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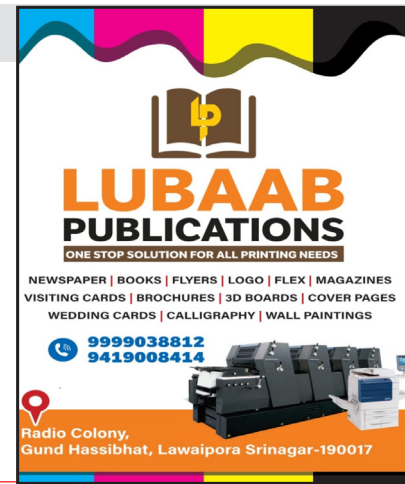
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15TH
YEAR OF
PUBLICATION

HEADLINES TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



Time To Break the Chains of Colonial Mindset: PM Modi

In Next Ten Years We Must Completely Free Ourselves from the Psychology of Subjugation

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DEC 6: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday called upon the nation to work collectively over the next decade to eliminate what he termed as the “mindset of slavery” inherited from the colonial era. Speaking at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit, the Prime Minister said that India today is rewriting its identity with renewed confidence, ambition, and pride.

Modi noted that the year 2035 will mark 200 years of Macaulay's education framework, which he said deeply



influenced India's thinking and institutional systems. “We have ten years before that milestone. These ten years must be the years in which we completely free ourselves from the psychology of subjugation,” he urged.

Taking aim at old economic narratives, Modi criticized the use of the phrase Hindu rate of growth, saying it was coined to blame the country's culture

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Kashmir to Kremlin: India Serves Heritage, Heart and Hospitality as PM Modi Hosts Putin

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DEC 06: In a rare blend of diplomacy and tradition, India welcomed Russian President Vladimir Putin with a grand culinary tribute one that carried the aroma of Himalayan saffron, the warmth of regional hospitality, and the pride of India's diverse food heritage.

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Social Media Posts Regarding JKPSK Exam Are Misleading: LG Office

Says JKPSK File Returned The
Same Day With Query

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 6: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday countered criticism over the delay in deciding age relaxation for the upcoming Combined Competitive Examination (CCE), asserting that his office acted without delay and returned the file on the very day it was received.

In a post on X, the LG's office stated that the file submitted on December 2 was related solely to age relaxation and was immediately sent back with a query asking the

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JKAS Prelims Exam as Per Schedule: JKPSC

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 06: The Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) on Saturday confirmed that the JKAS preliminary examination will take place as scheduled on Sunday, despite growing appeals and ongoing travel challenges faced by aspirants.

JKPSC Chairman Arun Kumar Choudhary, while speaking to the reporter, said there would be no change in the examination date.

“There is no change in the date of the exam. It will be conducted as per the schedule,” he reiterated.

The announcement comes amid a wave of confusion and speculation circulating on social media regarding a possible deferment.

Adding to the clarity, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha took to microblogging platform X to label rumours of postponement as misleading. His office stated that the age relaxation proposal at the centre of public debate had been received at Lok Bhavan on December 2 and was returned the same day with a query on whether eligibility criteria could be altered so close to the test.

Meanwhile, political leaders have continued to press for deferment in light of severe flight disruptions impacting aspirants traveling to examination centres.

The Office of the Chief Minister posted on X earlier today, expressing concern over the situation and urging the JKPSC to consider a postponement.

“The Chief Minister expressed deep

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Omar Abdullah is “Focused” and “Determined” in Rebuilding J&K’s Shaken Economy : Sitharaman Lauds CM

■ HT NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI, DEC 6: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday praised Jammu and Kashmir Chief Min-

ister Omar Abdullah for his “focused” and “determined” efforts to revive the region's economy after the tourism sector suffered a severe setback.

Speaking at the Hindustan

Times Leadership Summit, Sitharaman reflected on India's economic trajectory since 2019 and highlighted the challenges faced by Jammu and Kashmir, especially those stemming from

hostile actions across the border. Without explicitly naming Pakistan, she said the country continued to face trouble “with our borders... both through state and non-state actors,” adding that

recent incidents halted the region's economic momentum at a time when it was steadily improving under Central guidance.

