.”

The Managing Director said they have received full support from the government, whether it is No Objection Certificates, allotments, or coordination with security forces and departments.

“This hydro project will generate electricity sufficient for around 3,000 to 3,500 households annually,” he said, adding that hydropower is clean energy, and unlike thermal power projects, it does not pollute the atmosphere and does not rely on coal.

“During construction, there are challenges and hard work involved, but we expect that within one and a half months, subject to weather, the project will be in the commissioning phase,” the MD said. “Government norms allow 36 months, but we are close to completing this project in just 17 months, almost a year ahead of schedule due to day-and-night efforts.”—(KNO)



Div Com Kashmir chairs meeting on Expansion of Civil Enclave at Srinagar Airport

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 04: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, today chaired a high-level meeting to review the expansion of the Civil Enclave at Srinagar Airport and discuss the shifting of CRPF barracks from the present location within the vicinity of airport.

Besides, Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, the meeting was attended by senior officers from the CRPF, CISF, Airports Authority of India (AAI), and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

Among other issues, the meeting held detailed deliberations on various aspects of development of road linking the Ring Road, Railway Station, and Srinagar Airport as part of the proposed circuit.



The officers also discussed the feasibility of developing new CRPF barracks and accommodation for CISF personnel to support airport operations.

While addressing the officers, the Divisional Commissioner directed them to review the alignment of the proposed connecting road to ensure optimal connectivity and minimal land acquisition issues. He further instructed the concerned departments to identify suitable land for relocating CRPF facilities in line with safety and regulatory requirements specified by Air Force authorities.

The Div Com emphasized coordinated efforts among all stakeholder departments to ensure the timely finalisation of the plan latest by 20th November, which is expected to significantly enhance commuter experience.

Skill Development Programme Empowers Specially-Abled Persons in Kupwara

■ DR. AB QAYOOM

KUPWARA, NOV 4: A one-day skill development programme for specially-abled persons was organised on Tuesday at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kupwara in collaboration with the Voluntary Medicare Society (VMS) Bemina, Srinagar, aiming to equip participants with practical agricultural skills and promote sustainable livelihood opportunities. The programme was inaugurated by Prof. Kaiser Mohi-ud-Din Malik, Professor and Head, KVK Kupwara, who delivered an inspiring address highlighting the need to view disability as a distinctive ability rather than a limitation. "Disability is not a barrier but a distinctive lens through which we often find hidden abilities," he said, motivating participants to overcome personal challenges through innovation and self-confidence. The event featured interactive sessions



and hands-on training conducted by KVK scientists on low-cost, home-based agricultural enterprises such as mushroom cultivation, vermicomposting, beekeeping, and hydroponic vegetable production. Participants were also briefed on availing government subsidies and support schemes under the National Horticulture Mission and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY). More than 30 participants from across Kupwara district took part in the training, which combined vocational education with counselling on social and economic empowerment. The programme aimed to help specially-abled individuals become self-reliant and active contributors to the local economy. In his concluding remarks, Prof. Malik reaffirmed KVK Kupwara's commitment to inclusive development. He said, "Our goal is for each participant to become a beacon of change within their community." The KVK has also pledged post-training follow-up, including on-site visits and distribution of starter seed kits to help participants implement their learning. Expressing gratitude, Prof. Malik thanked Dr. Shahbaz Yousuf from VMS Bemina for his valuable insights and support during the programme. The collaborative initiative was widely appreciated for promoting dignity, empowerment, and self-reliance among the specially-abled community of Kupwara.

Mehbooba Mufti Visits Kulgam, Offers Condolences to Family of Late PDP Zonal President Mohammad Ayoub Rather

■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, NOV 4: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President and former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mehbooba Mufti, today visited Kulgam, where she offered condolences at the residence of Late Mohammad Ayoub Rather, Zonal President of PDP Devsar, at Sopat Tangpora. Mehbooba Mufti expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Mohammad Ayoub Rather and extended heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family. She recalled his contributions to the party and public service, describing him as a sincere and dedicated leader who worked tirelessly for the welfare of people in his area.



Late Mohammad Ayoub Rather had also served as the President of the Jammu and Kashmir Agriculture Employees Union and was widely respected for his integrity and commitment to employees' welfare. He was the paternal uncle of senior journalist Farooq Rather.

As per family sources, Mohammad Ayoub Rather passed away on October

29 after a brief illness, leaving behind a legacy of service and goodwill.

Mehbooba Mufti was accompanied by several district-level PDP leaders during the visit. The delegation offered prayers for the departed soul and conveyed solidarity with the family in their hour of grief. Earlier, several prominent leaders from the PDP, National Conference, and other

political parties had also visited the residence of the late leader to offer condolences and pay their respects.

The demise of Mohammad Ayoub Rather has been widely mourned across political, social, and journalistic circles, with many remembering him as a compassionate, upright, and public-spirited individual devoted to community service.

My Bharat Srinagar Organises Mega Unity Padyatra at University of Kashmir

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 04: Mera Yuva Bharat (My Bharat) Srinagar today organised a grand Unity Padyatra at the University of Kashmir as part of the nationwide Sardar@150 Celebrations, commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel — the architect of India's unity and national integration.

The Unity March was formally flagged off by Hon'ble Rajya Sabha MP Ghulam Ali Khatana, who highlighted the timeless significance of Patel's legacy and urged youth to uphold the spirit of unity, discipline, and national responsibility.

The event was graced by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, Prof. Dr. Nilofer Khan, and the Registrar of the University, who appreciated My Bharat's initiatives in engaging and empowering young people across the Valley.

More than 800 students from various colleges and schools across Kashmir enthusiastically participated in the padyatra, turning the University campus into a vibrant display of youthful energy and national pride. Their participation showed a clear message: the youth of Kashmir stand firmly for unity, development, and a stronger India.

The programme began with a Welcome Address by Sh. Pradeep Kumar, representing My Bharat Srinagar, who spoke about the organisation's commitment to fostering leadership and civic responsibility among young citizens.

The event concluded with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks delivered by the Registrar, University of Kashmir, acknowledging the immense support from students, dignitaries, faculty, and the organising team.

My Bharat Srinagar emphasised that initiatives like the Unity Padyatra serve as a reminder of India's collective strength and encourage the younger generation to carry forward the legacy of Sardar Patel with pride and purpose.

"Jashn-e-Tiflan" Children's Theatre Festival scheduled to be held from 17th to 21st Nov at Tagore Hall Srinagar

■ GULFAM BARJI

SRINAGAR, NOV 04: 5-Days "Jashn-e-Tiflan" Children's theatre festival scheduled to be held from 17th to 21st November this month at Tagore Hall Srinagar.

The festival is being organized by Kashmir Kala Manch, in collaboration with the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and the Re-Root Foundation of India.

Highlighting the unique nature of the event, the organizers shared that four schools from Sheher-e-Khaas (the old city of Srinagar) will be participating. These schools have been engaged with the group over the past year through theatre-based activities aimed at enhancing



ing children's mental growth, creative expression, and personality development. The organizers emphasized that in today's time, such festivals that actively involve children—especially in theatre—are rarely seen. "Jashn-e-Tiflan" aims to revive the culture of children's theatre and provide a creative platform for young minds to express themselves through art and performance.

The festival enjoys the support of the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, reflecting the government's commitment to nurturing children's artistic and intellectual development.

Special appreciation was extended to Mrs. Nighat Shafi Pandit, Chairperson of the HELPF Foundation, whose valuable support has made this festival possible.

Joint Action by DMO Baramulla and Police Post Fruit Mandi Sopore Foils Illegal Soil Trade, ₹13,000 Fine Imposed

■ UMAR RASHID

SOPORE, NOV 4: In a swift and coordinated operation, the District Mineral Office (DMO) Baramulla and Police Post Fruit Mandi Sopore successfully foiled an attempt of illegal soil transportation near Fruit Mandi Sopore.

According to reports, several dumpers were found transporting soil under the guise of sand royalty from Jahama Baramulla. Acting on credible inputs, a team led by SI Khalid Mir, Incharge Police Post Fruit Mandi Sopore, along with officials from the



District Mineral Office Baramulla, intercepted the vehicles and imposed a penalty of ₹13,000 on the violators.

Officials from the District Mineral Office played a vital role in identifying and verifying the illegal activity, ensuring strict enforcement of the JK Minor Mineral Concession Rules.

Locals have appreciated the timely and firm action by SI Khalid Mir and the DMO team, urging the District Mineral Officer, Baramulla, to maintain vigilant checks—particularly in vulnerable zones like Jahama—to curb illegal mineral trade in the future.

KU holds orientation workshop for new faculty on quality culture

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 04: The Directorate of Internal Quality Assurance (DIQA), University of Kashmir (KU), organised a one-day orientation workshop on "Integrating New Faculty into the University Quality Culture" here on Tuesday.

The workshop aimed to familiarize newly inducted faculty members with the university's quality assurance framework, policies, and web-based systems. It also focused on enhancing understanding of teaching, research, and service quality standards that guide the institution's



academic environment.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said, "Building a culture of quality begins with awareness and accountability. Our goal is to ensure that every faculty member understands their role in strengthening institutional standards and contributing to continuous improvement." She added that such initiatives reflect the University's collective commitment to excellence and transparency in academic and administrative functioning.

Dean Academic Affairs KU, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, highlighted the need for consistent efforts to align individual teaching and research practices with institutional benchmarks. Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, said that quality assurance is a continuous process that demands collective commitment and highlighted that every member of the academic community has a vital role in strengthening the university's quality culture.

Earlier, Director DIQA KU, Prof. Manzoor Ahmad Shah, in his welcome address, said that the workshop serves as a platform for new faculty to understand the university's expectations, quality mechanisms, and avenues for academic growth.

A joint team from the Directorate of IT & SS and DIQA demonstrated the use of the DIQA web portal and conducted hands-on training for the participants. Faculty members were also apprised of best practices in research publishing and strategies for maintaining academic integrity.

The event concluded with an interactive question-answer session where participants shared their feedback and sought clarifications on institutional quality processes. The event proceedings were conducted by Prof. Aijaz Akbar, Deputy Director, DIQA KU, while the vote of thanks was proposed by Sakib Rashid, Research Assistant, DIQA KU.

