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NIA Tightens Noose in Delhi Blast Case: Amit Shah Vows Justice 'At Any Depth'

Pledges Decisive Action in Delhi Blast Case As Probe Tightens
Nation Wide, Crackdown Intensifies in Delhi

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday delivered one of his strongest messages yet on terrorism, declaring that the government would "hunt down the culprits of the Delhi bomb blast even from the depths of the netherworld" and ensure the harshest punishment for those behind the attack that killed 15 people near the Red Fort last week.

Speaking at the 32nd Northern Zonal Council (NZC) meeting in Faridabad, Shah reiterated that eradicating terrorism from its roots under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership remains a collective national commitment. He also paid homage to the vic-



tims of both the Delhi blast and the accidental explosion at Nowgam Police Station in Srinagar. The meeting observed two minutes of silence in memory of those killed.

Fifteen people died and 20 others were injured in the Red Fort blast, triggered by a car bomb detonated by suicide attacker Dr Umar Mohammad, who also died in the explosion.

In Srinagar, nine people including a Naib Tehsildar, an SIA officer, and a tailor lost their lives and 32 were injured after seized explosives linked to an alleged doctors' terror module accidentally detonated inside the Nowgam police station late Friday night.

Shah said Zonal Councils play a

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LG Attends 32nd Northern Zonal Council Meeting in Faridabad, Haryana

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, NOV 17: The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today attended the 32nd meeting of Northern Zonal Council chaired by Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah in Faridabad, Haryana.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor said that under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and with continuous guidance of Hon'ble Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, Jammu Kashmir has been achieving greater and new heights on the development and security front since August 2019.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to the Hon'ble Home Minister for resolving various issues concerning Jammu Kashmir and guiding its all-around development. He said after abrogation of Article 370, Jammu Kashmir has witnessed historic transformation in terms of economic growth, investment, infrastructure, connectivity, strengthening of grassroots democracy and better opportunities for youth and women. The security situation has significantly improved.

"The policy of "Zero Tolerance to Terrorism" has curbed violence, stone pelting, strikes, and local recruitment. Not just terrorists but the entire ecosystem of terrorism is being dismantled," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He highlighted the recent meticulous inves-



tigation by Jammu Kashmir Police to unearth and dismantle Pan-India terror network. He also observed that in the first phase of the 150th year commemoration of 'Vande Mataram', Jammu Kashmir has achieved first place in the entire country in event participation and out of top 10 districts, 9 are from J&K UT.

"360-degree security mechanism has been strengthened. Seamless coordination between intelligence and security agencies has been enhanced to foil nefarious designs of adversary," the Lieutenant Governor said.

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Kashmir peak power demand crosses 1900MW mark

'Local generation reduces by nearly 75%'

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: As the mercury plummets to sub-zero, peak power demand in Kashmir has crossed 1900 Megawatts mark while the power generation from local plants has reduced by nearly 75 percent.

Officials informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that in the past 24 hours, there was a peak power load of 1925 MWs in the Kashmir division. "However, there was an average power load of 1566 MWs during these 24 hours."

It also said that in the Jammu division, there was a peak power load of 1119 MWs and 885 MWs on an average.

About the power generation from the local power plants of Jammu and Kashmir, the official said that the generation was ranging from 280 MWs to 350-380 MWs.

On Monday, power generation plants in

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DGP Prabhat Visits Families of Nowgam Blast Victims, Reaffirms Police Commitment to Stand by Bereaved

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: Reaching out to the families devastated by the Nowgam Police Station blast, Director General of Police (DGP) Jammu and Kashmir, Nalin Prabhat, on Monday underscored that the J&K Police stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the next of kin of the deceased and remains committed to extending every possible support to them.

Accompanied by Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir V.K. Birdi and senior officers, the DGP visited Hariparigam in Tral, Gazaliabad HMT in Srinagar, and Chansar in Kulgam to offer condolences to the families of Crime Branch photographer Javid Mansoor Rather, senior grade constable Ajaz Ahmad Mir, and constable Arshid Ahmad Shah three personnel who lost their lives in the tragic explosion.

During the visits, the top officers assured the families that the sacrifices of the fallen personnel would never be forgotten and reaffirmed the police department's responsibility to safeguard the welfare of the bereaved. "We will never forget them. All necessary assistance will be extended to all the affected families," DGP Prabhat said, while emphasising that the police leadership

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Srinagar Administration mourns the irreparable Loss in Nowgam accidental blast

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: District Administration Srinagar on Monday convened a solemn condolence meeting here at DC Office to mourn the demise of nine lives including Naib Tehsildar, Muzaffar Ahmad Khan and Suhail Ahmad Rather of Revenue Department who lost their lives in Nowgam accidental blast on Friday evening while discharging their official duties.

A two minute silence was observed to mourn the loss of

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J&K people peace-loving, aspire to Viksit Bharat and Viksit J&K: CM

HT NEWS NETWORK

FARIDABAD, NOV 17: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today attended the 32nd meeting of the Northern Zonal Council (NZC) held in Faridabad, Haryana. The meeting was chaired by Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah.

The Northern Zonal Council comprises the States and Union Territories

of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and Chandigarh.

Speaking at the meeting, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah highlighted the launch of Mission YUVA, the government's focused push on strengthening the education sector, expanding sports infrastructure, and fostering a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir.



The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to the Centre for its continued financial support, including the extension of the SASCI Scheme to J&K.

He said the NZC serves as an important platform to enhance cooperation among States and UTs, reaffirming that J&K remains fully committed to national growth with firm faith in democratic institutions.

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Women Stepping Into Roles That Were Once Inaccessible: Sakeena Itoo

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo addressed the three-day National Workshop on "Leadership Programme for Women Managers in Higher Education: Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies" at University of Kashmir here today.

The workshop is being organised by the



varsity's Centre for Women's Studies and Research (CWSR) in collaboration with the Institute of Home Science KU.

In her inaugural address, Minister Sakeena, who was Chief Guest on the occasion, said that institutions must work collectively to ensure that women feel respected and supported.

"Women are stepping into roles that were once inaccessible but their

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"Operation Sindoor just a trailer, blood and water can't flow together": Army Chief warns Pakistan

HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, NOV 17: In a strong message to Pakistan, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi on Monday said that Operation Sindoor was just a trailer, which was over in 88 hours, stating that if someone wants to blackmail us, India is not afraid of any blackmail.

Speaking at the curtain raiser event of the 'Chanakya Defence Dialogues' in New Delhi, the Army Chief, per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that terrorism emanating from Pakistan is a matter of grave concern for



India. He stated that India will no longer tolerate terrorism at any cost and the country is

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FROM - EDITORS DESK

INK OF COURAGE: HOW KASHMIR'S NEWSPAPERS CONTINUE TO WRITE AGAINST ALL ODDS...

On National Press Day 2025, as Nation celebrates the ideals of a free press, the story of Kashmir's newspapers stands out as one of extraordinary courage, resilience, and quiet heroism. In a land where every word carries weight, where every headline is shaped by both hope and caution, the act of publishing a newspaper is nothing short of a daily triumph.

In the narrow lanes of Srinagar, in

the modest newsrooms of Anantnag, Baramulla, Kupwara and Jammu, journalists continue to chase stories often

**NATIONAL PRESS
DAY-2025**

with limited resources, often in unpredictable circumstances, and always

with a deep sense of responsibility to the people they serve. Their newspapers, printed at dawn and distributed across valleys and mountains, remain the lifeline of credible information in a region.

Courage in a Time of Uncertainty is the peg. For decades, newspapers in J&K have worked in conditions that test both strength and spirit.

Rising newsprint prices,

Scarce local advertising, Logistical hurdles, and the constant pressure of reporting in a sensitive environment have pushed many publications to the brink. Yet, these papers endure powered not by revenue, but by resolve; not by comfort, but by commitment.

They are the storytellers of the people, the chroniclers of everyday

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GMC Jammu records 9,427 cancer cases in 5 years

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu has registered 9,427 cancer cases over the last five years (2020-2024), revealing a worrying rise in cancer incidence across the region.

The data paints a concerning picture, particularly about late-stage diagnoses and the prevalence of certain cancers in specific demographics.

Of the total 9,427 cases reported at GMC Jammu, 3,671 patients were from Jammu district, the highest among all districts; 943 hailed from Udhampur, 855 from Kathua, 694 from Doda, 580 from Samba, 532 from Reasi, 424 from

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Div Com Kashmir Reviews Arrangements for 350th Martyrdom Commemoration of Guru Tegh Bahadur

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir (Div Com), Anshul Garg, today visited Gurudwara Rainawari along with Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, to review onspot preparations for the upcoming commemoration of the 350th Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, scheduled to be held at Gurudwara Chatti Patshahi, Srinagar.

During the visit, the Divisional Commissioner convened a detailed meeting with officers of all departments to assess the civil, traffic and security arrangements required for the smooth conduct of the event.

He directed the concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply during all event-related activities, adequate drinking water facilities for devotees, sanitation, availability



of medical services and deployment of critical care ambulances at the Gurudwara.

He emphasized on comprehensive traffic management, including designation of parking areas for participants and convoys of religious dignitaries arriving from outside the region.

Stressing the importance of efficient traffic regulation, he called for a streamlined movement plan to avoid congestion and ensure a hassle-free experience for devotees.

The Div Com also reviewed the security arrangements, both at the venue and along the designated convoy routes, and instructed the authorities to ensure seamless coordination among all agencies.

The meeting was attended by Director Health, SSP Traffic and senior officers from all concerned departments besides representatives of the community.

Legislators, scores of Public Delegations meet Minister Satish Sharma at Srinagar

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Transport, IT, Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma today held an extensive public outreach and grievance-redressal session at the Civil Secretariat here, during which a wide range of delegations and dignitaries called on him to discuss issues pertaining to their respective sectors.

The day-long interaction witnessed participation from MLAs from Uri, Shopian, Pampore, and Kangan, representatives of trade bodies, workers' associations, and various aspirant groups seeking policy support and resolution of pending matters.

The legislators apprised the Minister of constituency-specific concerns related to ration supply, transportation services, and youth-centric programmes.

During interaction, Minister Satish Sharma assured timely intervention and directed concerned



departments to act promptly.

The delegation of the Fair Price Shop Association raised matters concerning supply-chain management and operational challenges. The Minister reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening the Public Distribution System (PDS) through transparent and technology-driven mechanisms.

Deputation of Kerosene Oil Association highlighted distribution-related issues. The Minister assured that all genuine concerns would be taken up with the concerned authorities. The pensioners of JKRTC also called on the Minister and discussed long-pending service-related matters.

Minister Sharma instructed the Transport Department to expedite clearances and streamline pending cases.

Deputations of Aspirants of Forest Inspector Exam, Social Forest Workers, Forest Protection Force Guard, Wildlife Guard, and President of Mutton Dealers Association also called on Minister.

The deputations brought forward issues regarding recruitment processes, service regularisation, working conditions, and market regulation.

The Minister assured fair consideration and said that the government is committed to transparent recruitment, improved workforce welfare, and streamlined trade practices.

Satish Sharma reaffirmed that open dialogue with stakeholders is a key component of the government's governance model.

He said that "Our administration is committed to active engagement and timely redressal of issues brought forth by citizens, associations, and public representatives. Every genuine grievance will be addressed with urgency and sincerity."

The Minister assured that follow-up meetings will be held with departmental heads to ensure that the concerns raised during today's interactions are resolved within a set timeframe.

Meanwhile, the Minister also undertook a review meeting of FCS&CA department and took stock of availability, winter preparedness, and essential deliveries across districts.

Commissioner/Secretary briefed the Minister about the measures undertaken for ensuring adequate supply of essentials and stocks.

The MD JKRTC also called on the Minister and briefed the him on fleet augmentation, financial stabilisation measures, and service expansion plans.

JKPICCA Expresses Deep Condolences Over Nowgam Police Station Blast Victims

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: The Jammu & Kashmir Fruits and Vegetable Processing & Integrated Cold Chain Association (JKPICCA) has expressed heartfelt condolences over the tragic accidental explosion at Nowgam Police Station that claimed the lives of police personnel and revenue employees. In a statement, JKPICCA President Bashir Ahmad Naik said the Association stands in solidarity with the bereaved families during this hour of immense grief.

He added that the loss of dedicated officers and employees is deeply painful, and the entire fraternity shares the sorrow of the affected families.

Naik prayed for peace to the departed souls and strength for their families to bear the irreparable loss.

SKUAST-K Unveils Achievements, Rising Rankings at Media Interaction

DR. AB QAYOOM

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) on Monday held a major media interaction showcasing the institution's rapid progress, significant achievements, and forward-looking vision under the leadership of Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai. In his detailed briefing, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai outlined how SKUAST-K has emerged as one of the most progressive and innovation-driven agricultural universities in the country. He highlighted the University's accelerated growth trajectory, its advancements in research and academics, expansion of the start-up and incubation ecosystem, and its strengthening national rankings — all of which reflect its rising stature among State Agricultural Universities (SAUs).

The Vice-Chancellor emphasized that the institution is steadily transitioning into a technology-enabled, outcome-oriented, and globally competitive centre of excellence. He credited faculty, researchers, scholars, and students for their collective efforts in driving this transformative journey.

Following the press briefing, journalists from leading print and electronic media were taken on an exclusive tour of the campus. They visited newly established research centres, innovation hubs, and ongoing projects that demonstrate the University's commitment to cutting-edge agricultural science and societal outreach. An interactive Question and Answer session allowed media representa-



tatives to raise queries related to the University's programmes, policy reforms, research priorities, and developmental initiatives. The University administration responded with clarity and confidence, reflecting transparency and a strong sense of institutional pride. Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai encouraged the media to maintain close engagement with the University, assuring an open and

Five-Day Theatre Festival 'Jashn-e-Tiflaan' Begins at Tagore Hall

Organised by Cultural Academy and Kashmir Kala Manch

Students from various schools to showcase their talent

GULFAM BARJI

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: The five-day theatre festival titled "Jashn-e-Tiflaan" began at Tagore Hall, Srinagar. The festival was inaugurated by the Director, News Division, Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar and Director of the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Qazi Salman Ibrahim; Additional Secretary of the Cultural Academy, Adeel Saleem; Chairperson of Help Foundation, Nighat Shafi; and Neer-ja Matoo, in the presence of several prominent theatre personalities, artists, drama enthusiasts, and a large number of schoolchildren. During the festival, students from various schools of downtown Srinagar will showcase their artistic talents. At the inaugural ceremony, noted singers Raja Bilal and Shahi Mumtaz entertained the audience by presenting the poetry of Abdul Ahad Azad.

