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## Red Fort Blast Probe Widens: Court Sends Key 'Co-Conspirator' to 10-Day NIA Custody



■ HT NEWS DESK

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** A Delhi court on Tuesday remanded Jasir Bilal, described by investigators as an "active co-conspirator" of suicide bomber Umar-un-Nabi, to 10 days' custody of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in the Red Fort car blast case that claimed 15 lives.

Principal District and Sessions

Judge Anju Bajaj Chandna granted the NIA's request for custodial interrogation, as security around the court complex was intensified. Mediapersons were barred from entering the premises, effectively turning the proceedings into an in-camera hearing. Multiple layers of police and Rapid Action Force personnel stood guard, with anti-riot teams on standby.

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### Red Fort Suicide Blast: Video Glorifying Attack Recovered From Bomber's Phone

Brother who drove explosive-laden car detained; Srinagar Police trail leads to unravelling of terror plot

■ HT NEWS DESK

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** Jammu and Kashmir Police have recovered a mobile phone belonging to Red Fort suicide bomber Dr Umar-un-Nabi, and the data extracted from the damaged device has revealed a chilling video in which the 28-year-old doctor glorifies the suicide attack as a "martyrdom operation". The evidence surfaced following the detention of Umar's brother Zahoor Illahi, who was allegedly behind the wheel of the explosive-laden car that blew up outside the Red Fort on November 10, killing 15

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## CM Omar Abdullah visits families of Nowgam blast, assures full support

CM meets injured in hospital



■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday visited the families of those who lost their lives in the recent accidental explosion at the Nowgam Police Station.

He visited the families of Late Ajjaz ● Turn on Page 2

### CM Omar reviews works, schemes in Ganderbal

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL, NOV 18:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated and laid foundation stone of a number of vital infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing civic amenities and accelerating development across District Ganderbal.

He inaugurated the upgradation and widening of the Dak Bungalow Fatehpura-Gadoora road worth ₹5.2 crore and the upgradation of various link roads in Sherpathri Block costing ₹8.9 crore. He also e-inaugurated several major water supply projects, including a 70,000-gallon capacity slow sand filtration plant with allied structures at WSS Gagangeer completed at a cost of ₹119.16 lakh; a

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## Vaishnodevi security tightened; extra deployment ordered

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, NOV 18:** As security was beefed up following the Delhi blast, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board authorities asked security agencies to ensure the deployment of additional personnel to provide foolproof security within the shrine area and its adjoining zones.

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

Police have beefed up security, set up checkpoints, intensified frisking and checking in Katra town, the base camp of the temple, and carried out area domination of the Trikuta hills housing the shrine, the officials said.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, urged the security agencies to ensure the deployment of additional personnel within the shrine area and its adjoining zones to maintain a secure environment throughout the

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## UAPA Court convicts Thokar in 2021 Imam Sahab encounter case

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, NOV 18:** The NIA/UAPA Court for Kulgam and Shopian has convicted Towseef Ahmed Thokar, son of Mohammad Yousaf Thokar, resident of Khawajapora Reban, Zainapora, in the 2021 Imam Sahab encounter case registered under FIR No. 25/2021 at Police Station Imam Sahab.

The court held the accused guilty under Sections 16, 18, and 20 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), Section 307 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), and Section 7/27 of the Arms Act. The matter was listed for sentencing on November 17, 2025, following which the court sentenced him to 6 years of imprisonment.

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## Zero Tolerance Is the Only Way Forward: Jaishankar's Strong Message at SCO

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** Just days after the devastating suicide attack near Delhi's Red Fort that claimed 15 lives, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar delivered a forceful appeal at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet in Moscow, urging the global community to adopt an uncom-



promising stance against terrorism in all its forms.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday reminded member nations that the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was built on the resolve to counter the "three evils" — terrorism, separatism and extremism — adding that these threats have only grown

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## Environmental law growth driven by PILs: Justice Kotiswar Singh

■ HT NEWS DESK

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** Supreme Court Judge Justice N Kotiswar Singh has said that the development of environmental law in India can be largely attributed to the growth of the public interest litigation (PIL).

Justice Singh made the remarks while addressing the UN Climate Change Conference 2025 in Brazil's Belem on Novem-

ber 13.

The conference, also called COP30 or the Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is being held from November 10 to 21.

Speaking about a period of transition marked by judicial activism, Justice Singh said, "This phase of environmental awareness also coincided with the path-breaking legal development taking place,

initiated by the Supreme Court, the rise of the Public Interest Litigation in India."

"The growth in environmental law can be attributed to a large extent to the growth of the PIL in the late 1970s and 1980s," he added.

He said that the apex court provided for a procedural innovation by giving an expansive meaning to the concept of locus standi, and allowed any public-spirited citizen or organisation to

approach the court on issues affecting the public at large.

Justice Singh underlined that the top court moved beyond the traditional requirement of locus standi where only aggrieved parties could seek redress.

"Parallel to this procedural innovation, the Supreme Court was also embarking upon an exercise of expanding the scope of Article 21 of the

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## CS Reviews Efforts Under 'Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan'

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, NOV 18:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level meeting to thoroughly assess the multi-departmental efforts and progress under the Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) across the districts of Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting concluded with several critical directives aimed at intensifying the campaign, streamlining coordination, and establishing a robust



mechanism for the rehabilitation of addiction-affected individuals.

Highlighting the urgency of tackling the drug menace, the Chief Secretary issued a slew of

instructions including constitution of a dedicated Task

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## After Srinagar, Admin checks lockers of doctors at GMC, SMGS hospitals in Jammu

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, NOV 18:** The administration of Government Medical College and Sri Maharaja Gulab Singh (SMGS) hospitals on Tuesday checked the lockers belonging to staff, students and doctors.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the lockers were checked as part of a drill amid tight security arrangements. "Keys were sought from the holders. Lockers will be checked and re-allotted," the official added.

Last week authorities conducted a locker

checking exercise at the Government Medical College and SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, to identify and label the personal lockers. The circular to conduct the checking was issued by the Administrator, Associated Hospitals, Srinagar, after an AK rifle was recovered from the locker of a doctor in Anantnag.

Pertinently, a few doctors were found involved in a major terror module and the subsequent car blast near the Red Fort in Delhi on November 10, and the recovery of arms and ammunition, including an AK rifle, from the locker of a

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## Power Demand in J&K to Jump 50% by 2035, Raising Alarm Over Winter Readiness

Old infrastructure, rising consumption and harsh winters set to test UT's power sector

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** Jammu and Kashmir is headed for a steep rise in electricity consumption over the next decade, with official assessments projecting a nearly 50 per cent increase in demand by 2034–35. The forecast comes as the Union Territory continues

to struggle with ageing infrastructure and recurring winter power shortages.

According to documents reviewed by this newspaper, authorities expect the UT's overall demand to grow by 49.42 per cent in ten years, driven by expanding domestic load, commercial activity and shifting consumption

patterns. Officials anticipate an average annual growth of around 6 per cent between 2025–26 and 2034–35, with peak demand—felt most acutely in Kashmir's freezing winters set to rise even faster.

The projections have heightened concerns over the UT's readiness to handle coming winters. Winter Stress

to Intensify With temperatures in the Valley often plunging below freezing, heating appliances place enormous pressure on the grid at a time when local hydroelectric generation drops sharply. Much of J&K's infrastructure—transformers, distribution lines and substations—remains decades old,

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## Northern Army Commander urges troops to stay ready for evolving threats

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, NOV 18:** Northern Army Commander Lt Gen Pratik Sharma on Tuesday asked soldiers to remain ready to meet evolving security challenges.

Addressing the soldiers near Line of Control in North Kashmir, Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Continue rigorous training and embrace technological advancements to remain a future ready force capable of meeting evolving security challenges."

Meanwhile, Army's Jammu based spokesman said that the Northern Army Commander today visited North Kashmir to assess the anti-infiltration grid and evaluate the operational

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**CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....**

**Red Fort Blast.....**

The NIA said Bilal, a resident of Qazigund in Anantnag, was arrested in Srinagar on Monday for allegedly providing technical support to the terror module by modifying drones and attempting to develop projectiles in the run-up to the attack.

In a statement issued on Monday, the agency described him as a close associate of Umar-un-Nabi who played a critical role in planning the "terror carnage." His arrest came a day after the court remanded another accused, Amir Rashid Ali, to 10 days' NIA custody for allegedly arranging a safe house and providing logistical support to the suicide bomber.

The investigation continues to expand as the NIA pieces together the network behind one of Delhi's deadliest recent terror strikes.

**Red Fort Suicide.....**

people. Illahi was picked up by a special team formed by SSP Srinagar G V Sundeeep Chakravarthi as investigators traced the contours of what officials describe as a sophisticated white-collar terror network spanning Kashmir, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Initially denying any knowledge, Illahi reportedly broke down during sustained interrogation and disclosed that Umar, during a brief visit to Kashmir between October 26 and 29, had handed him the mobile phone with explicit instructions to destroy it "if any news" about him surfaced. Illahi then led the police to the waterbody where he had attempted to dump the phone.

Though heavily damaged, forensic experts were able to extract crucial data including radical propaganda content and a two-minute video recorded by Umar, in which he justifies the suicide attack and cites extremist interpretations praising such acts. Investigators say the phone data shows Umar had been consuming violent extremist content linked to ISIS and Al-Qaeda, pointing to an advanced state of radicalisation.

The phone has been handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for deeper analysis. Officials said the NIA is also set to take custody of Illahi.

Plot Months in the Making. Investigators allege that Umar a doctor from Pulwama was the key operative in a plot to carry out a high-intensity VBIED attack around December 6, the anniversary of the Babri Masjid demolition. The target, officials believe, may have been a crowded or religiously significant location.

The terror network first came under the radar on October 19, after posters of the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) surfaced in Srinagar's Bumpora area. CCTV analysis led to the arrest of three local youths with previous stone-pelting records; their questioning exposed the involvement of Maulvi Irfan Ahmad, a former paramedic turned Imam, who allegedly distributed the posters and played a role in radicalising the doctors involved.

Further investigations revealed that Umar's indoctrination deepened after a 2021 trip to Turkey, undertaken with co-accused Dr Muzammil Ahmad Ganaie. Officials claim the duo met Jaish overground workers there and subsequently began stockpiling large quantities of chemicals including 360 kg of ammonium nitrate, potassium nitrate and sulphur — much of it stored near Al Falah University in Faridabad, where Ganaie was teaching.

Foiled Plan, Premature Explosion  
The wider plot began collapsing after Srinagar Police arrested Ganaie and seized the explosive materials, a development investigators believe may have triggered panic in Umar. Ten days later, the vehicle he was driving exploded outside Red Fort an apparent premature detonation that killed him and 14 others.

Authorities say the investigation has cracked open one of the most dangerous terror networks uncovered in recent years, involving educated professionals, cross-border radicalisation, and plans for mass-casualty attacks across multiple states. Further arrests and recoveries are expected as the probe widens.

**CM Omar.....**

Afzal Mir at HMT Zainakote, Late Mohammad Amin Mir at Bemina, Late Showkat Ahmad Bhat at Qamarwari, Late Suhail Ahmad Bhat at Natipora, and Late Mohd. Shafi Paray at Wanabath.

The Chief Minister expressed his deep sorrow over the irreparable loss and prayed for the departed souls to rest in peace in heaven. He also prayed for strength and forbearance for the families to bear the loss.

Expressing profound grief, the Chief Minister said, "This tragic incident has taken away dedicated individuals who were serving the people with sincerity and courage. Their loss is a loss for all of Jammu & Kashmir."

He assured the families that the Government stands firmly with them, adding, "We will ensure every possible support to the bereaved families in this hour of unimaginable pain."

Chief Minister assured the families of assistance from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

Later, the Chief Minister visited Ujala Cygnus hospital in Nowgam to meet the injured persons. He reviewed their medical condition and interacted with the doctors and attendants. Calling for the best possible treatment, he said, "Every injured individual must receive the utmost care. Their wellbeing is our immediate priority."

The Chief Minister was accompanied by his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Chanapora Mushtaq Ahmad Guro and other concerned.

**CM Omar reviews.....**

30,000-gallon capacity slow sand filtration plant with reservoirs and treatment units at WSS Fraw Haknar completed with an investment of ₹108.09 lakh; and a 60,000-gallon capacity slow sand filtration plant at WSS Rezan along with its pipe network and related infrastructure completed at a cost of ₹121.20 lakh.

The Chief Minister later laid foundation stone for multiple upcoming projects. These include a 4 MGD common pre-settling tank along with the revamping of the water treatment plant in Ganderbal Town with an estimated outlay of ₹384 lakh; the construction of a 33/11 KV, 1x6.3 MVA receiving station at Wangath,

Kangan costing ₹417 lakh; the upgradation of the road connecting Spring Naga Mohallah Shallar to Dab at Batpora, Lar with a budget of ₹181.06 lakh; the establishment of a Model Floriculture Centre at Nunnar (FPO Park) costing ₹172 lakh; and the upgradation of earthen ponds at NFSF Manasbal with a total investment of ₹308.12 lakh.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by Minister for Health & Medical Education, Higher Education, School Education Sakina Itoo, Minister for Jal Shakti Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister for Agriculture Javid Ahmed Dar, Minister for Transport Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Kangan Mian Mehar Ali, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Deputy Commissioner and SSP Ganderbal, heads of departments, district officers and other concerned officials.

These projects are being executed by Jal Shakti RWS Division Ganderbal, KPDCI Ganderbal and Public Works (R&B) Department, reflecting the government's commitment to strengthening infrastructure and public welfare.

Later, the Chief Minister chaired a comprehensive district review meeting and DC Ganderbal presented a detailed overview of progress across various sectors. CM gave instructions to ensure adequate awareness among farmers about Fasal Bima Yojana and other government schemes. CM exhorted that dropout rate at primary school level should be brought to nil and that teachers be deployed in such cases to understand the problem. He also asked for an assessment of whether the introduction of smart classrooms has led to qualitative improvement in the education being imparted in schools. He instructed the health authorities to immediately complete registration of the already procured ambulance through the hospital development fund and make it operational without delay. Similarly, he directed the concerned Health and R&B Electric wing to ensure early operationalization of the procured CT Scan machine by completing the pending civil and electrical works.

He also emphasized the urgency of addressing traffic congestion in Ganderbal and directed the Deputy Commissioner to prepare an ideal long-term solution in consultation with the R&B Department. He further stressed expediting utilization of funds, avoiding lapses and cutting down non-essential expenditure. Regarding the SASCI scheme, he directed the Deputy Commissioner to conduct fortnightly reviews to ensure that 80 percent expenditure by end of December is achieved, which is mandatory to secure the next instalment.

The Chief Minister instructed the concerned departments to make all necessary efforts to develop Sonamarg as another major winter tourism destination in Kashmir, saying that this year would serve as a learning experience as winter tourism expands beyond Gulmarg and Pahalgam. He also directed CEO Sonamarg Development Authority to check and stop any illegal construction in the eco-fragile zone of Sonamarg.

Responding to local demand for water tankers in the district, he sanctioned two tankers from his CDF for Ganderbal.

MLA Mian Mehar Ali raised several issues such as the establishment of a degree college at Gund, road connectivity improvements, drinking water coverage upgradation of schools and other public concerns. The Chief Minister asked the concerned ministers to resolve these issues in a timely manner.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Jatin Kishore delivered a detailed presentation on recent developments and ongoing projects in the district as of November 2025. The presentation highlighted progress in urban planning, road, water and power infrastructure, agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, education, social welfare and winter tourism development. It emphasized the modernization of Ganderbal town, the implementation of a ₹24.10 crore municipal work plan, significant upgrades in public amenities, expansion of health and educational institutions, improvements in the power and road sectors, and agriculture schemes benefiting thousands of farmers. The DC also gave details of steps being taken to enhance winter sports infrastructure and informed that Sonamarg would now function as a year-round destination. He further outlined progress under social security schemes, employment initiatives, industrial development and preparedness for winter operations and emergencies.

During the visit, the Chief Minister inspected a series of stalls showcasing departmental achievements and beneficiary schemes. These included the PM Suryaghar Muft Bijli Yojana stall of Electric Subdivision Tulamulla (KPDCI), PM Awas Yojana by MC Ganderbal, J&K KVIB, and stalls by the Horticulture, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry departments. He also viewed displays by Safawi Foods under the PMFME scheme, innovations presented by students under Atal Tinkering Labs, awareness stalls by Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti, a Bio-Floc demonstration by the Fisheries Department, capacity-building initiatives under Mission YUVA, local sozni and crewel art by NRLM-UMeed, and an exhibition by the J&K Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

The Chief Minister also distributed welfare benefits including ten individual cheques and one grand cheque under BOCW welfare schemes amounting to ₹3,62,72,562 benefiting a total of 5,424 workers and beneficiaries. He handed over sanction letters to two beneficiaries under Mission YUVA and presented two scooters under the Social Welfare Department. He also issued an approval letter sanctioning ₹6 lakh as grant-in-aid assistance to a Self-Help Group under HADP. Under PMAY-L, he handed over a cheque of ₹2,20,326 to one beneficiary and issued a sanction letter to another under PMAY-U 2.0. He also distributed orders for the regularization of CPW/LFW workers as MTS in favour of 14 beneficiaries.