She noted that the

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Bangladeshi Woman Booked For Illegal Stay In Ramban: Police

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN/JAMMU, DEC 6: Police have registered a case against a Bangladeshi woman in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district on Saturday for illegally entering and staying in

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INDIA Bloc ‘Barely Breathing’, Risks Political ICU: Omar Abdullah Sounds Alarm

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DEC 6: In a sharp and candid assessment, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah on Saturday said the opposition INDIA bloc is “on life support” and risks being shifted to the “ICU” if internal discord and organisational lapses continue.

Speaking at the HT Leadership Summit in New Delhi, Abdullah said the coalition's lack of cohesion, sluggish decision-making, and weak election preparedness stand in stark contrast to what he called the BJP's relentless, disciplined, and “unmatched” political machinery.

“We're sort of on life support, but every once in a while somebody brings

out the paddles and gives us a shock, and we get up again,” Abdullah remarked. “But then results like Bihar happen, and we slump down again and someone has to wheel us into the ICU.”

He blamed the bloc's poor strategy for Nitish Kumar's return to the NDA, saying the opposition alliance “pushed” him back towards the BJP. He also

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IndiGo disruptions drill hole in pockets of flyers

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, DEC 06: Air travel woes deepened across the country, including Kashmir, on Saturday as IndiGo flight disruptions persisted for another straight day, sending airfares soaring to as high as Rs 7,000–8,000 on several routes.

Many tour and travel operators who spoke with the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that while other airlines operated normally, the disruptions hitting IndiGo have triggered an unexpected spike in airfares, especially on short-notice bookings.

“The fares have shot up to Rs 4,000–6,000 on the Delhi and Jammu routes and even higher on some others, due

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21 flights cancelled across J&K airports today

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, DEC 06: Flight disruptions continued for the second consecutive day at Srinagar and Jammu

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Prevailing dry spell hits natural water supply sources

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, DEC 06: The prevailing dry spell has led to sharp decline in discharge levels of water supply sources across Kashmir.

Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Kashmir, Er. Rakesh Kumar Gupta, while talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, “The persistent dry weather has affected most

natural sources feeding the supply lines.”

“Due to the dry spell, our water sources have been affected. Once the rainfall occurs or weather patterns change, these sources will be recharged,” Gupta said.

He said while some areas are facing reduced water flow, the department has intensified its response to maintain supply. “The drinking water supply has

got affected a bit, but we are coping with the demand through tanker services.”

Er Gupta also said, the department is in continuous touch with the DCs and Divisional Administration and wherever there is a need, tankers are being provided. “There is no major shortage or crisis situation as of now,” he said.

Meanwhile, Independent

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Black Bear’s City Tour Ends at Nigeen’: Animal Trapped After 11-Day Search

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, DEC 06: The wandering black bear that had kept Srinagar residents on edge for over 11 days was finally trapped on Saturday evening at Nigeen here, bringing an end to an intense city-wide search operation.

Wildlife officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the animal walked into a cage set up near

the lake area. “The bear has been successfully trapped and will be relocated to a safe forest habitat after medical examination,” officials said.

The bear had been on an unusual “city tour,” spotted earlier at NIT Srinagar, Kashmir University, SKIMS Soura and finally around Nigeen Lake, prompting a massive multi-agency operation. Drones, tranquiliser teams, and rescue

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J&K Conducts 230+ Fertilizer Enforcement Drives: Go!

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, DEC 05: In a crackdown on malpractices in fertilizer supply, authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have taken more than 230 enforcement actions against black marketing, hoarding, and the supply of substandard products during the current Kharif season, Union Ministry informed in the

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Kishtwar road accident kills four of a family

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

KISHTWAR, DEC 06: At least four members of a family, including an infant were killed in a road accident in Dada Sarthal area of Kishtwar district on Saturday, officials said.