On the first day, students of Dreamland Public High School, Bemina Srinagar, performed a Kashmiri stage play titled "Son Pagah," written and directed by Jahangir Farash, winning warm appreciation from the audience.

On the occasion, Qazi Salman said that organising such theatre festivals helps nurture children's creative abilities, provides them with an opportunity to showcase their talent, promotes modern theatre, and encourages the younger generation to engage with the art form. A cultural exhibition has also been arranged as part of the event.

It is worth mentioning that the five-day Jashn-e-Tiflaan Theatre Festival has been organised by Reroute of India in collaboration with the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and Kashmir Kala Manch, with support from Help Foundation J&K. The festival director is Hakeem Javed,

HIMALAYAN CRYOSPHERE CONFERENCE AT BHADERWAH CAMPUS CHARTS PATH FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

AMIR IQBAL KHAN

BHADERWAH, NOV 17: Wrapping up with resolute calls for action, the two-day 3rd International Conference on "Change in Cryosphere and Impact on Ecosystem Services, Indigenous Knowledge System and Sustainable Development in the Indian Himalayan Region" wound down at University of Jammu's Bhaderwah Campus throwing the spotlight on urgent climate challenges and holistic solutions. "Scholarship must meet the street. The insights generated here must leap from the lecture hall into real policy and

grassroots action," asserted Dr. Sunil Bhardwaj, MLA Ramnagar hailing the campus for bringing global debate to the mountains and assuring unwavering support for science driven initiatives in Jammu & Kashmir.

Reflecting the spirit of collaborative learning, Prof. Rahul Gupta, Rector, Bhaderwah Campus said, "We are raising the bar for mountain research and inviting young minds to rub shoulders with the best in the field. Such platforms not only fortify the local academic fabric but lay down stepping stones for global engagement." Guest of Honour Prof.



Dipanker Sengupta and ADC Bhaderwah Shri Sunil Kumar Bhutyal echoed the urgency for

empowering local communities, with Bhutyal emphasising, "It's time to rally administrative and academic teamwork to turn the tide on climate vulnerabilities."

Summing up the deliberations, Dr. Chhering Tandup, Conference Convener spotlighted matters from glacial dynamics to indigenous wisdom. "The Himalayan cryosphere stands at a tipping point; the path ahead demands science backed, community centric intervention."

Dr. Shayan Javed, Organizing Secretary, struck a note of gratitude to all participants and sponsors including J&K Bank and Chenab Valley Power Projects promising continued collaboration for ecological resilience in the region.



DST Awards 37 Cutting-Edge Research Projects Under JKSTIC's SREP

Secretary reviews Kashmir Province Projects; Pls Present Research Roadmaps Spanning Healthcare Innovation, Climate-Resilient Agriculture, Food Safety, Infrastructure & Digital Governance

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 17: Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, today chaired a workshop with 37 Principal Investigators from leading academic and research institutions of Kashmir Province at Srinagar. The meeting featured detailed presentations by selected Project Investigators under Round 1 of the Sponsored Research and Extension Programme (SREP) 2025, implemented by the Jammu & Kashmir Science, Technology & Innovation Council (JKSTIC).

The 37 approved projects for Kashmir Province, representing an investment of more than 515.00 lakhs, span five strategic research clusters designed to address critical challenges facing the region while improving public service delivery. Principal Investigators from 16 premier institutions presented their research methodologies, pilot demonstration strategies, and anticipated community impact to the Secretary.

Participating institutions from Kashmir Province included Islamic University of Science & Technology Awantipora (IUST) with 6 projects, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology-Kashmir (SKUAST-K) with 8 projects,

National Institute of Technology Srinagar (NIT) with 5 projects, Central University of Kashmir (CUK), Kashmir University (KU), NIELIT Srinagar, Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Government Medical College Srinagar (GMC-S), ICAR-Central Institute of Temperate Horticulture (CITH), Indian Grassland & Fodder Research Institute (IGFRI), Cluster University Srinagar, Government College for Women Srinagar, Islamia College of Science & Commerce Srinagar, and JKSTIC itself, besides the government departments.

Smart Agriculture & Food Security emerged as the largest cluster with 9 projects. Researchers presented innovations in climate-resilient indigenous rice varieties through photosynthetic and biochemical modeling (CUK), smart blueberry farming establishment (SKUAST-K), stress-priming kits for climate-smart vegetable production, paprika and colored capsicum production systems for local seed self-reliance, tomato genetic interventions for water-deficit stress mitigation, AI-powered research data banks for sustainable agriculture, integrated forage production strategies for fodder security (IGFRI), and AI-enabled IoT weather stations for precision horticulture (JKSTIC),



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collectively benefiting over 200,000 farmers and supporting Kashmir's 4,000+ crore horticulture economy.

Under Healthcare Innovation & Public Health (7 projects), Principal Investigators presented cutting-edge research including IoT-enabled smart IV infusion systems for patient safety in resource-constrained district hospitals (IUST), genomic analysis of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy and sudden cardiac death prevalent in Kashmir's population (SKIMS), longitudinal studies on opioid dependence mortality addressing the addiction crisis (SKIMS), Delphi-derived organophosphate poisoning severity scales for improved toxicology management (GMC-Srinagar), exploration of anti-breast cancer compounds from

indigenous Himalayan flora Lagotis cashmeriana (CUK), biodegradable hydrogel wound dressing materials from Himalayan flora (ICSC), and isolation of exosomes from subclinical mastitis for novel veterinary diagnostics (Cluster University).

The Food Safety & Quality cluster (4 projects) featured presentations on groundbreaking consumer protection research: quantitative assessment of microplastic contamination in packaged food products with migration dynamics simulation (IUST), UV-C LED treatment combined with AI-driven risk modeling for microbial safety of fresh produce (IUST), AI-based geographical discrimination of honey to protect 30,000+ marginal bee farmers in the sub-Himalayan region (IUST),

and deep learning-powered Kashmiri saffron adulteration detection systems safeguarding the 300+ crore GI-tagged saffron industry (NIELIT Srinagar).

Sustainable Infrastructure & Climate Action presentations (8 projects) covered technology-enabled corrosion monitoring for water supply pipelines preventing 100+ crore annual losses (NIT), WEAP-CORDEX ensemble and machine learning approaches for assessing climate change effects on J&K's 3,500+ MW hydropower potential (NIT), AI-driven optimization of hydro-solar power integration for weak grid regions (NIT), solar-driven hydrogen-based heating systems for sustainable housing in Kashmir Valley (NIT), integrated driver risk profiling using VBOX and physiological

monitoring for road safety addressing 400+ annual traffic fatalities (NIT), hydrogel-based eco-innovations for reviving Dal Lake's water quality (KU), geospatial real-time monitoring of construction activities around Dal-Nageen-Khushalsar-Brarinambal water bodies (IUST), and standardization of hazelnut propagation techniques under temperate conditions (CITH).

Under Digital Governance & Heritage (4 projects), researchers presented AI-based translation and restoration systems for preserving 50,000+ rare and deteriorating Kashmiri manuscripts (IUST), post-quantum secure drone surveillance frameworks for critical infrastructure and public space monitoring (NIELIT), AI-powered predictive irrigation monitoring and control systems for apple orchards (KU), and psychology-driven STEM education programs to build scientific temper in 100+ border villages of Kashmir (Government College for Women Srinagar). Other projects included Evaluation of Intersecting Burdens of Hepatitis (B and C), Nutritional Deficiency, Anemia and Risk of Liver Cirrhosis in Transhumant Population of J&K, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Sustainable Pastoralism.

Secretary Choudhary

emphasized the Department's commitment to "research as public service," directing Principal Investigators to establish formal Memoranda of Understanding with line departments, including Horticulture, Health & Medical Education, Food Safety, Agriculture Marketing, Public Health Engineering, Power Development, Lakes & Waterways Management Authority, Archives, and School Education, within 90 days.

He assured timely quarterly fund releases, inter-departmental facilitation through designated nodal officers, JKSTIC infrastructure access for equipment and laboratories, and direct policy linkage to Chief Secretary reviews for translating research findings into governance interventions.

The Secretary called for confirmation of pilot demonstration sites within 45 days, scheduling of first technology demonstrations within 60 days, and submission of policy brief outlines within 90 days, emphasizing that research timelines must synchronize with governance cycles for maximum impact. A separate review meeting for Jammu Province projects under SREP 2025 is scheduled separately.

DC Bandipora Reviews ODOP with Departments

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Monday chaired a meeting at the Mini Secretariat to review the district's preparedness under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized review of current ODOP to explore other unique and high-potential products which may better represent the district's economic strengths and noted that the previously communicated ODOP crewal based shawl was not actually practiced in Bandipora.

On the occasion, the DC observed that Sheep emerged as strong contender for ODOP, given Bandipora's sizeable livestock base, comprising more than three lakh sheep, 7,200 registered breeders and nearly half of local mutton consumption being met within the district.

During the meeting, Officers also highlighted the ongoing SKUAST initiatives aimed at strengthening the Gurezi sheep breed, the inclusion of sheep as ODOP under PMFME, and the year-round demand for mutton, which provides avenues for processing, branding and marketing. While acknowledging labour-related challenges and sustainability concerns, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that infrastructure development remained central to any successful ODOP strategy.

During the meeting, the DC issued directions to concerned departments regarding raw material support, processing facilities, market linkage, skill development, employment generation and policy alignment needed for finalising the district's ODOP proposal. He also directed the departments to obtain the relevant rules from the Pollution Control Committee to facilitate compliance for future processing units. The meeting further discussed additional potential products including honey, water chestnuts, lotus stem and Gurezi potato, along with the need to promote local produce in line with the "Vocal for Local" vision.

The DC underscored that coordination between all concerned departments would be crucial for ensuring meaningful value addition and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Among others, the meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development Bandipora, GM DIC Bandipora, DSHO Bandipora, CHO Bandipora, CAO Bandipora, representatives from Handicrafts, Handloom, Employment, Revenue and ITIs.

Budgam DLSA Conducts Awareness Programme on MWPSA Act & NALSA LSUM Scheme

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 17: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Budgam, under the aegis of the J&K Legal Services Authority, organized an awareness programme on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007, and the NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024 (LSUM), in collaboration with the Islamic Educational Institute, Lolipora Chadoora.

The event was held under the leadership of Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority, Justice Arun Palli, and Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority, Justice Sanjeev Kumar.

The programme was conducted under the directions of Member

Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Shazia Tabassum, supervised by Chairman, DLSA Budgam, O.P. Bhagat, and guided by Secretary, DLSA Budgam, Nusrat Ali Hakak,

The primary objective of the programme was to spread awareness regarding the legal mechanisms ensuring the maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens, and to provide legal support to persons with mental illness and intellectual disabilities.

Deputy LADC and Assistant LADC were deputed by DLSA Budgam as resource persons for the programme. They delivered detailed presentations on relevant legal provisions and sensitized participants about their significance and implementation.

Deputy Legal Aid Defence Counsel, Budgam, explained the provisions of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior



Citizens Act, 2007. He emphasized that the Act ensures elderly persons

can live with dignity by legally obligating children and relatives

to provide for their maintenance. He highlighted the role of Maintenance Tribunals in expeditiously adjudicating such claims and elaborated on the protection offered to senior citizens against property transfers made on the condition of care, which become void if the condition is violated.

Legal Aid Defence Counsel, Budgam, addressed the gathering on the NALSA Scheme, 2024. He explained that the scheme is designed to provide comprehensive legal assistance to individuals with mental illness and intellectual disabilities. He informed participants about the establishment of dedicated Legal Services Units (LSUM), specialized panels of lawyers and volunteers, the availability of services at courts, prisons, and police stations, and ongoing efforts to ensure disabled-friendly infrastructure within the justice delivery system.

DLSA Shopian organises awareness camps on Welfare of Senior Citizens across the district,

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 17: District Legal Services Authority Shopian today held awareness programmes on five locations across the district on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007.

The main programme was organized in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department Shopian at Town Hall Shopian.

The programmes were organized

under the guidance of Chairman DLSA Shopian, Mehmood Ahmad Chowdhary and Secretary DLSA Shopian, Mudasar Farooq.

The purpose of these programmes was to provide information to the senior citizens of the society about their rights, welfare schemes and legal provisions.

Chief LADC Shopian, Rafie Ahmad Ganie, elaborated on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 and its significance in ensuring the welfare of senior citizens.

He stressed the importance of taking care of parents and urged the participants to fulfill their responsibilities towards them while also highlighting the NALSA (Legal Services to Senior Citizens) Scheme, 2016, which provides free legal aid to senior citizens. He informed the participants that senior citizens are eligible to receive free legal aid from legal services institutions as per Rule 19 of the J&K Legal Services Authority rules, 2020.

DLSA Srinagar organizes awareness programme on MWPSA Act 2007 at Chanapora

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 17: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar today organized an Awareness Programme on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007 at Ahat-e-Waqar, Chanapora, Srinagar.

The programme was held under the directions of Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Shazia Tabassum and under the chairmanship of Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar, Tasleem Arief and under the supervision of Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Sajad Ur Rehman.

Addressing the gathering, Secretary, Ahat-e-Waqar, Er. Khazir Mohammad Trag, highlighted the importance of creating a supportive environment for senior citizens and ensuring their dignity and safety.

Resource Persons including Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsel DLSA Srinagar, sensitized the participants about the key provisions of the Senior Citizens Act, 2007, and the legal mechanisms available for protection, maintenance, and welfare of parents and elderly persons. They emphasized the responsibility of families, society, and institutions in upholding the rights of senior citizens.

Senior citizens also shared their experiences during the event, expressing their views on the challenges faced by elders in contemporary society and the need for stronger community support.

The efforts of DLSA Srinagar in conducting such meaningful awareness initiatives was appreciated, aimed at empowering and safeguarding the elderly members of the community.

Student Start-up from SKUAST-K Secures Rs 5 Lakh ICAR Grant

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 17: A student led start-up "M/s Faim Farms P Ltd" mentored under the SKUAST K Innovation, Incubation & Entrepreneurship (SKIIE) Centre Shalimar Srinagar has been awarded a Rs 5 lakh grant in aid by ICAR Pusa, New Delhi, in recognition of its promising and disruptive innovation in the Agriculture sector.