DC Kulgam holds Teachers' Interaction and Feedback Session under 'Classes of Joy' Initiative

Calls for child-centered, inclusive, and interactive classrooms

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KULGAM, NOVEMBER 04: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, held a Teachers' Interaction and Feedback Session under the ongoing 'Classes of Joy' initiative, an effort jointly undertaken by the District Administration and the Pratham Foundation, being implemented across all 458 government primary and middle schools in the district.

The session was organized to review the implementation, progress, and learning outcomes of the initiative, and to obtain valuable feedback from teachers and field-level education officers to further strengthen the programme.



During the session, teachers shared their on-ground experiences, observations, and suggestions regarding the Classes of Joy initiative, which aims to create joyful learning environments and enhance student engagement in schools.

The DC chaired the session, emphasizing the importance of effective implementation through TRAL (Teaching at the Right Level) to bridge learning gaps.

He stressed that every classroom should be a space of curiosity, creativity, and joy where children can learn, express, and grow. He also instructed all concerned to ensure zero learning gaps and to make every classroom child-centered, inclusive, and interactive.

SHEW Shopian organises Awareness Camp at Hanjipora

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 04: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Mission Shakti Shopian today organized an awareness programme at Anganwadi Centre Hanjipora, Shopian, focusing on various Women Welfare Schemes and Helpline Services aimed at uplifting and empowering women in the district.

The programme was aimed to create awareness among women about the government initiatives designed to enhance their socio-economic status, promote self-reliance, and ensure their safety and well-being. Participants were educated about different welfare schemes, financial support programmes, and skill development opportunities available for women.

SHEW officials also shared vital information about important helpline numbers including Women Helpline 181, Sakhi One Stop Centre, and other grievance redressal platforms, ensuring that women are aware



of the support systems in place to assist them in times of need.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from local women who engaged in interactive discussions about challenges, opportunities, and ways to achieve self-dependence. Officials emphasized that empowerment begins with awareness, and every woman should know her rights and the facilities provided by the government for her welfare.

Intensive health and water testing drives held at Check Saidpora Shopian

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 4: On the directions of District Administration Shopian, in response to the detection of four jaundice cases in Check Saidpora area of District Shopian, health and Jal Shakti Departments have launched a comprehensive health surveillance and sanitation drive to prevent further spread of the infection.

Teams from the Health Department in coordination with officials of the Jal Shakti Department have initiated intensive field inspections to identify suspected cases and assess hygiene conditions.

Drinking water samples have been collected from multiple locations in the area for laboratory analysis to ascertain the quality of water being supplied to households.

Jal Shakti Department has intensified chlorination and flushing of supply lines in the locality.

Meanwhile, the Health Department has started an extensive awareness campaign advising residents to consume boiled drinking water, maintain personal hygiene and avoid consumption of uncovered food.

A medical team has visited today to ascertain the health scenario and extend the assistance and treatment to the local people.

The people have been advised to take precautionary measures and to report any new suspected cases promptly.

The District Administration has assured that all necessary steps are being taken to safeguard public health.

Continuous surveillance will be maintained in the area.

CCF Kashmir visits Kamraj Forest Division Kupwara

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, NOV 04: Chief Conservator Forests (CCF) Kashmir, Irfan Rasool Wani, today visited the Kamraj Forest Division Kupwara to review ongoing forest protection measures and developmental works in the area.

The visit commenced with a review meeting at the office of the Deputy Director, Headquarters Natnussa, which was attended by the DFO Kamraj, Deputy Directors Natnussa, Langate, and Kehmil, along with Range Officers of North Lolab, Matchil, Kupwara, and Sopore.

During the meeting, the CCF took stock of the various measures

being undertaken for forest conservation in Kupwara, with a particular focus on the Sogam and Chandigam areas of Lolab Valley. He emphasized the need to intensify field vigilance to curb illegal exploitation of forest resources and ensure that forest offence cases are promptly acted upon and taken to their logical conclusion.

As part of his visit, the CCF inaugurated the Winter Plantation Drive in the district by planting a Deodar sapling in Compartment 18/SL, marking the commencement of the winter afforestation season.

The event witnessed active participation of school children and members of the local com-



munity, reflecting growing public involvement in forest conservation efforts.

DLSA Srinagar Conducts Awareness Drive on Free Legal Aid

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 04: In connection with the upcoming National Legal Aid Day to be observed on 9th November 2025, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar organized an Awareness Programme on Free Legal Aid across various locations of District Srinagar.

The programme was held under the chairmanship of Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, Tasleem Arief, and under the supervision of Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Sajad Ur Rehman.

The initiative aimed to sensitize the general public about their rights and the availability of free legal services under the Legal Services Au-



thorities Act.

On this occasion, Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) of DLSA Srinagar conducted awareness sessions and outreach programmes at different public places, spreading information regarding free legal aid, the role of Legal Services Institutions, and procedures to avail such services.

The Para Legal Volunteers acted as resource persons, engaging with the community, distributing informative material, and encouraging people to seek legal assistance through the District and Tehsil Legal Services Committees.

The awareness drive reflects the continued efforts of DLSA Srinagar to ensure access to justice for all, particularly for the marginalized and weaker sections of society.

Plantation Drive under Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas held at GBHSS Mantrigam

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 04: A plantation drive was successfully carried out at Government Boys Higher Secondary School (GBHSS) Mantrigam under the aegis of the Social Forestry Range Bandipora to celebrate Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.

The event was held with the theme of promoting environmental conservation and preserving cultural heritage. The plantation drive aimed to raise awareness about the importance of environmental protection and the significant role of tribal communities in conservation efforts.

On the occasion, students and local community members participated enthusiastically, planting saplings and learning about sustainable environmental practices.



This initiative formed part of the broader celebration of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas, which honors the contributions and legacy of tribal freedom fighters and communities.

By engaging in such environmental activities, the community reaffirmed its commitment to building a greener and more sustainable future.

DC Kupwara reviews Progress of NH-701 Project

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, NOV 4: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, today chaired a meeting to review the progress of the National Highway-701 (RKCTC Road) project and address various issues affecting its execution.

The meeting held a detailed discussion on key aspects of the project, including shifting of electricity poles and water pipelines, improvement of road curves.

The concerned Tehsildars were



instructed to ensure timely submission of land title documents to facilitate prompt compensation to affected landowners.

The Deputy Commissioner also emphasized the removal of hindrances, attestation of mutations, and clearance of issues related to walnut trees and forest land, directing the concerned departments to expedite the process to ensure uninterrupted construction of the highway.

The DC directed concerned agency to complete pending culvert works on fast track basis to avoid inconvenience to the gen-

eral public.

The DC urged all stakeholders to maintain close coordination and work proactively to achieve timely completion of this vital infrastructure project, which is expected to significantly enhance connectivity and boost economic activity in the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Handwara, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Kupwara, SE Hydraulics, SER&B, OC Beacon, Chief Horticulture Officer Kupwara, and other concerned officers.

ADDC Shopian finalizes Modalities for Week-long celebration of 'Vande Mataram' Campaign

Departments assigned roles to ensure smooth conduct of the week-long nationwide campaign.

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 04: In a significant move to mark the 150th anniversary of the composition of the National Song 'Vande Mataram', the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone, today convened a meeting at the Mini Secretariat Shopian to finalize the modalities for a week-long celebration under the Vande Mataram Campaign.

The campaign, which will be observed from November 7 to November 14, 2025, aims to evoke a spirit of patriotism and unity among



citizens through a series of cultural and educational activities.

During the meeting, department-wise responsibilities were

assigned to ensure the smooth and coordinated execution of

the campaign across the district. The ADDC emphasized the

importance of active participation from all departments, edu-

cational institutions, and community stakeholders to make the campaign a grand success.

As part of the district-level celebrations, a variety of events have been planned, including the singing of 'Vande Mataram' in schools and public places, cultural programmes, exhibitions, competitions, and special assemblies highlighting the historical and national significance of the song. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Assistant Commissioner (Revenue) Shopian, Shakoor Ahmad Dar; and other district and sectoral officers.

DC Baramulla presides over Block Diwas at Boniyar Bardian

Distributes sanction letters and seeds among beneficiaries

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BARAMULLA, NOVEMBER 04: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today presided over Block Diwas at Boniyar Bardian aimed at strengthening public outreach and ensuring prompt grievance redressal at the grassroots level.

During the programme, The DC inspected stalls set up by various departments showcasing their schemes and services. On the occasion, the DC distributed sanction letters, certificates, and seeds among beneficiaries of various government schemes, encouraging them to avail benefits for sustainable livelihood and development.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of a large gathering of locals from Boniyar and adjoining areas. They raised several developmental issues and demands of public importance.



The grievances projected by the locals mainly included the demand for community bunkers

for Halqa Madanan, repair and replacement of electric poles, transformers and wires, comple-

tion of Banali-Gulmarg road, upgradation of school infrastructure and addressing shortage of staff in educational institutions. Locals also demanded upgradation of Middle School Madanan, completion of Trikanjan-Salasn road, repair of Government School building at Darkujan, provision of an ambulance for the area, timely disbursement of KCC loans, establishment of a firewood depot, and settlement of compensation issues related to certain PMGSY road projects.

Further, the people of Trikanjan highlighted the shortage of medical staff and machinery at the local hospital, seeking immediate intervention to improve healthcare facilities. Locals also demanded installation of an ATM machine in the area, upon which the DC on the spot directed the Lead District Manager for immediate redressal.

Responding to public issues,

DC Baramulla gave a patient hearing and assured that all genuine demands will be addressed in a time-bound manner. He informed that nine community bunkers have already been sanctioned for the concerned villages to ensure safety and protection of residents in vulnerable areas.

On the issue of establishment of ATM and KCC loan disbursement, the DC directed the Lead District Manager for prompt action. Regarding the Banali-Gulmarg road, the DC informed that the work will commence very soon on the project.

He further directed officers present to address grievances promptly and ensure effective service delivery, especially in view of the approaching winter season.

Sub-Divisional Magistrate Boniyar, Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, and other District and Sectoral Officers were present during the Block Diwas.

Voter Awareness Programme under SVEEP held at Bemina to Encourage Voter Participation

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 4: In connection with the forthcoming Bye-Elections to 27-Assembly Constituency Budgam, the District Administration today organised a Voter Awareness Programme under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative at Bemina.

The programme aimed to encourage greater voter turnout and informed participation among the local electorate.



The awareness campaign was held under the directions of the District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, and was spearheaded by the District Nodal Officer SVEEP (Chief Education Officer Budgam).