Later in the day, the Chief Minister visited District Hospital Ganderbal where he inaugurated a high-end USG machine procured under CDF and dedicated it to the public. The machine will become operational from Monday. Several issues concerning the hospital, including the establishment of a CATH lab, deployment

of a cardiologist and the need for a PG Hostel facility, were raised during the visit. The Chief Minister directed the Deputy Commissioner to incorporate the PG Hostel project under the CAPEX Plan. He also carried out a plantation drive within the hospital premises.

**Vaishnodevi.....**

pilgrimage route. He conveyed this during a comprehensive review of disaster management preparedness and security measures for the pilgrimage.

The security agencies were requested to undertake a thorough review of the functionality and operational readiness of the security equipment currently in use, he said.

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.

Highlighting the central role of the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC), the CEO emphasised its full-scale utilisation 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 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 organise such drills frequently to further enhance readiness and inter-agency coordination.

Emphasising 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 a thorough inventory audit of Disaster Management Stores located along the track and within the Bhawan area. The stores will be replenished and upgraded wherever required.

**UAPA Court.....**

The case pertains to the encounter that took place on May 5, 2021, between security forces and terrorists at Imam Sahab, Shopian. During the encounter, three militants — Danish Ahmed Mir, Zahid Bashir, and Umar Hassan Bhat — were neutralized, while the accused, Towseef Ahmed Thokar, was apprehended alive from the encounter site along with arms and ammunition. The investigation of the case was conducted by Shri Mohd Ashrif Lissery (JKPS), then DySP Operations Imam Sahab Shopian, who is presently serving as SDPO Magam.

In a detailed judgment, Special Judge Parvaiz Iqbal observed that, in view of the rising threat of terrorism, courts must adopt a stringent approach against acts that endanger national security and the rule of law, while ensuring that constitutional safeguards and the right to a fair trial are fully upheld.

The court also commended the Investigating Officer and the Prosecution for conducting a thorough and professional investigation and for presenting strong and credible evidence that withstood judicial scrutiny.

"The investigation has been carried out in a professional manner, and the prosecution has systematically presented evidence that led the court to believe in the truthfulness of the prosecution case," the judgment reads. Concluding the judgment, the court stated that the prosecution successfully proved all the charges beyond reasonable doubt, resulting in the conviction of the accused.

**Zero Tolerance.....**

more dangerous over the years. Addressing the SCO Council of Heads of Government in Moscow, Jaishankar said the world must show zero tolerance toward terrorism, stressing there can be "no justification, no looking away and no whitewashing" of such acts. "As India has demonstrated, we have the right to defend our people against terrorism, and will exercise it," he asserted.

Calling for an SCO that is responsive to global shifts, Jaishankar said the grouping must adapt, widen its agenda and reform its working methods. He highlighted the volatility of the global economic environment, noting that supply-side risks and demand-side complexities have made diversification and de-risking essential. "This is best achieved by forging the widest possible economic links in a fair, transparent and equitable manner," he said.

The minister pointed out that India's ongoing efforts to conclude free trade agreements with several SCO partners reflect this vision, strengthened further by New Delhi's longstanding ties with member states.

Emphasising India's civilisational approach to diplomacy, Jaishankar said people-to-people contact remains the heart of any enduring partnership. "Facilitating deeper interaction between our intellectuals, artists, sportspersons and cultural icons will create stronger bonds across the SCO," he added.

**Environmental.....**

Constitution (right to life) to include environmental protection, building on its broad language and humanitarian interpretation," he said.

The top court judge said that the "fusion of PIL and expansive interpretation of Article 21" became the "bedrock" of India's environmental jurisprudence, and thereafter, from the 1980s onwards, the apex court delivered a series of path-breaking judgments, firmly establishing environmental principles in Indian law.

Justice Singh, however, said that the Supreme Court often faced the challenge of making complex scientific and ecological determinations without having expert infrastructure at its disposal.

He said that the experience of major industrial disasters, such as the Bhopal Gas Tragedy of 1984, was

a wake-up call, following which the top court largely followed the legal principle of strict liability.

He further said the "uniquely Indian principle of absolute liability" arose in the 1986 case of M C Mehta versus Union of India, where it was held that enterprises engaged in hazardous activities bear full responsibility for any harm, with no exceptions.

Justice Singh said that subsequent rulings by the apex court introduced the 'Polluter Pays' and 'Precautionary Principles'.

"The Supreme Court has progressively adopted a range of innovative strategies to enhance the administration of justice, extending beyond environmental matters to diverse areas of public concern," he said.

The judge said that by the 1990s, India's environmental jurisprudence entered a phase of consolidation, building upon the foundations of the 1970s and 1980s, as the Supreme Court began to lay down comprehensive environmental policies through its rulings, which, under Articles 141 and 142 of the Constitution, became binding on all authorities and citizens unless altered by legislation.

By invoking its expansive writ jurisdiction and through the innovative use of PILs, the Supreme Court transformed itself into a guardian of environmental governance, Justice Singh said.

The apex court integrated Directive Principles of State Policy with Fundamental Rights, while also drawing upon natural law principles adopted by UNFCCC, he added.

He said that to institutionalise the judicial momentum, the establishment of the National Green Tribunal (2010) provided India with a specialised forum for swift and scientific adjudication of environmental disputes.

"Together, these developments transformed environmental protection from a matter of policy into a continuing constitutional commitment, where the judiciary emerged as both interpreter and enforcer of the nation's ecological conscience," Justice Singh said.

He said that while the judiciary played a pivotal role in bridging legislative gaps to uphold constitutional ideals, it had simultaneously maintained a careful balance between activism and restraint, thereby reinforcing its credibility as a guardian of justice rather than a policy maker.

"As we move into the 21st century, the Supreme Court's environmental role continues to evolve in response to new challenges. Two significant and related themes stand out: addressing the climate crisis (often through the lens of sustainable development) and protecting biodiversity amid infrastructure expansion," Justice Singh said. (Agencies)

**CS Reviews.....**

Force under the Chairmanship of the Principal Secretary, Home, with Administrative Heads from the Information, Social Welfare, and Skill Development Departments as members. This force will focus on formulating comprehensive, age-group-wise rehabilitation proposals for treated individuals.

Chief Secretary underscored the vital need for training counsellors for every Panchayat, Health Center, High/Higher Secondary School, and College across J&K. He asked for training of Master Trainers at IMHANS Srinagar/Jammu, who will then be utilized to conduct decentralized training sessions in their respective districts. Videography of these training sessions was suggested for clarity and wider dissemination across tehsils and blocks.

The Information Department was designated as the nodal agency for coordinating the NMBA activities across all departments and was directed to explore the possibility of seeking financial assistance from the Department of Revenue (DoR), Government of India, under the National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse (NFCDA).

All departments were instructed to meticulously dovetail their NMBA-related activities and ensure their coordinated upload onto the single reporting portal managed by the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR).

Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare, Sarmad Hafeez, presented a detailed overview of the achievements under the Abhiyan, showcasing widespread outreach and collective departmental efforts.

Sarmad Hafeez, highlighted the comprehensive outreach of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA). He added that cumulatively, the campaign has successfully reached 1,09,78,171 people across J&K through 12,565 activities. This extensive outreach included covering 24,166 educational institutions and 8,203 villages.

Additionally, he apprised that the efforts focused significantly on vulnerable groups, reaching over 11 lakh youth and nearly 98.63 lakh women. Furthermore, a special three-month campaign recently held by the Ministry of Social Justice saw the UT conducting 1,020 events, engaging an additional 2,22,565 people.

Commissioner Secretary further noted that during a special three-month campaign run by the Ministry of Social Justice, the UT conducted 1,020 events, reaching 2,22,565 people, including over 1.20 lakh youth.

The success of the Abhiyan was said to stem out from the joint efforts of several departments. The Information Department played a crucial role in awareness generation by conducting 5,361 events, reaching 3,83,259 persons. The Rural Development Department (RDD) also contributed significantly with 4,881 outreach events, engaging 3,08,841 participants.

Alongside events by Urban Local Bodies, the Health & Medical Education Department has

focused on intervention and rehabilitation, registering 33,205 patients for treatment. Supplementing this, Drug Deaddiction Centres across the UT have provided substantial support by holding 1,12,884 counselling sessions.

On the strategy for the days ahead, the meeting emphasized awareness generation, rehabilitation of victims, imparting vocational training, education, and sustainable livelihoods as key tasks to combat the addiction menace.

The Health Department apprised the meeting that the training of Master Trainers would commence immediately at both GMC Srinagar and Jammu, with an initial batch of 30 from each district. The process is slated to continue for the next six months, aiming to create a comprehensive pool of approximately 4,000 counsellors covering every Panchayat, school, and health center.

The Chief Secretary concluded the meeting by administering a pledge to all participants, committing them to help achieve a drug-free India by abstaining from and preventing the use of narcotic substances.

**After Srinagar.....**

doctor at GMC Anantnag on November 8. Notably, the investigations and the DNA test had revealed that a doctor from South Kashmir's Pulwama district Dr Umar Mohammad carried out a suicide attack near Red Fort on November 10 by blowing off the i20. In the blast more than ten people were killed.

A few days before the blast, J&K, Haryana and UP Police had recovered a major cache of explosives, nearly 2,900 kg during a raid in Faridabad. Initially two Kashmiri-origin doctors were detained from Al Falah University in connection with that operation. "Dr Umar was associated with those arrested and may have gone ahead with the attack fearing imminent arrest," an official had said.

On November 14, the National Medical Commission (NMC) removed four doctors from the Indian Medical Register (IMR) and National Medical Register (NMR) with immediate effect following their involvement in a case registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

The doctors removed includes Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad (Reg. No. 14680/2017), Dr. Adeel Ahmad Rather (Reg. No. 15892/2019), Dr. Muzamil Shaheel (Reg. No. 15130/2018), and Dr. Shaheen Saeed (Reg. No. 45961/2022).

The Jammu & Kashmir Medical Council had already cancelled the registrations of Dr. Ahmad, Dr. Rather, and Dr. Shaheel based on evidence shared by investigating agencies.

Dr. Saeed, registered with the Uttar Pradesh Medical Council, was removed through a separate NMC order. The removal followed FIR No. 162/2025, lodged at Nowgam Police Station in Srinagar on October 19, under multiple sections of the UAPA, including provisions relating to unlawful activities, terrorist acts, raising funds, recruitment, and harbouring. The NMC said the conduct of the doctors was "prima facie inconsistent with the standards of ethical propriety, integrity and public trust" required under the Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002.

The order states that the four individuals "shall cease to practice medicine or hold any medical appointment till further orders". All State Medical Councils have been instructed to enforce the directive—(KNO)

**Power Demand.....**

making it vulnerable to overloads and frequent outages.

Year-on-Year Growth Pattern of Official estimates indicate demand will increase by:

- 5% in 2025-26
- 4% in 2026-27
- 4% in 2027-28
- 3% in 2028-29
- 5% in 2029-30
- 4% in 2030-31
- 4% in 2031-32
- 3% in 2032-33
- 5% in 2033-34
- 4% in 2034-35

These projections, officials noted, are higher than those indicated in the 20th Electric Power Survey of India, prompting planners to adopt J&K's revised figures for future studies.

Generation Additions is not enough. The documents also outline generation plans up to 2030, including 392 MW of coal-based power, 620 MW of solar, and 1,206 MW of hydropower. But experts warn the additions may not keep pace with winter requirements unless accompanied by significant upgrades in transmission and distribution systems.

A Decade of Difficult Winters Ahead? With winter demand rising faster than supply, energy planners say J&K must accelerate reforms, bolster renewable integration and replace worn-out infrastructure. Failure to do so, they caution, could leave the UT facing harsher and more unpredictable power shortages in the years ahead.

The projections, officials admit, underline an urgent truth: J&K's winters are only going to get tougher unless its power system gets stronger.

**Northern Army.....**

preparedness of formations deployed along the Line of Control (LoC)

"During the visit, the Army Commander interacted with troops stationed in forward areas and lauded their high level of combat readiness, indomitable spirit and consistent professional performance," he added—(KNO)



# KU students impress at 17th national youth parliament, varsity ranks amongst top 8 teams

HT NEWS DESK

**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** The University of Kashmir (KU) hosted the 17th National Youth Parliament Competition, organised by the Department of Students' Welfare (DSW) under the aegis of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, at the University's Convocation Complex.

The event brought together trained student parliamentarians who demonstrated strong knowledge of legislative procedures and parliamentary conduct. The proceedings were attended by faculty members, officers, research scholars and students.

Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan commended the

participants for their confidence, clarity and discipline. She said that the University remains committed to nurturing leadership, critical thinking and democratic values, and that such platforms help students gain deeper insights into parliamentary functioning.

Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi, former MP and sitting MLA, appreciated the University's efforts, noting that Youth Parliament initiatives play a vital role in strengthening democracy at the grassroots.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, said that the Youth Parliament is an important platform for shaping informed and responsible young citizens. He highlighted the commitment



and maturity displayed by students during the training and reiterated the University's support for initiatives that broaden students' national exposure.

Shri Sharad Dwivedi, Under Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, praised the professionalism with which the University conducted the event and lauded the enthusiasm and preparedness of the participants.

Earlier, Dean DSW KU, Prof. Pervez Ahmed, delivered the welcome address and thanked the Ministry for its continued support.

Dr. Shahid Ali Khan, Cultural Officer DSW KU, and mentor of the KU's Youth Parliament team, shared insights into the preparation process. He

informed that 55 students from the University departments and affiliated colleges underwent an intensive 60-day training covering key aspects of Lok Sabha procedures, Question Hour, legislative business, and overall parliamentary conduct—enabling them to perform with authenticity and confidence.

Earlier, 51 teams from across India competed at the group level, out of which only eight—including the University of Kashmir—qualified for the national round. These top eight teams will now compete for the final honour, with the winning team earning an opportunity to perform inside the Parliament of India before Members of Parliament and Union Ministers.

## Jasahn-e- Tflaan, 2nd Day of 5-Day Theatre Festival

GULFAM BARJI

**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** On the second day of the ongoing five-day theatre festival Jashn-e-Tiflaan, held at Tagore Hall Srinagar, the students of New Genius Public High School, Nawab Bazaar Srinagar, performed the thought-provoking Kashmiri play "Tahqeeqat Chu Jaari", written by Majeed Majazi and directed by Majeed Wani. Their performance received an enthusiastic response from the audience.

Former Advisor to governor Khursheed Ahmad Ganai attended the event as the chief guest on the



second day, while HELP Foundation Chairperson Nihat Shafi and several prominent theatre personalities were also present. Notably, Nissar Naseem and Gulzar Ahmad Ganai are serving as judges for the festival.

Speaking on the occasion, Khursheed Ahmad Ganai emphasised the need to revive cultural activities in schools to preserve Kashmir's centuries-old theatre traditions. He said that children here possess immense talent, but what is lacking is proper guidance and encouragement to draw them towards theatre.

Festival Director Hakeem Javaid said that the festival serves as an excellent platform to nurture the hidden artistic abilities of children, urging everyone to come forward and encourage the young participants so that more children develop an interest in theatre.

The five-day Jashn-e-Tiflaan festival is being jointly organised by Re-Root Foundation of India, the Cultural Academy, and Kashmir Kala Manch, with support from HELP Foundation J&K.

## JKWDC Mega Awareness Camp-cum-Loan Mela Held at GDC Ganderbal

HT NEWS DESK

**GANDERBAL, NOV 18:** The J&K Women's Development Corporation (JKWDC), in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare, Ganderbal, today organized a Mega Awareness Camp-cum-Loan Mela at Government Degree College (GDC) Ganderbal. The programme was sponsored by the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC), Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India.

Principal GDC Ganderbal, Ms. Fauzia Fatima, graced the event as the Chief Guest, while District Programme Officer (DPO) Ganderbal, Ms. Bureeda Majid, and Mr. Ab Rashid Bhat, Deputy Reg-

istrar, Central University of Kashmir, attended as Guests of Honour. The dignitaries were warmly welcomed by Shabir Ahmad Wani, District Manager JKWDC Ganderbal/Baramulla-Kupwara, along with his team.

The event highlighted various self-employment and welfare schemes of JKWDC and NMDFC aimed at empowering women, particularly those from minority and economically weaker sections. The programme witnessed large participation from students, ICDS workers, SHG members, and local women entrepreneurs, making the event highly impactful.