The grant, sanctioned under ICAR's support for youth led agricultural innovations, will be used to advance the start up's ongoing work on a Ready to Eat/ Serve centric innovation developed



at SKUAST K Innovation Centre in support with Division of Food Sciences & Technology.

The Funding will support prototype refinement, field validation, and early stage commercialization activities, enabling the team to translate research into practice and benefit farmers and other stakeholders in the region.

Vice Chancellor SKUAST K, Prof Nazir A Ganai Congratulated the Young Student led Startup Founders of M/s Faim Farms P Ltd setting their goals and achieving the feat and for taking the mission and vision of SKUAST K forward. He also congratulated the Director and Team SKIIE Centre and all mentors across faculties and different labs of University.



Javed Rana inaugurates, lays foundation stones of key Civic, Tourism projects in Mendhar

Govt Reiterates Commitment to Equitable Growth of Remote Areas

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

MENDHAR, NOVEMBER 17: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana today inaugurated and laid foundation stones for several key development works aimed at strengthening civic infrastructure, boosting connectivity and promoting eco-tourism in the Mendhar region.

The Minister launched the first phase of the Mendhar Town Drainage Upgradation Project worth 50 lakh, part of a larger 10.15 crore plan under the UT CAPEX budget. He said the project will modernise the town's drainage network, improve sanitation, enhance flood resilience and raise public health standards, reflecting the Government's commitment to timely and high-quality execution of public utilities.

He also inaugurated the newly



constructed road from KM 12th to Mohalla Phamra Ziyarat, developed under NABARD funding at a cost of 319.91 lakh. The Minister said the road will ease

travel for residents, improve access to remote habitations, and strengthen connectivity to the revered Ziyarat. He appreciated the executing agency and directed

officers to ensure proper maintenance for long-term durability.

Rana reiterated that the Omar Abdullah-led Government is

committed to ensure that far-flung areas receive their due share of development.

Later, the Minister also laid the foundation stone for Rest House at Jaranwali Gali, to be developed at an estimated cost of 45 lakh, in presence of MLA Surankote, Choudhary Muhammad Akram. The upcoming facility will support eco-tourism, offer improved accommodation for visitors and enhance the operational capacity of the Forest Department.

He said the Government is focused on promoting sustainable tourism while protecting vital natural resources.

The Minister urged officers to maintain high technical standards in all ongoing works, ensuring durability and long-term public benefit.

He also interacted with locals and assured them that development initiatives aimed at public welfare and regional growth will continue to be prioritised.

DDC Budgam Reviews Progress Under District Capex Budget

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 17: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress of developmental works being executed under the District Capex Budget 2025-26, Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and the UT Sector.

The meeting, held in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex, was attended by senior officers, sectoral heads and engineers of all departments.

During the meeting, detailed sector-wise progress was presented. The R&B sector informed that 100 ongoing works had been taken up, out of which 94 have been completed, while 80 new works stand approved, 76 tendered, 70 allotted, and 57 started, with 50 already completed.

Financially, more than 1574 lakh has been released for execution across multiple heads.

The Hydraulic (Jal Shakti) Circle Budgam informed that all 8 ongoing works have been completed. Under new works, 21 projects have been approved, all are tendered, 20 allotted, and 13 started. An expenditure of over 26 lakh has been incurred on new works, while nearly 15 lakh has been utilised under ongoing schemes.

The Rural Development Department highlighted one of the highest workloads in the district with 2694 works approved under District Capex. It was informed that out of these, 2586 have been tendered, 2264 allotted, 2070 works have started, and 1591 stand completed, supported by financial releases exceeding 2455 lakh.

Similarly, a block-wise review across Beerwah, BK Pora, Budgam, Chadoora, Charar-e-Sharief, Khag, Khansahib, Nagam, Narbal, Pakherpora, Parnewa, Rathsun, SK Pora, Soibugh, Sukhnag, Surasyar and Waterhail revealed that 1780 ongoing works had been undertaken and 1772 completed, with expenditure surpassing 506 lakh out of 646 lakh released.

While reviewing the overall progress, the DDC emphasised that the pace of work must be further accelerated.

He said that timely execution is critical for ensuring service delivery at the grassroots level, and delays must be avoided at all stages.

The DDC stressed that both physical and financial targets must be met within the stipulated timelines, particularly in view of the current working season.

He said that all departments should maintain strict coordination, ensure quality adherence, and resolve bottlenecks without delay. It was further directed that officers must ensure optimum utilisation of funds released under District Capex, CSS and UT Sector schemes.

He insisted that regular field monitoring, prompt reporting, and timely tendering/allotment remain essential for improving overall developmental outcomes in the district.

The DDC also remarked that departments must maintain transparency and accountability in every stage of project execution, adding that citizens expect efficient delivery of infrastructural and public welfare works.

He also directed officers to keep him regularly updated regarding progress and ensure that pendency is removed through focused intervention.

Besides JD planning budgam, SE Hydraulics circle budgam, SE R&B Budgam, ACD/ACP budgam, CEO MC budgam, all District officers, all BDOs, EO of all MCs were present in the meeting.

DC Bandipora Chairs DLIC meeting, Clears 74 Cases Under Mission YUVA

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today chaired a meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) at the Mini Secretariat to review and approve cases under Mission YUVA.

During the meeting, 98 cases were placed before the Committee for consideration. After detailed scrutiny, 74 cases were approved, while the remaining cases were returned to the respective departments for further verification and submission of complete feasibility reports.

The meeting also took a comprehensive review of the district's overall progress under Mission YUVA, including the status of cases recommended to banks, sanctioned, disbursed and rejected, to assess the programme's implementation at the grassroots level.



The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to ensure rigorous verification of all cases to uphold transparency and accountability in the approval process. She reiterated the instructions of the Chief Secretary, underscoring the need to prioritise rehabilitated youth and victims of terror under Mission YUVA to enable sustainable livelihood generation.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner directed the bank authorities to analyse all rejected cases along with the reasons for rejection and to ensure timely resolution wherever feasible.

The meeting was attended by officers from DIC Bandipora, DSWO Bandipora, ARTO Bandipora, PCB Bandipora, JKEDI Bandipora and other concerned officers.

DC Budgam chairs meeting on Armed Forces Flag Day Observance

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat today chaired a meeting to review preparations and awareness activities regarding Armed Forces Flag Day, observed every year on 07 December.

The day holds national significance as it honours the supreme sacrifices, courage, and dedicated service of the Armed Forces personnel, while also mobilising public contributions for their welfare.

During the meeting, the DC highlighted that Armed Forces Flag Day serves as a collective opportunity for citizens to contribute generously to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF), which extends essential support to disabled ex-servicemen, war widows, and the children of martyrs. He urged all departments and the general public to actively



participate in the campaign and uphold the spirit of gratitude towards the nation's defenders.

The DC appreciated the Zila Sainik Welfare Board Budgam for its tremendous efforts and continued commitment towards the welfare of ex-servicemen and their families.

He acknowledged the Board's role in facilitating assistance, awareness, and fund raising initiatives across the district.

Further, the DC instructed the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Budgam to formulate a District Welfare Board to coordinate voluntary contributions and streamline welfare-related activities in connection with the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund. He emphasised that a dedicated district-level mechanism will help strengthen outreach and ensure sustained public participation.

Besides, ADC Budgam, ACD, DTO, all SDMs, DIO informatics, representatives of welfare board and other concerned officers were present in the meeting.

Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas-2025 concludes in Anantnag Tribals, other stakeholders participate with enthusiasm

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 17: The Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas-2025 celebrations, held from 01 to 15 November, concluded on Saturday in Anantnag with a district-level valedictory event attended by district officers and sectoral heads, who listened to the livestreaming of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's address from Dediapada, Gujarat.

Organised by the District Administration under the aegis of Rural Development Department (Nodal Agency), the outreach program witnessed enthusiastic participation from tribal community leaders and members besides other stakeholders across the district.

The celebrations featured a meaningful mix of awareness

programmes, cultural activities, educational events and environmental initiatives. The efforts aimed to honour the contributions of tribal freedom fighters while enrolling eligible tribal community members under various government welfare schemes related to health, education and social security.

Joint teams conducted extensive awareness drives in various blocks, enabling many tribal beneficiaries to register on the spot. A notable achievement was the participation of 1309 women, who received direct support and guidance.

Traditional Gujar-Bakerwal folk dances, cultural attire displays, poetry, storytelling and community performances held at various places brought local heritage to the forefront and provided a vibrant



platform for tribal children and youth to showcase their traditions and creativity.

Taking a leading role, Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) Salia organised a wide range of programmes, including painting and essay competitions, quizzes, poem recitations and storytelling sessions on tribal history and freedom fighters, in addition to national anthem singing and sports activities.

Students paid rich tributes to tribal icons, deepening their understanding and pride in national and tribal heritage.

To promote awareness about hygiene and environmental protection, community-led cleanliness and tree plantation drives were held in tribal pockets such as Lehendajan and other areas.

DLSA Bandipora Organises Multiple Awareness Programmes on MWPSA Act

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 17: Under the leadership of Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority), Justice Arun Palli, and Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Bandipora, in collaboration with the Education Department Bandipora and Social Welfare Department Bandipora, organised Legal Awareness Programmes on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007 at

multiple locations across the district.

The initiative was overseen by Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Shazia Tabasum, and Chairman DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge) Bandipora, Khalil Ahmad Choudhary, and conducted under the guidance of Secretary, District Legal Services Authority Bandipora Sheikh Babar Hussain.

The programmes were aimed at educating students, senior citizens, community members, and stakeholders about their legal rights and statutory protections under the Act.

The awareness programmes were held at several locations including



Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School, Plan Bandipora, Senior Citizens Home (Old Age Home), Bandipora, Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School, Mantrigram

Bandipora, Govt. Girls High School, Nadihal Bandipora, Babies Land Secondary School, Sumbal, J&K Educational and Social Welfare Trust, Sumbal, CDPO Office, Sumbal, Model Anganwadi Centre, Dawar, Gurez, Bal Vidyalaya Anganwadi Centre B, Dawar, Gurez and Army Goodwill School, Gurez.

The sessions focused on key topics including Legal rights of parents and senior citizens under the Act, Procedures for filing and enforcing

maintenance claims, the role of DLSA and TLSCs in providing free legal aid and ensuring access to justice, Promoting respect, dignity, care, and protection of senior citizens within families and communities.

Through these programmes, DLSA Bandipora and the TLSCs of Bandipora, Sumbal, and Gurez reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening legal literacy, ensuring social justice, and safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups.

The awareness drives witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, senior citizens, and social workers across the district.

HT EDITORIAL

Take practical steps to preserve fish species of Kashmir

World renowned water bodies of Kashmir like the Wullar Lake and river Jhelum were known for the different species of fish. Braving various odds the fishermen would cast their net in these water bodies and catch the fish. These fishermen would feel satisfied at the end of the day and the different species of the fish would reach fish markets of Srinagar and other districts of Kashmir valley. Thousands of families both directly and indirectly were involved with the fishing trade.

The situation has changed of late and as on date just a few species of fish are found in Wullar Lake and river Jhelum. The reasons for the same are multiple and the conservationists have raised alarm over the same. These people have expressed lament that despite repeated requests the government has not taken any worthwhile step to stem the rot. The conservationists say that if the situation remains the same then no species of fish would be left in the two water bodies.

The fishermen said that the cold-water fish species has been declining sharply due to water pollution, habitat loss and unregulated sand extraction. They have been maintaining that the Department of Fisheries has failed to conduct or make public a scientific investigation into the cause of this alarming event. The silence and inaction have further eroded public trust. In October, a disturbing incident of mass mortality of snow trout was reported across the several stretches of river Jhelum.

The fishermen have been demanding for a transparent inquiry and restoration of fish habitats before the entire aquatic system collapses. They say that rampant electric shock fishing has emerged as one of the gravest threats to aquatic biodiversity in the region. The use of electric currents to kill fish en masse destroys breeding populations, wipes out juvenile fish and leads to long-term ecological imbalance. They have referred to electric shock fishing as ecological terrorism saying that it is a crime not just against nature, but against the communities who live by these waters.

Encroachments within the Wullar Lake have severely altered its hydrology. These illegal structures restrict fish movement, intensify siltation and degrade the lake's natural resilience. The result is a shrinking wetland, rising pollution and collapsing fish productivity. The fishermen community has been pushed to the wall. It is important that demolition of illegal encroachments is carried out and the officials need to be made accountable since they have failed to curb violations.

Sports Activities Are Vital For The Youth In The Present Era



Promoting sports activities sends a clear and fair message to the people of the country to participate, stay healthy, and always smile, regardless of the circumstances. It is very impressive that the government administration is interested in sports. Every August 29th, we celebrate Sports Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand. On this day, schools, colleges, and universities are packed with students and teachers who celebrate by participating in various sports activities and sending a message to the entire country about the value of sports



Our young generation has great potential in every field. alhumdulillah! Every day, we witness how our youth brings laurels like in cricket, chess, boxing, carrom, bodybuilding, in the agriculture sector, and pisciculture, agriculture, writing world, artisan sector, which means our youth is engaged and trying to try their fortune. This is really a great sign for us all.

What should be avoided to achieve a milestone? We know health is wealth, when it comes their turn of health. We should never compromise. Always take care of our health, always suggest a healthy lifestyle to others, and always try your best to keep healthy and take part in the country's development.

Being involved in sports activities can reduce the number of health-related issues.

Sports may support your health-related issues and keep your fitness at its best. When we are not physically fit, it means we have to be ready for several health-related problems. Like stress, excessive belly fat, unnecessary cholesterol, the risk of heart-related diseases, the weakness of general body parts, fatigue, insomnia, and many more health-related issues. If you ask me, "What is exercise?" My answer is that every body movement is an exercise. So then, what is the need for engaging in other activities? Being engaged in different activities may involve our whole body, which feels quite delightful and uplifting.

There are hundreds of sports activities being played around the world, and the same activities are being played in the country as well. In our country, there are a few games that are very popular among the people, and most of them are likely to take part in them. Cricket is one of the prominent sports in India. It's very pleasing that India has the richest cricket board in the world. The BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) has a market capitalization of Rs 18,000 crore. The BCCI held the IPL (Indian Premier League) across the world, with top-class cricket players taking part in the mega event. There are about ten teams that participate in the Mega League every year. I mentioned in an article about the net worth of the BCCI that sports are now becoming a profession. You can get name recognition, fame, and whatever else you want in sports.

India has great records in different sports at the international level, and there are great and renowned sports personalities that the country has produced.