The initiative particularly focused on polling stations identified with relatively lower voter turnout viz. Bemina Polling Stations E, F, G, and H.

The event witnessed active participation of the Zonal Education Officer Soibugh, Principal of GHSS Bemina, and other district officials.

A series of engaging and informative activities were carried out as part of the campaign, including Nukkad Natak (street plays), awareness rallies, distribution of voter information pamphlets, and the installation of awareness hoardings across the area.

A large number of students, teachers, and local residents joined the awareness rally, which started from Khomani Chowk, Bemina, passed through various local streets of Ward 65, and culminated at Government Higher Secondary School Bemina. The vibrant display of enthusiasm and community participation reflected a strong collective commitment towards enhancing electoral participation in the upcoming bye-elections.

Speaking on the occasion, concerned officials related to sweep activities highlighted the importance of every single vote in shaping a strong democracy and urged citizens, especially first-time voters, to come forward and exercise their democratic right with responsibility and pride.

HP&M Anantnag Organises Awareness Camp for Fruit Growers

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 04: The Department of Horticulture Planning & Marketing (HP&M) Anantnag today organised an awareness camp and capacity building workshop at the Fruit & Vegetable Market, Japlipora.

A large number of fruit growers, traders, and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) participated in the camp and were apprised of various government schemes of the horticulture sector including the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Jammu & Kashmir-Crop Insurance Programme (JK-CIP), Support for Grading and Packaging, and e-NAM trade initiatives.

The Area Marketing Officer briefed the participants about all the components of HADP and JK-CIP schemes in detail. Officers from KVK Anantnag, Horticulture Production, and Agriculture Departments delivered technical and informative lectures on modern cultivation techniques, post-harvest management, market linkages, and value addition to improve productivity and profitability.

The program aimed to sensitise the farming community about various government initiatives launched for sustainable agricultural development and self-reliance, in alignment with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. During the interactive session, participants raised several queries regarding market access, quality standards, and the role of digital platforms in agricultural marketing, which were addressed by the concerned officers. The camp served as an important platform for direct interaction between the department and farmers, encouraging the adoption of scientific and sustainable practices in horticulture and enhancing their understanding of government support systems.

CSC SPV hands over Digital Devices to Kisan Khidmat Ghars in Kupwara

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 4: In a step towards digital empowerment and agricultural development, CSC SPV handed over Digital Devices, including Micro ATMs and Biometric Devices, to Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) across District Kupwara.

The event was graced by the Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse who formally handed over the devices to the KKG representatives.

ACR Kupwara, Peerzada Mumtaz



Ahmad; Chief Agriculture Officer Kupwara, Mohammad Iqbal Khan; District Agriculture Officer Kupwara, District Managers of CSC SPV, Technical Officers and representatives of Kisan Khidmat Ghars were present

on the occasion.

This initiative aims to strengthen digital service delivery in the agriculture sector and enhance the efficiency of citizen-centric services at the grassroots level.

While interacting with the participants, DC Kupwara emphasized the need for all KKG operators to create awareness and actively work on various Government Schemes, Services and Programmes, ensuring that residents can avail all benefits conveniently at their doorstep.

DC Pulwama reviews Action Plan for 150 Years of Vande Mataram Celebrations

Calls for mass participation, patriotic fervour and coordinated efforts across district

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

PULWAMA, NOVEMBER 04: In alignment with the nationwide commemoration of 150 Years of Vande Mataram, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, today chaired a meeting to review the district action plan and arrangements for the forthcoming year-long celebrations.

At the outset, the Additional Deputy Commissioner Pulwama presented a detailed presentation on the District Action Plan, outlining a series of activities to be organised throughout the year at the district, subdivision, tehsil, block, and panchayat levels.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that the commemoration should witness mass participation, enthusiasm, and patriotic spirit across all sections of society.

He further urged the Principals of Degree Colleges and the Chief Education Officer to frame an activity-wise schedule for educational institutions, ensuring that programmes are conducted in a structured and engaging manner across all schools and colleges of the district.

Dr. Qayoom further directed that every officer shall lead at least one event under the commemoration drive to ensure



inclusive participation and wide outreach across the district.

Emphasising the sanctity of the occasion, the DC remarked that the National Song holds sig-

nificant reverence and every officer must ensure strict adherence to the prescribed protocol during the celebrations.

The DC further directed all departments to work in close coordination to ensure mass participation and successful observance of the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram across the district.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioners of Pulwama, Tral, and Awantipora; Principals of Degree Colleges, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Chief Education Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, and other district and sectoral officers.

DC Kupwara reviews Cooperative initiatives in 6th DCDC meeting

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 04: The 6th District Level Cooperative Development Committee (DCDC) meeting was today convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse. The meeting was attended by Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies, Kupwara, district officers and representatives from various cooperative institutions.

At the outset, the Deputy Registrar Cooperatives, Adnan Nazir briefed the committee about the overall functioning and achievements of the Cooperative Department in the district.

He informed that special emphasis is being laid on the revival of dormant cooperative societies and that a silent revolution in milk cooperatives is underway under the umbrella of JKMPCL, aimed at strengthening the rural economy. It was further informed that Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Farmer Producer Units (FPU) are receiving financial support under various government schemes



to promote rural entrepreneurship and employment generation.

During the meeting, the committee approved the establishment of an FPU in MPSC Kanthpora for setting up a bakery unit. The Chair was also apprised about the comple-

tion of works at the Cooperative Super Bazar Kupwara and the ongoing progress on the world's largest grain storage project at Turkpora.

The Deputy Commissioner issued several directions to the concerned officers, including coordinating with

the executive agency for early operationalization of the Sogam Super Bazar, making fair price shops functional at the Cooperative Super Bazar Kupwara, providing space to NRLM-affiliated societies within the Super Bazar premises, submitting a comprehensive report on defunct cooperative societies, and ensuring timely completion of the Grain Storage Project at Turkpora. He also directed the opening of new PACS PM Jan Aushadhi Kendras for the benefit of patients.

Appreciating the efforts of the Cooperative Department, the DC emphasized the need for inter-departmental coordination and collective efforts to revive the cooperative movement and empower the rural economy of Kupwara district. He urged all stakeholders to align their efforts toward strengthening the cooperative sector as a sustainable model for local economic growth and self-reliance.

The meeting was attended by ADDC kupwara, Mufti Fareed ud Din; ACD, CHO, AD Fisheries BDOs, DDM NABARD and other officers from Cooperative Department.

Transport Commissioner visits Udhampur, reviews functioning of MVD

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, NOVEMBER 04: Transport Commissioner, Vishesh Paul Mahajan today visited Udhampur and conducted detailed review on functioning of Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) here.

During the inspection, he interacted with the enforcement staff and officers at Ban Toll Plaza and took first-hand assessment of the ongoing enforcement operations and transport regulation activities.

During the visit, the Transport Commissioner emphasized the need for coordinated enforcement across all entry and exit points. He directed that the Toll Plazas shall share real-time details of vehicles, videos and enforcement data with MVD to strengthen road safety and regulatory compliance mechanisms.

The Transport Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the enforcement teams and instructed them to maintain strict vigilance against violators to ensure safe and disciplined road transport operations.

Later, the Transport Commissioner



launched 'New Venue 2025' at VK Automart Pvt. Ltd., Devika Hyundai, Udhampur.

Speaking on the occasion, the Transport Commissioner lauded the automobile sector's contribution to regional development and encouraged the promotion of cleaner and safer mobility solutions.

Later, he also visited the ARTO Office Udhampur and interacted with officers and staff, reviewing services provided by the department as well as other ongoing activities and initiatives of the department.

HT EDITORIAL

Nobody seems to be concerned about regularization of daily wagers

In the recent autumn session of the legislative assembly the issue of regularization of daily wagers and workers hogged the headlines more than once. Legislators cutting across party lines raised the issue on the floor of the house and demanded quick action from the government in this regard. The lawmakers urged the union territory government to take immediate steps so that the services of daily wagers are regularized without any further delay.

It would be in place to mention here that regularization of daily wagers was one of the key issues highlighted by the National Conference in its manifesto for the 2024 assembly elections. The issue was also touched upon by chief minister Omar Abdullah in his maiden press conference on January 2 this year. The government constituted a committee headed by chief secretary Atal Duloo to look into the regularization of daily wagers and the committee was asked to submit the report within six months.

The present government has maintained that there is a confusion regarding the actual number of daily wagers working in the different government departments in the union territory. The people at helm have been saying that there has been a quantum jump in the number of daily wagers in a matter of a few years and the issue needs to be looked at in a broader perspective. These people say that one cannot rule foul play in this respect and that only genuine people would be regularized.

In 2014 the number of daily wagers was 61,000 and the number reached more than one lakh while the PDP-BJP was in power in 2018. The increase of around 40,000 daily wagers during a time period of four years created doubt in minds of people and as such the whole process was viewed with suspicion. In this whole scenario the genuine daily wagers were forced to feel the heat and as on date they continue to wait for their services to be regularized.

Some years back a cabinet sub-committee had suggested that it will not be possible for the government to regularize the services of daily wagers since huge financial implications are attached to the same. The committee had asked the government to pay enhanced wages to the daily wagers according to their position in the departments and their qualification. This proposal was also not implemented by the government leaving daily wagers high and dry.

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Javaid Bhat

Dr. G. N. Itoo

A Luminary Whose Retirement Marks the End of an Era

The Education Sector of Jammu and Kashmir bids farewell to one of its most dynamic and visionary leaders, Dr. G. N. Itoo, whose retirement marks the conclusion of a remarkable chapter in public service. Widely regarded as a reformist administrator, Dr. Itoo has played a pivotal role in transforming the School Education Department through innovation, accountability, and forward-looking policies.

As the Director General of School Education, Dr. Itoo spearheaded initiatives that infused new energy into the system; from strengthening institutional mechanisms to introducing digital learning, improving infrastructure, and ensuring transparency at all levels. His emphasis on efficiency and educational excellence has left a lasting imprint across schools in the Union Territory.

Known for his dynamic leadership and people-centric governance, Dr. Itoo inspired both colleagues and subordinates with his clarity of vision and steadfast dedication. His tenure was defined by prompt decision-making, transparency, and a rare ability to blend compassion with discipline.

Having had the privilege of work-



ing under his guidance in 2016 in the Media and Publicity Wing, this writer witnessed firsthand his remarkable administrative acumen and speedy disposal of official matters. He led with clarity, compassion, and commitment; qualities that truly define a public servant.