Addressing the gathering, the Principal and DPO Ganderbal emphasized the importance of



women availing government-supported financial assistance schemes to strengthen their economic independence and create sustainable livelihoods.

Dr. Gh. Mouhidin Bhat, Head, Faculty of Forestry, also delivered an informative session on women's safety and empowerment, receiving appreciation from the participants.

Mr. Tahir Parvez from JKWDC

and Ms. Gull Yasmeen, District Manager JKWDC (Bandipora-Srinagar-Budgam), were also present on the occasion and shared valuable information about the diverse initiatives and loan facilities offered by the Corporation.

The programme began with a warm Welcome Address by Prof. Mehvish, and concluded with a formal Vote of Thanks delivered by Ms. Shazia, expressing gratitude to all guests, participants, and departments for contributing to the success of the event.

JKWDC reaffirmed its commitment to advancing women's empowerment, financial inclusion, and entrepreneurship development across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

## International Islamic School Srinagar Deeply Mourns The Loss of Inspector Shah Asrar-ul-Haq

IIS Family Stands United With The Bereaved Family In This Painful Moment

HT NEWS DESK

**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** The International Islamic School, Peerbagh Srinagar, expresses its profound grief and heartfelt condolences on the tragic demise of Inspector Shah Asrar-ul-Haq, a distinguished officer of Jammu & Kashmir Police and a respected parent of our school.

Inspector Asrar-ul-Haq was known for his humility, integrity and unwavering dedication to his duty. His professional excellence, compassionate nature and commitment to public service earned him deep respect from colleagues, friends and the community at large. His loss is not only a personal tragedy for his family, but an irreparable loss for the



entire society.

Speaking on the devastating incident, a spokesperson of the school said "We are deeply shocked and saddened by the untimely passing of Inspector Shah Asrar-ul-Haq. He was not only a brave officer but a gentle,

humble parent who always carried himself with respect and dignity. His presence was a source of pride for our school. We pray Almighty Allah forgives his shortcomings, grants him the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous and gives his family patience, strength & courage in this very difficult time.

The School Management, Principal, Staff and Students of the International Islamic School stands in solidarity with the bereaved family in this moment of grief. The IIS family joins together in prayer for the departed soul and for strength and patience for his loved ones.

May Allah elevate his ranks, shower His mercy upon him and grant peace and comfort to all those touched by his noble life. Ameen.

## CPI(M) Calls for Justice in Delhi Terror Case, Warns Against Harassment of Students and Labourers

FAROOQ RATHER

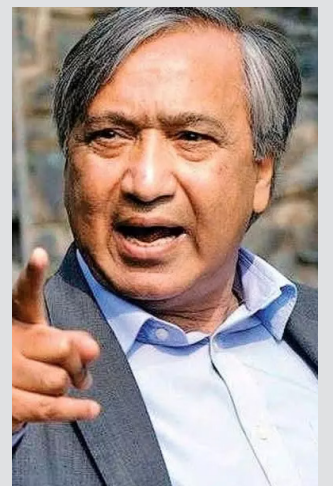
**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** The Jammu & Kashmir State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has expressed serious concern over reports of harassment faced by students and labourers in different parts of the country in the aftermath of the recent terrorist attack in Delhi.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, CPI(M) leader M.Y. Tarigami said that while those involved in the "heinous terrorist act" in Delhi must be brought to justice, it is equally important to ensure that innocent people are not subjected to intimidation or arbitrary action.

Tarigami said the atmosphere of fear reportedly being created around students studying outside J&K is deeply worrying. "Students should not be dragged into it. The country must ensure a sense of security for them instead of exposing them to intimidation or suspicion," he said.

He added that such a situation is detrimental to a conducive environment for education and livelihood, especially when young people need stability and reassurance. While calling for stringent action against the perpetrators of the Delhi attack, Tarigami stressed that efforts to "win hearts and minds" of the youth are essential. "Pushing innocent people to the wall has never helped achieve anything fruitful. Desperation is always counterproductive," he observed, noting that previous conflict situations have shown that indiscriminate actions only deepen alienation.

The CPI(M) also demanded that law enforcement agencies ensure there are no indiscriminate arrests following the Delhi incident. "Innocent citizens—students, labourers or ordinary people—must not become victims of fear or suspicion," the statement added.



## Mass Awareness Rally Held in Kulgam Under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

FAROOQ RATHER

**KULGAM, NOV 18:** As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), a mass awareness rally was organised in Kulgam on Tuesday to highlight the harmful effects of drug abuse and encourage youth to stay away from substance addiction. The rally was flagged off by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kulgam.

The rally began from the Mini Secretariat (DC Office) and culminated at the Drug De-addiction Centre Kulgam. Students, teachers, staff members and representatives from various institutions participated with great enthusiasm, carrying placards and raising slogans advocating a drug-free society. The rally passed



through the main market, drawing public attention and reinforcing the message of "Say No to Drugs."

The event was presided over

by ADC Kulgam Viqar Ahmed Giri. ACD Bilal Ahmad Kamgar, District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Sonabar Altaf and other officers were also present. They appreciated the collective efforts of participants in spreading awareness and combating the rising menace of drug abuse. Alongside the rally, an awareness programme

was held at the Conference-cum-Auditorium Hall of the Mini Secretariat, where students and staff members took part in a pledge ceremony to contribute towards building a drug-free society. Addressing the gathering, officers stressed the importance of community-based awareness, early intervention, counselling and active cooperation from all sections of society to achieve the vision of a Nasha Mukht Bharat. They also highlighted the crucial role of youth in shaping a healthier and more responsible community.

The rally concluded at the Drug De-addiction Centre Kulgam, where participants were briefed about counselling, rehabilitation and support facilities available for individuals affected by substance abuse.

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# DC Budgam chairs 41st NCORD Meeting

## Urges Community-Driven Fight, Stronger Enforcement and Rehabilitation Measures

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 18:** The 41st District-Level NCORD (Narco Coordination) Committee Meeting was today convened at the DC Office Budgam under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, along with SSP Budgam Nikhil Borkar, to review ongoing measures against drug abuse and to formulate fresh strategies for a drug-free Budgam.

The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam, all SDMs, ACD, CMO, DSWO, Medical Superintendent DH Budgam, Principals of all Government Degree Colleges, EOs of Municipal Committees, and other concerned officers.

At the outset, action taken on previous NCORD decisions was reviewed. It was informed that wild cannabis spread over 77 kanals and 18 marlas of land has been destroyed across the district during the past month, while 55 cases have been registered and 38 challenged for illicit cultivation.

The DC said that drug abuse

is not only a law enforcement challenge but a serious social problem affecting families and communities. He emphasised that the fight against drugs must remain strict and uncompromising toward peddlers, traffickers, and cultivators, while being supportive and compassionate toward victims who require treatment and rehabilitation.

He said that a multi-pronged approach involving deterrence, enforcement, treatment, and mass awareness is essential. It was stressed that all line departments need to intensify efforts to curb narcotics cultivation and peddling. It was further stated that roads, embankments, and Panchayat areas must be kept free from cannabis and poppy cultivation through coordinated efforts.

The DC appreciated the progress made so far but said that continuous, proactive and visible action is required so that the public retains confidence in the administration's resolve.

Regarding drug regulation, the DC underlined the importance



of 100% CCTV coverage and Computerized Billing Systems (CBS) in all chemist shops. It was informed that Budgam has 630

retail and 225 wholesale chemist outlets, all under strict monitoring. He said that frequent inspections must continue and

strict action be taken for any violations.

He also said that the Drug Inspector shall ensure wide

publicity about actions taken, including cancellation of licenses and other violations, to increase transparency.

It was given out that 117 calls have been received on the Tele-MANAS mental health helpline, indicating its increasing role in providing psychological support. The DC said that such services must be further publicised so that people can seek help confidentially.

He said that the Excise Department shall work in close coordination with Revenue and Police authorities for destruction of illicit crops and registration of FIRs.

SDMs were asked to hold meetings with religious scholars and community stakeholders to encourage sermons against substance abuse and promote "Nasha-Mukt Panchayats."

It was also stated that the Rural Development Department shall organise special Gram Sabhas on drug abuse awareness, while the DSWO shall conduct mega IEC campaigns across villages, towns, and educational institutions.

The DC said that the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital Budgam must remain functional round-the-clock. It was further informed that the Drug De-Addiction Centre is now fully ready for intake of patients requiring treatment.

The DC also said that all Degree Colleges in Budgam shall ensure installation of CCTV cameras within their campuses to strengthen preventive monitoring.

Reiterating the zero-tolerance stance, the DC said that the administration shall continue to act firmly against drug peddlers, cultivators, and traffickers, while extending full support to victims of addiction. He said that this campaign requires collective participation of government departments, civil society, community elders, teachers, parents, and religious scholars.

He added that Budgam must set an example for the rest of the UT by breaking the drug supply chain and protecting the youth through united community action.

## DC Budgam Approves Fresh Cases under HADP, JKCIP, ISDS, IDDS to Boost Agriculture & Allied Sectors in District

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 18:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, today chaired a meeting regarding the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP), the Integrated Sheep Development Scheme (ISDS), and Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDD) at the New Conference Hall, DC Office Complex Budgam.

The meeting was convened to evaluate and approve eligible applications received from various Agriculture and Allied Departments.

During the session, the DC approved 03 cases under HADP, taking the total number of approved cases under the programme to 47, including 44 cases approved earlier.

Under JKCIP, the District Level Committee (DLC) approved 889 new cases, in addition to 465 cases approved earlier, raising the total to 1,354 approved cases across Budgam district.

Similarly, under the Integrated Sheep Development Scheme (ISDS), 141 cases were approved today, taking the cumulative total to 404 cases, including 263 cases approved earlier.

Under Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDS), 65 cases were approved, taking the total approvals under the scheme to 139 so far.

While reviewing the schemes, the DC reiterated that agriculture and allied sectors remain the backbone of Budgam's rural economy. He emphasized that these government interventions provide direct livelihood support, introduce modern technology, strengthen value chains, and enhance market competitiveness for farmers, youth, and livestock rearers.

He directed the concerned officers to ensure timely implementation, handholding support, and close coordination with all beneficiaries so that each sanctioned project is executed transparently and efficiently on the ground without delays.

Highlighting the vast potential of Budgam in horticulture, livestock, fisheries, and dairy sectors, the DC noted that effective tapping of these resources can significantly transform the district's socio-economic landscape and generate employment opportunities for rural youth.

The meeting was attended by CPO, ACP, CAO, CAHO, CHO, DSHO, DSO, AMO, AD Fisheries, representatives from NABARD, LDM Budgam, DFO Budgam, HPM, PO KVK and other concerned officers.

## KVIB Organizes Awareness Camp-cum-Interaction Programme ITI Budgam

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 18:** Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (JKKVIB), District Office Budgam, today successfully organized an Awareness Camp-cum-Interaction Programme at ITI District Budgam.

The event was attended by Principal ITI, Officers/representatives from office of Lead District Manager Budgam, JKRETI Budgam, Cluster Head J&K Bank Budgam, various rural Bank Branch Heads, representatives from various Blocks and officers from other line departments.

The programme was aimed at creating awareness among unemployed educated youth, aspiring entrepreneurs, artisans with a special focus on the passing out students of the institution. The event featured informative

sessions and discussions on self-employment opportunities and various schemes viz. PMEGP and JKREGP implemented by the Board.

Speaking on the event, District Officer KVIB Budgam highlighted the Self-employment opportunities in Khadi and village industries sector, financial assistance schemes (PMEGP/JKREGP) and employment generation programs offered by J&K KVIB, Technical training and skill development initiatives, marketing support and linkages for entrepreneurs.

The interactive session enabled direct dialogue between KVIB officials and local participants, addressing queries related to loan applications, project formulation, and accessing government support schemes. On-spot in the programme, many applications from the participants under various activities



under JKREGP/PMEGP scheme were received and it was assured to them that the same shall be processed/ sponsored as early as possible after prior approval from the DTFC.

It was informed that the KVIB is committed to generating employment opportunities in rural and urban areas through promotion of Khadi and village industries, during the year 2024-25 under

PMEGP scheme, 498 cases were disbursed involving Margin Money of Rs 1379.92 lakh generating employment to 2988 persons and under JKREGP scheme 15 rural cases stand disbursed involving Margin Money of Rs 48.30 lakh thereby creating employment to 120 rural persons.

The initiative received an enthusiastic response from

participants, who actively engaged in discussions about entrepreneurship opportunities and government support mechanisms.

The awareness camp represents J&K KVIB's continued commitment to empowering rural entrepreneurship and fostering sustainable economic development in the block. By focusing on traditional industries alongside other village industries, the Board aims to strengthen local economies while preserving indigenous skills and practices.

The programme marks another significant step in the Board's ongoing efforts to bridge the gap between government schemes and grassroots beneficiaries, ensuring that rural communities have access to the resources and knowledge necessary for economic self-reliance.

## Mass Awareness Rally Organized in Kulgam Under Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**KULGAM, NOVEMBER 18:** As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), a rally was today organised at Kulgam, flagged off by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kulgam.

The rally commenced from the Mini Secretariat (DC Office) Kulgam and culminated at the Drug De-addiction Centre Kulgam, aiming to spread awareness against drug abuse and encourage youth to stay away from substance addiction.

The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, staff members, and representatives of various institutions.

Participants carried placards and raised slogans promoting a

drug-free society. The rally moved through the main market areas of Kulgam, drawing public attention and reinforcing the message of "Say No to Drugs."

The event was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kulgam, Viqar Ahmed Giri, ACD, Bilal Ahmad Kamgar.

District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Kulgam, Sonabar Altaf and other officers also participated in the event and appreciated the collective efforts of students, teachers, and staff in combating the menace of drug abuse.

Alongside the rally, an awareness programme was organised at the Conference-cum-Auditorium Hall of the Mini Secretariat, where students, teachers, and staff members

participated actively.

A pledge-taking ceremony was also held, reaffirming commitment towards building a drug-free society.

Addressing the gathering, the officers stressed the importance of community-based awareness, early intervention, counselling, and cooperation from all sections of society to realise the vision of a Nasha Mukht Bharat.

They highlighted the vital role of youth in shaping a healthier and more responsible society.

The rally concluded at the Drug De-addiction Centre Kulgam, where participants were briefed about the available facilities for counselling, rehabilitation, and support for individuals affected by substance abuse.

## UF Division Srinagar organises Plantation-cum-Drawing Competition to promote Environmental Awareness among students

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 18:** Urban Forestry (UF) Division, Srinagar today organised a Plantation-cum-Drawing Competition for students from various schools at Bal Van, Zeethyar Srinagar.

The event witnessed participation of around 100 students, who actively took part in plantation activities and expressed their creativity through nature-themed drawings.



On the occasion, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Urban Forestry Srinagar, Dr. Sheikh Mehraj delivered an insightful lecture on the importance of environment and forests. He highlighted the vital role forests play in maintaining ecological balance, mitigating climate change, and enhancing the overall quality of life.

The students were encouraged to become ambassadors of environmental conservation by adopting eco-friendly habits and spreading awareness in their communities.

Speaking at the event, Chairman National Society for Protection of Water Resources, Forests and Wetlands, appreciated the initiative and encouraged students to develop a deeper connection with nature and contribute actively to conservation efforts.

The programme concluded with a brief interactive session where students shared their thoughts on environmental challenges and possible solutions.

## Multiple Activities Mark 5th Anniversary of NMBA in Anantnag Participants Reaffirm Resolve to Fight Drug Abuse

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 18:** Multiple activities including pledge ceremonies, rallies, awareness sessions, and debates marked the 5th anniversary of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) across Anantnag district today.

These programmes were organised by the District Administration and witnessed enthusiastic participation from senior officers, officials, students, youth, and civil society members, who reaffirmed their resolve to fighting the menace of drug abuse.

The main event, held at Town



Hall Anantnag, was presided over by Additional District Magistrate, Tariq Ahmad Malik and attended

by the DEPO, DIO, CDPOs, TSWOs, and field officials from the Social Welfare, Health, ICDS, Education, MCA, and other departments.

Administering the NMBA pledge, the ADM urged participants to create community-led mass awareness against drug abuse by engaging officials, youth, civil society members, and other stakeholders so the menace is eradicated from society. He said the district schedule of events has been designed to enhance awareness and participation at the grassroots level, adding that departments are conducting activities in tune with it.

## Chief Secy visits Sujeet Mattoo's residence to offer condolences on mother's demise

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**JAMMU, NOVEMBER 18:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today visited the residence of Sujeet Mattoo his PA to express his heartfelt condolences on the passing of his mother, Smt. Sharika Mattoo.