Such as Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, and others from the cricket world; Sania Mirza, Mahesh Bhupathi, and others from badminton; Bhutia (football), and many more who have represented India at an international level and won prestigious awards for the country. Every country has a separate sports budget for the fiscal year, and every country promotes sports activities at the district, state, and country levels; only the lucky ones get to the international level.

Promoting sports activities sends a clear and fair message to the people of the country to participate, stay healthy, and always smile, regardless of the circumstances. It is very impressive that the government administration is interested in sports. Every August 29th, we celebrate Sports Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand. On this day, schools, colleges, and universities are packed with students and teachers who celebrate by participating in various sports activities and sending a message to the entire country about the value of sports.

The government's administration is heavily focused on sports infrastructure and promoting it among the nation's youth. Sports stadiums constructed at every panchayat level and laced with adequate infrastructure, like levelling off the ground and fencing the stadium, etc., are quite an appreciable step and need to be considered as part of the development of the sports sector. Every year, a large number of athletes from various sports are chosen at the national and international levels. In Kashmir, several leagues are being held by the sports departments and other agencies; this has helped produce great sports personalities in J&K.

Benefits of sports activities: Sports activities are quite interesting, and everyone wants to participate in and play them. Sports activities keep us healthy and happy, strengthen our body parts, and keep us happy and stress-free. Sports activities are the best alternative against drug addiction among the youth of the country, as sports activities reduce the use of drugs, which has some scientific logic. Sports activities are the best healthy package for your loved ones and kith and kin, as they have several health benefits and keep your children away from drug addiction and other wayward activities.

Sahilmanzoor0411990@gmail.com

Why Pinarayi is Admired Everywhere?

A Tale Beyond Politics



SIDHARTH P K

The right incredible Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan who is known for his extraordinary outputs as the state's administrator, uses skillful mix of ideas to innovate and fulfill the dreams of Malayali's. It is striking to note that a humble man of his own origin could occupy such a capacity by his own means and ways. Pinarayi is admired for his sharp political acumen and his flexibility to in highlight-



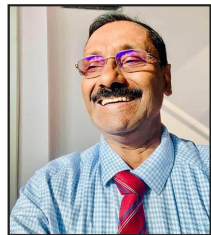
ing the key issues of the state and to tackle them.

To be wise like the incumbent chief minister who only approves development related tasks in the government-levels in ordering of business. He is man with a clear and formidable vision who sees nothing but the future, is like an open book to read and get inspired. The journey begins as very simple at the grass-root level turning each disaster into fabulous investment for a brighter Kerala.

Showing Kerala's might in the fight against covid 19, the state has already scripted history in every sense of its uniqueness. It was a victory to the administrative capacity carefully monitored by the chief minister himself. To be a proud Keralite belonging to the ruler ship of Shri Pinyari Vijayan, makes oneself with a huge applause for the well-being he addressed in every attempt of his own governance.

Writer/ Poet/ Teacher

Fiction Still An Incomplete Page In The Literary Book of Kashmir



DR RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

Rahim Rehbar is a highly regarded contemporary Kashmiri fiction writer, as well as a playwright and poet. He is a prominent figure in Kashmiri, Urdu, and English literature, known for his significant contributions to the short story genre. Rehbar has authored 61 books across Kashmiri, Urdu, and English, which include 11 acclaimed collections of Kashmiri short stories. Rahim Rehbar is widely recognized for his short story collection Tasveer. His stories often revolve around the everyday struggles of Kashmiri people, weaving together personal narratives with broader social commentary.

In Tasveer, the title story explores the metaphor of a picture as a frozen moment in time, symbolizing memory and loss. Themes of nostalgia, displacement, and the fragility of human relationships dominate his work. Rehbar's writing style is marked by lyrical prose and a deep sensitivity to the rhythms of Kashmiri life. His participation in literary conferences and camps underscores his role as a cultural ambassador, bringing Kashmiri short fiction into wider recognition. He is noted for his distinct diction and idiom, often writing shorter, or "mini" stories. His work often draws inspiration from ordinary life events and transforms them into readable literary substance. His stories capture the essence of Kashmiri society and culture. His fiction works have been translated into multiple languages and presented at various literary forums and festivals

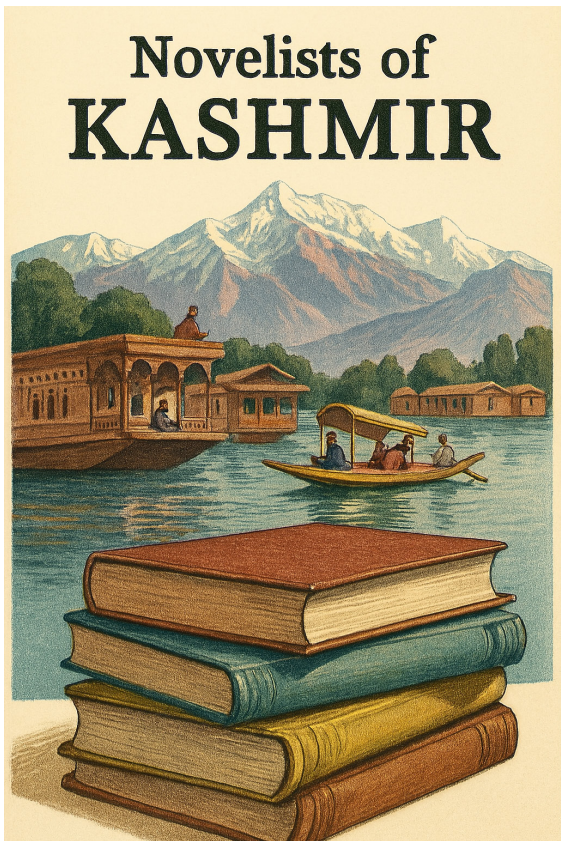
Kashmir is primarily considered a land of poetry because its rich history and stunning natural beauty have inspired generations of poets to weave spiritual, romantic, and politically-charged verses. From mystic Sufi saints to modern-day poets addressing conflict, Kashmiri poetry is a reflection of the region's complex identity, cultural heritage, and collective soul. Poetry is a way for Kashmiris to mirror their spiritual depth, cultural heritage, and individual experiences to the world. Early poets like Nund Rishi and Lal Ded used poetry to explore spirituality, influenced by Sufi mysticism and Kashmir Shavism..Poets like Habba Khatoon and Rasool Mir or Saifi Sapori are celebrated for their romantic and lyrical verses, reflecting themes of love and longing. In recent decades, especially since the 1990s, poets have increasingly used verse to reflect the political struggles, violence, and the "excruciating confrontation" with their homeland, as seen in the work of Agha Shahid Ali.. Today, a new generation of poets is using platforms like ' The Kashmir Tales ' to document their experiences and ensure that "resistance literature" and their stories are not lost. In the landscape of contemporary literature, the short story as a literary genre is emerging to be the main trend of contemporary literature. Fiction as a genre has undergone a remarkable renaissance. Once considered a stepping stone for novelists or a form relegated to literary magazines, the short story has reclaimed its place as a powerful medium for exploring the complexities of modern life.

Writers of the modern times have embraced brevity not as limitation but as liberation, crafting narratives that capture the essence of human experience in a few thousand words. The modern short story writer is not merely a storyteller but a cultural cartographer, mapping the anxieties, joys, and contradictions of the twenty-first century with precision and artistry. The literary landscape of Kashmir has always been enriched by voices that capture the region's cultural, political, and emotional complexities. Among the contemporary short story writers, Rahim Rehbar, Mushtaq Ahmad Mushtaq, Dildar Ashraf Shah, and Mahfooza Jan stand out for their contributions to Kashmiri and Urdu literature. Their stories reflect not only the lived realities of Kashmir but also universal themes of identity, resilience, and human connection.

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Mushtaq Ahmad born in Budgam in 1961, is one of the most celebrated Kashmiri short story writers. His collection Aakh (The Scar) won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2018, cementing his place in modern Kashmiri literature. The story collection Aakh published in 2012, consisted of eighteen short stories. In 2014, he was also awarded Best Book award by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages for one of his uncertain books. The stories in Aakh deal with the scars—both literal and metaphorical—left by conflict and personal trauma. The title story, The Scar, portrays a woman's repeated attempts to clean her veranda, symbolizing the persistence of memory and the difficulty of erasing pain. Mushtaq's themes revolve around resilience, the psychological impact of violence, and the endurance of ordinary people. His narrative style blends realism with allegory, making his stories resonate beyond Kashmir. His earlier works, such as Yeth Waveh Hali, also reflect his ability to capture the nuances of Kashmiri society. Mushtaq Ahmad is a dynamic personality, a writer, broadcaster and journalist. As deputy director of Radio Kashmir Srinagar for news department and previously as a newsreader at Radio Kashmir he has been promoting literary works of contemporary writers and his works are going on.

Professor Mehfooza Jan with an academic background of History represents the emerging generation



Dildar Ashraf Shah, a renowned drama artist and author of over 10 books, is dedicated to preserving and promoting the Kashmiri language. He is known for his play-script Tsange Gayeh Tseteh, which won recognition from the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages. While primarily a playwright, Shah's contributions to short fiction and dramatic storytelling highlight themes of social justice, cultural identity, and the struggles of marginalized voices. His stories and scripts often explore the tension between tradition and modernity, reflecting the evolving Kashmiri society

of Kashmiri female storytellers. Her work, including contributions like Kuliyati Soch Kral and her recognition among Kashmir's female story writers Kashmir Life, reflects a commitment to preserving cultural heritage while also addressing contemporary issues. Jan's stories often highlight the role of women in Kashmiri society, exploring themes of empowerment, tradition, and the negotiation of identity in a patriarchal context. Her literary voice is distinct for its blending of historical reflection with modern feminist concerns. By engaging with the legacy of Kashmiri poets and storytellers, she situates her short fiction within a broader cultural continuum. Her work is part of a growing movement of Kashmiri women writers who are reshaping Urdu and Kashmiri fiction, bringing fresh perspectives to the literary scene. Mahfooza Jan has published several collections of Kashmiri short stories, including Sheenemaain (1990), Atnarikh Tsainj (1992), Shihij Wath (1998), and Pothtshoe (2000). Her work in fiction is a major focus of her literary career. Her short stories and critical essays delve into themes of identity, memory, mysticism, and social change, offering narratives that reflect the cultural soul of Kashmir. She is a respected figure and a role model for women writers in the region. The Sahitya Akademi has organized events specifically for "Story Readings by Eminent Kashmiri short story writer Mehfooza Jan" (Kathasandhi program). In addition to her fiction, she has authored or edited numerous books and research papers and is known as a translator who has made Kashmiri literature accessible to a wider audience. Her work is considered significant enough to be the subject of academic comparative studies, alongside other contemporary women writers from Kashmir, highlighting her importance to Indian literature.

Two new Kashmiri novels Indrim Zarb and Ajab Malik, written by renowned broadcaster, writer, dramatist, and critic Dr. Sohan Kaul, were released recently by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages at Tagore Hall, Srinagar. A grand ceremony marked the unveiling of Dr. Sohan Kaul's novels, bringing his published works to a record total of 16 novels, making him the state's most prolific novelist. The novel Indrim Zarb explores the life of a woman facing an existential crisis, who, on her deathbed, begins to rediscover her Pandit identity. Her story unfolds as a reflection of the traumatic exile in Jammu, where many Pandits suffered from sunstroke, snake bites,

and mental stress, resulting in significant memory loss. Prof. Bashir Bashir, presenting a paper on Indrim Zarb, described it as a "pathetic novel" and a "true literature of exile" that captures the deep cultural attachment and existential struggle of the main character. Professor Shad Ramzan analysed the second novel, Ajab Malik and focused on the theme of absurd nature of human existence and the struggles of a writer grappling with creation and resilience, ultimately leading to a descent into madness. It is described as a philosophical novel that pushed the boundaries of Kashmiri fiction. He highlighted the novel's use of magical realism as a valuable addition to Kashmiri literature. Notable Kashmiri short story writers include pioneers like Akhtar Mohiuddin, Dinanath Nadim, and Somnath Zutshi, alongside contemporary figures such as Dheeba Nazir, Harikrishna Kaul, and Neerja Mattoo. These writers have contributed to the genre through realistic social dramas, explorations of human emotions, and reflections on the Kashmiri experience. Akhtar Mohiuddin is considered a major figure in modern Kashmiri literature, Mohiuddin is known for short story collections like Sath Sangar and Sonzal, and for writing Dod Dag, the first novel in Kashmiri. He is praised for his profound portrayal of human nature and societal issues.

Dildar Ashraf Shah, a renowned drama artist and author of over 10 books, is dedicated to preserving and promoting the Kashmiri language. He is known for his play-script Tsange Gayeh Tseteh, which won recognition from the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages. While primarily a playwright, Shah's contributions to short fiction and dramatic storytelling highlight themes of social justice, cultural identity, and the struggles of marginalized voices. His stories and scripts often explore the tension between tradition and modernity, reflecting the evolving Kashmiri society. Tsange Gayeh Tseteh in particular addresses issues of human dignity and resilience, using dramatic narrative to underscore the emotional depth of Kashmiri life. Shah's work demonstrates how short stories and plays can intersect, creating powerful narratives that resonate with audiences both within and outside Kashmir. Through his literary and theatrical contributions, he has played a significant role in enriching Kashmiri culture and heritage.