As Dr. Itoo steps into retirement, the education fraternity across Jammu and Kashmir feels a profound sense of loss. His departure creates a void that will be difficult to fill, but his contributions and legacy will continue to inspire generations of educators and administrators alike.

Historic victory: Indian women's cricket team creates new World Cup history

India defeated South Africa to become world champions



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

Today will forever be etched in golden letters in Indian sports history. The Indian women's cricket team defeated South Africa to win the 2025 Cricket World Cup. This victory is not just a trophy, but a symbol of the indomitable spirit, determination, and struggle that have, over the years, given Indian women's sports identities. This moment is one of pride, excitement, and inspiration for every Indian—because it's not just a victory on the field, but also a victory of the mind.

This glorious chapter in Indian women's cricket is the culmination of a long journey that began amid struggle, limited resources, and social barriers. There was a time when women's cricket wasn't taken seriously, with neither spectators nor sponsors. But times changed, and these girls, through their play, dedication, and talent, demonstrated to the world that the playing field isn't the exclusive domain of one gender. Today, as India wins the World Cup and reigns supreme, this victory speaks for every girl who has placed her dreams above societal constraints.

The Indian team performed brilliantly in this thrilling World Cup final. After winning the toss and batting first, India scored 298 runs in 50 overs. Shefali Verma and Smriti Mandhana opened the innings. Smriti provided a solid foundation for the team with a composed but crucial 45, while Shefali Verma played aggressively, scoring 87 runs in 78 balls. Her innings was peppered with fours and sixes. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur was dismissed early, but young batsman Richa Ghosh played a crucial 34 runs, once again providing stability to the team. In the middle order, Deepti Sharma and Sneha Rana batted with restraint, taking the team to a respectable score of around 300.

Chasing the target, South Africa got off to a brisk start in the opening overs, but the Indian bowlers soon took control. Renuka Thakur and Deepti Sharma kept the opposition batsmen at bay, bowling with precise line and length. Shafali Verma also performed brilliantly with the ball—taking two crucial wickets for just 36 runs in seven overs. Her all-round performance proved to be the backbone of India's victory. As the match progressed, the pressure on South Africa increased, and ultimately, the Indian team made history with a win. Shafali Verma was named "Player of the Match" for her



stellar performance, while Deepti Sharma was awarded "Player of the Tournament" for her outstanding performance throughout the tournament.

This victory isn't just a triumph in a sporting event, but rather a symbol of the mindset shift underway in India regarding the status and attitudes toward women. The daughters who were once told that "sports aren't for girls" are now world champions. This victory sends a message to society that, given the opportunity, Indian women are no less than men in any field. Today, these athletes aren't just playing, but paving a new path for generations to come.

This glorious performance by the Indian women's cricket team is the culmination of years of hard work. The Women's IPL (WPL) gave the players both a platform and confidence. Players from smaller towns and cities, such as Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Rodrigues, Sneha Rana, Radha Yadav, and Renuka Thakur, have demonstrated that talent knows no boundaries. These players have written a new story of inspiration not only on the field but in every home across the country.

The policy changes made by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Sports Ministry regarding women's cricket over the past few years have laid the foundation for this success. The equal pay policy has given players self-respect, while improved coaching facilities and domestic tournaments have prepared them for international competition. It is heartening to see that women's cricket is now receiving the same respect and broadcasting as the men's team. This victory is another strong step in that direction.

With this victory, India now faces a new responsibility. We must ensure that this enthusiasm and support are not limited to a few days. Sports must be integrated into education from school to university levels, so that more girls are inspired to pursue careers in sports. The Sports Ministry and state governments should increase the number of sports

training centers in rural areas, where both resources and instructors are available.

The media also has a major role to play. Continuing to highlight women's cricket, highlighting the players' stories, and reinforcing the sense in society that it's not just a sport, but a tool for empowerment—this is the biggest responsibility of the times ahead.

There are many untold stories behind the Indian women's cricket team's victory—the mother who buys a bat for her daughter regardless of society, the father who sells his farm to buy cricket kits, the coach who trains the players without pay, and the teammates who stand by the team despite being in the reserves. This victory is not just about the 11 players on the field, but about thousands of dreams that have been waiting for this moment for years.

India's victorious women's cricket team included Harmanpreet Kaur (captain), Smriti Mandhana (vice-captain), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh, Uma Chhetri, Renuka Singh Thakur, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Shri Charani, Radha Yadav, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, and Kranti Gaur. Reserve players Tejal Hasabnis, Prema Rawat, Priya Mishra, Minnu Mani, and Sayali Satghare also made significant contributions. Although they didn't take the field, their role in the team's preparation and unity was crucial.

This World Cup has given Indian women's cricket a lasting recognition on the global stage. It is no longer the achievement of a single generation, but a guide for generations to come. India's daughters are now a new example for the world—not just as athletes, but as symbols of the power that transforms even defeat into inspiration.

Today, when the whole world is saluting this achievement of the Indian team, this moment also forces us to think that the real victory will happen when some daughter in every village, every school, takes the bat and enters the field and says – "I also want to win like India."

This historic victory has proven that "where there's a will, there's a way" is not just a saying, but a reality for India's daughters. This victory is not just for these 11 players, but for all of India—for the families who gave their daughters the freedom to dream; for the coaches who nurtured talent despite limited resources; and for the spectators who cheered the team on with every ball.

The year 2025 will be marked as a golden year for Indian sports. India's daughters are now writing not just history, but the future. Their victories are igniting pride, inspiration, and hope in the hearts of every Indian.

India is the world champion! Hail the women power!

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With Mahesh Dattani: Living Legend of Indian English Drama



Dr Ratan Bhattacharjee

In *Bravely Fought the Queen* (1991), Dattani dissects the patriarchal family structure through the lives of the Trivedi family. The men are corporate manipulators and the women — Dolly, Alka, and Baa — are trapped within domestic and emotional confines. The play's fragmented structure, alternating between drawing room and dance floor, symbolically captures the divided self of the modern Indian woman. Similarly, *Tara* (1990) transforms a medical and familial tragedy into an exploration of gender discrimination. The story of conjoined twins, Tara and Chandan, becomes a metaphor for the social mutilation of the female self. Dattani uses the motif of the body as a battleground — where patriarchal bias and scientific rationalism collude to privilege the male over the female.

Mahesh Dattani's first visit to Kolkata for inaugurating Dattani Archive as the Guest in Chief for the UGC Sponsored National Seminar organized by our PG Dept Motijheel College nearly 16 years ago is still a precious memory for the delegates from all over India, but surprisingly even at that earlier stage this Sahitya Akademi (1998) awardee writer was a living legend and his books were prescribed as Text for PG syllabus in many universities of India. Today Mahesh Dattani stands as a pioneering dramatist in the landscape of Indian English theatre, redefining the parameters of the modern Indian stage with his sharp sociocultural insights and psychological realism. Through his nuanced portrayal of gender, sexuality, class, and identity, Dattani has brought Indian urban life into dramatic focus with unprecedented honesty. He fuses indigenous storytelling with Western theatrical techniques. A close reading of his major plays — *Final Solutions*, *Tara*, *Dance Like a Man*, and *Bravely Fought the Queen* — reveals that Dattani's art transcends mere social commentary, emerging instead as a form of humanist inquiry. His theatre becomes a mirror for a fragmented society negotiating tradition and modernity, silence and articulation, oppression and self-discovery. In this light,

Dattani emerges as a true living legend of Indian English drama — both for his craft and for his courageous engagement with taboo and truth. The trio of Indian English theatre Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar, and Mahesh Dattani — each transformed Indian theatre, but in very different ways. Karnad drew on myth and history to question identity, Tendulkar exposed raw social and political violence, while Dattani brought urban, middle-class realities and taboo subjects like gender and sexuality into the English stage. Together, they shaped the path for modern writers, but their legacies diverge in focus and style. Karnad wrote primarily in Kannada, later translated into English. Famous for plays like *Tughlaq*, *Hayavadana*, and *Nagamandala* used myth, folklore, and history to interrogate modern dilemmas of power, morality, and identity. His impact: encouraged writers to reinterpret tradition and explore hybridity between past and present. Tendulkar wrote in Marathi, with plays like *Silence!* *The Court is in Session*, *Ghashiram Kotwal*, and *Sakharam Binder*. Known for brutal realism, exposing violence, patriarchy, and political corruption. His characters often embody power struggles and the darker instincts of society. While Tendulkar's theatre is raw and confrontational Dattani's is intimate and psychological, set within families and friendships. Where Tendulkar dissected power and violence, Dattani illuminated identity, silence, and marginalization. Unlike Karnad and Tendulkar, who wrote in regional languages, Dattani wrote in English, giving Indian English theatre its first authentic, urban voice. He addressed LGBTQ+ issues, disability, and communal tensions long before they became mainstream topics. His plays encouraged a generation of dramatists and novelists to write inclusively, experiment with realism, and confront silences in Indian society.

The ever down to earth Mahesh Dattani one year junior to me who endearingly called me Ratanda was born in 1958 in Bangalore. He used to love nalen gur of Bengal and baul songs of Shantiniketan. He broke new ground by introducing themes of urban alienation, gender identity, sexuality, communal tension, and generational conflict. His plays mark a decisive shift from the nationalist and colonial preoccupations of earlier dramatists like Asif Currimbhoy and Girish Karnad toward the inner landscapes of contemporary Indian life. In 1998, Dattani became the first English-language playwright to receive the 'Sahitya Akademi Award' for his collection *Final Solutions* and *Other Plays* — a recognition that affirmed the legitimacy of Indian English drama as a literary form. As playwright, actor, and director, Dattani's works operate at the intersection of literature and performance, language and silence. His dramaturgy reflects what he once described as "a theatre of confrontation" — where the unspoken realities of Indian life are articulated with empathy and precision. At the heart of Dattani's theatre lies the conviction that the personal is political. His plays expose the hypocrisies within middle-class Indian families, the



tensions between traditional values and modern aspirations, and the silent suffering of individuals who deviate from social norms.