The Chief Secretary spent time with the bereaved family, offering words of sympathy and solace during this difficult time. He conveyed his deep sorrow and shared the grief of the family, praying for eternal peace for the departed soul.



Smt. Sharika Mattoo, originally a resident of Vicharnag, Srinagar, was a respected member of the community. Her demise has been widely mourned by friends, relatives, and well-wishers.

Dulloo assured the family that he shares this grief and shock the family finds themselves by her sudden departure. He highlighted the importance of standing by one another in moments of personal loss and showed his support to the family in this hour of grief and loss.

## DC Doda reviews progress of work on 132 KV Khellani-Changa Transmission Line Project

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**DODA, NOVEMBER 18:** Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh today chaired a comprehensive review meeting in the VC Room to assess the progress of the under-construction 132 KV Khellani-Changa Transmission Line and Grid Sub-Station Changa (Bhaderwah). The meeting was attended by ACR Ashraf Pervez; CPO Manesh Kumar Manhas, functionaries from JKPTCL, JPDCL, PGCIL, the Revenue Department and the Army, who attended both in person and virtually.

The DC reviewed the current status of tower erection, stringing activities, forest clearance, land acquisition and the availability of materials. He stressed on removing the pending bottlenecks, including Right of Way (ROW) issues, to avoid delays. The DC sought feedback from concerned SDMs on the status of the work and directed them to ensure close departmental coordination for timely execution of the project.

The JPDCL was asked to submit a consolidated progress report and share updated project details with all concerned departments before the next review. He urged all stakeholders to initiate and accelerate execution of works to prevent power disruptions amid winter season. The DC emphasised that uninterrupted power supply to the region depends on



the timely completion of this vital project. The DC directed the JPDCL to take all necessary measures to maintain smooth and reliable power supply during winters. The meeting concluded with clear directions for weekly monitoring, field verification and proactive issue resolution to ensure steady progress and timely completion of the 132 KV Khellani-Changa Transmission Project.

## DC Kathua inaugurates wheat sowing across the fence along IB in Hiranagar Sector

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**KATHUA, NOVEMBER 18:** District Administration Kathua, in coordination with the Agriculture Department and Border Security Force, today inaugurated wheat sowing across the fence along the Indo-Pak International Border in the Hiranagar Sector.

Deputy Commissioner, Rajesh Sharma accompanied by Chief Agriculture Officer, Jatinder Khajuria, Sub Divisional Magistrate Hiranagar, Phulail Singh Bandral and Commanding Officer BSF Kathua-Samba Range, M.C Pragnan formally initiated the sowing activity at Village Chack Changa.

The Deputy Commissioner said the district administration is encouraging farmers to bring more vacant land under cultivation along the international border. He said farmers are being motivated to adopt integrated farming practices and use modern machinery to reduce input costs and increase agricultural productivity. He added that the District Administration, BSF and Agriculture Department are working in coordination with farmers to ensure safe and secure sowing of wheat across the fence. The Deputy Commissioner also interacted with local farmers and reviewed their requirements.

The Chief Agriculture Officer informed that the department has set a target of wheat sowing over 270 acres across the fence. He said 100 acres of land across the border was sown today involving 21 farmers from Chack Changa and Chann Tanda. He added that field teams are providing technical support to farmers for effective sowing.

He further said that farmers are being encouraged to use tractors and allied machinery, which save time and reduce labour costs as compared to traditional practices.

Progressive farmers from the border villages appreciated the efforts of the Agriculture Department for facilitating sowing on vacant land across the border. It was noted that since 2019, the department has consistently supported border area farmers and motivated them to bring more land under cultivation each season.

Tehsildar Hiranagar, Anoop Kumar, SDAO Hiranagar Ashwani Sharma, AEO Marheen Jamsheed Singh, JAEO Vishal and other officials of the Agriculture Department were also present.

## GDC Marh observes 5 years of Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan with NMBA pledge

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**JAMMU, NOVEMBER 18:** Government Degree College (GDC) Marh celebrated the completion of five years of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan with active participation of students and faculty. On this occasion, an NMBA pledge was administered online and offline to reaffirm the institution's commitment toward creating a drug-free society. Students and staff collectively pledged to promote

awareness, discourage substance abuse and contribute to building a healthier and responsible community.

The event was organized by Prof. Malti Rajput, Convener, Prahari Club Nasha Mukh Bharat under the guidance of Prof. Ramneek Kaur, Principal of the College. GDC Marh continues to support national initiatives aimed at youth empowerment and societal well-being. NCC Cadets and NSS volunteers of the college were actively involved in the event.

## Chairman DDC Kathua reviews progress under District Capex Budget 2025-26

Council lauds district admin for effective mitigation measures during August rains, floods

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**KATHUA, NOVEMBER 18:** Chairman District Development Council Col. (Retd), Mahan Singh today chaired a meeting of the Council to assess the physical and financial progress of works being executed under the District Capex Budget 2025-26.

The meeting was attended by DDC Vice Chairman, Raghunadan Singh; DDC members from Nagri, Billawar, Bani, Keerian Gandyal, Marheen, Gujroo Nagrota, Dinga Amb and Barnoti, besides ADDC Surinder Mohan Sharma and district and sectoral officers.

At the outset, Chief Planning Officer Ranjit Thakur briefed the Council about the status of 1810

works approved under PRI, BDC, DDC, ABDP and APDP grants. The meeting was informed that out of 1810 works, 1633 have been allotted. The DDC members emphasised the need to accelerate progress of works and ensure timely redressal of public demands. They also highlighted gaps requiring focused intervention for the effective implementation of schemes at the grassroots level.

The DDC Chairman called for coordinated efforts to create durable public assets within set timelines. He stressed on the need for close collaboration among departments to ensure quality outcomes for the benefit of the public. The DDC Vice Chairman also highlighted the importance



of working in unison to improve service delivery and infrastructure across the district.

The ADDC Kathua called upon the executing departments to maintain close liaison with the Council members to ensure smooth implementation of the District Capex Plan. The Council unanimously passed a resolution to place the demand for permanent restoration of public assets damaged due to August rains and floods. The meeting concluded with acknowledgement of the dedicated efforts of the district administration and frontline staff during the recent spell of floods, cloudbursts and continuous rains, ensuring timely response and mitigation measures.

## Director horticulture reviews development activities in Rajouri District

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**JAMMU, NOVEMBER 18:** Director Horticulture Gul Sayed along with Assistant Director Sunil Gupta, toured different areas of District Rajouri.

During the tour, he was joined by Chief Horticulture Officer Susheel Angurana, District Horticulture Officer, Shafkat Hussain Khan, Subject Matter Specialists, Arshad Jameel and Horticulture Development Officers.

The Director visited Panjah (Kalakot), Peli (Sunderbani) and inspected the Malika Mango plantation, to assess the growth, management practices and overall orchard performance.

## District Kishtwar vows for drug-free future on 5th Anniversary of Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**KISHTWAR, NOVEMBER 18:** The District Administration Kishtwar, in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare, today observed the 5th anniversary of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan with a mega district-level event held in the Conference Hall of the New DC Office Complex.

Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma presided over the function as the Chief Guest.

At the outset, District Social Welfare Officer, Tariq Parveez Qazi, extended a warm welcome to the guests and participants.

The programme featured a vibrant lineup of awareness-oriented activities, including Debate and Painting Competitions with



enthusiastic participation from students of different schools.

A graceful solo dance performance by Tavishi Anand

and a powerful theme based Nukkad Natak presented by the talented team of Kishtwar Act Production were highlights of the event.

In his address, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in guiding the district toward a healthier, drug-free future. He emphasized that the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan is not merely a government programme but a people's movement, requiring sustained vigilance, compassion and coordinated action from every segment of society.

Highlighting the crucial role of parents, educators, community leaders and youth, he called upon them to remain proactive in identifying early signs of

substance abuse and promoting constructive avenues for personal development.

The Deputy Commissioner also administered the "Nasha Mukh" pledge to all attendees. Simultaneously, an e-pledge campaign was conducted across the district, facilitated through scanner-based wall posters installed at all Sub-Divisional and Tehsil offices by the Social Welfare Department.

Further extending the outreach, the School Education Department conducted parallel awareness activities in educational institutions across the district. The event was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal; ACP Neeraj Sharma; DTO Showket Ibrahim; AD Handloom Pardeep Shan and others.

## DC reviews status of Aadhaar enrollment, updating services in Kishtwar

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**KISHTWAR, NOVEMBER 18:** Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting of the District Level Aadhaar Monitoring Committee (DLAMC) to review the progress, coordination and implementation of Aadhaar-related services in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner assessed the status of Aadhaar enrollment, Mandatory Biometric Update (MBU) for children aged 5-17 years, verification of centenarians and other service delivery mechanisms. He emphasized the need for timely updation of demographic and biometric data to ensure accurate Aadhaar records for all residents. Further, directions were issued to organize awareness campaigns among the general public who have not updated their Aadhaar for the last 10 years, which can be done at home using online access to UIDAI services or at nearby ASKs. The DC also directed the concerned departments to strengthen public outreach, enhance service accessibility and ensure smooth functioning of Aadhaar centres, particularly in remote areas.

The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal; CDPO Nagseni Najeeb Latief; DFO Mahesh Thakur; ExEn Jal Shakti Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, ExEn JPDCL Latif Wani; I/C CMO Dr. Yudhvir Singh Kotwal; LDM Harsh Rawal besides others Concerned.

## SHG led Sanitary Pad Manufacturing Unit commissioned at Samba

DC Ayushi Sudan inaugurates NABARD & NABFOUNDATION funded venture

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**SAMBA, NOVEMBER 18:** Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan today inaugurated a Sanitary Pad Manufacturing Unit established under NABARD's "My Pad My Right" (MPMR) project of its Livelihood & Enterprises Development Programme (LEDP) and support of NABFOUNDATION and locally based Kristu Jyoti Social Welfare Society.

The MPMR project aims at nurturing rural women entrepreneurs, enhancing financial independence and ensuring access to affordable menstrual hygiene products within rural communities. It further seeks to raise awareness on menstrual health and encourage environmentally responsible waste management practices.

NABARD, NABFOUNDATION



and Kristu Jyoti Social Welfare Society provided the machinery, equipment and working capital support of Rs. 5.70 lakh to the SHG members for the establishment of the Unit.

After inaugurating the facility, DC Ayushi Sudan interacted with the SHG members involved in production and appreciated the efforts of NABARD in empowering rural women and youth through

diverse skill based livelihood initiatives. She highlighted the significance of the MPMR project in strengthening rural entrepreneurship and emphasised the importance of menstrual health and hygiene in community welfare.

On the occasion, DC Sudan also inaugurated a watershed project of NABARD in Deon Panchayat, fully grant supported at a cost of Rs. 2.26 crore.

HT EDITORIAL

## Make ration depots operational on Sundays

Some years back the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) issued an order asking the storekeepers of the ration depots to keep open the depots on Sundays so that the government employees or working professionals receive their monthly ration quota. The order was issued so as to ensure that nobody is denied their monthly ration quota and the people get the same according to their own convenience.

In the order it was mentioned that the ration depots should observe the weekly holiday on Mondays and Sundays would be a working day. It was expected that the order would be implemented in letter and spirit and people would not experience difficulties in getting their monthly quota of ration. However, to the dismay of one and all, especially to the working people the implementation of the said order was limited to papers only with no action taken on ground.

Due to the non-implementation of this order people in general are facing difficulties in getting the ration since a lot of time gets wasted in receiving the OTP from the consumers not present at the ration depot. Had the ration depots been kept open on Sundays there would be less problems for the people in getting the monthly ration. As on date it is tedious to receive the monthly quota of ration since a lot of time gets wasted in the same.

Most of the people go to the ration depots in the evenings so as to avoid the rush and save their time. On most of the occasions the storekeeper of a ration depot gets hooked to the phone of the relative of a consumer who is not present at the ration depot. At times the person on the other side misses the OTP and he or she has to wait for yet another OTP and as such a lot of time gets wasted. This irritates the other consumers and at times there is a fight at the ration depot.

It is imperative that the order issued by the department regarding the functioning of ration depots on Sunday is implemented in the real sense. This would save a lot of time for the people and the whole process would get streamlined. Since the working class of people would come to ration depots on Sundays, the others can get the monthly ration on the other working days and there would be no mess and confusion.

# Artisan Carnival at Sher-e-Kashmir Park to showcase Kashmir's timeless craft heritage



MOHAMMAD HANIEF

The Artisan Carnival will bring together more than thirty distinguished craftsmen from across the region. Many among them are award-winning masters who have shaped the identity of Kashmiri craft both locally and internationally. Their participation ensures that the event will serve not only as an exhibition but as an immersive learning experience. Through continuous live demonstrations, they are expected to reveal the painstaking skill, patience and creativity that go into each handmade piece, allowing visitors to follow the intricate journey from raw material to finished artwork

Srinagar is preparing to host a vibrant celebration of its artistic soul as the Handicrafts and Handloom Department launches a three-day Artisan Carnival at Sher-e-Kashmir Park from November 20 to 22. Set against the canopy of autumn Chinars, the event is positioned as a major cultural highlight under the "Soulful Kashmir" initiative, which seeks to renew public engagement with the Valley's traditional crafts and strengthen the bond between artisans and audiences.

The carnival comes as a natural progression of the department's sustained efforts over the past year, particularly the "Know Your Artisan" campaign, which has reintroduced thousands of people to the richness of the Valley's handmade traditions. Through a series of exhibitions, cluster-focused events, craft village safaris, and earlier festivals, these initiatives have significantly increased visibility for artisans and helped revive interest in the stories, skills and heritage behind Kashmiri craftsmanship. These earlier platforms also revealed a growing public curiosity about the fine techniques behind Sozni embroidery, papier-mâché, Pashmina weaving, copper repoussé, willow work and other crafts, making the upcoming carnival a timely extension of that enthusiasm.

The Artisan Carnival will bring together more than thirty distinguished craftsmen from across the region. Many among them are award-winning masters who have shaped the identity of Kashmiri craft both locally and internationally. Their participation ensures that the event will serve not only as an exhibition but as an immersive learning experience. Through continuous live demonstrations, they are expected to reveal the painstaking skill, patience and creativity that go into each handmade piece, allowing visitors to follow the intricate journey from raw material to finished artwork.

The carnival continues a pattern established by earlier events where visitors—especially students and young enthusiasts—showed an eagerness to understand the deeper history behind the crafts they often encounter only as final products. Craft Safaris conducted in Kanihama, Ganderbal, and other notified villages also demonstrated how witnessing artisans at work within their own spaces transformed public appreciation. Many families and tourists who participated in these safaris developed a new respect for the labour and artistic discipline involved, and artisans themselves benefitted from increased sales and visibility.



The upcoming event draws inspiration from these earlier successes. The choice of Sher-e-Kashmir Park, with its central location and picturesque landscape, reflects the department's intention to create a space that is both accessible and emotionally resonant. Here, visitors will not simply browse through stalls but engage with the ethos of craftsmanship in a more personal way. Every embroidered motif, every brushstroke on a papier-mâché object, every handwoven thread of Pashmina is expected to serve as a reminder that Kashmir's crafts remain living traditions shaped daily by skilled hands.

The present scenario of Kashmiri handicrafts is one of promise shaped by serious challenges. Global demand for authentic handmade products continues to grow, yet artisans often struggle with market competition, low-cost imitations, rising raw material costs and the need to attract younger generations to continue the craft. Government interventions such as GI certifications, skill upgradation programmes, buyer-seller meets and design support initiatives provide some relief but require consistent public engagement to achieve long-term impact. It is in this context that the Artisan Carnival is being viewed not only as a cultural festival but as an important economic bridge that connects artisans with potential customers, mentors, researchers and markets.

For the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, the carnival is an opportunity to consolidate lessons learned from past initiatives and build a stronger roadmap for the future. The department envisions expanding craft villages, strengthening artisan cooperatives, enabling international outreach, and promoting craft tourism as an integral component of cultural travel. Events like the carnival help to test these ideas in real time by observing visitor interactions,

artisan experiences and market responses.

For artisans, the carnival represents both recognition and renewal. Many of them have inherited their skills through generations, often working quietly in their homes and workshops. Public spaces such as this provide them with a dignified platform to present their work, narrate their journeys and reestablish their identity as custodians of Kashmir's cultural heritage. For many young artisans, especially those navigating the rapidly changing global marketplace, the carnival offers visibility and validation at a crucial time in their careers.

As the countdown to the event begins, anticipation grows across Srinagar. With its blend of artistry, history, storytelling and natural beauty, the Artisan Carnival promises to transform Sher-e-Kashmir Park into a living gallery of Kashmiri heritage. Visitors will not only witness the refinement of traditional craftsmanship but experience the cultural continuity that binds the Valley's past to its present and future.