Dinanath Nadim key figure in modern Kashmiri poetry, also wrote short stories and helped the progressive writers movement in Kashmir. Along with Dinanath Nadim, Somnath Zutshi is credited with writing one of the first Kashmiri short stories, published in 1955. Another prominent figure in the early development of the short story form in the language is Ali Mohammad Lone. Harikrishna Kaul started his career in Hindi but became a major short story writer in Kashmiri, known for works like Tsakravyuh which chronicles human dilemmas. While Neerja Mattoo writes in English, she is also a significant figure as a translator of Kashmiri short stories and has published collections of translated works. Dheeba Nazir a contemporary writer whose work is featured in collections of modern Kashmiri short fiction. Sofi Gulam Mohammad is known for realistic dramas that reflect Kashmiri society, with stories like "Paper Tigers". Rattan Lal Shant explores the pain of losing one's homeland in stories such as "Moss Floating on Water". Other contemporary voices include writers like Dr. Nightat Nazar, Sayeda Nasreen Naqash, Zafar Khokhar, Dr. Nilofar Naz Nahvi, Shabnam bint Rashid, and Rafia Wali, who are expanding the scope of contemporary Kashmiri literature. The fictional output of Kashmir focus on the struggles of the people . Today people from outside of Kashmir are taking keen interest in Kashmiri writers of fiction. Fatimah Asghar who focused on the struggles of its people rightly wrote : "Everyone wants Kashmir but no one wants Kashmiris." Literary works by authors like Siddhartha Gigoo also explore the psychological and emotional landscape of the region, using natural phenomena like penumbra and umbra to represent internal state in the 'The Lion of Kashmir published by Rupa Publication. Award-winning author Siddhartha Gigoo's The Lion of Kashmir is not just a story of a father and daughter's intrepid struggles in Kashmir, but also the story of present-day Kashmir itself. Commandant Abdul Aziz, Special Forces, Kashmir is a legendary police officer in the valley, albeit not always for good reasons. And then one day he disappears. His daughter, Zooni, a human rights activist has to return home for her missing father. Bizarre events unfold in the ensuing night at a safe house where she's forced to stay and where she comes face-to-face with the most disturbing truth of her life, and of the lives of her father and half-brother. Through the eyes of the daughter are seen the dilemma and the moral crisis of a legendary police officer torn between his past and present, duty and desertion, loyalty and treachery, and right and wrong. Still we wait for more courageous novels from the Kashmiri writers of fiction where we may get the real stories of the people of Kashmir. Many Sahitya Akademi writers have graced Kashmiri literary landscape but still we have miles to go before we can say that the full page of fiction is now written. Hello Swanky's poignant words capture the region's often incomplete narrative : "Kashmir is a page in the wind, half-written and wholly longed for;". Readers of fiction now eagerly wait for the fully written page in Kashmir.

About the Author
International Tagore Awardee Professor Ratan Bhattacharjee , the author of Six Feet Distance (USA 2023 winner of the Book of the Year Award 2025) is known as ' Oleander Poet ' for his poetic best seller 'Oleander Blooms. Email profdratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com

Compounds in Coffee May Help Lower Type 2 Diabetes Risk, Study Finds

The findings of a new study suggest that people who regularly drink caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee benefit from some of the beverage's naturally occurring polyphenols.

Experts say the amount of coffee a person can tolerate varies, and you should avoid adding sugar or cream or eating unhealthy breakfast foods with your coffee.

A new research analysis suggests that black coffee, whether caffeinated or decaffeinated, may help lower the chances of developing type 2 diabetes.

Researchers affiliated with universities in the Republic of Korea say people who drink 3 to 5 cups of black coffee per day benefit from natural compounds known as polyphenols.

The findings were recently published in the International Journal of Molecular Sciences.

For the study, the researchers compiled data from 149 publications to examine coffee's effects on the metabolic forces involved in the development of type 2 diabetes. They focused on five hydroxycinnamic acids found in coffee and analyzed the effects these polyphenols had on the small intestines, pancreas, liver, muscle, and tissue.

The analysis shows that daily consumption of black coffee can help modulate blood sugar levels, suppress inflammation, enhance insulin sensitivity, provide antioxidant properties, and improve glucose metabolism.

The results were similar for both caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee, so the benefits appeared to be derived from compounds other than caffeine. This included a 20–30% lower risk of type 2 diabetes incidence for regular coffee drinkers.

The scientists say further research is necessary, but the benefits of daily coffee consumption appear to be clear.

"Coffee and its bioactive compounds, including chlorogenic acid and its hydroxycinnamic acid derivatives... have significant potential in the prevention and management of (type 2 diabetes)," the researchers wrote.

Zhaoping Li, MD, a professor of medicine and the chief of the Division of Clinical Nutrition at the University of California, Los Angeles, agreed. Li wasn't involved in the study.

"Drinking coffee provides natural benefits," she told Healthline. "You can make coffee part of your healthy lifestyle."

Marilyn Tan, MD, a clinical associate professor of medicine at Stanford University in California, had some cautions about



the findings. Tan was likewise not involved in the study.

She said the findings are notable, but added that some of the research reviewed was conducted in lab settings. She said that observational studies don't always account for external factors such as coffee drinkers' overall health.

"(The research) is a very bold statement, as a 20–30% risk reduction is very large and meaningful," Tan told Healthline. "Interestingly, whether the coffee was caffeinated or not did not seem to make a difference, which suggests it's not the caffeine driving the benefit, but rather the other components of the coffee."

How does coffee impact type 2 diabetes risk?

Li explains that coffee is a natural product. If you drink it black, it's basically just coffee beans and hot water.

Li said coffee beans contain about 200 compounds, many of which have potential health benefits. In some cases, the mixture of compounds is beneficial.

Many of these compounds are also similar to the ones found in certain spices. "Humans can take advantage of what this (coffee) plant provides," Li said. "The health benefits of black coffee seem to be obvious."

Previous research has indicated that there are other health benefits to regular coffee drinking.

Another recent study reported that regular consumption of black coffee can reduce a person's overall mortality risk as well as their risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

Other studies have associated coffee with improved brain health, lowering the risk of depression, and protecting against certain liver conditions.

Our free weekly micro-lessons can empower you with wisdom you need to make healthy changes for your diabetes. Short and easy to follow tips for the week ahead.

Li cautioned people to be wary of their caffeine intake if they are drinking 3 to 5 cups of coffee per day.

She said 3 cups daily is probably fine for most people, but some folks may not be able to handle the caffeine load from 4 or 5 servings per day.

People with certain heart conditions should also carefully monitor their caffeine intake. "Everybody is different," Li said.

Tan shared similar concerns. "Three to five cups of coffee is a significant amount," she said. "If the coffee contains caffeine, excess caffeine may also have other unwanted symptoms, such as headaches, jitteriness, nausea, (and) insomnia. In addition, with certain health conditions (pregnancy, heart disease), this much caffeine may cause physical harm."

Li said those who can't tolerate a lot of caffeine can simply drink decaffeinated coffee. "You remove the caffeine, but the rest of the compounds are still there," she said.

People can also drink tea or use spices in their cooking instead of sugar and salt to obtain some of these health benefits, Li added.

Li said the most important way to derive health benefits from coffee is to drink it black without adding sugar or cream.

She advised against unhealthy breakfast foods with coffee, such as sugary donuts.

Li noted that coffee can be particularly helpful if it's a substitute for other types of liquids, particularly those high in sugar.

"Black coffee is beneficial, especially if you are replacing sugary drinks with it," she said.

Join our Type 2 Diabetes newsletter and get a free resource Twice per week you'll get tips on nutrition, weight management, and the latest on condition breakthroughs.

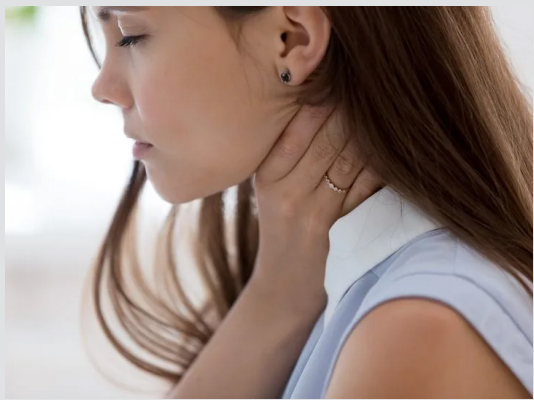
Courtesy Healthline

Highly infectious new Covid Stratus takes over UK with unique symptom

A new strain of Covid is rapidly spreading across the world and has been found in the UK - becoming dominant in weeks - with experts saying it is evading immunity. The Covid strain, formally known as XFG and nicknamed Stratus, is said to have one unique symptom that helps identify which variant you have. Stratus cases have boomed in just one month, thanks to its ability to infect people who have previously had Covid and those who had injections. Data from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), shows Stratus has now become the dominant Covid strain in England.

In May 10 per cent of cases were Stratus, by the middle of June that was 40 per cent. There are two variants of Stratus circulating - XFG and XFG.3.

Dr Kaywaan Khan, Harley Street GP and Founder of Hannah London Clinic, told Cosmopolitan UK: "Unlike other variants, Stratus has certain mutations in the spike protein which could help it evade antibodies



developed from prior infections or vaccinations."

Dr Khan said Stratus does not appear to people 'more ill' than previous strains. But he said there is one unique symptom, adding: "One of the most noticeable symptoms of the Stratus variant is hoarseness, which includes a scratchy or raspy voice." Dr Khan said in general, the symptoms of Stratus tend to be 'mild to moderate'.

Dr Khan said: "If you test positive, Stratus is highly contagious, and it is advised to stay home and isolate to avoid spreading to others."

Professor Lawrence Young, a virologist at Warwick University, told MailOnline: "The increased competitiveness of XFG and XFG.3 is likely due to new spike mutations which make these variants more able to evade the immune response. Given that immunity to Covid is waning in the population due to a decline in uptake of the spring booster jab and the reduction of Covid infections in recent months, more people will be susceptible to infection with XFG and XFG.3."

Courtesy Healthline

New Covid Variant 'Stratus' Spreads with Unique Symptom

It's been five years since the coronavirus outbreak, and while vaccines have made things safer for those more vulnerable, Covid is still something we ought to look out for and be made aware of.

The World Health Organisation has issued a statement saying the XFG variant, also dubbed 'Stratus', will likely become the dominant variant soon, with symptoms ever so slightly different to the classic heavy cough and tiredness we've come to associate with Covid.

Stratus is thought to have become the dominant strain in India and is spreading across the world. GISAID, a global initiative which tracks variants, found a sharp increase in samples containing the Stratus variant when examining data from 38 countries. The company reported 22.7% of all samples tested were Stratus positive, up 7.4% from the week before.

"Unlike other variants, Stratus has certain mutations in the spike

protein which could help it evade antibodies developed from prior infections or vaccinations," Dr Kaywaan Khan, Harley Street GP and Founder of Hannah London Clinic, tells Cosmopolitan UK. "Despite this, it is important to mention that Stratus seems to be no worse than earlier Omicron variants in terms of illness, hospitalisations, or deaths."

And before anyone starts panicking, the WHO have also stated it believes "currently approved vaccines are still effective against any symptomatic or severe disease".

Here's what we know about Stratus Covid variant so far.

As Dr Khan explains: "Coronaviruses are a group of viruses, named after their crown-like appearance, where there are many strains including those that cause the common cold illness. Stratus Covid variant, also referred to as XFG, is a new subvariant of Omicron that has been circulating around the globe and now accounts



for 25% of COVID cases (as of May 2025)."

By now, we're likely all familiar with the more general Covid symptoms of a temperature, loss of taste or smell, and a cough.

However, there is one prominent new thing to look out for when it comes to Stratus.

"One of the most noticeable

symptoms of the Stratus variant is hoarseness, which includes a scratchy or raspy voice," explains Dr Khan. "Though the symptoms manifest differently and vary from person to person, the symptoms of Stratus tend to be mild to moderate. "Regardless of whether the symptoms mimic a cold or flu, testing continues to be the critical

step in eliminating the possibility of a coronavirus infection."

Things have certainly changed a lot since the days of lockdown - but if you're feeling unwell and experiencing any of the above symptoms, it's important to take a Covid test. They are no longer free, but you can pick them up from retailers such as Amazon and Boots.

"If you test positive, Stratus is highly contagious, and it is advised to stay home and isolate to avoid spreading to others," Dr Khan says. "During recovery, focus on getting plenty of rest and drinking fluids regularly."

He adds that if symptoms worsen after a few days or you are in a high-risk group, then it is important to book in for a consultation with your GP to get personalised medical advice. If your symptoms become severe, such as difficulty breathing or chest pain, it is important to seek urgent medical attention.

Courtesy Healthline

Forever Chemicals May Disrupt Brain Development

Despite its reputation as a safer chemical, PFHxA—a short-chain PFAS—may cause long-term behavioral changes when exposure occurs early in development. Researchers found that male mice exposed to PFHxA in utero and through breastfeeding displayed increased anxiety, memory deficits, and lower activity levels.

These effects were not seen in female mice, echoing patterns found in male-biased neurodevelopmental disorders like autism and ADHD. The findings raise concerns about the neurodevelopmental risks of PFHxA, challenging assumptions that short-chain PFAS are harmless. "Forever chemicals" or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) have been widely used in consumer and industrial products for the better part of a century, but do not break down in the natural environment.

One PFAS, perfluorohexanoic acid or PFHxA, is made up of a shorter chain of molecules and is thought to have less of an impact on human health.



New research from the Del Monte Institute for Neuroscience at the University of Rochester suggests otherwise, finding that early life exposure to PFHxA may increase anxiety-related behaviors and memory deficits in male mice.

"Although these effects were mild, finding behavioral effects only in males was reminiscent of the many neurodevelopmental disorders that are male-biased," said Ania Majewska, PhD, professor of Neuroscience and senior author of the study out today in the Euro-

pean Journal of Neuroscience. Research has shown, males are more often diagnosed with neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism and ADHD. "This finding suggests that the male brain might be more vulnerable to environmental insults during neurodevelopment."

Researchers exposed mice to PFHxA through a mealworm treat given to the mother during gestation and lactation. They found that the male mice exposed to higher doses of PFHxA in utero and through the mother's breastmilk showed mild developmental changes, including a decrease in activity levels, increased anxiety-like behaviors, and memory deficits. They did not find any behavioral effects in females that were exposed to PFHxA in the same way.

"Finding that developmental exposure to PFHxA has long-term behavioral consequences in a mammalian model is concerning when considering short-chain PFAS are thought to be safer alternatives to the legacy PFAS that have been phased-out of production," said Elizabeth Plunk, PhD ('25), an alumna of the Toxicology graduate program at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry and first author of the study.

"Understanding the impacts of PFHxA on the developing brain is critical when proposing regulations around this chemical. Hopefully, this is the first of many studies evaluating the neurotoxicity of PFHxA."

Courtesy Healthline

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Reviews Disaster Preparedness, Security Measures



HT NEWS DESK

KATRA, NOV 17: A comprehensive review of the disaster management preparedness and security measures pertaining to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi pilgrimage was conducted today in a meeting presided by Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB), at the Spiritual Growth Centre, Katra.

The meeting was attended by the Addl. CEO, SMVDSB; SSP Reasi; Jt. CEO, SMVDSB; SDMs Katra and Bhawan; SP Katra; Dy. Commandant, CRPF; Assistant CEOs; Tehsildar, SMVDSB; SDPOs Katra and Bhawan; ACF, SMVDSB; and representatives from the Fire and Emergency Services, NDRF and other allied agencies.