Officials informed the news agency—

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CS Leads Drive to Boost MAP Sector in J&K

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 06: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired a joint meeting of the Forest and Agriculture Production Departments along with the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu, to evolve a comprehensive roadmap for commercial cultivation, conservation and large-scale promotion of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Commissioner Secretary, Forest Department; Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu; senior officers of the Forest Department, SKUAST, and other concerned stake-



holders.

During the deliberations, the Chief Secretary observed that Jammu and Kashmir is currently generating barely ₹12 Cr annually from the MAP sector, which is significantly low compared to its immense potential estimated at nearly ₹10,000 Cr at the national level and about ₹2 lakh Cr globally. He emphasized the urgent need for a

structured, scientifically driven and commercially viable strategy to unlock the sector's economic and livelihood potential, particularly for enhancing farmers' incomes.

Stressing inter-departmental coordination, the Chief Secretary directed the three key stakeholders of Forest Department, Agriculture Production Department,

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Aijaz Asad Stresses Ownership of Public Schemes

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

POONCH, DEC 06: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, emphasised the need for renewed commitment from officers and field staff to ensure the effective and timely execution of government schemes, stating that the ultimate objective of all development initiatives is to deliver maximum benefits to the common people.

During his visit to Poonch, Secretary conducted a comprehensive Panchayat-wise review of major Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including MGNREGA, PMAY-G, SBM-G, NRLM, RGSA, IWMP and allied programmes. He directed officers to expedite project execution, address grassroots-level bottlenecks and ensure steady progress

across all schemes. Stressing the need to prioritise works of public importance, he called for ensuring that every eligible beneficiary receives rightful entitlements.

Highlighting the importance of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), Aijaz Asad instructed officials to complete all pending houses within stipulated timelines, noting the scheme's role in supporting homeless and vulnerable families.

He also reviewed the status of e-KYC, Awas Plus 2.0, CD and Panchayat works, RGSA, TSP Plan and Self-Help Group (SHG) activities, besides other key programme components.

Reiterating the importance of strict financial discipline, the Secretary stressed the need for seamless fund flow, enhanced utilisation

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Saurabh Bhagat reviews functioning of Consumer Commissions across J&K

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DEC 6: Commissioner Secretary Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Saurabh Bhagat, today convened a comprehensive review meeting to assess the functioning and ongoing initiatives of the Consumer Commissions across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by President State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission, along with the Presidents and members of the District Consumer Commissions besides senior officers from the department of FCS&CA, including Special Secretary, Director Finance, Deputy Directors,

Senior Law Officer and officials from Legal Metrology Department and National Informatics Centre were also present.

During the review, the Commissioner Secretary stressed the need to expedite identification and allotment of suitable land parcels for construction of permanent buildings for District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions. It was decided that the matter would be followed up proactively with respective district administrations to ensure timely availability of land.

The meeting emphasised the need to expedite the preparation and approval of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for new DCDRC buildings in Srinagar,

Anantnag, Baramulla and Kupwara.

The Commissioner Secretary directed that these DPRs be treated as priority projects. He asked the Legal Metrology Department to collaborate closely to fast-track all related technical and administrative processes in this regard.

Further, a detailed overview of existing staff shortages in various Consumer Commissions was also taken up.

Saurabh Bhagat directed to initiate concrete measures to address these deficiencies at the earliest so that functioning of the Commissions remains smooth and efficient. He asked the concerned officers to take up digitisation of all case



records, orders and judgments on priority basis.

A detailed review was held with the National Informatics Centre regarding the fast track implementation of e-Jagriti platform, aimed at ushering in comprehensive e-governance

across consumer courts. The platform will integrate mediation cells, online payment gateways and the corpus fund for fines and penalties.

Commissioner Secretary also directed for early finalisation and signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Union Ministry of Food, Supplies & Consumer Affairs for seamless integration and rollout of the system in J&K.