In essence, the carnival stands as a tribute to Kashmir's craftsmen—its "golden hands"—who have kept centuries-old practices alive despite shifting times. By bringing together artisans, locals, tourists and cultural enthusiasts within one space, the event embodies the spirit of Soulful Kashmir. It reaffirms that Kashmir's crafts are more than commodities; they are stories of resilience, memory and artistic devotion. Through this celebration of living heritage, the Artisan Carnival aims to inspire renewed pride, greater awareness and a stronger foundation for the future of the Valley's craft ecosystem.

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## A Home library



SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Encourage students to develop a mini home library by keeping 10 to 20 books. They can be motivated by giving stars in their progress reports.

Books are precious, books are assets, books are a treasure of knowledge. Books are the best alternative when we have nothing to do. They are very valuable and they increase our interest in many things. Books are the main source of facts and information. Books are like a simple gadget carrying a gallery of facts and figures.

**Why read books?**  
For students up to the 10th grade, NCERT books and general knowledge from weekly or monthly magazines are the best sources of learning. I suggest that students from the 6th grade and above should read NCERT books and collect basic knowledge for higher classes.

Unfortunately, many students in higher education lack basic knowledge of history, civics, geography,



Urdu, Hindi, and English. They choose professional courses and think reading other books is not important for them. But we must know all the subjects we study at the school level.

We should not prepare only for final exams, midterms, or unit tests. As parents or teachers, we must provide interesting books to students so they can read in their free time and develop interest in many things. School administrations should provide updated and interesting books, guide students about the importance of reading, and tell them how regular

reading will help them in the future by reducing pressure and stress.

We should make reading a habit. Sometimes, buying a storybook or a simple novel written by a famous writer helps us. Reading books increases our interest and updates our knowledge about many concepts that we did not learn during school days.

Many of us think differently about reading books. Earlier, in school, we told students to focus only on certain subjects. Now, we must change this thinking and encourage learners to study in a happy and free environ-

ment. In such an environment, learners learn more and become independent at a comfortable stage of life.

I think that up to the 10th standard, students must have a grip on spoken English and understand basic concepts. A degree is just a paper. We must have the ability to learn from others, discuss with others, and teach others what we know.

### Home Library

I think we should give stars to students in their progress reports if they maintain a home library with at least 15 to 20 books. Home libraries are very important these days. Students can decorate an almirah with books. Some people keep showpieces in their almirahs, but books are more useful. Keeping books in the almirah helps children learn more things in their own room without needing to go to a library. Encourage students to keep more books in their home library and reduce unnecessary visits to outside libraries.

Keeping trending exam books, storybooks, novels, and religious books at home gives learners a chance to learn whenever they feel free. Having these facilities provides a good opportunity to learn in a free and comfortable way.

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# Reimagining Education with Tech



■ DR. AQIB

E-learning can play a vital role in restructuring the education system of our country. The current system is traditional and can be improved in many ways among which, e-learning stands out as one of the most transformative. The conventional face-to-face learning approach can effectively be blended with online learning to create a more dynamic and flexible educational model. Online learning can be both synchronous and asynchronous, allowing for adaptability and inclusiveness.

This approach offers many benefits such as wider accessibility, improved engagement, increased interaction, flexible course design, better management of time and resources, and lower costs. However, it also presents some challenges, including the lack of direct face-to-face communication, the need for stronger self-discipline, and additional workload for instructors.

A variety of digital platforms such as Moodle, Blackboard, WebCT, Adobe Captivate, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and Slack can support e-learning. These platforms help in managing courses, delivering lessons, assessing learners, and facilitating communication. For teaching to be effective, instructors must



also focus on building essential skills such as digital literacy, organizational ability, time management, and creativity to inspire continuous learning and progress.

Online courses should be carefully designed to encourage collaboration among learners and instructors. Clear learning outcomes aligned with curriculum goals must be established. Using action-oriented verbs like "describe," "demonstrate," "outline," "design," and "create" helps make objectives measurable and effective.

Instructors can create engaging virtual content through tools such as Vituou, MERLOT, Nearpod,

Wikibooks, Diigo, and Delicious. Additionally, MOOCs offered by platforms like EdX, Coursera, and Udacity provide rich learning experiences.

Technology should be used to facilitate participation, enable collaboration, and enhance creativity. Following the SAMR model Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition can help transform teaching and learning experiences. Similarly, Bloom's Taxonomy provides a strong framework for structuring e-learning through its focus on remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating.

Collaborative tools like Microsoft Teams and Slack can further strengthen interaction, allowing students to learn from one another, solve problems collectively, and develop teamwork and communication skills.

Assessment in e-learning should be both formative and summative. Formative assessments can include quizzes, discussions, assignments, and peer feedback, while summative assessments can take the form of final exams, projects, or comprehensive evaluations. These assessments should measure not only knowledge acquisition but also the learner's ability to apply and extend that knowledge.

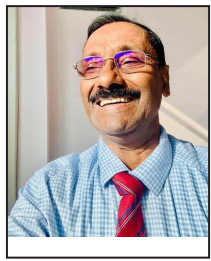
In conclusion, technology should not merely supplement education but should reshape it. By thoughtfully integrating digital tools into the learning process, we can bridge the gap between traditional and modern education truly putting the "tech" in teaching.

## About the Author

With a profound dedication to fostering innovation and excellence across education and professional development, Dr. Aqib continues to make an indelible impact through their coaching, training, and literary contributions. Their holistic approach to learning not only equips individuals with the requisite knowledge and skills to thrive in an increasingly complex world but also cultivates a profound appreciation for the transformative power of education. As they inspire others to embrace lifelong learning, Dr. Aqib remains a guiding force for those seeking to unlock their full potential and contribute meaningfully to society.

# Taza Hawa in Chander Bhan Khayal's Poetry

(His Lifelong Engagement With Kashmiri Literature)



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

His pen name is 'Khayal' and probably Firaq Gorakhpuri the Ustad of his Guru Pandit Ram Krishan Muztar a great Persian scholar and poet endearingly gave him. He has a lifelong engagement with Kashmiri poetic literature and society. He brought Taza Hawa (fresh air) for poetry in Kashmir. Very justifiably Sahitya Akademi in 2022 recognised Chander Bhan Khayal (also mentioned as Chandra Bhan Khayal) for his collection Taza Hawa Ki Tabishen. He is a prolific author of 13 books and a well known name in the annals of Urdu literature. His masterpiece Loulaak comprises 400 couplets on 100 pages and has won him accolades and honours worldwide. Kashmiri poetry has long been a rich tradition, blending mystical Sufi voices like Sheikh Noor-ud-Din (Nund Rishi) and Lal Ded with modern poets who grapple with identity, exile, and political turmoil. It is characterized by lyrical intensity, spiritual depth, and cultural rootedness. Over centuries, Kashmiri poets have used verse to preserve memory, resist erasure, and articulate the collective consciousness of their people. Within this tradition, Chander Bhan Khayal occupies a distinctive place. Though born in Madhya Pradesh, he became deeply connected to Kashmiri literary circles and was recognized as a polymath who wrote ghazals, nazms, and essays in Urdu. Khayal's recognition by institutions such as the Sahitya Akademi underscores his stature in Indian literature. For Kashmiri readers and critics, his work is valued not only for its stylistic elegance but also for its cultural resonance, as it reflects Kashmiri identity within the broader Urdu literary framework. His poetry brought Taza Hawa (fresh air) for Kashmiri literature as he often draws on Kashmiri imagery—valleys, rivers, forests—and reflects the emotional and cultural struggles of Kashmiri society. This makes his work resonate as part of Kashmiri literature even though his medium was Urdu.

Though he was recognized for his book Taza Hawa Ki Tabishen, yet Khayal's collection Loulaak (meaning "inkpot") is often cited as a poetic masterpiece because it symbolizes the act of inscribing Kashmiri identity against the forces of time and political upheaval. The inkpot becomes a metaphor for memory, resistance, and continuity, themes central to Kashmiri poetry. Loulaak fuses the richness of Urdu literary tradition with Kashmiri cultural sensibilities, using ink (loulaak) as a metaphor for memory, resistance, and continuity. It stands out for its lyrical depth, social consciousness, and ability to preserve Kashmiri identity through the universal language of poetry. Having worked for decades as a correspondent for the Urdu daily Qaumi Awaz, he developed a keen eye for detail and a sensitivity to the rhythms of public discourse. This journalistic sensibility surfaces in the poems through references to social issues, the plight of marginalized communities, and the ironies of political rhetoric. Yet Khayal transforms reportage into art, weaving factual observation into lyrical meditation. The result is poetry that resonates with authenticity while transcending the boundaries of journalism. His verses weave together personal recollection and collective experience, echoing the Kashmiri tradition of

poetry as both lyrical art and cultural testimony. This ability to transform lived realities into art aligns him with Kashmiri poets who have historically used verse to articulate both personal longing and collective struggle. Loulaak occupies a distinctive place in the landscape of modern Urdu literature, not only because of its stylistic daring but also because of the way it reflects the poet's lifelong engagement with language, identity, and the shifting cultural currents of India. The wonderful collection of poems exemplifies the vitality of Urdu literature in the modern era. It demonstrates that the language, far from being a relic of the past, continues to evolve and to address the complexities of contemporary life. Khayal's contribution lies in his ability to bridge tradition and modernity, to honor the heritage of Urdu while pushing it into new realms of expression. His work reminds us that literature is not static but dynamic, a living dialogue between past and present, between individual and society.

This prolific Kashmiri writer who was born in 1946 in Babai, Madhya Pradesh, came of age in a milieu where Urdu was both a literary inheritance and a contested cultural space. His career as a journalist and poet gave him a vantage point from which to observe the transformations of Indian society, and Loulaak crystallizes many of those observations into a work that is at once personal and universal. The title itself, suggestive of ink and the act of writing, signals the poet's awareness of the fragility and permanence of words, their ability to record memory and resist erasure. The reception of Loulaak among critics has been marked by recognition of its boldness. Khayal's language is steeped in the cadences of classical Urdu poetry, yet it is also infused with modernist sensibilities. He does not shy away from experimenting with imagery that draws from everyday life, politics, and the intimate struggles of existence. Readers encounter verses that oscillate between tenderness and defiance, between nostalgia for a fading cultural world and a sharp critique of contemporary realities. In this sense, Loulaak is not merely a collection of poems but a chronicle of a society negotiating its past and present.

One of the striking features of Loulaak is its engagement with memory. Khayal often invokes the landscapes of his childhood, the rhythms of small-town life, and the voices of elders who embodied oral traditions. These recollections are not presented as sentimental vignettes but as fragments of a larger mosaic that speaks to the continuity of culture. At the same time, the poems acknowledge rupture—the ways in which modernity, migration, and political upheaval have unsettled those continuities. The ink of Loulaak becomes a metaphor for both preservation and protest, a means of inscribing what might otherwise be forgotten. Thematically, Loulaak grapples with questions of identity. Urdu, as a language, has often been caught in debates about religion, nationalism, and cultural ownership. Khayal's work asserts the vitality of Urdu as a shared heritage, resisting attempts to confine it within narrow definitions. His poems celebrate the richness of Urdu's literary tradition while simultaneously pushing it into new directions. In doing so, Loulaak becomes a statement about the resilience of language and the necessity of creative renewal. Another dimension of Loulaak is its social consciousness. Khayal's background as a journalist sharpened his sensitivity to issues of injustice, marginalization, and political rhetoric. These concerns surface in his poetry, but they are transformed into lyrical meditations rather than mere reportage. This ability to weave social critique into poetic form elevates Loulaak beyond personal expression, making it a collective voice for Kashmiri society.

Critics have noted the musicality of Khayal's verse in



Loulaak. The rhythms are carefully modulated, drawing on classical meters but also allowing for freer forms that reflect modernist experimentation. This musicality is not ornamental; it serves to heighten the emotional impact of the poems. Whether he is writing about love, loss, or social injustice, Khayal's lines carry a cadence that lingers in the reader's mind, echoing the oral traditions from which Urdu poetry emerged. The imagery of Loulaak is equally compelling. Khayal employs metaphors drawn from nature—rivers, forests, deserts—as well as from urban life—streets, markets, newspapers. These images create a tapestry that situates the personal within the collective. For instance, a description of a decaying street corner may serve as a metaphor for cultural erosion, while the image of a flowing river may symbolize resilience and continuity. Such imagery allows the poems to operate on multiple levels, inviting readers to interpret them in light of their own experiences. Another dimension of Loulaak is its exploration of love and intimacy. Khayal approaches these themes with a blend of classical sensibility and modern frankness. Love is depicted not only as a personal emotion but also as a force that shapes social relations and cultural identity. The poems often blur the boundaries between the personal and the political, suggesting that intimacy itself can be an act of resistance in a world marked by division and alienation.

The critical acclaim for Loulaak reflects its ability to speak to diverse audiences. Scholars of Urdu literature have praised its stylistic innovation, while general readers have found in it a mirror of their own struggles and aspirations. The work has been discussed in literary forums, academic seminars, and cultural gatherings, underscoring its relevance across contexts. Khayal's recognition by institutions such as the Sahitya Akademi further attests to the significance of his contribution to Indian literature. In reflecting on Loulaak, it is important to situate it within Khayal's broader oeuvre. His earlier works, such as Shoalon Ka Shajar and Taza Hawa Ki Tabishen, established him as a poet of depth and originality. Loulaak builds on this foundation, offering a synthesis of his thematic concerns and stylistic experiments. It represents a mature phase of his career, where the poet's voice is confident yet open to new possibilities. The continuity between his works highlights his commitment to exploring the evolving landscape of Urdu poetry.

The significance of Loulaak extends beyond literature.

In a society where cultural identities are often contested, Khayal's work serves as a reminder of the power of art to foster dialogue and understanding. His poems invite readers to reflect on their own histories, to recognize the interconnectedness of communities, and to imagine futures grounded in empathy and creativity. In this sense, Loulaak is not only a literary achievement but also a cultural intervention. As a newspaper article, it is fitting to emphasize the relevance of Loulaak to contemporary readers. In an age of rapid change, where digital media often overwhelms traditional forms of expression, Khayal's poetry reminds us of the enduring value of words carefully crafted and thoughtfully inscribed. Stylistically, Loulaak demonstrates Khayal's mastery of lyrical cadence and imagery. He draws upon classical Urdu meters while infusing them with Kashmiri sensibilities—images of rivers, valleys, and mountains that resonate with the Kashmiri landscape. This blending of traditions creates a unique poetic voice that is both rooted and expansive. The musicality of his verse, with its careful modulation of rhythm, echoes Kashmiri oral traditions, ensuring that the poems are not only read but also heard and felt. The ink of Loulaak is a metaphor for resilience, for the capacity of literature to withstand the pressures of time and to continue speaking to new generations. Readers who encounter Khayal's work today may find in it not only aesthetic pleasure but also a source of reflection and inspiration. Khayal's journalism background also informs the texture of Loulaak. Chander Bhan's poetry is thus a testament to the enduring power of poetry. It captures the nuances of memory, identity, love, and social critique, weaving them into a tapestry that resonates with readers across contexts. Its significance lies not only in its literary artistry but also in its cultural relevance, offering insights into the challenges and possibilities of our time. As readers engage with Khayal's poetry, they are invited to reflect on their own journeys, to recognize the resilience of language, and to appreciate the transformative potential of art. Khayal's ink, inscribed in Loulaak, continues to flow, reminding us that words, once written, can shape worlds and sustain hope. When we speak of his poems in the context of Kashmiri literature, we are not merely referring to a collection of poems but to a cultural artifact that embodies the struggles, aspirations, and resilience of Kashmiri society.

Loulaak deserves its reputation as a poetic masterpiece of Kashmiri literature because it captures the essence of Kashmiri identity through the universal medium of poetry. Its ink flows not only to record but to resist, to remember, and to inspire. Khayal's achievement lies in his ability to transform the inkpot into a symbol of cultural survival, making Loulaak a work that continues to resonate with readers across generations. Kashmiri literature has often grappled with questions of belonging and displacement, and Khayal's poems reflect this tension. His verses evoke the pain of cultural rupture while simultaneously celebrating the endurance of Kashmiri heritage. In this sense, his poems can be read as a literary chronicle of Kashmiri society, capturing both its sorrows and its hopes. The monumental work reflects the dialogue between Kashmiri identity and the broader Urdu tradition, making his poetry a bridge between regional and national literatures.

## 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 profpratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com

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# Six Effective Ways to Keep Your Gums Healthy

Maintaining oral hygiene is extremely important. Swollen, tender, inflamed gums are early signs of degrading gum health, however, these can be prevented as well as reversed. Apart from getting a regular dental check-up, it is always advisable to resort to some natural remedies to ensure your gum health is fine.

Of course twice a day brushing and flossing are some of the good practices that need to be followed. But, there is no harm in knowing and following some more ways to fend off gum diseases.