The CEO underscored the importance of conducting mock drills at regular intervals to ensure that the Shrine Board's Disaster Management teams, in coordination with all stakeholder agencies, remain fully prepared to respond swiftly and effectively to any emergency. He instructed representatives of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) to organize such drills frequently to further enhance readiness and inter-agency coordination.

The representative of the Fire and Emergency Services was directed to undertake a comprehensive fire safety audit of the track and Shrine area to strengthen existing fire safety mechanisms. Emphasizing strict adherence to the prescribed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the CEO reiterated the need for meticulous compliance in all aspects of disaster preparedness.

To bolster the Shrine Board's Disaster Management capabilities, the CEO directed that a thorough inventory audit of Disaster Management Stores located along the track and within the Bhawan area shall be carried out and the stores will be replenished and upgraded, wherever required. He further directed that the functionality and operational readiness of all equipment housed in these stores be rigorously examined.

The CEO called upon the concerned agencies to expedite the verification process of individuals employed in local shops operating along the track and within Katra town.

Highlighting the central role of the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC), the CEO emphasized

its full-scale utilization for effective disaster management and operational coordination. He noted that the ICCC functions as the central hub for real-time monitoring, communication, and decision-making, enabling seamless coordination among various agencies during both routine and emergency situations. The movement of vehicles within the Shrine area also came under detailed discussion. The CEO conveyed necessary instructions to the concerned quarters.

The security agencies were requested to undertake a thorough review of the functionality and operational readiness of the security equipment currently in use. The CEO stressed that regular assessments are essential to ensure optimal performance of all devices. He also directed the immediate procurement of any critical or urgently required security equipment.

The CEO also urged the security agencies to ensure the deployment of additional personnel to provide fool-proof security within the Shrine area and its adjoining zones, thereby reinforcing the safety of all pilgrims and maintaining a secure environment throughout the pilgrimage route.

Kashmir Virtual Traffic Court disposes over 2 lakh challans, recovers Rs 7 cr in 14 months

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: In a significant stride toward modernising traffic enforcement and judicial delivery in Jammu and Kashmir, the Kashmir Virtual Traffic Court has disposed of more than 2.1 lakh challans and recovered over 77 crore in fines within a span of just 14 months.

Officials say the disposal rate marks one of the highest recorded in Srinagar's traffic adjudication history.

According to figures accessed by Kashmir News Service (KNS), Special Mobile Magistrate (Traffic), Srinagar, presided over by Touseef Ahmad Magray—2,10,117 challans were processed from September 2024 to November 17, 2025. During the same period, the court recovered 77,07,06,850 in fines, signalling an “unprecedented level” of compliance by traffic violators and effective adjudication through digital platforms.

The virtual court, established to expedite the disposal of traffic cases and reduce footfall in physical courtrooms, has emerged as a key institution in promoting road safety and accountability in Kashmir. Officials note that the high disposal rate reflects improved coordination between the judiciary and traffic authorities, the rising use of online payment systems, and increased public awareness regarding traffic regulations.

Special Mobile Magistrate (Traffic) Touseef Ahmad Magray said the milestone was a result of sustained teamwork and the public's willingness to shift to digital modes of payment.

“The dedication of our judicial staff and the support of the traffic police have been central to this achievement. The convenience of virtual hearings and online fine payments has encouraged violators to settle cases promptly,” Magray said. He added that the rapid disposal of challans has contributed to better road discipline across the Valley.

The court has also been working closely with enforcement agencies to ensure consistency in traffic regulation and quicker follow-up on violations detected through CCTV networks, e-challans, and on-ground policing. Officials said the virtual model has significantly reduced delays that previously burdened the system, ensuring that violators are held accountable without procedural bottlenecks.

Expressing gratitude to the public, Magray urged citizens to continue observing traffic norms to ensure safer roads for commuters. “Public cooperation is essential. We encourage everyone to follow rules not just to avoid fines but to ensure safer travel for all,” he said.

The statement was issued by the Office of the Special Mobile Magistrate (Traffic), Srinagar. (KNS)

Sanat Nagar flyover to open next week after load testing: CE R&B

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, NOV 17: The long-awaited Sanat Nagar flyover, the final critical bridge on the Srinagar Bypass corridor is expected to be opened for traffic next week, Chief Engineer R&B Central Kashmir, Sushil Kumar, said on Monday.

Speaking to Kashmir News Service (KNS), Kumar said the project has entered its final phase and is currently awaiting mandatory load testing, a process that takes around four days. “The bridge is in the final stage. Once the load testing is completed, we are hopeful that it will be thrown open to the public within a week,” he said.

Kumar acknowledged that the project had seen multiple delays due to “unavoidable obstructions,” but confirmed that all such issues have now been resolved. “Those obstructions have been removed. Finishing touches are being given, and the bridge will soon be ready for traffic,” he said.

The installation of poles and lighting is also underway, with only minor works pending before the structure becomes fully operational, he added.

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KALANTRA / KREERI

Subject: Application of MOHD SHAREEF KATARI S/O GH MOHD KATARI for the issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar and Bakerwal)in favour of self ,IQBAL HUSSAIN , AJAZ AHMAD , IRSHAD AHMAD S/O MOHD SHAREEF KATARI

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and Gojer community, having annual income is 156000 in wards (One lack Fifty Six Thousand)the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1.... MOHAMMAD SHAREEF KATARI SELF 58 years labour
- 2.... RANI BEGUM wife 57 house wife
- 3....AJAZ AHMAD son 26 years student
- 4..IRSHAD AHMAD Son 25 years student

The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self

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

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application of SHOWKAT AHMAD SOFI S/O AB KARIM SOFI R/O SHEIKHPORA for the issuance of income Dependent certificate

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above in this context a report sought from patwari halqa concerned and reveals that applicant family consist of 05 members and the Annual income of applicant family from all sources consist of Rs. 840,000 in words Eight Lack Forty Thousand only

Moreover family structure of the applicant is as under
1... KHADIJA BEGUM mother 90 years pensioner //
2...MYMOONA BEGUM wife 40 years H/W married
3...AABIRO SHOWKAT daughter 13 years student unmarried
4....KATIFA SHOWKAT daughter 08 years student. //

It is further submitted that SHOWKAT AH SOFI S/O AB KARIM SOFI is Govt Employee by profession and is sole earning. in the said family,the applicant has applied for Issuance of Dependent certificate in favour of KHADIJA BEGUM for Caregiver

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

Public Notice

My daughters date of Birth has been wrongly written as 18/11/2012 in her school regard while her correct Date of Birth is 18/06/2012 which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file his /her objection in the office GOVT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL MANAGAM Wagoora within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....MOHD SHAFI MIR , F/O ...AZMAT SHAFI R/O ...MANAGAM , ZONEWAGOORA

Public Notice

I have lost my School Discharge certificate at somewhere .Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of GOVT MIDDLE SCHOOL PETHPORA KLANTRA BALA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name...NELOFAR HAMID D/O .ABDUL HAMID BHAT R/O ...KALANTRA BALA ZONE ...CHANDOOSA

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Office of the Executive Engineer REW Division Pulwama

Notice Inviting Tenders | e-NIT No: 130/2025-26 | Dated: 14-11-2025

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

Call Ist

S. No.	Name of the Work	Block	Estimated /Adv. Cost (In lacs)	Cost of tender documents (In Rupees)	EMD (in %)
1	Construction of Community Sanitary Complex near Masjid Sharief Khan Mohalla Gang Pati Gulshanpora	Aripal	3.00	200/-	2%
2	Construction of Community Sanitary Complex near Masjid e Ahle Hadees at Panchayat Halqa Kangan	Pulwama	3.00	200%	2%

Class of Contractor: DEE

Time of completion: 30 Days

Major Head: SBM G

Position of A/A: Accorded

Position of T/S: Accorded

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	14-11-2025
2.	Online Bid submission Start Date	14-11-2025 from 06:55 PM
3.	Online Bid Submission End Date	21-11-2025 up to 06:55 PM
4.	Date and time of opening of Online Bids	22-11-2025 at 09:00 AM or any convenient day In the office of the Executive Engineer REW Pulwama
5.	Note: Fee Receipt and EMD shall be deposited after the financial bids opened. Incase The original Tender Document Fee Receipt and EMD is not Deposited within 5 days after the Financial Bids Opened for all responsive bidders Who have participated online, the Department shall take action as per Rules.	

Special Condition 01:

Only the eligible contractors of respective Panchayat Halqa shall take part in the tendering process for works under District Capex with Advertised Cost 3.0 Lacs or below for District Capex works only. Bidders must upload any document viz residential certificate/ Adhar Card/ Ration Card/Electricity Bill showing panchayat name, as residence proof that he/she is residing the respective Panchayat Halqa (Applicable for DEE Class contractors in call Ist only).

SC02: Contractors Strictly not eligible

The Bidders who had participated in 2023-24/2024-25 and has not completed the works within stipulated time frame/who had left the work midway/ who had not started/taken up the works are strictly not eligible. Any such participation may lead to cancellation of their bid and No claim shall be entertained in this regard.

Conditions for Bidders:

Every Participating supplier/contractor to mandatorily disclose the Bank Account No. which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No Payment shall be released by Govt. Deptt./Agency to any other Bank Account except the one linked with GST Registered number of the Successful bidder. As per Circular No. 01 (Adm) FD of 2025 Dated 08/07/2025 issued by Govt. of JandK Finance Department Civil Secretariat Jammu/Srinagar.

1. As per Government Order No. 238-F of 2021 Dated 07-09-2021, in case of inadequate response to a tender, participation from adjoining Panchayats will be permitted (i.e in 2nd call of tendering preceding condition will be applied).

2. Contractors who failed to execute the allotted work/works during the previous financial year (2024-25) are not eligible for-tendering for the current financial year (2025-26).

3. Any Bidder who will go down more than 10% of Advertised Cost shall upload the Additional Security online in shape of CDR/ FDR during tendering process as per Unbalance Bid Table mentioned in NIT at S. No 09 (Non uploading of Additional Security will let to the rejection of the tender).

4. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer REW Division Pulwama (Tender receiving authority).

5.In Addition to Earnest Money Deposit (Bid Security), the 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of allotted cost as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR within 05 days before fixation of contract. The EMD (Bid Security/Earnest money) of 2% of advertised cost of successful bidder shall be released after receipt of 5% Performance Security, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.

6. The 1st lowest responsive (Successful) shall submit all the hard copies of uploaded documents within 05 Days before fixation of Contract. Failure to produce the documents shall render the L1 as non-responsive and he shall be debarred to participate in any tendering process up to 12 months after forfeiting the CDR and case for debarring of the Contractor is forwarded to Higher Authorities for a period of 01 Year.

7. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR of the unsuccessful Bidder shall be released after opening the Tender on production of Treasury Challan.

8. The Tender Opening Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders or any part of any tender without assigning reason thereof.

9. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of technical bids

Xen/REW/Pul/7510-16 | Dated: 14/11/2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer REW Division Pulwama

DIPK: 8173/25 | Dated: 17-11-2025

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the General Manager District Industries Centre, Srinagar

Near Petrol Pump Baghi Ali Mardan Khan, Srinagar-190011

Public Notice

M/s S.A Enterprises I/E Khunmoh Srinagar formally registered with this office under No. 01/003/09600/PMT/MSME dated.24-08-2024 for the line of activity "Manufacturing of copper utensils by way of hand tools" as proprietorship concern of Mr. Sayar Ahmad S/o Ghulam Rasool Bartha R/o Kukar Masjid Malarata S.R. Gunj Srinagar

Now the promoter of the unit intends to transfer of lease hold rights to Najeeb Afzal Shah S/o Mohd Afzal Shah R/o Rawathpora Baghat Near MET School Sanatnagar Srinagar and incoming promoter further intends to establish a new unit for the activity of "Manufacture of corrugated Card Board Boxes" under name Khunmoh and style of M/s Himalyan Packers after due de-registration of existing unit viz. M/s S.A Enterprises I/E Srinagar.

Any person having any objection for above mentioned changes shall report to the office of General Manager. District Industries Centre, Srinagar within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained.

**Sd/- General Manager
District Industries Centre Srinagar**

DIPK: 8199/25 | Dated: 17-11-2025



Handicrafts Dept to host 3-Day Artisan Carnival at Srinagar from Nov 20

Celebrating Living Heritage of Craftsmanship as part of 'Soulful Kashmir'

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 17: Continuing its vigorous 'Know Your Artisan' campaign, Handicrafts and Handloom Department, is set to host a 3-day 'Artisan Carnival', a vibrant celebration of Kashmir's timeless crafts and cultural legacy at the Chinar-draped Sher-e-Kashmir Park, here, from November 20 to 22.

As a flagship event under the 'Soulful Kashmir' branding initiative, the three-day event will bring together over 30 master artisans from across the valley, showcasing the finest of Kashmiri handicrafts and handlooms under one roof.

In a press statement issued here today, a spokesman of the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, Kashmir, stated that visitors will be treated to niche handicrafts and Handloom products made by the 'Golden Hands'



of Kashmir artisans, including Shilp Gurus, Padma Shris, and National & UT Awardees. "LIVE demos of iconic crafts like Sozni & Crewel embroidery, Pashmina & Kani Weaving, Papier-Mâché, Copperware (Kandkari), Willow Work, Tweed making, shall be on display," he said, adding that 'Meet the Masters' interactive sessions will be another highlight of the event.

The Artisan Carnival is part of the larger 'Soulful Kashmir' campaign which aims to revive, promote, and provide sustainable market linkages to the region's legendary artisans while offering visitors an immersive experience.

"Kashmir's crafts are not just products, but Centuries-old stories woven by the golden hands. This carnival is our tribute to the artisans who keep these traditions alive and an invitation to all craft lovers to discover the real soul of Kashmir," he added.

DLIC Budgam approves 733 cases under Mission YUVA

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 17: A meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) for Mission YUVA was today chaired by the Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex.

The meeting focused on accelerating youth entrepreneurship and reviewing the progress of cases submitted under the mission.

During the meeting, 733 cases, duly verified by the Small Business Development Units (SBDUs), were placed before the committee for consideration. After thorough evaluation, all 733 cases were approved for financial assistance, capacity building, and handholding support under Mission YUVA.

With today's approvals, the total number of cases cleared by the DLIC in Budgam has reached 2178 marking a significant milestone in the district's youth empowerment efforts.