In *Bravely Fought the Queen* (1991), Dattani dissects the patriarchal family structure through the lives of the Trivedi family. The men are corporate manipulators and the women — Dolly, Alka, and Baa — are trapped within domestic and emotional confines. The play's fragmented structure, alternating between drawing room and dance floor, symbolically captures the divided self of the modern Indian woman. Similarly, *Tara* (1990) transforms a medical and familial tragedy into an exploration of gender discrimination. The story of conjoined twins, Tara and Chandan, becomes a metaphor for the social mutilation of the female self. Dattani uses the motif of the body as a battleground — where patriarchal bias and scientific rationalism collude to privilege the male over the female. I

One of Dattani's most revolutionary contributions to Indian theatre is his candid engagement with gender and sexuality — topics long suppressed in the Indian dramatic tradition. In *On a Muggy Night* in Mumbai (1998), Dattani presents the first Indian play to explicitly depict homosexual identity and desire in English. The play unfolds in real time over one night, where a group of gay friends confront their fears, hypocrisies, and longing for acceptance. By domesticating the discourse of homosexuality within the Indian middle class, Dattani dismantles the stereotype that queerness is "foreign" or "Western." His characters speak in the idiom of Indian English, revealing the internalized conflicts between societal expectation and individual truth. In *Seven Steps Around the Fire* (1999), Dattani addresses the invisibility of the hijra (transgender) community through the investigation of a murder by a radio journalist, Uma. The play intertwines social realism with detective narrative, exposing how violence against gender minorities is sustained by institutional silence. His plays extend empathy to the marginalized without idealizing them. The language of his theatre is not propaganda but revelation — showing how identity is formed and deformed by social gaze. As theatre scholar Erin Mee observes, "Dattani's stage is a place where the invisible becomes visible, where the unspeakable finds utterance." This act of giving speech to silence marks the essence of his legend.

Dattani's engagement with communal identity and prejudice is most powerfully realized in *Final Solutions* (1993). Set against the backdrop of Hindu-Muslim tensions in contemporary India, the play exposes the cyclical nature of prejudice and fear. The play revolves around the Gandhi family — Ramnik, Aruna, and Hardika — whose lives intersect with two young Muslim boys, Bobby and Javed, seeking refuge from a riot. The characters' dialogues reveal inherited biases and unacknowledged guilt. The chorus, representing shifting communal identities, functions as both participant and observer, blurring boundaries between stage and audience. Unlike nationalist dramatists who idealized communal harmony, Dattani presents the crisis of identity as an emotional inheritance. The past of partition and migration resurfaces in Hardika's memories, showing how prej-

udice is transmitted across generations. The play's title, 'Final Solutions', is ironic — there are none. The Bharatanatyam performance in *Dance Like a Man* becomes both literal and metaphorical — a struggle between art and gender expectation. The protagonist, Jairaj, fights against patriarchal notions that define dance as effeminate. The play examines artistic ambition through generational conflict, exploring how tradition both nurtures and imprisons creativity.

Dattani's stage directions are precise yet open, allowing directors interpretive freedom. His language — urban Indian English peppered with code-switching — captures the hybridity of postcolonial identity. In form and spirit, his theatre embodies Indianness without provincialism — cosmopolitan yet rooted. Silence is one of Dattani's most profound dramatic devices. In his plays, silence is never absence; it is the presence of repression. The pauses in dialogue, the unsaid between family members, the ellipses of memory — all signify the unspeakable within social discourse. In *Bravely Fought the Queen*, the silent suffering of women is punctuated by the incoherent ramblings of Baa, whose mental illness becomes a form of subconscious protest. In *Final Solutions*, Hardika's fragmented recollections constitute a silent testimony to communal trauma. Dattani's mastery lies in his ability to turn the domestic sphere into a microcosm of national tensions. Silence operates as both concealment and revelation — an aesthetic of compression that makes his realism psychologically dense. This dramaturgy of silence connects him to playwrights like Harold Pinter, yet Dattani's silence is culturally inflected — shaped by Indian norms of modesty, obedience, and shame. It is this hybridization of form that makes him distinctively modern and Indian.

Although Dattani's plays tackle controversial issues — homosexuality, gender bias, communalism — they are ultimately humanist in vision. His characters are flawed yet empathetic, products of circumstance rather than villains. "My plays are about people who live on the fringes of society, those whom we either ignore or condemn. I see them as heroes." This statement encapsulates his artistic ethos. In the tradition of Ibsen, Dattani uses the domestic as a lens for the universal. Yet unlike Western realism, his theatre carries the moral resonance of Indian epics — the conflict between dharma (duty) and kama (desire) transposed into contemporary life. His characters are not destroyed by sin but redeemed through self-awareness. In this lies his enduring appeal as a dramatist of conscience.

Indian English drama has long struggled for legitimacy beside fiction and poetry. Early playwrights like Nissim Ezekiel and Asif Currimbhoy explored urban alienation, but it was Dattani who gave Indian English theatre a living, performative vitality. His plays are not literary artifacts but living scripts — written to be seen, not merely read. He has collaborated with major theatre groups such as Playpen and has directed several of his own works, ensuring that the written and performed texts remain organically linked. By addressing contemporary realities with aesthetic sophistication, Dattani has turned Indian English theatre into a mirror of postcolonial modernity.

As critic Tutun Mukherjee notes, "With Dattani, Indian drama in English found its modern idiom." His influence extends to younger playwrights like Poile Sen-gupta, Deepika Arwind, and Abhishek Majumdar, who acknowledge his courage in expanding thematic boundaries. The fact that Dattani continues to write, direct, and mentor new voices reinforces his status as a living legend — not a relic, but a dynamic force shaping the evolving theatre of India.

Mahesh Dattani's theatre represents the coming of age of Indian English drama. Through his fearless engagement with taboo subjects and his innovative dramaturgy, he has redefined what the English stage in India can express. His plays, rooted in urban realism, are simultaneously intimate and universal, personal and political, Indian and global. In Dattani's hands, the stage becomes a moral space — a mirror that reflects both individual struggle and societal transformation. He compels audiences to confront the invisible, to question silence, and to recognize the humanity of those marginalized by culture and convention. As a playwright, he bridges literature and life, turning theatre into a form of social introspection. In doing so, he fulfills the function of the artist as conscience-keeper. It is therefore no exaggeration to call Mahesh Dattani a living legend — a dramatist whose voice continues to resonate with courage, compassion, and creative integrity. His theatre not only chronicles the Indian experience but dignifies it, making him one of the most vital voices in contemporary world drama.

Mahesh Dattani's impact on modern writers lies in how he redefined Indian English theatre by fearlessly addressing taboo subjects — gender, sexuality, communalism, and family conflict — while blending Indian cultural traditions with contemporary dramatic techniques. His plays opened new creative and thematic possibilities for younger playwrights and writers. He is the first Indian English playwright to win the Sahitya Akademi Award (1998). This recognition gave legitimacy to Indian English drama, inspiring modern writers to experiment in English without feeling overshadowed by Western traditions. Dattani shifted attention from rural, mythological, or colonial themes to the realities of middle-class urban India, making theatre more relatable for contemporary audiences. Plays like *On a Muggy Night* in Mumbai and *Bravely Fought the Queen* openly explored homosexuality, gender identity, and patriarchal oppression. This encouraged later writers to normalize LGBTQ+ narratives in Indian literature and theatre. Works such as *Tara* and *Dance Like a Man* dissected generational clashes, parental expectations, and suppressed desires — issues that resonate strongly with modern writers exploring identity and selfhood. *Final Solutions* tackled Hindu-Muslim conflict with nuance, inspiring socially conscious writers to confront divisive issues through art. We find a fusion of East and West in Dattani's combined Indian performance traditions (like Bharatanatyam and folk storytelling) with Western stagecraft, creating a hybrid style that modern dramatists continue to adapt. His sharp, layered dialogues mirror everyday speech, giving authenticity to characters and influencing contemporary playwrights to embrace realism rather than melodrama. Dattani used theatre as a space for debate and reflection, a model that modern writers now apply across genres — plays, screenwriting, and even prose fiction.

Dattani played a role in the empowerment of marginalized voices. By foregrounding women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and minority communities, Dattani paved the way for inclusive storytelling. Mahesh Dattani's plays challenged silence, legitimized Indian English drama, and inspired a generation of writers to confront uncomfortable truths. His influence is visible in the rise of socially engaged, identity-driven, and inclusive narratives across modern Indian literature and theatre.

International Tagore Awardee writer Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee, President of Kolkata Indian American Society is a former Affiliate Faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University and multilingual poet cum columnist. Email prof.ratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com



Surinderpal Singh

The Sciatica which is the most common neurological condition and it represents one of the leading causes of chronic pain and disability worldwide. It arises due to irritation or compression of the sciatic nerve the longest and thickest nerve in the human body.

Definition And Medical Overview

The Sciatica is defined as pain radiating along the path of the sciatic nerve, which extends from the lower back through the hips, buttocks and down each leg. The pain typically affects only one side of the body and may vary in intensity from mild discomfort to debilitating agony. In medical terminology, sciatica is a symptom rather than a standalone disease, often indicating underlying disorders such as lumbar disc herniation, spinal stenosis or degenerative disc disease. This condition can affect both men and women particularly between the ages of 30 and 60, with lifestyle factors such as prolonged sitting obesity and lack of exercise contributing significantly to its prevalence.

Anatomical And Pathophysiological Basis

The sciatic nerve originates from the lumbosacral plexus (L4–S3 nerve roots). Compression or irritation of these nerve roots—most commonly due to intervertebral disc prolapse or osteophyte formation—triggers inflammation and neuropathic pain. The pain radiates along the nerve's distribution, often accompanied by numbness, tingling, or weakness in the affected limb.