**Here are some ways to ensure your gum's wellness:**

**PRACTICE OIL PULLING**

One of the most practiced methods of Ayurveda to ensure oral well-being has been oil pulling. Coconut or olive or sesame oil

swishing in the mouth for 15 minutes without brushing your teeth, right after you wake up in the morning prevents plaque build-up, gingivitis, and lets you enjoy a great gum health. It not only cleanses the mouth of the harmful toxins, but is also great for digestive health.

**USE NEEM**

Neem tree is a blessing abounding in nature's goodness. Right from its leaves to twigs, neem is highly effective in bringing about gum well-being. Anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic neem has been proven to be excellent to strengthen gums, prevent bleeding, formation of plaque, inhibit gingivitis, and improve tooth enamel.

**TEA TREE OIL**

Opt for toothpaste that has the essential tea tree oil in it. It is excellent to treat gingivitis.

Just remember to not use this oil directly in undiluted form.

**FLUORIDE**

Ensure your toothpaste has fluoride and a stamp of ADA acceptance in it. This ingredient is highly effective in preventing bad breath, gingivitis.

**USE CRANBERRY**

It has been found that periodontitis-related inflammation can be cured by the use of cranberries. They are good to keep the bacteria away from sticking to the teeth.

**VITAMIN C**

Vitamin C found in grapefruit, oranges, kiwi, mango, papaya, strawberry, red pepper, broccoli, brussels sprouts, and cantaloupe play a significant role in gum health. You get the chances of periodontal disease reduced with vitamin C.

Courtesy Healthline

## How Well Do COVID Vaccines Protect After Organ Transplant?

A new study raised questions about how well COVID-19 vaccines protect organ transplant recipients and what precautions people with suppressed immune systems should take after the shots.

Vaccines rev up the immune system to recognize the virus, something that's harder to do if someone's immune cells aren't in good working order. Transplant recipients take powerful immune-suppressing drugs to prevent organ rejection, which also increases their risk from the coronavirus but excluded them from vaccine studies.

Specialists say the shots appear safe for transplant recipients and any protection is better than none. But how much protection do they get?

On Monday, researchers at Johns Hopkins University reported a first attempt to find out. They tested 436 people who had received new organs in recent years and were getting the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. A few weeks after the first dose, 17% of the transplant recipients had developed antibodies against the coronavirus, said Dr. Dorry Segev, a Hopkins transplant surgeon who co-authored the study.

Segev acknowledged transplant recipients may fare better after the needed second dose but prior studies show the first shot is enough to kickstart antibody production in just about everybody with a well-functioning immune system.

Of most concern, people whose transplant medications include a type called an anti-metabolite were far less likely to respond to the shot than those who don't require that kind of drug, the team reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The findings come after the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said fully vaccinated people can relax some, but not all, of the masking and distancing precautions against the coronavirus.

Segev called on CDC to consider a more nuanced message.

From what we know, transplant patients cannot assume that they are safe after being vaccinated, Segev said. They may need post-vaccination blood tests to be sure, he added.

The CDC didn't immediately comment. Dr. David Mulligan, Yale University's chief of transplant surgery and immunology, said Monday's report is a disappointment but not a surprise, because people with weak immune systems don't respond as well to other vaccines.

Some transplant groups, including the American Society of Transplantation, already have issued cautions about that.

Yale's Mulligan urged patients to check in with their transplant center for advice. Those waiting for a life-saving organ transplant might be able to get vaccinated first. He said some people who've already had a transplant might be good candidates to temporarily cut back on certain immune-suppressing drugs. And the immune-compromised should be sure to get both vaccine doses for the best chance at protection.

Our patients are already calling for advice, Mulligan said. Until you've had your antibodies checked and you know, boy, I've got a vigorous immune response or we've got better data," the immune-compromised shouldn't let down their guard against the virus.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institutes Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Courtesy Healthline

## Five Foods That Shouldn't be Given to Toddlers

For toddlers in the 1-3 years age group, it is a vital period for growth after the end of the weaning period as they start consuming solid food. However, they still need full guidance from parents regarding what they should or shouldn't eat. Mentioned below are five foods that toddlers should never be allowed to eat.

**NUTS & SEEDS**

Children feel hungry all the time because their rapidly growing bodies need calories. They may want to try everything that they see their parents/elders consume, without knowing what is safe for them. Nuts are unsafe for children as they pose the risk of choking them. Babies don't

have developed teeth and won't be able to chew the nuts or seeds them. Their oesophagus is also thin and may cause fatal blockages.

**SPICY & OILY FOODS**

While it is advisable to gradually add spices to a child's food to provide them with the antioxidants, dishes that contain a lot of spices, chillies or are greasy is best avoided. They might cause digestive upset, including heartburn and reflux.

**WHOLE VEGETABLES & FRUITS**

Vegetables like carrots, fruits like grapes might cause choking hazards for babies. Finely chopped and boiled carrots, chopped grapes or other fruits that



toddlers can easily swallow are ideal. In short, large chunks of foods should be avoided.

**CHEWING GUM & CANDIES**

Most kids like candies and bubble gums. However, both of these confectionaries may cause choking and death in toddlers. Hence it is best to not keep such items lying about the house lest a child may feel tempted.

**FIZZY SOFT DRINKS**

They provide instant calories and are sweet; everything that children need. However, they are an unhealthy choice for not only babies but also adults. The bacteria in our tooth react with the high amount of sugar in fizzy drinks and produce acids that damage tooth enamel. Frequent consumption of soda pops also causes dental caries in children.

Courtesy ET

## GO SHAMPOO FREE WHILE WASHING HAIR, HERE'S HOW

MOST SHAMPOOS ARE LAID WITH CHEMICALS THAT CAN LEAVE DAMAGING EFFECTS ON OUR HAIR AND SCALP



**NEW DELHI:** Hair washing is an integral part of our hair care routine. While most of us choose to use shampoo to wash hair, did we know that most shampoos are laid with chemicals and can leave damaging effects on our hair and scalp?

The good news is that we can wash our hair even without using shampoo. Natural alternatives to shampoo can help us achieve clean-healthy hair.

There are numerous benefits of going shampoo-free. It is eco-friendly, improves the scalp health, increases the volume of hair, reduces exposure to harmful chemicals and improves hair texture.

**Below is a step-by-step guide for you to ditch your shampoo:**

1. Get your hair wet with water (not too hot-not too cold).
2. Scrub the scalp gently for at least 2 minutes: This process is vital. If scrubbing is not done properly, the hair is going to look greasy and feel greasy too.
3. Use a hair soap bar: It may take some test, trial and error

to find the best hair soap bar for you. Hair soap is a "real soap", i.e., saponified oils. Hair soaps are bar soaps with ingredients that are especially good for scalp and hair. They generally do not contain any synthetic substances. They have saponified oils to clean the hair.

Always check the ingredients of the hair soap before buying. Look for natural oils like castor oil, avocado oil, palm oil, butter and babassu oil. It provides natural shine to the hair without damaging it. The best part about the hair bars is that they leave hair stronger, shinier and smoother with absolutely no scalp irritation.

Please note: Hair soaps are alkaline, like all "real soaps". This is a part of why they are effective. Naturally, our skin has a slightly acidic PH value of 5.5, so using alkaline cleaners is not for everyone. If you want to give hair soap a try, do look for a local soap maker.

4. Use a natural conditioner: Natural conditioners like a homemade conditioner will

make hair soft and healthy. Conditioners shield hair from heat, dust, pollution, etc. and keep hair tangle-free.

Take one tablespoon of coconut oil, one tablespoon honey, one tablespoon lemon juice, two tablespoons of curd and one teaspoon of rose water. Mix all of them well and apply them on your hair. Leave it for about 10-15 minutes and rinse off with running water. Coconut oil not only helps your hair become smooth and soft, but also helps in making your hair grow longer and thicker. The essential minerals and fatty acids in coconut oil nourishes the scalp well.

5. Brush your hair: This is a 'must' in the routine. Comb wet hair with a wide-toothed comb. Let your hair dry naturally. Do not apply heat right after hair-wash as it makes all the effort go down the drain. Comb dry hair with a comb that has natural bristles. This will evenly distribute the natural oils throughout the hair, making it look lustrous.

Courtesy ET

## Here are Five Health Benefits of Consuming Sunflower Seeds

Native to the Americas, sunflowers are primarily cultivated for their use as a cooking fuel, extracted from its seeds. Sunflower seeds are also consumed raw or roasted, as snacks and used as flour in confectionary items or cereals. They are also used to make butter as an alternative to dairy and peanut butter. Below, we take a look at some of the health benefits of sunflower seeds.

**RICH IN ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS**

Sunflower seeds are a very good source of vitamins, particularly the B-complex group and vitamins C and E. They also contain a high percentage of essential minerals such as phosphorous, magnesium, manganese, zinc, and iron among others. Collectively, they help maintain our bones, tissues, vital organs and help our bodies heal, among other functions.

**GOOD FOR THE HEART**

A higher level of cholesterol, especially low-density lipoproteins (LDL), is bad for the heart as it gets deposited inside the arterial walls and may cause heart attack. Sunflower seeds contain a high percentage of linoleic acid, which helps reduce total cholesterol as well as LDL levels. The seeds also contain oleic acids that can reduce triglyceride, which causes similar cardiac issues.

**CONTROLS DIABETES**

Those suffering from diabetes are unable to produce enough insulin to bring glucose to cells. The blood sugar levels rise as a result and cause damage to blood vessels, vital organs and affect the heart, kidneys, nerves and vision. Sunflowers seeds not only have a low glycaemic index, but they contain chlorogenic acid which controls blood sugar levels.

**ANTI-INFLAMMATORY**

Acute inflammation is a temporary, protective response to any injury or infection through swelling. Chronic inflammation, however, is a long-term condition that causes damage to the cells, tissues and vital organs like the heart. It can also cause DNA damage and cancers. Sunflower seeds contain vitamin E and phenolic compounds like flavonoids, both of which have antioxidant properties that help reduce inflammation.

**HEALS WOUNDS**

Studies conducted on male lambs have shown that sunflower seeds can help aid in healing wounds. Linoleic acid in the seeds help speed-up the healing process.

Courtesy Healthline

# PM Shri Govt. Higher Secondary School Bhalra Marks 5th Anniversary of Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan

Inaugurates Renovated Facilities

AMIR IQBAL KHAN

**BHADARWAH, NOV 18:** PM Shri Government Higher Secondary School Bhalra commemorated the 5th anniversary of the Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) alongside the inauguration of newly renovated infrastructure completed by the R&B Department. Addressing the ceremony, Chairman, District Development Council Doda Dhanantar Singh Kotwal said, "This upgraded infrastructure will significantly enhance the learning environment and holistic development of our students." He praised the efforts of the District Administration and R&B for their unwavering commitment to improving education in the region.

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Koul, Associate NCC Officer, highlighted the students' academic achievements stating, "Our students' success in competitive exams and professional courses across India exemplifies the school's dedication to excellence."

Cadet Aryaveer Kotwal delivered a compelling speech on the collective responsibility to build a drug-free society on NMBA's anniversary. The event concluded with a Nasha Mukti



pledge administered by Dr. Koul that saw wholehearted participation from NCC cadets, students, staff and community members reaffirming their collective commitment towards a drug free future.

## Philanthropist Karan Gilhotra, Adani Group vice president Dr Rupesh were special guest

HT NEWS DESK

**SRINAGAR, NOV 18:** The 10th Inter-Zonal Youth Fest of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Punjab Technical University (MRSPTU), Bathinda, was organized at Aryans Group of Colleges, Rappura, Near Chandigarh. More than 25 colleges and thousands of students participated on this year theme "Virsa te Vikas" showcasing vibrant cultural, literary, and talent.

On the second day of the event, Dr. Sanjeev Sharma, Vice Chancellor, MRSPTU, Bathinda; Acharya Manish; Ayurveda and naturopathy expert, motivational speaker, Karan Gilhotra, Chairman, PHD Chamber of Commerce, Sec 31 Chandigarh; and Dr. Rupesh Singh, Vice President, Adani Group were the distinguished guests. Dr. Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group, presided over the function. Prof. Bhupinder Pal Singh Dhot, Director, Sports and Youth Welfare, MRSPTU was present

Acharya Manish appreciated Aryans for preserving culture through such events and remarked, "By hosting these festivals, Aryans is keeping our heritage alive and inspiring students towards wellness, discipline, and balanced living."

Karan Gilhotra lauded Aryans' initiative and said, "Youth festivals help students build confidence, leadership qualities, and global exposure, and Aryans has provided an excellent platform for the same."



Dr. Rupesh praised the institution's efforts and stated, "Aryans has taken a commendable step in nurturing skilled, innovative, and confident youth, truly preparing them for the future."

Chairman Dr. Anshu Kataria expressed gratitude to all dignitaries, MRSPTU officials, faculty members, and students. He emphasized that the Youth Fest reflects Aryans Group's continuous commitment to promoting talent, cultural enrichment, and holistic education.

This year's Youth Fest saw participation from 25 colleges, with thousands of enthusiastic students taking part in a vibrant array of events. The campus came alive with energetic and colourful performances including Gidha, Rangoli, Elocution, On-the-Spot Painting, Photography, and many more artistic, literary and cultural activities. Students showcased exceptional creativity, teamwork and spirit, adding excitement to the festive atmosphere.

## Inauguration of Advanced Immuno-hematology Technology at GMC Baramulla

New Gel Card Technology Boosts Diagnostic Excellence at the Blood Centre

UMAR RASHID

**BARAMULLA, NOV 18:** Government Medical College (GMC) Baramulla today marked a major leap in modern diagnostics with the inauguration of a semi-automated analyser based on the latest Column Agglutination (Gel Card) Technology at the Department of Immuno-hematology and Blood Transfusion (Blood Centre).

The inauguration ceremony was led by Principal Prof. Dr. Majid Jahangir, along with MS Dr. Parvaiz Masoodi, Registrar Academics Prof. Dr. Shafiq Ahmad Lone, HOD Blood Centre Dr. Saadat Nazir Shah, HOD Pathology Dr. Baba Iqbal Khaliq, several HODs from other departments, CMO's and dedicated staff members.

The introduction of this advanced system brings major improvements in key diagnostics, including:



Blood grouping and crossmatching  
Direct Coombs (DCT) and Indirect Coombs Test (ICT)  
Resolving blood group discrepancies  
Antibody screening  
Prevention of alloimmunization

This technology is expected to greatly benefit pregnant women, multi-transfused patients, and pediatric cases, ensuring faster, safer, and more accurate testing.

On the occasion, HOD Dr. Saadat Nazir Shah extended heartfelt gratitude to the Principal and MS for their continuous support in upgrading the Blood Centre's facilities.

With this milestone, GMC Baramulla reaffirms its commitment to delivering high-quality patient care and strengthening its academic and clinical excellence.

## Public Notice

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is certify that the Faisal Manzoor Rather S/o Manzoor Ahmad Rather lost his qualification certificate of class 10th . The roll number is 117014025 , regular 2024 under registration number 221700000120030 . The D O B of said candidate is 18/08/2009 . Besides the loasted qualification certificate , bearing serial number 24. ARKAM\_ 6023562 are be treated as cancelled . Now the candidate has applied for issuance of duplicate qualification certificate. If anybody has any regard about this. They will contact jammu and kashmir board of school education, beminia srinagar within the period of seven days. After completion of said period. No objection will be entertained .

Faisal Manzoor Rather  
S/o Manzoor Ahmad Rather  
Mother name : Fehmeeda Bano  
18/08/2009  
Aarath  
District : Budgam, Tehsil : Narbal

## Public Notice

It is hereby informed to general public that I Syed Zubair Ellahi Shah resident of House No 7, Lane-D, Habib Colony, Baghat, Srinagar, J&K father of Syed IBRAHIM SHAH wants to change his name in his school records ( Class LKG) from SYED IBRAHIM SHAH to SYED HASAF SHAH. In future my son will be Known with New Name as SYED HASAF SHAH. In this regard if anyone has any objection he or she may approach to the Principal of The Kashmir Valley School, Humhama Budgam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be entertained.

Name: Syed Zubair Ellahi Shah  
F/O :- SYED HASAF SHAH  
R/O House No 7, Lane-D, Habib Colony, Baghat,  
Srinagar, J&K  
Mob No: 9622797321

## Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that I, Muzammil Hussain, proprietor of Blacksheep BnB, located at Changra, intend to apply for registration of the said hotel with the Ladakh Tourism Department.

Any person having any objection to the registration of this hotel is hereby requested to submit the same in writing to the undersigned / concerned authority within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no objections are received within the stipulated period, it shall be presumed that there is no objection to the proposed registration.