The approved cases include entrepreneurial ventures, ranging from traditional crafts such as shawl embroidery, sozni, aari work, tailoring and cutting units, carpentry and joinery workshops, as well as modern and service-oriented businesses including load carriers, dairy units, repair shops, stationery/printing units, food businesses, retail stores, packaging units, and other micro-enterprise activities.

The diversity of ventures reflects the administration's commitment to strengthening both heritage-based skills and emerging livelihood avenues for youth.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that Mission YUVA is a transformative initiative aimed at empowering young men and women by enabling them to become self-reliant entrepreneurs.

He emphasised that the goal is not only to provide financial support but to create a sustainable ecosystem where youth have access to training, market linkages, guidance, and long-term mentorship.

He said that the district administration is committed towards ensuring that every aspiring youth receives timely support.

"Mission YUVA is our investment in the potential, resilience, and creativity of Budgam's youth. Every project approved today represents a new livelihood opportunity, a family strengthened, and a step towards a more self-reliant district,"



the DC noted.

The DC directed all concerned departments, banks and implementing agencies to ensure time-bound sanctioning, hassle-free disbursement, and continuous mentoring of the approved cases. He instructed that Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) must be completed without delay and emphasised that no application should remain pending unnecessarily at any level.

Accountability, transparency, and efficiency must be maintained throughout the process, he added.

He further said that the success of Mission YUVA will be determined by how many of these ventures become viable and sustainable in the long run.

He stressed the need for regular monitoring, skill development programmes, and facilitating market access so that young entrepreneurs can scale their businesses effectively.

The DC further said that Mission YUVA holds special significance for underprivileged and marginalised youth, who will be given priority support to improve their socio-economic conditions. He affirmed that Budgam is emerging as a hub of youth-led enterprises where traditional craftsmanship blends with modern entrepreneurship.

The meeting was attended by General Manager DIC, Budgam, CPO Budgam, Deputy Director Employment, District Nodal Officer, representatives from JKEDI, and other concerned officers.

Bandipora District Intensifies NMBA Campaign with Large-Scale Activities Across Educational Institutions

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 17: A series of awareness and creative programmes were organised across Bandipora district on Monday under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), as part of the ongoing district-wide campaign to curb substance abuse and promote a healthier, drug-free society.

At HKM Government Degree College Bandipora, the College NCORD Cell and NSS Units conducted a painting competition on the theme "Together for a Drug-Free Kashmir." The event saw enthusiastic participation from students who expressed their commitment to a drug-free society through impactful artworks portraying the harmful effects of substance abuse. The activity highlighted the vital role of youth in promoting social responsibility and strengthening collective efforts toward a drug-free Kashmir.

Similar activities were held in various schools and colleges across the district. GMS Wanpora, HSS Madwan, HSS Ajas, and PM SHRI HSS Shadipora organised painting competitions, awareness drives, and the NMBA e-pledge, with students reaffirming their commitment to combat addiction and promote conscious, community-led action.

At Government Model Higher Secondary School Sumbal, NMBA activities were carried out under the supervision of the Head of Institution, Dr. Ehtishamul Haq, which witnessed vibrant participation from 157 students in essay and painting competitions on drug abuse and its prevention. Staff and students also took the NMBA e-pledge, which was prominently displayed on the school notice board to enhance public awareness. Meanwhile, HSS Gadakhud conducted essay and painting competitions as part of the NMBA schedule.

The district-wide programmes collectively reinforced the message of a drug-free society and demonstrated the proactive involvement of colleges, schools, students, and staff in advancing the objectives of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan. The events reflected the shared resolve of Bandipora's educational institutions to support youth empowerment, strengthen community awareness, and intensify the fight against substance abuse.

Series of Awareness programmes on MWPSA Act held across Pulwama

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

PULWAMA, NOVEMBER 17: Under the Chairmanship of Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge), Pulwama, Malik Shabir Ahmad and under the supervision of Secretary DLSA Pulwama, Mudasar Farooq, various awareness programmes on "Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007" were organized across Pulwama.

A total 7 awareness programmes were organized in the entire district out of which one programme was organized by District Legal Services Authority Pulwama in collaboration with District Social Welfare Officer Pulwama in circuit house Pulwama.

On the occasion the main resource person, Chief LADC Pulwama, Mehraraj-Ud-Din Wani from DLSA Pulwama highlighted the importance of the event and briefed



the audience about the legal rights of parents and senior citizens and role of society in maintaining welfare of senior citizens.

The other awareness programmes with regard to maintenance and welfare Parents and senior citizens Act, 2007 were organized by TLSCs Tral, Awantipora and Pampore with in their respective jurisdictions.

Besides door to door campaign was conducted by PLVs of District Pulwama in far flung areas to raise awareness about the maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens.

Labour Department holds Conference on 'Sewa through Equality' to Strengthen Women's Rights, Workplace Safety

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 17: In a major step towards promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplaces, the Labour Department, organized a one-day Conference-cum-Workshop on "Sewa through Equality, Promoting Women's Rights and Safety through Labour Reforms" today at Institute of Hotel Management, Rajbagh, Srinagar. The event was graced by Labour Commissioner, S. Charandeep Singh, as the Chief Guest in presence of Deputy Labour Commissioner, Central, Masarat Hashim and Deputy Labour Commissioner, Kashmir, Najwan Nazki.

The programme witnessed the

participation of Associate Professors from reputed universities, Employers, Factory owners, Trade union leaders, Corporate Employees, Media personalities and Officers of the Labour Department.

The Conference-cum-Workshop served as a collaborative platform for discussion, awareness and capacity building on recent labour reforms designed to enhance women's rights and workplace safety. The deliberations and technical sessions covered key legislative and policy measures viz. Maternity Benefit Act, Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, Revised provisions under the Factories Act, Equal Remuneration Act, Jammu & Kashmir Shops and Establishment (Regulation of Employment and



Conditions of Service) Act, 2025.

Addressing the gathering, Labour Commissioner, emphasized that Women's participation in the work places forms the backbone of equitable and inclusive development. He reiterated that

the Labour Department remains committed to ensuring dignity, safety, and equality for every woman worker through effective enforcement of progressive labour reforms. The renowned academic experts including Dr. Shazia Manzoor (Professor & Head, Department of Social Work, Kashmir University), Anamika Gautam (Assistant Professor, School of Law, Kashmir University), Dr. Junaid (Assistant Professor, Department of Law, Kashmir University) and Dr. Shabir Ahmad Najar (Post Doctorate Fellow in the Department of Social Work, Kashmir University) highlighted the importance of regular sensitization and institutional training to strengthen the implementation of women-centric

labour legislation and to enhance women's rights and workplace safety.

In addition, the Senior Advocate, Zahoor Jan, expert on Labour Laws briefed about the recently passed J&K Shops & Establishment Bill by the J&K Legislative Assembly, introducing progressive measures for regulating working hours, safety, and welfare of women employed in the unorganized and service sectors. The Conference-cum-Workshop concluded by reaffirming the collective commitment of the Government, Judiciary, Academia, Industry, Trade Unions and Civil Society to uphold women's rights, workplace safety and equality through sustained labour reforms and awareness initiatives across the Union Territory.

Director Agriculture Jammu inaugurates 5-Day internship programme for school students

Interns set to learn about departmental functioning, technical laboratories, applied agri practices

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 17: Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta today inaugurated a five-day Internship Programme for the students of Government Boys Higher Secondary School (GBHSS) R S Pura, Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Sai and Government Boys Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Chakroi of RS Pura Zone.

A total of twenty four students, eight from each school along with ten teachers are participating in this academic initiative aimed at providing practical exposure to departmental functioning, technical laboratories and applied agricultural practices.

Joint Director Agriculture (Extension), Sanjay Anand;

Deputy Director (Trainings), Karuna Nidhi; Academic Mentor from Bharti Airtel Foundation, Arvi Khan; senior officers and staff of the Agriculture Department were present.

While addressing the gathering during the inaugural session, Director Agriculture, Anil Gupta encouraged the students to explore agriculture as a modern, technology-driven and promising field offering vast opportunities for research, innovation and entrepreneurship.

He highlighted the importance of youth engagement in agriculture and appreciated the efforts of the participating schools and the Bharti Airtel Foundation for collaborating in this learning initiative. He further stated that if educated youth enter the agriculture



sector, it will significantly promote modern and scientific farming practices, leading to increased farmers' income and enabling the country to shift from being an agriculture import-dependent nation to

an export-oriented one.

Joint Director Agriculture (Extension), Sanjay Anand stated that agriculture plays a vital role in India's economy and is one of the country's priority sectors. He highlighted that

more than six lakh farmers in the Jammu Division are associated with the Agriculture Department, which supports them at every stage from sowing to ensuring that their produce reaches the market. He

expressed confidence that the students would gain a meaningful understanding of scientific agriculture, laboratory operations and the various schemes offered by the department.

The inaugural session was followed by an orientation in the Auditorium at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo, after which the students visited the Agro Cold Storage and the Agriculture Research Engineering (ARE) Workshop to familiarize themselves with the structure and functioning of these sections.

Over the next few days, the participants will be exposed to various technical wings including the Mushroom Production Unit, Plant Health Clinic, Fertilizers Unit, Soil Testing Laboratory and

Pesticides Laboratory. They will also visit applied agriculture facilities such as the Apiculture Unit, Seed Testing Laboratory and Protective Cultivation (Green Houses). A dedicated field visit to Chakroi Farm has been scheduled to provide on-ground experience of modern agricultural practices, demonstrations and farm management activities.

The programme will conclude on November 21 with a concluding ceremony and certificate distribution. The proceedings of the inaugural programme were conducted by Information Officer FTC, Guldev Raj and Subject Matter Specialist, Arun Khajuria, who coordinated the event and guided the participants throughout the session.



SC posts Tamil Nadu Govt plea on vice-chancellor appointment powers to December 2

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOV 17 : The Supreme Court on Monday posted to December 2 the Tamil Nadu Government's petition challenging the Madras High Court's interim stay on State amendments that removed the Governor's power to appoint Vice-Chancellors of State-run universities.

The matter was heard by a Bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi.

The State has also filed a transfer petition seeking to move to the Supreme Court a public interest litigation pending before the Madras High Court on the same issue.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that the matter may have to await the

outcome of the pending Presidential Reference relating to timelines for gubernatorial assent to Bills.

However, Senior Advocate Dr AM Singhvi, appearing for Tamil Nadu, argued that the issue was independent of the Presidential Reference, as the amendments took effect based on the "deemed assent" declared by the Supreme Court in the Tamil Nadu Governor judgment.

Senior Advocate P. Wilson, also for the State, expressed concern over the administrative vacuum caused by the High Court's stay.

He said, "Out of 22 universities, 14 are without Vice-Chancellors. I am unable to do anything in the State. Ex-parte stay was granted. There is an urgency."



Justice Surya Kant observed that the State may request the High Court to decide the matter urgently within 7-10 days, though ultimately the Supreme Court listed the case for December 2.

The Tamil Nadu legislative amendments transferred the power to appoint Vice-Chancellors from the Governor (as Chancellor) to the State Government, relying on the Supreme Court's ruling that defined the scope of the Governor's powers in the State's legislative process.

On May 21, 2025, the Madras High Court stayed the operation of these amendments, noting the writ petitioner's claim that the 12 amendments were repugnant to the UGC Regulations, which require that Vice-Chancellors be appointed by the Chancellor from a panel shortlisted by a Search Committee.

The State, opposing the stay, argued that Legislation cannot be stayed as a matter of course, unless prima facie illegal.

A gazette notification relied upon by the petitioners was forged, requesting a CB-CID inquiry.

The High Court did not defer the matter and granted a stay.

Tamil Nadu has a related matter pending before the Supreme Court challenging three notifications issued by the Governor to constitute search-cum-selection committees for appointments to Bharathiar University, Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University and University of Madras

In January, a Bench led by Justice J.B. Pardiwala indicated that the Supreme Court would decide the issue if it remained unresolved.

The petition was filed through Advocate-on-Record Misha Rohatgi, UNI

SC orders status quo on flagpole dispute in Tamil Nadu

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOV 17 : The Supreme Court on Monday directed that the status quo be maintained regarding the dispute over flagpoles in Tamil Nadu, while hearing a petition filed by P. Shanmugam, State Secretary of the Communist Party of India (CPI).

A Bench comprising Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta issued notice, returnable in four weeks, and ordered that, "Until further orders, the parties are to maintain status quo with respect to the subject flagpoles, as it exists today."

The present proceedings arise after the Supreme Court earlier dismissed a Special Leave Petition (SLP) challenging a decision of the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court, which had directed all political parties and organisations to remove permanent flagpoles erected in public spaces, including national highways and government lands.

Following the SLP dismissal, a related application pending before Justice G.R. Swaminathan of the High Court was disposed of in the light of the Supreme Court's order.

The matter was thereafter brought again before the apex court, resulting in Monday's status quo directive.

On August 11, the Supreme Court dismissed another appeal and upheld the High Court's judgment requiring removal of unauthorised flagpoles. That appeal was filed by Kathiravan, who sought permission to erect a flagpole for the AIADMK in Palanganatham, Madurai, after the request was refused by the Assistant Divisional Engineer.

Counsel for the petitioner had argued that the High Court travelled beyond the scope of the original plea by issuing broader directions. However, the Supreme Court did not find merit in the challenge and affirmed the removal order.

With the latest order, the Supreme Court has put a temporary hold on further action, ensuring that the existing position of all disputed flagpoles will remain unchanged until further orders.

The matter is expected to be taken up after four weeks. UNI

Delhi Urban Development Minister cracks down on garbage, encroachments in

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOV 17 : Delhi's Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood on Monday inspected several locations in Ward 92 and reviewed cleanliness, waste collection and sanitation facilities.

The localities the minister visited included Shivaji Enclave near the Animal Hospital, R Block Jhuggis, and Rajiv Gandhi Camp, Main Road near the CNG Pump.

During an inspection in Shivaji Enclave, the Minister expressed dissatisfaction over scattered garbage dumps and ordered MCD officials to identify a proper dumping site, procure additional vehicles if needed, and divert waste to the Bhalswa landfill for quicker clearance. He also directed immediate cleaning and repair of a long-neglected drain.

At R Block Jhuggis, he instructed DUSIB to reclaim land from MCD, remove encroachments and build a three-storey toilet complex for women by 20 February. The Minister further ordered the closure of illegal borewells, removal of abandoned vehicles, and construction of a boundary wall at Rajiv Gandhi Camp to prevent encroachment. Briefed on severe dust pollution near Punjabi Bagh Chowk, caused by a cement site, continuous emissions and crematorium activities, he directed officials to prepare a comprehensive mitigation plan.