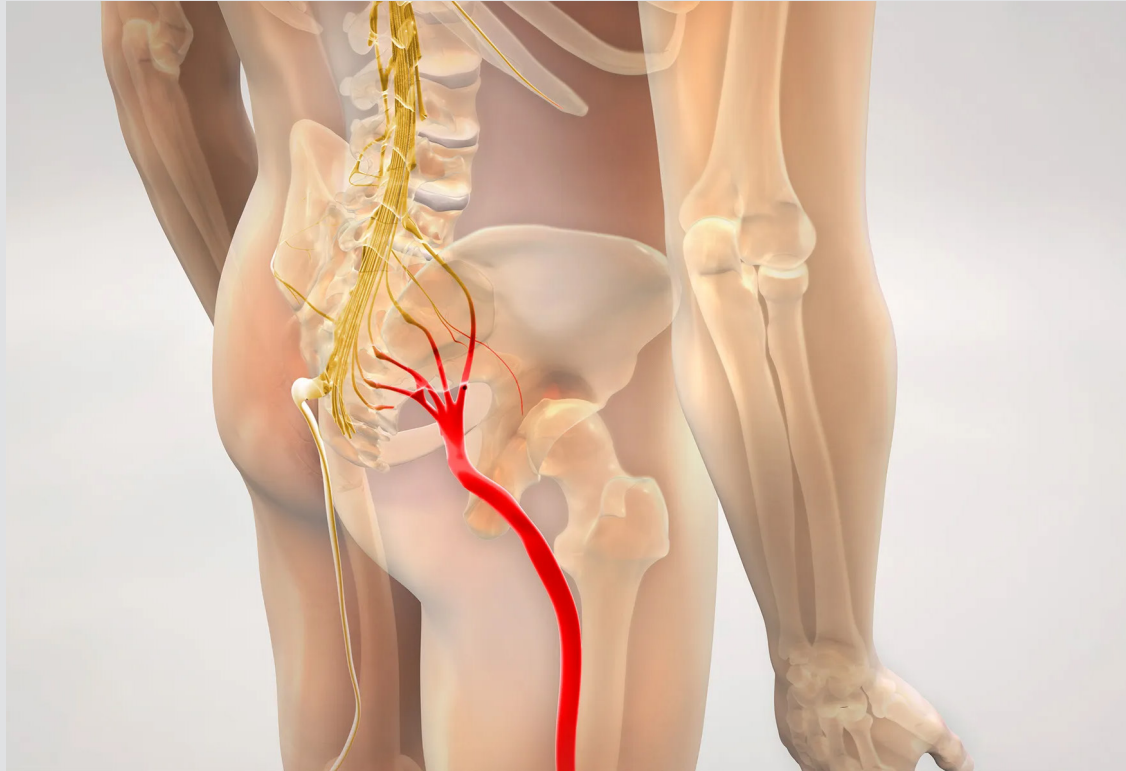
Pathophysiologically, the process involves:

1. Mechanical Compression which is due to herniated disc or bone spur.
2. Inflammatory Response – release of cytokines and inflammatory mediators around the nerve root.
3. Neurogenic Pain Transmission – causing hypersensitivity and chronic pain perception.

Causes Of Sciatica

1. **Lumbar Disc Herniation:**
The most common cause, accounting for nearly 90% of cases.
2. **Spinal Stenosis:**
The narrowing of the spinal canal compresses nerve roots.
3. **Spondylolisthesis:**
The vertebral slippage causes mechanical nerve impingement.
4. **Piriformis Syndrome:**
The piriformis muscle compresses the sciatic

THE SCIATICA



nerve in the buttock region.

5. Trauma or Tumors:

Rarely, direct injury or metastatic compression may cause symptoms.

6. Metabolic Factors:

Diabetes and obesity increase vulnerability by affecting nerve health.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of sciatica involves a detailed clinical history, neurological examination and imaging studies.

Physical Tests:

Straight leg raising test and neurological reflex assessment.

Imaging:

MRI and CT scan for visualization of disc herniation and nerve compression.

Electromyography (EMG):

Evaluates nerve conduction abnormalities.

Treatment Approaches Across Different Pathies

Allopathic Medicine (Modern Medicine)

Pharmacological Therapy:

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) for pain and inflammation.
Muscle relaxants and neuropathic pain agents (gabapentin, pregabalin).
Corticosteroid injections for acute nerve inflam-

mation.

Surgical Intervention:

Microdiscectomy or laminectomy in cases resistant to conservative therapy.

Ayurvedic Medicine

Ayurveda attributes sciatica (Gridhrasi) to vitiation of the Vata dosha.

Therapies:

Panchakarma procedures like Kati Basti, Abhyanga (oil massage), and Swedana (fomentation).

Herbal formulations: Dashmool, Yogaraj Guggulu and Erand Taila to balance Vata and reduce inflammation.

Homeopathy

Homeopathy treats sciatica based on individual symptom patterns.

Commonly prescribed remedies include Colocyntis, Gnaphalium, Magnesium Phosphoricum and Rhus Toxicodendron.

The goal is to reduce neural inflammation and promote long-term nerve healing without side effects.

Physiotherapy And Rehabilitation

The Physiotherapy remains one of the most effective and non-invasive treatments for sciatica.

Role Of Physiotherapy:

Reduces nerve compression through posture correction, stretching and strengthening exercises.

Enhances flexibility of the spine and surrounding musculature.

Prevents recurrence by stabilizing the core and lumbar region.

Modalities Used:

Ultrasound therapy, Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS), traction and heat therapy.

Cure Potential:

In early and moderate cases physiotherapy alone can lead to complete recovery. The Chronic cases may require a multidisciplinary approach.

Precautions And Preventive Measures

1. Ergonomic Correction:

Maintain proper posture while sitting and standing can helps in reducing pain.

2. Weight Management:

The weight management can reduce stress on the lumbar spine.

3. Exercise Regularly:

While exercising stress and focus should be laid on core strengthening and stretching.

4. Avoid Prolonged Sitting:

It is always essential to avoid prolonged sitting and taking break after every 30–45 minutes can help in relieving the pain.

5. Use Firm Mattress:

The use of firm mattress can support spinal alignment during sleep.

6. Lift Properly:

It is recommended to bend knees, not the waist, while lifting objects.

7. Quit Smoking:

Quitting smoking can improve the circulation of blood and spinal disc health.

Psychological And Social Dimensions

Chronic sciatica can impair quality of life, leading to depression, anxiety and social withdrawal. Psychological counseling and relaxation techniques such as yoga and meditation significantly improve coping mechanisms. A holistic view of health—integrating body, mind and environment—plays a crucial role in complete rehabilitation.

The Sciatica represents a multidimensional health condition that demands integrated management. While the modern medicine provides effective symptomatic relief and surgical solutions, traditional systems like Ayurveda and Homeopathy offer complementary, restorative approaches. Physiotherapy remains central to recovery, offering a non-invasive, long-term solution through muscle re-education and nerve decompression. Preventive lifestyle modifications, ergonomic discipline and psychosocial support together ensure sustainable well-being.

In the modern era of sedentary lifestyles and digital dependence the resurgence of sciatica serves as a reminder that human health is deeply connected to movement, posture and balance and sciatica is both a physical and psychological disease.

The Author is a Faculty in Science
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Biomaterial Vaccines Under Development to Combat Infections Linked to Medical Implants

■ GOAL

NEW DELHI: Recent research highlights the growing concern over infections linked to implanted medical devices, such as total knee and hip replacements, pacemakers, and artificial heart valves. These infections, often caused by bacterial pathogens, pose significant risks to patients undergoing these procedures. The healthcare community has increasingly focused on addressing this issue due to the severe complications that can arise from device-related infections.

Patients with implanted orthopedic

or cardiac devices face persistent threats of infection, which can lead to prolonged hospital stays, additional surgeries, and even life-threatening conditions. Researchers are exploring innovative solutions to mitigate these risks, including the development of biomaterial vaccines designed specifically for use with implanted devices. These vaccines aim to prevent bacterial colonization on device surfaces and reduce infection rates. This approach represents a potential advancement in improving patient outcomes and enhancing the safety of medical implants.

Longevity Secrets: 5 Biohacks That Keep You Young Beyond 30

■ SNIGDHA OREYA

NEW DELHI: Your 30s are often when life feels at its busiest – careers peak, responsibilities multiply, and self-care quietly slips to the sidelines. But biologically, this decade marks a subtle turning point. Metabolism slows down, collagen production drops, and the body's natural repair mechanisms begin to lose efficiency. The good news? You can hack biology to your advantage.

According to experts, ageing gracefully isn't about expensive supplements or complicated regimens. It's about syncing with your body's natural rhythm through simple, daily habits that support longevity from within.

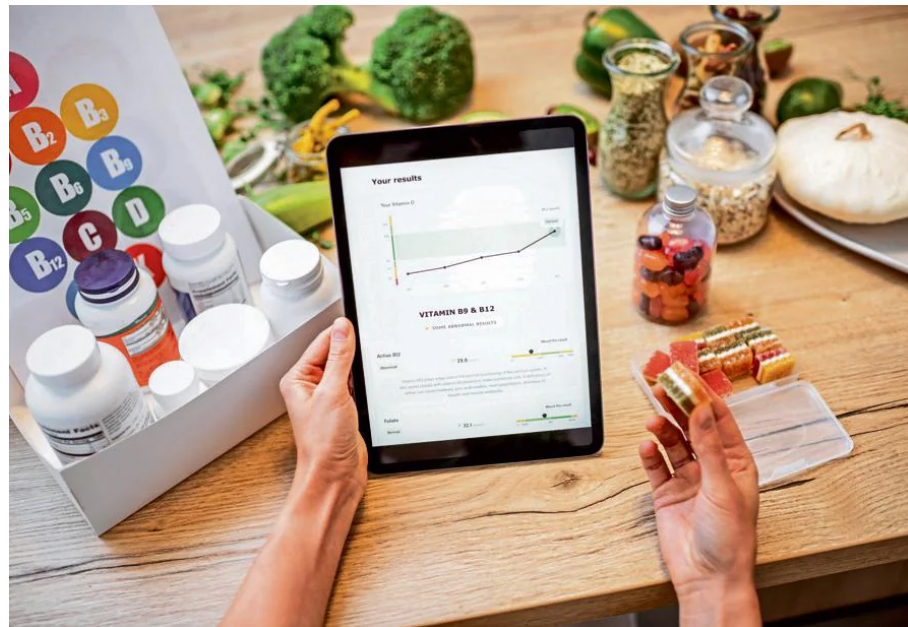
"Sleep like it's medicine. One night of poor sleep can make you as insulin-resistant as a pre-diabetic. Deep sleep repairs DNA and restores hormones," says Dr. Arpit Bansal, Cancer Surgeon & Longevity Specialist. Prioritising 7–8 hours of uninterrupted rest helps stimulate growth hormone secretion, repair tissues, and maintain optimal energy balance.

Dr. Pratyaksha Bhardwaj, World Record Holder Dietician and Weight Management Expert, adds, "A consistent sleep routine supports the body's natural regeneration process, keeping both skin and metabolism youthful."