Name: Tafazzul Hussain  
Designation: Proprietor  
Address: Changra Bazar Gargil  
Contact No.: 9419887776; 9419289275

## Jamia Islamia Institute Waripora (Gonipora) Handwara

### Fee Structure for the session 2024-25 & 2025-26

S.No	Class/Deptt.	Type of Fee	Session		Remarks
			2024-25	2025-26	
<b>Boarding Classes</b>					
1	High (9th & 10th)	Tuition Fee (Formal Edu. + Quran Classes)	2000/-	2000/-	
		Hostel & Mess (Monthly)	3000/-	3000/-	
		Total	5000/-	5000/-	
		Yearly Dues	N/A	N/A	
2	Middle (6th, 7th & 8th)	Tuition Fee (Formal Edu. + Quran Classes)	1500/-	1500/-	
		Hostel & Mess (Monthly)	3000/-	3000/-	
		Total	4500/-	4500/-	
		Yearly Dues	N/A	N/A	
3	Primary (4th & 5th)	Tuition Fee (Formal Edu. + Quran Classes)	1000/-	1000/-	
		Hostel & Mess (Monthly)	3000/-	3000/-	
		Total	4000/-	4000/-	
		Yearly Dues	N/A	N/A	
<b>Non-Boarding Classes</b>					
3rd	Tuition Fee	1000/-	1000/-	(50% Conc. For Local)	
2nd	Tuition Fee	800/-	800/-	(50% Conc. For Local)	
1st	Tuition Fee	800/-	800/-	(50% Conc. For Local)	
Pre-Primary	Tuition Fee	600/-	600/-	(50% Conc. For Local)	
1	20% Reservation for orphan and Poor students with full fee concession. (Including Boarding and lodging)				
2	50% Scholarship (On Full Fee Including Full Fee Boarding Charges) for 2 Students in each Class on Merit cum Means Basis)				
3	25% Scholarship (On Full Fee Including Full Fee Boarding Charges) for 2 Students in each Class on Merit cum Means Basis)				

Sd/- Principal Jamia Islamia Institute  
Waripora (Gonipora) Handwara

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 Bashir Furniture House Rakh Zakoora Gulabagh, Srinagar under No.: 01/03/07357/PMT/Tiny dated 17.05.2007 for the activity of "Wooden furniture with the help of small surface planner and by hand tools" with its location at Rakh Zakoora Gulabagh Srinagar as proprietorship concern of Mr. Bashir Ahmad Bhat S/o Ghulam Nabi Bhat R/o Rakh Zakoora Gulabagh.

As per Death Certificate issued by Birth and Death Srinagar Municipal Corporation vide Registration No. 34236 dated 11.09.2024 the promoter of the unit has expired on 09.09.2024. Now the legal heirs of the promoter have approached this office for transfer of the unit to one of the legal heir namely Mr. Arif Bashir Bhat.

Any person having any objection with regard to the above mentioned change in favour of the unit 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: 8235/25 | Dated: 18-11-2025

## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT DISTRICT HOSPITAL KULGAM

E-Tender Notice No: 12 of 2025-26

DATED: 18/11/2025

Sub: Abbreviated notice inviting e-tenders for supply of HSD (High Speed Diesel) at District Hospital Kulgam on annual rate contract basis.

For and on the behalf of Government of Union Territory of J&K through the Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kulgam, e-tenders are invited under two bid system (Technical bid and financial bid) from the Oil Companies/ their authorized and registered dealers with sound financial background for the supply of HSD (High Speed Diesel) at District Hospital Kulgam on annual rate contract basis.

Description	Tentative annual qty.
High Speed Diesel (HSD)	58 KL

The detailed tender document containing quantity and other terms and conditions, is available on [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and complete bidding process will be online on said e- tender portal, as per following schedule:

S. No.	Activity Description	Schedule
01.	Tender fee in the shape of Demand Draft favoring Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kulgam	Rs. 1,000/-
02.	Successful tenderer shall deposit Security Deposit of Rs 50,000 in the shape of CDR/ FDR (pledged to Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kulgam)	Rs. 50000
03.	Date & time for downloading of tenders	19/11/2025 (09:00 am) to 25/11/2025 (06:00 pm)
04.	Any clarification with regard to e-NIT shall beentertained only from (No representation/clarification shall be entertained beyond the stipulated period)	19/11/2025 to 22/11/2025 (During Office Hours)
05.	Start/ Last date & time for submission of tenders	19/11/2025 (09:00 am) to 25/11/2025 (06:00 pm)
06.	Date & Time for opening of technical bids	26/11/2025 (10:00 am)

Complete bidding process will be online at [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) (Technical and Price bids shall have to be submitted in the electronic format on the said tender portal and in no case be submitted in physical form.

The Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kulgam reserves the right to accept/reject or cancel any tender or all the tenders in full or part thereof without assigning any reason.

The tenders should be submitted strictly in accordance with the provisions of the detailed eNIT.  
No: MS/DHK/NHM/769-74

Dated: 18/11/2025

Sd/- Medical Superintendent,  
District Hospital Kulgam

DIPK: 8236/25 | Dated: 18-11-2025

# DC B'la inaugurates Recording Studio to Strengthen Awareness on Government Welfare Schemes

## Also Upgraded Info Office with Latest Equipment

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**BARAMULLA, NOVEMBER 18:** Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today inaugurated a newly established Recording Studio at the District Information Office Baramulla, in presence of District Information Officer Iftikhar Naseem.

The facility marks a significant step towards enhancing public outreach on various Centrally Sponsored and UT Government welfare schemes. Content produced in the studio will be shared across social media platforms to ensure accurate, accessible, and wider dissemination.

To strengthen its communication capabilities, the Information Office has also been upgraded with modern equipment, including a Digital Sound System (Mic System) and other essential broadcasting tools. The improved infrastructure is expected to enhance the



department's efficiency in managing routine media activities and major government events.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that

the new recording studio will greatly strengthen communication between the government and the public, ensuring that information on welfare schemes reaches every

household.

He stressed that awareness is the foundation of empowerment, and well-informed citizens can make better use of government

programmes designed for their welfare.

The DC added that the role of the Information Department extends beyond sharing scheme-related information and must also include highlighting developmental works, documenting success stories, and raising awareness on critical issues such as drug abuse, traffic rules, and other public concerns. He noted that the studio will serve as an important platform for producing meaningful and impactful content through pod Cast "Jhelum Se Chenab Tak" for the community.

It is pertinent to mention that the Chief Secretary, Jammu & Kashmir, recently launched the podcast series "Jhelum Se Chenab Tak" at Dakbanglow Baramulla. The podcast aims to provide citizens with clear and reliable information about government initiatives through conversations with concerned officers.

# GMC Srinagar Conducts GeM Training Programme for DDOs, Officials of H&ME

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 18:** Government Medical College Srinagar today conducted the GeM Training Programme for DDOs, dealing assistants, and officials of the Health and Medical Education Department, Kashmir Division, inaugurated by Principal and Dean, Government Medical College Srinagar, Prof. Dr. Iffat Hassan Shah.



On the occasion, Prof. Dr. Iffat Hassan Shah appreciated the initiative and added that capacity building improves digital governance in the health sector. She said that GeM adoption is a statutory requirement under GFR 2017 and an essential tool for transparency and financial discipline in procurement. She asked participants to stay attentive, raise questions, and apply these skills in their offices to strengthen procurement and service delivery.

Chief Accounts Officer, GMC Srinagar, highlighted dynamic pricing, e bidding, reverse auctions, standard catalogues, automated contracts, secure payments, and vendor rating. She added that officials must understand the bid life cycle, product category codes, procurement modes, demand creation, purchase preferences, BoQ based and custom bidding, OEM mapping, and GARPTS.

Resource Person from Government e Marketplace, Ministry of Commerce, covered user role assignment, profile validation, demand creation, bid creation, direct purchases, BoQ based and custom bidding, reverse auctions, bid evaluation, OEM and seller mapping, contract generation, consignee activities, CRAC issuance, PFMS linked invoice processing, dashboard analytics, MIS reporting, and audit trails. Rule 149 of GFR 2017 was explained and the role of GARPTS in market analysis. Participants asked technical questions on workflow, documentation, and compliance. He addressed each question with clarity.

The programme was attended by Administrator GMC Srinagar, Personnel Officer GMC Srinagar, Deputy Director Planning GMC Srinagar and officials from different departments.

# Ramban Administration marks 5th Anniversary of Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**RAMBAN, NOVEMBER 18:** To commemorate the 5th anniversary of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, the District Administration Ramban on Tuesday organized a series of awareness events across the district, reaffirming its commitment to building a drug-free society.

At the District Headquarter Ramban, Deputy Commissioner, Mohammad Alys Khan administered the Nasha Mukht pledge to officers, officials, prominent citizens, youth, and students, urging them to actively participate in spreading awareness and guiding others away from the menace of drug abuse.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Varunjeet Singh Charak and Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Shokat Hayat Mattoo and other officers were also present on the occasion.



Earlier, a mass awareness rally was taken out in Ramban town, in which officers, officials, teachers and students from different institutions enthusiastically participated. Holding banners and placards, the participants raised slogans encouraging a collective fight against substance abuse.

Across all Sub-Divisions, Tehsils, Blocks, Panchayat and educational institutions, a series of competitions—including debate, painting, essay writing and slogans writing—were organized to engage youth and educate them on the harmful impact of drugs. These activities witnessed vibrant participation, reflecting the growing awareness among young minds. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized that drug abuse poses a serious threat to society and called for coordinated efforts from all stakeholders to eradicate this challenge. He stressed the need for community involvement, continuous awareness and proactive measures to ensure that the district moves steadily toward becoming Nasha Mukht. The DC appreciated the participation of students, officers and civil society members and asked them to continue such campaigns with greater vigor.

# DC Poonch reviews district-wide anti-drug measures

## Stresses on strengthening enforcement, awareness campaign

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**POONCH, NOVEMBER 18:** Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting of the District-Level Committee under the Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) to review the ongoing anti-drug measures and evaluate the performance of enforcement agencies in curbing the drug menace across the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner conducted a comprehensive review of anti-narcotic activities, including the destruction of illicit cannabis cultivation and the progress of the Nasha Mukht Panchayat initiative across various tehsils.

All concerned officers briefed the chair regarding drug-related reports, ongoing actions and the overall status within the district.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Chief Education Officer to intensify awareness programmes among students in coordination with the police department. He also took stock of any instances of cannabis cultivation and instructed officials to initiate immediate destruction wherever such activities



are detected.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized enhanced surveillance in hotspot areas, installation of CCTV cameras, strengthening enforcement presence and sustaining mass awareness campaigns to achieve the vision of a drug-free Poonch.

SSP, Shafket Hussain Bhat briefed the meeting on the prevailing drug situation and highlighted the necessity for seamless coordination among all

departments. He called for swift and decisive action against any reported drug-related activities.

The meeting was attended by SSP Poonch, Shafket Hussain Bhat, ADC Poonch, Tahir Mustafa Malik, PO ICDS, Khalid Hussain Wafa, SE PWD, Kewal Kumar, ACR, Mohammad Sayeed, ACP, Rakesh Sharma among other district and sectoral officers.

SDMs and Tehsildars joined the meeting through virtual mode.

# DC Rajouri receives National Honour from President of India for Excellence in Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**RAJOURI, NOVEMBER 18:** In a moment of immense pride for District Rajouri, Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma was today honoured by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, for the district's outstanding performance under the Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari initiative. The award recognises Rajouri's exemplary achievements in promoting community-led water conservation and sustainable resource management.

Despite challenges during the implementation phase, including incidents of Pakistani shelling in border areas and the concurrent Operation Sindoor, the district administration—supported by the unwavering spirit of Jan Bhagidari, completed and geo-tagged all water recharge structures well before the 31st May deadline. This

accomplishment stands as a testament to the resilience and determination of both the administration and the public.

As part of the Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari programme, Rajouri successfully geo-tagged 4,208 rainwater harvesting structures, including 132 Amrit Sarovars, 894 ponds, 510 bowls, 2,270 harvesting tanks and 408 dugwells.

These efforts have significantly enhanced the district's rainwater harvesting capacity and strengthened long-term water sustainability.

The national recognition highlights the district administration's innovative and result-oriented approach in mobilising public participation, rejuvenating traditional water bodies, expanding community awareness and prioritising grassroots engagement. Under the leadership of DC Abhishek Sharma,



Rajouri adopted a holistic strategy to improve water security through collaboration and community ownership. "This honour belongs to the people of Rajouri," DC Abhishek Sharma said, expressing gratitude for the prestigious recognition. He emphasized that

the district's success was driven by collective commitment, strong community participation and consistent on-ground efforts.

Guided by the Prime Minister's vision of ensuring water security for all, Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari promotes conservation through

a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach. The initiative empowers communities to protect and restore water bodies, adopt sustainable practices and build resilience against water scarcity.

Rajouri's people-centric model—anchored in sustainability, collaboration and active citizen participation—has now gained appreciation at the highest national level. The award has also infused renewed motivation among district officials, community groups and the general public to continue their efforts toward creating a water-secure and environmentally sustainable Rajouri.

This national honour marks a significant milestone, positioning Rajouri as a leading example of innovative governance and effective public participation in water conservation across the country.

# Rajouri: Women batch completes Beauty Parlour management course at JKBRSETI

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**RAJOURI, NOVEMBER 18:** Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Rajesh Verma today gave away certificates to a women batch on completion of the Beauty Parlour Management course here at J&K Bank Rural Self-Employment Training Institutes (JKBRSETI) Rajouri. He interacted

with the pass-out candidates, applauding their dedication and motivating them to pursue further opportunities for growth and self-reliance. Verma also engaged with the trainees of the ongoing Women Tailoring batch. He encouraged them to harness their skills for income generation and entrepreneurial ventures. The CAO further briefed the

participants on various schemes of the Agriculture Department that offer scope for self-employment and rural empowerment. The visit highlighted the importance of skill development in transforming the socio-economic landscape of rural communities. JKBRSETI, operating under the Ministry of Rural Development, Government



of India, continues to play a pivotal role in imparting practical, industry-aligned training aimed at empowering rural youth—especially women—towards sustainable livelihoods.

The Beauty Parlour Management course is one of the many vocational programmes designed by JKBRSETI to promote employability. Its curriculum

includes beauty therapy, makeup artistry, hair styling and salon management, equipping participants with the skills necessary to secure jobs or start their own enterprises.

Director JKBRSETI, Suniel Sharma, extended gratitude to the Chief Agriculture Officer for his visit and motivational interaction with the trainees.

# SC seeks Centre, ED, CBI, Ambani's response on PIL alleging RCom bank fraud

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** The Supreme Court today sought responses from the Central government, the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), and businessman Anil Ambani on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking a court-monitored investigation into an alleged large-scale banking fraud involving Reliance Communications (RCOM), its group entities, and Ambani.

The petitioner, filed by EAS Sarma, former Secretary to the Government of India, alleged systemic diversion of funds, fabrication of accounts, and institutional complicity in one of India's "largest corporate frauds."

A Bench comprising Chief Justice of India BR Gavai and Justice Vinod Chandran issued notice and directed the Centre, CBI, ED, and Ambani to file their

responses within three weeks.

Appearing for the petitioner, Advocate Prashant Bhushan told the Court, "This is probably the largest corporate fraud in India's history."

The FIR comes to be registered only in 2025, whereas the fraud has been going on since 2007-08."

The Court asked whether copies of the petition had been served on the respondents, to which Bhushan requested that status reports from both CBI and ED be called for.

The Court thereafter formally issued a notice.

According to the petition, the CBI FIR dated August 21, 2025, and connected ED proceedings cover only a fraction of the alleged wrongdoing.

Despite forensic audits and independent assessments pointing to large-scale fraud, investigative agencies have not examined the involvement of bank officials and financial regulators, it is alleged.



The petitioner also referred to a Bombay High Court judgment, which had noted instances of systematic diversion of funds.

The PIL states that the findings from the forensic audit between 2013 and 2017, RCOM and

subsidiaries Reliance Infratel and Reliance Telecom allegedly received loans of Rs 31,580 crore from a consortium of banks led by State Bank of India (SBI).

A forensic audit commissioned by SBI allegedly

found that the diversion of loan funds was for repayment of unrelated loans.

Transfers to related parties and routing of funds to disguise evergreening, investments liquidated immediately after

infusion, transactions from bank accounts marked as closed, suggesting fabricated financial statements.

The petitioner further claimed that shell entities, including Netizen Engineering and Kunj Bihari Developers, were used to siphon and launder funds, and that sham preference share settlements caused losses of over Rs 1,800 crore.

A major grievance raised was that SBI's nearly five-year delay in initiating criminal proceedings, despite the forensic audit being submitted in October 2020.

SBI lodged a complaint only in August 2025, which, according to the petitioner, indicated "institutional complicity."