The Minister also interacted with local residents and took note of their concerns. Sood said that the Delhi Government has accorded top priority to improving the capital's sanitation system. Stating that the ten-year tenure of the Aam Aadmi Party and the



Municipal Corporation's negligent approach over the last two and a half years pushed Delhi towards a paralysed state, Sood said, "Their lack of interest in solving civic problems has left the present Government with multiple inherited challenges. The Government is adopting a scientific, phased and systematic

approach to resolving major issues such as cleanliness and pollution."

He stated that while decades-old problems cannot be eliminated overnight, the Government is working with full sensitivity, resolve and transparency. He further highlighted that due to vote-bank politics the previous Government allowed

encroachments on 60-ft roads, shrinking them to as narrow as 20-ft, severely affecting both traffic and cleanliness. "The dilapidated condition of public toilets and lack of basic amenities in slum areas are also a result of the earlier Government's negligence. Although false promises were made by others, the present Government is now facing the brunt of public dissatisfaction," he said.

Sood assured the residents that he will remain in regular contact with MCD, PWD and other departments to ensure the timely resolution of complaints. He instructed officials to ensure daily garbage removal and to send photographs of cleaned areas to his office. The Minister also announced that he will revisit the area after 15 days to review compliance with the directions issued today. UNI

Centre seeks more time on Sahara's plea to sell 88 properties, including Amby Valley, to Adani Group

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOV 17 : The Central Government on Monday sought additional time to respond to applications filed by Sahara India Commercial Corporation Ltd., which has sought the Supreme Court's permission to sell 88 properties, including the prominent Amby Valley project in Maharashtra and Sahara Seher in Lucknow, to Adani Properties Pvt. Ltd. A Bench comprising Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, and Justices Surya Kant and M.M. Sundresh granted four weeks after Solicitor General

Tushar Mehta requested more time to file a detailed response.

The matters have now been posted for hearing after six weeks. The Court also adjourned applications filed by Sahara employees seeking the release of their pending salaries from group companies.

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal appeared on behalf of Sahara.

The Solicitor General additionally urged that the Ministry of Cooperation be impleaded in the case, stating that multiple cooperative societies are affected.

Senior Advocate Shekhar Naphade,

serving as amicus curiae, informed the Court that he has been receiving claims over several properties allegedly not disclosed by Sahara.

He suggested that Sahara be directed to publish complete details of its assets on an official website, but the Court did not issue any directions on this request on Monday.

During a previous hearing, the Court had sought responses from the union Government and SEBI regarding Sahara's request for approval to sell the assets.

The Court had also directed that parties claiming rights over the properties file their claims to the amicus.

India issues guarded response to Hasina death sentence by Bangladesh's ICT

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, NOV 17 : India on Monday issued a guarded response to the death sentence handed down to former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by the nation's International Crimes Tribunal, saying it has noted the verdict and is committed to the best interests of the people of Bangladesh.

In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs also said that India will continue to engage constructively with all stakeholders for ensuring peace, democracy, inclusion and stability in Bangladesh.

The statement, which noticeably put double quote marks on the words "International Crimes Tribunal of Bangladesh", to signify that it is a purely domestic tribunal, read:

"India has noted the verdict announced by the 'International Crimes Tribunal of Bangladesh' concerning former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

"As a close neighbour, India remains committed to the best interests of the people of Bangladesh, including in peace, democracy, inclusion and stability in that country. We will always engage constructively with all stakeholders to that end."

Notably, Sheikh Hasina has been living in self-exile in India since August 5, 2024, when she fled Dhaka after so-called student led protesters, comprising mainly of Islamists, stormed her residence-cum-official building, demanding her ouster.

The country's interim government, led by Mohamed Yunus, had earlier requested India to hand over Hasina to face trial in her country, a request that New Delhi has not responded to over the past several months.

Relations between the Yunus regime, which has been cosying up to Pakistan ever since August 2024, and India have remained strained over numerous issues, including the targeting of Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh and the noticeable anti-India rhetoric by members of the interim government's advisors.

Earlier in the day, Sheikh Hasina was sentenced to death by the ICT of Bangladesh after being found guilty of "crimes against humanity" for her alleged role in the crackdown on student-led protests in July-August 2024 that led to the collapse of her government. UNI

Bangladesh on boil again after Sheikh Hasina's death sentence by Dhaka Tribunal

BY RAMESH BHAN

NEW DELHI, NOV 17 : Bangladesh is on the boil again.

Bangladesh's ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was awarded death sentence in absentia by the country's International Crime Tribunal (ICT) for "crimes against humanity" over a crackdown on students' uprising in 2024. Sheikh Hasina was convicted of crimes including murder, extermination, torture and other inhumane acts. However, she pleaded not guilty and described the judgement as "politically motivated."

Along with Sheikh Hasina former Home Minister Asad Uzzaman Khan Kamal was also sentenced. Former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun was awarded five years jail after he turned state witness.

The judgement has put the country on the edge once again, for the second time after a student uprising in July-August, 2024, ousted Sheikh Hasina from power.

The ICT verdict on Sheikh Hasina has undoubtedly created extraordinary churn and uncertainty at home, in the region and geopolitically.

The judgement sparked off widespread unrest in the country, mainly capital Dhaka where Sheikh Hasina's supporters came out on the streets and resorted to violence. Sheikh Hasina's Bangladesh Awami League has already announced a two-day shutdown across the country, disrupting normal life.

Following the judgement, Dhaka was put on high alert and security was tightened throughout the capital city. Personnel from the Army, police, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) were deployed.

Violence erupted in several parts of the country. Sheikh Hasina's Party activists took out processions in several places in protest against the verdict. Crude bombs were also detonated in some places. More than 50 activists of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League have been arrested so far. Capital city Dhaka has been placed under unprecedented security cover and 'shoot-at-sight orders' have been issued against those indulging in arson and looting.

There has been growing demand for Sheikh Hasina's return. The timing of the ICT verdict against Sheikh Hasina is significant as it comes ahead of Bangladesh's interim government announcement

of the elections next year.

Although officially India has refrained so far from commenting on the evolving situation, experts feel concerned at such development in India's immediate neighbourhood. Experts say Pakistan which has already set feet in Bangladesh, could exploit the situation.

A senior Indian government official, on condition of anonymity, said the government is closely monitoring the situation. He did not elaborate.

If the situation escalates, it could push the country into the abyss of destabilisation for the second time since 2024 uprising that seemed to have US blessings and brought in Nobel Laureate Mohammed Yunus to power as Advisor and head of the interim government.

The US State Department had in 2024, after the unrest, in its Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bangladesh also accused the Sheikh Hasina government of human rights violations. The State Department report said "Significant human rights issues – primarily under the previous government – included credible reports of arbitrary or unlawful killings; disappearances; torture or cruel, inhuman, or

degrading treatment or punishment; arbitrary arrest or detention; transnational repression against individuals in another country by the previous government, serious restrictions on freedom of expression and media freedom, including violence or threats of violence against journalists, unjustified arrests or prosecutions of journalists, and censorship; significant restrictions on workers' freedom of association; violence or threats against labour activists or union members; and significant presence of the worst forms of child labour." It was a verdict by the US against the Sheikh Hasina government and endorsement of the uprising.

The report by the US State Department confirmed that US had intervened to overthrow Sheikh Hasina who was seen as pro-India. The opportunity was exploited by China and Pakistan. Pakistan's infamous intelligence agency the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) made efforts to fill in the space left vacant by India after Sheikh Hasina's ouster. Anti-India activities began in Bangladesh, including attacks on Hindu minorities.

The developments sent alarm bells ringing in India. Despite protests by India, Yunus

administration did not take any action. India took some steps. But it had no major impact because of Chinese and Pakistani influence.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had in an address at the Delhi University, described the developments in Bangladesh as "very troubling." "There are two aspects of it... the spate of attacks on minorities... it is something which impacts our thinking and... we have to speak up about... they have to make up their mind what kind of relationship they want with us. I think this is a decision they have to make. About what kind of relationship they want."

"We have sent a very clear signal, okay we are a neighbour, we would like for things to calm down... But we would obviously not like to see the messaging and... signalling which is continuously hostile in a way to India," Jaishankar said.

The latest situation in Bangladesh is no less worrying for India. Pakistan and China could tighten their hold in India's immediate neighbourhood and Jamat-I-Islami could be a major player. A peaceful and politically-stable Bangladesh will be an advantage for India. UNI



SANGAKKARA CONFIRMED AS ROYALS HEAD COACH AND DIRECTOR OF CRICKET

■ ESPNCRICINFO

MUMBAI: Kumar Sangakkara will perform the dual role of head coach and director of cricket at Rajasthan Royals (RR) in IPL 2026, with Vikram Rathour, batting coach last season, elevated to assistant coach.

As reported by ESPNcrinfo in September, in Sangakkara's case, the change in designation is a formality, since he had performed the two roles even in IPL 2025 after head coach Rahul Dravid and RR parted ways.

Sangakkara had previously served as the team's head coach from 2021 to 2024, "a period that marked a clear rise in the team's performance and consistency," an RR statement said. While Sangakkara was in charge, RR reached the IPL final in 2022 and made the playoffs in IPL 2024.

"We are delighted to have Kumar return as head coach," Manoj Badale, the franchise's lead

owner, said. "As we looked at what the team needed at this stage, we felt that his familiarity within the squad, his leadership and his deep understanding of the Royals culture would bring the right balance of continuity and stability."

"Kumar has always had our complete trust as a leader. His clarity, calmness and cricketing intelligence will play an important role in guiding the squad into this next phase."

Along with Rathour's promotion, the franchise also announced that Shane Bond would continue as the bowling coach, while Trevor Penney and Sid Lahiri will remain assistant coach and performance coach respectively.

"I'm honoured to return as head coach and continue working with this talented group," Sangakkara said. "I'm also pleased to have a strong coaching team alongside me. Vikram, Trevor, Shane and Sid each bring valuable experience in their areas, and together we are

focused on preparing the players in the best possible way."

"We have a clear understanding of where we want to go as a group, and our aim is to build a team that plays with clarity, resilience, and purpose."

The team management group will, however, have a new captain to work with after RR released Sanju Samson in a trade deal with Chennai Super Kings, where they acquired Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran, ahead of the next auction.

They have also released or traded out Nitish Rana, Akash Madhwal, Ashok Sharma, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Kumar Kartikeya, Kunal Singh Rathore, Maheesh Theekshana and Wanindu Hasaranga. And, along with Jadeja and Curran, have also traded in Donovan Ferreira from Delhi Capitals.

At the upcoming auction, they will have a purse of INR 16.05 crore and have nine slots, including one overseas, to fill.

ICC launches Emerging Nations Trophy for women

■ ESPNCRICINFO

ABUDHABI: A new global tournament, the ICC Women's Emerging Nations Trophy, involving eight teams from four continents, will be played from November 20 to 30 in Bangkok. Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Netherlands, UAE, Scotland, Namibia, Tanzania and Uganda will take part in the inaugural edition.

The trigger for the tournament, an ICC statement said, was the success of the recent ODI World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, where "more than 500 million viewers in India" were recorded and there was also "significant growth in viewership across countries".

"Nearly 300,000 fans attended matches across India and Sri Lanka and the event concluded with India becoming the first Asian team to lift the Women's Cricket World Cup, a watershed moment in the evolution of the sport and the socio-cultural context of gender roles," an ICC statement said.



"Building on the extraordinary impetus provided by the marquee event, the ICC continues to invest in creating a sustainable future for women's cricket. The Women's Emerging Nations Trophy is part of a new three-tier development pathway designed to offer high-performance exposure to emerging nations."

Sanjog Gupta, the ICC chief executive, said, "It is the ICC and the Chair's [Jay Shah] vision to sustainably expand cricket's footprint across the world and grow the women's game. Providing elite athletes from emerging nations more opportunities to play at the highest level is aimed at fast-tracking their development and improving the competitiveness of their teams."

"It also drives the visibility of the sport in participant nations, serving as a driver of girls' involvement in the sport and inspires women from other nations to stay committed to the development pathways."

The opening day will feature Thailand vs Netherlands and Papua New Guinea vs UAE.

Hazlewood out of Ashes opener with hamstring injury

■ ANDREW MCGLASHAN

LONDON: Australia have suffered a huge blow ahead of the Ashes, with Josh Hazlewood ruled out of the opening Test in Perth with a hamstring injury three days after initially being cleared when he left the field during New South Wales' Sheffield Shield game against Victoria at the SCG. Hazlewood will not travel to Perth this weekend, and Queensland seamer Michael Neser has been added to the squad, which has also lost Sean Abbott to a hamstring injury.

Pat Cummins had already been ruled out of at least the opening Test as he recovers from a back injury.

"Initial scans Wednesday were clear of muscle strain, however follow-up imaging today has confirmed the injury," a CA statement on Saturday said. "Early imaging can occasionally underestimate low-grade muscle injuries."

The latest injury means that Brendan Doggett could be closing in a Test debut



with even more onus now on Mitchell Starc and Scott Boland. The news of Hazlewood follows England having a scare around Mark Wood who went for a scan after reporting hamstring tightness of the first day of the warm-up game against the Lions in Perth although on Saturday the ECB said he had been cleared.

Hazlewood, who sits on 295 Test wick-

ets, had bowled superbly in the white-ball matches against India last month and again looked in good rhythm in his Shield outing. However, after completing his spell on the third morning, he told Steven Smith, who was captaining NSW and will lead Australia in Perth, that he was feeling some tightness in his hamstring and Smith told him to leave the field immediately.

He walked to a clinic next door to the SCG to have a scan which, before the match had ended, came back clear. Cummins, who had been at the ground to see the physios before speaking at a commercial engagement, said Hazlewood had been in good spirits after the result.

Last season, Hazlewood missed three of the five Tests against India, firstly because of a side strain and then a calf injury. Since 2014, Australia have only twice played a Test at home without Cummins and Hazlewood, but won on both occasions - against England in 2021 and West Indies in 2022 - which are also the two Tests Neser has played.

District Bandipora Handball Championship from 21 Nov

■ AASHIQ HUSSAIN

BANDIPORA, NOV 18: District Bandipora Handball Association in collaboration with J&K Sports council is going to organise District Handball Championship from 21 to 22 Nov at Playfield Naidkhai Bandipora. All Handball Clubs, Teams and players of district Bandipora are informed to contact 96826 18886, 9622844958 for registration by or before 20 Nov.

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