Eat And Hydrate For Cellular Youth

What you eat in your 30s has a profound impact on how you age in your 40s and beyond. Dr. Bhardwaj recommends a diet rich in lean proteins, omega-3 fats, berries, and green vegetables to preserve muscle mass, maintain skin elasticity, and combat oxidative stress. Intermittent fasting patterns, like the 16:8 method, can further enhance cellular repair through autophagy, the body's natural detox mechanism.

Hydration, too, is critical – not just for the skin but for every cell in your body. "Even a 2% drop in body water reduces mental performance by 20%," warns Dr.



Bansal. Staying hydrated ensures your mitochondria function optimally, slowing the biological ageing process from the inside out.

Movement And Mind: The Longevity Duo

Exercise is one of the most effective anti-ageing biohacks. Weight training helps maintain muscle mass, bone density, and metabolic rate – all of which naturally decline with age. "Regular resistance training prevents bone loss and keeps the muscles strong, aiding longevity," says Dr. Bhardwaj.

But longevity isn't only about physical endurance. It's equally about emotional balance. Dr. Bansal emphasises the importance of mental flow: "Flow releases dopamine, endorphins, and serotonin – the natural youth molecules." Activities that promote focus and creativity, such as dancing, painting, or mindful breathing, can keep stress hormones in check and promote a youthful brain.

Reconnect With Nature And Breath

Our modern lives are dominated by screens and indoor routines, but nature remains a timeless healer. Dr. Bansal suggests spending the first hour of the day outdoors, grounding and breathing deeply to reset the body's circadian rhythm. Training your breath and improving CO₂ tolerance through controlled breathing techniques can improve emotional resilience and cardiovascular health, which are key pillars of longevity.

Small Shifts, Big Impact

The real secret to delaying ageing isn't hidden in serums or supplements. It's in the small, consistent biohacks you commit to daily. Sleeping deeply, eating clean, hydrating well, moving regularly, and staying connected to nature form the foundation of lifelong vitality. By your 40s, these habits won't just make you look younger. They'll make you feel stronger, sharper, and more alive.

Courtesy News18.com

SCRTI Pampore holds National Technical Seminar on “Technological Interventions for Improving Quality and Productivity of Silk Industry”

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, NOV 04: The Central Sericultural Research & Training Institute (CSRTI), Pampore, under the Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles, organized a National Technical Seminar on “Technological Interventions for Improving Quality and Productivity of Silk Industry” at Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre, Srinagar.

The seminar was inaugurated by Chief Executive Officer and Member Secretary, Central Silk Board, and Director General, International Sericulture Commission, P. Sivakumar, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The event was also attended by several distinguished dignitaries, including Director, Sericulture Development Department, Jammu and Kashmir, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat; Director, CSB—Central Sericultural Research and Training Institute, Pampore, Dr. Sardar Singh; Director (Retd.),

Central Silk Board, Dr. M.A. Khan; Director, Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, Mussarat Islam; Joint Director, Rajbhasha Vibhag, Ministry of Home Affairs, K.P. Sharma,; and Joint Secretary (Tech), Central Silk Board, Bengaluru, Dr. Naresh Babu.

In his inaugural address, P. Sivakumar assured full support from the Central Silk Board for the promotion and sustainable growth of bivoltine sericulture in Jammu and Kashmir. He appreciated the superior quality of Kashmir silk and emphasized the need for global branding of silk products from the region to enhance their visibility and market potential worldwide.

Director, Sericulture Development in his address said that the deliberation and research findings being shared in bilingual (Hindi and Urdu) will have a far-reaching consequence for Technology diffusion and Silk Production and Productivity improvement across India especially in



J&K. He further emphasized that such type of events may be continuously organized for the benefits of Sericulture farmers and revive this age-old legacy of Kashmir and promote Kash-

miri silk as a brand.

Director, CSB—Central Sericultural Research and Training Institute, Pampore, informed that it is first time that Institute is organizing a dedicated Na-

tional Technical Seminar where sericulture scientific deliberations are being made in Hindi.

Director Handloom, appreciated the efforts and hope that it will add new dimensions to

sericulture industry of Kashmir and Department of Handloom will be ultimate beneficiary of these developments as silk is an important constituent of Handloom products of Kashmir Valley being exported worldwide.

Joint Director, Rajbhasha Vibhag, informed that Central Silk Board is playing a pivotal role in popularizing the Hindi as a medium of communication in Scientific deliberations. It is a welcome step that Sericulture farmers will get the information in their mother tongue as a result a communication between scientists and farming community is going to be more effective, he added.

On the occasion, three Hindi publications Abstract Book (Smarika), Annual Hindi Magazine, and Half-Yearly Newsletter were released by the Chief Guest and other dignitaries.

A total of 88 scientists from 20 states participated in the seminar and presented their research findings through oral

and poster presentations.

During the Rajbhasha Session, four presentations were made by Hindi officers from the Central Silk Board, emphasizing the importance of Hindi in science and technology communication.

In the technical sessions, Directors from nine R&D institutes of the Central Silk Board presented their lead papers on the current status of Mulberry, Tasar, Muga, and Eri sericulture, along with Post-Cocoon technologies and by-products.

Across the Mulberry, Vanya, and Post-Cocoon sessions, 34 oral presentations and 25 posters were presented.

This was the first Hindi technical seminar organized by the Central Silk Board in the Kashmir Valley, providing a platform for meaningful discussion on sericulture technologies, scientific advancements, and strategies for the sustainability of sericulture in North-West India.

DDC Chairperson Kupwara reviews progress of works under District Capex Budget 2025-26

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, NOV 4: District Development Council (DDC) Chairperson Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Panditpori today chaired the council meeting at Environment Hall Handwara to review the progress of various developmental projects under District CAPEX Budget 2025-26.

Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, Vice-Chairperson District Development Council, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir, CEO DDC, Mufti Fareed-u-din; ADC Handwara, Javaid Naseem Masoodi; Members of District Development Council, besides, District and Sectoral Officers attended the meeting.



The meeting was informed about the ongoing and completed

projects under District CAPEX Budget 2025-26 including sectors

like Minor Irrigation, R&B, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Youth Services & Sports, Health, Jal Shakti, NFB, United Grants, ADF (DDC/BDC/PRI grants) and Samridh Seema Yojna.

The Chairperson took a detailed review of the physical and financial status of works taken up under the District Capex schemes and other sectors. Council members also raised various issues and demands pertaining to their respective constituencies.

After reviewing the sector wise progress of the works, the Chairperson impressed upon district level Officers of all departments to speed up the pace of ongoing development projects to ensure timely completion within the cur-

rent financial year.

He enjoined upon the officers to work with greater coordination and zeal to finish the targets within the timeframe.

On the occasion, the Vice Chairperson, District Development Council also asked the officers to put in their best efforts for timely completion of works for optimum utilization of funds under different schemes.

Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, while speaking on the occasion, reiterated the importance of close inter-departmental coordination and directed officers to ensure that all ongoing works are completed within the stipulated timeframe to meet developmental goals of the district.

Picking of Button Mushroom inaugurated at DCTC, Krishi Bhawan Talab Tillo

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 4: The Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu today inaugurated the picking of button mushrooms at the Demonstration cum Training Centre (DCTC), Krishi Bhawan, Talab Tillo. The event was formally inaugurated by Mission Director, HADP/JKICP Sandeep Kumar, in the presence of Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta; Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed; Mushroom Development Officer Raghubir Pal Kochar, along with other officers and staff of the Agriculture Department.

Speaking on the occasion, Mission Director HADP Sandeep Kumar appreciated the Agriculture Department for promoting mushroom cultivation under controlled environmental conditions. “The establishment of Controlled Cropping Units will enable farmers to cultivate mushrooms round the year, thereby ensuring a steady source of income and livelihood,” he emphasized.

He further highlighted the importance of processing and value addition in mushroom production. “The Mushrooms need to be processed and canned to enhance their shelf life, which will help farmers earn additional income beyond traditional cultivation practices. By integrating processing and marketing with production, farmers can achieve higher profitability and contribute to the overall goal of agricultural sustainability under HADP,” he added.

Later, Sandeep Kumar inspected the Pasteurized Compost Making Unit established at DCTC, where spawning of mushroom bags was in progress. These mushroom bags would be provided to the farmers of the Jammu Division at subsidized rates under departmental initiatives to promote mushroom cultivation at the grassroots level.

Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta highlighted the department’s continuous efforts toward promoting mushroom cultivation as a viable enterprise for small and marginal farmers. He stated that the Department is providing the necessary technical support, training and infrastructure to enhance mushroom production across the division. He further stressed that with the active support of HADP and the collaborative efforts of the line departments, Jammu Division is witnessing remarkable progress in the mushroom sector.

Block Diwas held at Jamola to redress public grievances, enhance service delivery

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAJOURI, NOVEMBER 4: As part of the Government’s ongoing public outreach and grievance redressal initiative, a Block Diwas programme was today held near Shiv Mandir, Jamola in Block Budhal Old to address public issues and ensure effective service delivery at the grassroots level.

The event was presided over by District Development Commissioner (DDC), Abhishek Sharma along with DDC Member Budhal Old, Shazia Choudhary.

During the programme, a large number of people from adjoining panchayats participated and demanded black-topping of the Rajouri–Bakori road via Jamola, construction of a bridge at Beda Khetar, boundary wall for Shiv Mandir, upgradation of local schools, augmentation of electricity and water supply. The public also highlighted shortage of doctors in local health institutions and demanded rationalization of teachers in schools.

After patiently listening to the public grievances, the DDC issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers for their early redressal. He directed the Education Department to rationalize staff in schools, while instructing the Power Development Department to ensure the installation of transformers within a week. The Jal Shakti Department was asked to ensure speedy execution of ongoing Jal Jeevan Mission works to ensure adequate water supply. He also emphasised the need for organising awareness camps by different departments in cluster villages to spread information about the government schemes. The PWD authorities were directed to adhere to quality standards while executing the works. The public was encouraged to register complaints through the JK Samadhan portal if they face any issue.

The DDC further urged the public to avail benefits under flagship initiatives such as Mission YUVA and JKICP (Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project). The DDC appealed to civil society members to contribute towards making the panchayats drug-free and TB-free.

DDC Member Shazia Choudhary appreciated the efforts of the District Administration and requested the DDC to address all pending issues of the area at the earliest.

On the occasion, the officers from Social Welfare, Agriculture, Horticulture, Veterinary, Health, RDD, PDD, PHE and Banking institutions conducted awareness activities to educate the public about welfare schemes and services available to them.