Since officers of nationalised banks are treated as public servants under the Prevention of Corruption Act, their conduct also requires investigation, the plea argued.

The petitioner also cited other

transactions, referred to alleged irregularities in other Anil Ambani-led entities, including Reliance Capital's Rs 16,000-crore inter-corporate deposits to subsidiaries with negative net worth.

Diversion of funds by home-finance subsidiaries. Fabrication of accounts, forged documents, non-existent bank accounts, and cross-border layering of funds

The petitioner has sought a Supreme Court-monitored investigation covering all forensic audit findings, insolvency-related material, and potential offences under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA), Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), Companies Act, RBI norms, and under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

The matter will be heard next after all respondents have filed their responses. UNI

## President Murmu calls for water conservation and management

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday stressed the need for prioritization of water conservation and consistent management at the level of central and state governments, district administrations, village panchayats and municipal bodies. Speaking at a function here to present the sixth National Water Awards and Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari Awards the President advised farmers and entrepreneurs to adopt innovative methods of maximizing production while minimizing water consumption.

Pointing out that effective water management is possible only with the participation of individuals, families, society and the government, she called for making the most efficient use of water resources an integral part of lifestyle.

"In our tradition rivers, lakes and other water sources are revered. In our national song, the first word Bankim Chandra Chatterjee wrote is 'Sujalam'. This means 'blessed with abundant water resources.' This fact reflects the priority of water for our country," she said.

Describing the efficient water use a global imperative, she said efficient water use is even more crucial for our country because our water resources are limited compared to the population. Per capita water availability is a major challenge. She underlined that climate change is affecting the water cycle. In such circumstances, the government and the public should work together to ensure water availability and water security.

The President said that by adopting circular water economy systems, all industries and other stakeholders can make effective use of water resources.

She noted that along with water treatment and recirculation, many industrial units have achieved the target of zero fluid discharge. Such efforts are useful for water management and conservation.

The President advised people to remain constantly vigilant about water conservation, both individually and collectively. It is crucial to spread water awareness in our country's public consciousness. Water can only be harvested and conserved through the power of the people, she added.

The National Water Awards aim to create awareness among the people about the importance of water and motivate them to adopt the best water usage practices.

The Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB) initiative has been leading to the emergence of diverse, scalable, and replicable models for artificial groundwater recharge through community participation and convergence of resources. Under the initiative launched last year, more than 35 lakh groundwater recharge structures have been constructed. UNI

## BCI tells Delhi HC foreign lawyers' rules need no approvals

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** The Bar Council of India (BCI) on Tuesday informed the Delhi High Court that its 2022 rules permitting the entry and regulation of foreign law firms and lawyers in India do not require prior approval of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) or the Central government.

The submission was made before a division bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela during the hearing of petitions filed by Dentons Link Legal and CMS IndusLaw, which are challenging the Bar Council of India rules for registration and regulation of foreign lawyers and foreign law firms in India, 2022.

Senior advocate Arvind Nigam, appearing for one of the petitioners, argued that the BCI had not demonstrated that it had secured the approval of the CJI or the Central government before framing these rules.

In response, counsel for the BCI maintained, "We don't need the approval to allow me to file a counter, and I will justify."

During the hearing, the bench reiterated its earlier reservations regarding the BCI Rules, especially provisions enabling drastic action against law firms based on only a preliminary inquiry.

The court remarked, "It's a mess. Why don't you (BCI) carry out an amendment? These rules are applicable all across the country."

The BCI submitted that a



consultation process was underway and that suggestions were being considered, prompting the court to observe: "Please frame the rules properly, instead of explaining all this. You are the Bar Council, after all." The court granted the BCI two

weeks to file its affidavit, and adjourned the matter to January, while its previous order restraining the BCI from taking any final decision against the petitioning law firms will continue to remain in force.

"Don't take the final decision," the bench directed.

Dentons Link Legal and IndusLaw have approached the court after the BCI issued show-cause notices in August 2025 about alleged unauthorised collaborations between Indian and foreign law firms, said to violate the 2022 Rules.

The petitioners have argued that the BCI has no rule-making power under the Advocates Act, 1961, to regulate the entry of foreign law firms and lawyers.

The rules are ultra vires the

advocates Act and violate Articles 14, 19(1)(g), and 21 of the Constitution.

Section 49 of the Advocates Act does not empower the BCI to frame such regulations.

Dentons Link Legal contended that Section 49(1)(c) and (e) require the prior approval of the CJI or the Central government, which was not obtained.

The regulations deal solely with foreign law firms but do not define "Indian law firms," creating regulatory inconsistency.

The High Court had earlier expressed similar concerns, questioning provisions that permit serious action against law firms based only on preliminary findings.

The matter will be heard next in January. UNI

## Post-Bihar jolt: Congress launches intensive voter roll review in 12 States/UTs

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** In a decisive move following its crippling defeat in the Bihar Assembly elections, the Congress party is holding a crucial meeting on Tuesday to conduct a high-level review of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls across 12 States and union Territories.

The session, scheduled at Indira Bhawan in New Delhi, is seen as a high-stakes post-mortem and strategy meeting aimed at addressing systemic issues the party believes contributed to its recent electoral failures.

The urgency of the meeting stems directly from the Congress party's dismal performance in the recently concluded Bihar polls.

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) secured a commanding victory

with 202 seats, while the Mahagathbandhan, of which Congress was a key part, was relegated to just 35 seats with the Congress winning a meagre six seats.

The scale of the loss prompted strong public reactions from the party's top leadership. Both party leader Rahul Gandhi and party President Mallikarjun Kharge had previously voiced significant concerns over the Election Commission's role in the Bihar poll process, alleging widespread irregularities that they termed "vote chori" (vote theft).

The current review of the electoral rolls is therefore directly linked to the party's suspicion that voter list management and accurate enumeration may be a critical weakness to address.

The crucial review meeting has brought together senior functionaries responsible for ground operations,

including AICC in-charges, Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) chiefs, Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leaders, and secretaries from the 12 regions involved in the SIR exercise.

The States and UTs whose electoral rolls will be under intense scrutiny are: Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep.

The review is expected to focus on the completeness, accuracy, and fairness of the revision process in these regions, with a specific mandate to ensure Congress workers are actively engaged at the booth level to prevent any alleged manipulation.

The meeting's review will be contextualized against the Election Commission's recent data on the Special Intensive Revision exercise. UNI

## Massive GST fraud unearthed: 12 fake firms, Rs 8.6 cr evasion in timber trade

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**MORADABAD, NOV 18:** The State Tax Department's mobile unit has unearthed a major case of Input Tax Credit (ITC) fraud in the timber trade, involving multiple firms using a single mobile number to evade GST.

During the investigation, officials discovered that 12 firms were registered using the same number as Sitapur-based Zara Enterprises, whose business structure appeared suspicious. The department detected GST evasion worth Rs 8.60 crore on a turnover of ₹67 crore, officials confirmed on Tuesday.

The fraud network reportedly operated through firms registered under the Central GST (CGST). The investigation began when the mobile unit intercepted three trucks loaded with timber. Documents revealed that the consignment was purchased by Zara Enterprises.

A check on the GST portal revealed that Zara Enterprises had shown purchases from two other Sitapur-based firms. Further investigation into the purchase chain exposed that these Sitapur firms had claimed to buy timber from a Gorakhpur-based firm, where too the department found no real cash-based business involving timber. This led officials to uncover a multi-district nexus of fake billing and bogus ITC, where only paper transactions were being used to evade tax worth crores.

What shocked officials was that a single mobile number linked to Zara Enterprises was used to register 12 different firms. According to officials, this pattern is commonly seen in the creation of bogus entities meant to issue fake invoices and pass on fraudulent ITC.

Several discrepancies were found in addresses, documents, and ownership details of these firms. Many of these entities, despite showing transactions worth crores, had no warehouses, machinery, labour, or banking activity that matched their claimed business volume.

Given the seriousness of the case, State Tax officials have sent a detailed report to the Principal Commissioner of CGST. Further action including cancellation of registrations, bank account scrutiny, and recovery proceedings will be carried out in coordination with the CGST department.

Officials suspect that more fake firms may be operating in other districts using the same mobile number or linked individuals. The department has begun collecting all records, including GSTR filings, e-way bills, and bank transaction reports from the firms involved.

Authorities indicated that similar frauds are increasingly being detected in sectors such as timber, scrap, metals, and general trading, where bogus firms are created to pass on fraudulent ITC. "Efforts are underway to trace the full network behind this chain," claimed RA Seth, Additional Commissioner, SIB State Tax, Moradabad Zone. UNI

## What After Bangladesh's Death Sentence For Hasina?

JAYANTA ROY CHOWDHURY

**NEW DELHI, NOV 18:** The two big questions haunting political circles in South Asia are whether India will extradite Sheikh Hasina to Dhaka after a court there sentenced her to death and what will happen next to Bangladesh which is already in the throes of a political and economic crisis.

India in its answer to Bangladesh government's call to "immediately hand over convicted individuals", seems to have completely side-stepped the demand and merely pointed out that it has "noted the verdict announced by the International Crimes Tribunal of Bangladesh" concerning Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The Indian government's message to Dhaka, following the latest judgment, appears unmistakable: "You may place any demand you wish, but India will take its own decisions in its own way."

Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty, former Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh

told UNI that New Delhi has implicitly already conveyed to Dhaka that the bilateral extradition treaty contains an exemption clause that bars the extradition of individuals facing political or politically motivated judgments. Agreed Dr Smruti S Pattanaik, Research Fellow at the Manohar Parriker-Institute of Defense Studies & Analysis, "If we read the two statements - one by Bangladesh and the other by India on the issue of extradition, they seem to be talking past each other."

Pattanaik said New Delhi is likely to wait for an elected government to assume office in Bangladesh before considering any significant political move, though routine trade and people-to-people contacts will continue unaffected.

India of course has a long history of giving refuge to heads of state and their families, fleeing turmoil or war in their lands.

In 1950, King Tribhuvan of Nepal sought refuge in India, which helped trigger a popular revolt against the ruling Rana regime,

leading to the monarchy's restoration to power.

Similarly, in 1959, India granted political asylum to the 14th Dalai Lama and provided refuge to tens of thousands of Tibetans escaping Chinese rule.

Following the rise of Taliban in 1996, India had offered asylum to the family of former Afghan President Mohammad Najibullah, who was killed by the Taliban. The family has resided in Delhi since.

Analysts here warned that the latest developments could further destabilise Bangladesh's already fragile political landscape and undermine investor confidence. Bangladesh, Chakravarty pointed out is grappling with severe economic stress marked by rising prices, unemployment, and sharply slowing growth. "On top of that, there has been mobocracy, chaos on the streets, and deepening internal strife among political parties," he said.

Chakravarty too felt the political churn in Bangladesh would now intensify and added that the judgment is likely to heighten

the rival Bangladesh National Party's longstanding fear that its support base may be eroded by the Jamaat-e-Islami, a concern that could reshape political alignments in the coming months.

In the days leading up to the ruling, the now-banned Awami League called for peaceful nationwide shutdowns, strikes and mass protests. Dhaka and several other city centres also witnessed repeated crude bomb explosion, arson attacks and acts of sabotage by unknown miscreants, that have put police and paramilitary units on high alert. "The verdict comes at a time when the Awami League has witnessed a revival since the August 2024 movement," Pattanaik said. The party which had led Bangladesh to freedom, she pointed out, has become increasingly active, organising demonstrations across the country.

Its renewed political vigour, began after the fledgling political party NCP, set up by members of the Mohammad Yunus interim government, attempted a march on Gopalganj, a bastion of the Awami League.

# Kolkata Minefield: Bavuma Stands Tall, Washington Stands Longer

■ KARTHIK KRISHNASWAMY

**KOLKATA:** Temba Bavuma played the pivotal innings of the Kolkata Test between India and South Africa, but was he the best batter across the two teams? It sounds like an absurd question when Bavuma scored the only half-century of a low-scoring dogfight, but we like throwing philosophical debates at our readers, angering some of them in the process.

The answer is, maybe, he quite possibly was, but he quite possibly wasn't, judging by two measures.

On a pitch as treacherous as this one at Eden Gardens, control percentage, with a few caveats, is a good way to separate batters who happened to spend good amounts of time at the crease from batters who demonstrated a method of staying in over a good amount of time.

And on a pitch as treacherous as this one, batters had a trade-off to make between control and run-scoring, and take on certain risks to keep the scoreboard moving, so they weren't just hanging in before the inevitable wicket ball arrived. In-control strike rate, then, gives us an idea of how efficiently these batters created run-scoring opportunities.

By both these measures, Bavuma ranks fairly low among the 11 batters who faced at least 50 balls across both innings - the second-lowest control percentage (76.19), and the fifth-lowest in-control strike rate (37.50). Now here are the caveats. One, control percentage is a reliable measure over the period of, say, a season or a year, where the batters under comparison have faced a large

number of balls from a multitude of bowlers across different conditions, but can be somewhat misleading over a period as short as a Test match.

If a partnership lasts for, say, ten overs, there's a strong chance that one batter was stuck facing the opposition's most threatening bowler while the other was mostly at the other end, facing someone far more straightforward to negotiate. En route to his unbeaten third-innings 55, Bavuma survived one of the most challenging phases of the Test match, a spell from Ravindra Jadeja late on day two where every ball looked like getting a wicket.

And the method Bavuma employed was to play for his inside edge, guarding against the threat of Jadeja's non-turning or less-turning ball rather than the one ripping sharply away from him. This method, in conditions where Jadeja often turned the ball big, meant Bavuma was often beaten on the outside edge, and marked as not being in control while he was happy to be beaten that way. And every batter brings a different method to the crease, dependent on their strengths and the match circumstances. Bavuma trusted his defence, and his lower-order partners, and did not take undue risks to score his runs. His in-control strike rate, naturally, was on the lower end of the scale.

Having got all that out of the way, let's look at that chart again.

Look at the top left corner. Washington Sundar faced more balls across two innings in Kolkata (174) than anyone on either side, and was the only batter to go past the 50-ball mark twice. And he did this with a

control percentage of 88.51.

He did this at No. 3, having walked in inside the first ten overs of both innings, on a pitch where the ball was at its worst behaviour when it was new and hard. He did this while batting at No. 3 for the first time in his Test career. India's decision to bat Washington at No. 3, and play all three of their spin-bowling allrounders, was perhaps the biggest selection talking point of this Test match. It was an unusual-looking selection on the face of it, and if you were inclined to, you could have looked at India's XI and judged them to have played only three specialist batters, with the rest of their top eight made up of allrounders and wicketkeepers.

It would be a misleading way of looking at it, though, because all of Washington, Rishabh Pant, Dhruv Jurel, Jadeja and Axar Patel are genuine allrounders, particularly in Indian conditions, if you count wicketkeepers as allrounders. All five are good enough to bat in the top or middle order of a Test-match line-up as specialists. And on the evidence of his control numbers in Kolkata, Washington can certainly bat at No. 3. The evidence of the eye suggested this too, as it has done pretty much since the start of his Test career. He has faced criticism for some facets of his batting - notably his ability to bat alongside the tail, until he showed that side of his game with a 46-ball 53 during India's Oval win earlier this year - but everyone from lay observer to coaches and team-mates has noted how organised his technique is, and how unruffled he looks at the crease.

ESPNCricinfo



## Sangakkara confirmed as Royals head coach and director of cricket

■ ESPNCRICINFO

**NEW DELHI:** 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 ESPNCricinfo 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.

## Mitchell in doubt for remainder of ODI series against West Indies

Henry Nicholls has been called up as cover while Mark Chapman is also part of the squad

■ ESPNCRICINFO

**CHRISTCHURCH:** Daryl Mitchell is in doubt for the remainder of the ODI series against West Indies having picked up a groin strain during his match-winning century in Christchurch. Mitchell, who made 119 off 118 balls in New Zealand's seven-run victory, will remain in Christchurch to undergo a scan.

Left hander Henry Nicholls, who played the most recent of his 81 ODIs in early April, has been called into the squad for



the second match in Napier on Wednesday. Nicholls is currently the leading scorer in the Ford Trophy with 306 runs at 76.50 including back-to-back centuries against Otago and Auckland.

Mark Chapman is the other spare batter in the squad and is averaging 101.33 from four ODIs this year.


Mitchell has been in fine form this season, taking the player of the series award against England.

"He is a man for crisis," captain Mitchell Santner said after

the century. "He played extremely well, on one leg at the end."

New Zealand are without several players for this series including Mohammad Abbas (ribs), Finn Allen (foot), Lockie Ferguson (hamstring), Adam Milne (ankle), Will O'Rourke (back), Glenn Phillips (groin), and Ben Sears (hamstring).

Kane Williamson, who picked up a groin niggle against England, was also not considered as he focuses on preparing for the Tests against West Indies.




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