Among others present were included ADDC Malikzada Sheraz ul Haq; PO ICDS, Harpal Singh; Deputy Director Employsment, Mohammad Nawaz; ACD Auqil Naveed; DSWO Abdul Raheem; CMO, Dr. Manohar Lal Rana, Executive Engineers of PWD, PMGSY, PDD, PHE and other district and block level officers.

Block Diwas held at Rajpura: DDC listens to public grievances, reviews development activities

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SAMBA, NOVEMBER 4: District Development Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan presided over a Block Diwas programme today at Rajpura. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from locals and representatives of the adjoining panchayats.

The DDC listened to a wide range of public grievances and developmental demands, with special focus on agrarian issues, employment, besides education and healthcare facilities. People from adjoining villages raised concerns regarding post-flood damages, drug abuse and sought restoration of water bodies, improvement of drainage, rural infrastructure and better sports facilities as a constructive alternative for youth.



Highlighting Rajpura’s potential for livestock rearing and farming, the DDC emphasized measures to strengthen the same through convergence of departmental efforts. She also stressed the strengthening of Gram Sabhas, desilting of drains, ponds and the need for collective community participation in developmental initiatives.

DDC Ayushi Sudan reiterated that the core objective of Block Diwas is

twofold — to ensure timely redressal of grievances and to spread awareness about government schemes meant for public welfare. She urged people to proactively avail benefits of various schemes tailored for their socio-economic upliftment.

The event was attended by ADDC Champa Devi Thakur; SDM Ghagwal K.S. Bali; ACD, ACP and heads of all line departments.

Arise Hyundai Unveils All-New Hyundai Venue 2025 in Baramulla

■ DR. AB GAYOOM

BARAMULLA, NOV 04: Arise Hyundai Sangrama, one of North Kashmir’s leading Hyundai dealerships, proudly unveiled the all-new Hyundai Venue 2025 a fully connected SUV at a grand launch event held at its showroom in Baramulla on Monday. The event drew automobile enthusiasts, customers, and dignitaries who witnessed the formal introduction of Hyundai’s latest compact SUV that blends technology, comfort, and safety in a bold new design. The Hyundai Venue 2025 arrives with a refreshed, muscular look and several premium upgrades that redefine the compact SUV experience in India. The new model features enhanced dimensions, a dark chrome grille, twin-horn LED DRLs, quad-beam LED headlamps, and a full-width rear light bar giving it a commanding

road presence. Inside, the Venue boasts a high-tech dual 12.3-inch curved panoramic display powered by NVIDIA’s cNC system, ventilated front seats, ambient lighting, and a 4-way powered driver seat for unmatched comfort. Safety has also been significantly upgraded with Level-2 ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance System) that includes 16 smart features such as forward collision avoidance, lane-keeping assist, and smart cruise control. The Venue offers six airbags, electronic stability control, and a high-strength steel body for maximum protection. Powertrain options include a 1.2-litre petrol, 1.0-litre turbo petrol, and 1.5-litre diesel engine, available in both manual and automatic variants. The SUV is available in multiple seating configurations, including a 6-seater variant, designed to cater to modern families and lifestyle needs. With its ad-



vanced connectivity features, spacious interiors, and improved

driving dynamics, the new Venue promises a premium and con-

nected driving experience. The launch ceremony was graced by Masood Ahmad, Cluster Head J&K Bank Baramulla, along with several branch managers of the district. Also present were Imran Rashid (GM North), Parvaiz Ahmad (Sales Head Handwara), Mudisar Ahmad (Sales Head Kupwara), and other members of the Arise Hyundai sales team. Speaking on the occasion, the management of Arise Hyundai Sangrama reaffirmed their commitment to bringing Hyundai’s latest innovations to the people of North Kashmir. With the introduction of the new Venue, the dealership continues to strengthen its market presence by offering vehicles that combine style, performance, and smart technology. The launch of the Hyundai Venue 2025 marks another milestone for Hyundai in the Valley setting new standards of connectivity, comfort, and safety for compact SUV lovers.



Never Stop Dreaming: Harmanpreet Urges Youth

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: She never stopped dreaming since picking up her father's 'big' cricket bat as a kid and Harmanpreet Kaur is feeling 'humbled' after leading India to its maiden women's World Cup title.

After leading India to a 52-run win over South Africa in the women's World Cup summit clash in Navi Mumbai on Sunday, Harmanpreet's advice to budding youngsters is: "Never stop dreaming. You never know where your destiny will take you. Ever since, as a kid, I started getting a sense of what likes and dislikes are, I've always seen a bat in my hand. I still remember we used to play with a bat from my dad's kit bag. The bat was very big."

"One day, my dad cut an old bat (to make it small) of his for me.

We used to play with it. Whenever we used to watch a match on TV, or watch India play, or watch the World Cup, I used to think, I need an opportunity like this. At that time, I didn't even know about women's cricket," Harmanpreet said in a video released by the BCCI.

The journey which began as a child culminated to lifting the World Cup trophy, which, however, came after struggles and defeats.

"I was dreaming, when will I wear

this blue jersey? So I think this means a lot to me, a young girl who didn't know about women's cricket, but still dreaming, that one day, I want to bring that change in our country.

"And I think, it all shows that you should never stop dreaming. You never know where your destiny will take you. You never think, when will it happen, how will it happen. You only think, this will happen."

"So, I think, that was my self-belief, that this can be possible. And that exactly happened."

The 36-year-old stalwart said she is feeling relaxed and humbled after the childhood dream was realised.

"Personally, it's a very emotional moment. Because, it was my dream since childhood. Ever since I started playing, it was my dream to win the World Cup one day.

If I get an opportunity to lead my team, I don't want to miss this opportunity.

"So, I said all these things from the bottom of my heart. And God heard everything one by one. It's like magic. I don't understand how come suddenly everything is falling in place. Everything kept happening one by one.

"Finally, we are world champions. I am feeling very relaxed, very humble, so grateful to God, for giving this team, which we have been dreaming of for so

many years, and we are living this moment."

Harmanpreet recalled the big reception when the Indian team returned home after losing the 2017 women's World Cup final to England in London.

"After the 2017 World Cup, when we came back, we were so heartbroken. We lost the game by 9 runs.

We didn't understand how that happened because that game was also fully in control," she said of the 2017 final where India were all out for 219 in 48.4 overs while chasing 229.

"But after coming back, the kind of welcome and motivation we got from Indian fans, that shows that not only us, the entire country was waiting for women's cricket to do something special for them. And special for the country."

That team, led by Mithali Raj, had the current team's senior players like Harmanpreet, Smriti Mandhana and Deepthi Sharma.

"Everybody was waiting for this moment. And I think it's because of everyone's blessings and prayers that we were able to cross that line. I don't think we were alone playing in the stadium.

"Everybody, the entire stadium, people who were watching us on TV, everybody came together to win this. Because it wasn't possible alone."

Jannik Sinner reclaims No. 1 ranking after beating Auger-Aliassime in Paris Masters final

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PARIS: Jannik Sinner reclaimed the No. 1 ranking in men's tennis after beating Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-4, 7-6 (4) in the Paris Masters final on Sunday. The four-time Grand Slam champion from Italy replaced six-time major winner Carlos Alcaraz at the top as he extended his indoor winning streak to 26 matches, following up victory in Vienna last Sunday with his first Paris title.

The ninth-seeded Auger-Aliassime needed to win the tournament at La Défense Arena to clinch the eighth and final spot for the season-ending ATP Finals in Turin, Italy.



But Sinner did not concede a break point chance in the match and won the tournament without dropping a set. "It's huge, honestly. It was such an intense final here and we both knew what's on the line," Sinner said. "For him it's a very tough and difficult spot but from my side I'm extremely happy." Sinner beat Auger-Aliassime for the third straight time — including in the semifinals at this year's U.S. Open — and now leads the Canadian 3-2 in head-to-heads.

"He was serving extremely well," Sinner said. "You have to use your small chances well."

Auger-Aliassime is one of the most consistent players indoors but overall he was unable to trouble Sinner in a one-sided contest which saw Sinner at his clinical best as he won his fifth title of the year and 23rd of his career. Italy's Jannik Sinner holds the trophy after winning the final match of the Paris Masters tennis tournament against Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime in Paris, Sunday, Nov. 2, 2025.

Sinner routs Zverev to set up Paris Masters final against Auger-Aliassime and move closer to No. 1.

Sinner won on his first match point with a crisp two-handed backhand down the line, tilted his head back and raised his arms. He then patted his heart as he waved his racket to the crowd.

"The past couple of months have been amazing. We tried to work on things, trying to improve as a player and seeing this kind of result makes me extremely happy," Sinner said. "It has been an amazing year no matter what comes in Turin." Although Auger-Aliassime had more aces — eight compared to six — Sinner won 91% of first-serve points compared to 81 for his opponent. "Everything was on the quality of his serve," Auger-Aliassime said. "Hats off to him."

Head released from Australia's T20I squad for last two matches against India to prepare for Ashes

PTI

HOBART: Opening batter Travis Head was on Monday released from Australia's T20 International squad for the remaining two matches against India to play in the Sheffield Shield ahead as part of preparations for the Ashes. The 31-year-old left-hander will play alongside Alex Carey for South Australia against Tasmania here from November 10 as he switches to red-ball cricket ahead of the first Ashes Test starting November 21 in Perth.

It will be his first first-class match since the tour of West Indies in July. He has had a relatively lean run in white-ball cricket over the last month with a top score of 31 in eight innings across T20Is and ODIs after making 142 against South Africa in



August.

Head is the third member of Australia's T20I squad to prioritise

preparation for the five-Test campaign against England. Josh Hazlewood and Sean Abbott are the

others, having both faced India over the course of the first three matches of the T20 series. The

pair will now turn out for New South Wales in a star-studded clash with Victoria at the SCG.

The selectors left the decision on whether to play in the Shield or the final two T20Is against India to Head himself, but he opted to feature in the domestic competition, according to a report in cricket.com.au.

The report also said that every member of Australia's likely squad for the first Ashes Test squad will feature in the next round of Sheffield Shield. Head played one early round of Sheffield Shield leading into last summer's Border-Gavaskar Trophy series and finished as its leading run scorer. The five-match T20I series between India and Australia are tied 1-1 after three matches. The last two matches will be played at Carrara (November 6) and Brisbane (November 8).

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