Further, the meeting also held a threadbare discussion on implementation of Supreme Court judgments pertaining to functioning of Consumer Courts. This included deliberations on emoluments of Commission members, mode of appointment, tenure and other

statutory compliances.

Saurabh Bhagat instructed that necessary steps must be taken to ensure full adherence to the Supreme Court directions in letter and spirit.

Commissioner Secretary also reviewed status of the Consumer Welfare Fund and called for renewed efforts to mobilize resources and deploy them effectively for consumer awareness and welfare activities. The consumer awareness campaigns regarding through press and electronic media was highly prioritised in the meeting. He underscored the importance of accelerating consumer justice delivery through coordinated departmental efforts and adoption of modern practices.

Traffic Teams in Anantnag and Kulgam Strengthen Night-Time Safety Measures

Routine Use of Reflective Jackets and Hand-Held Lights Ensures Safer Traffic Management

■ FAROOQ RATHER

ANANTNAG/KULGAM, DEC 06: To enhance road safety and ensure effective traffic regulation during low-visibility hours, the Traffic Police teams in both Anantnag and Kulgam sectors have intensified night-time safety measures. According to the department, traffic personnel are now using reflective jackets and hand-held lights regularly during late evening hours.

The Traffic Department stated that the objective of this initiative is to improve the visibility of on-ground staff, especially in high-risk zones, poorly lit roads, and areas that witness heavy traffic during evening hours. The reflective jackets help traffic personnel remain visible from a distance, while hand-held lights assist in signaling vehicles and managing traffic flow more efficiently.

DSP Traffic Mohammad Aslam (JKPS) and other supervising officers reported that the results of these measures have been encouraging. They said that improved compliance with traffic rules, reduced chaos at intersections, and better management of peak-hour traffic have already been observed. Such safety gear is particularly crucial for personnel deployed on busy highways and in challenging conditions.

Traffic teams across various locations in Anantnag are also conducting routine evening enforcement drives to check overspeeding, misuse of pressure horns, and violations related to headlights and vehicle lighting. Officials noted that with increasing traffic volume, night-time enforcement has become more essential for ensuring discipline and safety on the roads. The department has appealed to the public to cooperate with traffic personnel, follow their instructions, and maintain discipline while driving. The Traffic Department reiterated its commitment to ensuring safe and well-organized traffic movement across the district through consistent monitoring, strengthened night deployments, and continuous upgrades in safety measures.

JKWDC Holds Mega Awareness & Loan Mela in Anantnag

■ HT NEWS DESK

ANANTNAG, DEC 06: The J&K Women's Development Corporation (JKWDC) today organised a one-day Mega Awareness Camp-cum-Loan Mela at Govt. Model Girls Higher Secondary School, Rainbagh Lal Chowk Anantnag. The programme was sponsored by the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC), Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India.

The event was honoured by the presence of the Principal, Govt. Higher Secondary School (Girls) Mehbooba Ji, along with various professors from Govt. Degree College for Women, Anantnag, who attended as the chief guests. They were warmly welcomed by Mr. Bashir Ahmed,

District Manager JKWDC Anantnag, along with his team.

The initiative aimed to create awareness among the public, especially women, regarding various self-employment, livelihood, and financial assistance schemes offered by JKWDC and NMDFC to enhance women's economic independence.

A significant number of participants, including local women entrepreneurs and aspiring beneficiaries, attended the camp.

While addressing the gathering, the dignitaries emphasised the importance of women actively availing government-sponsored livelihood schemes for sustainable income generation and empowerment.

The Principal and professors also delivered insightful sessions



covering women's safety, legal rights, health awareness, and

various women empowerment schemes, which were highly appreciated by the attendees.

District Manager Bashir Ahmed briefed participants about different loan products, eligibility requirements, and benefits available under JKWDC and NMDFC schemes. He also expressed gratitude to higher authorities for facilitating such community outreach initiatives, especially in rural and semi-urban pockets.

Reiterating its commitment, JKWDC pledged to continue its dedicated efforts toward women's empowerment, entrepreneurship development, and financial inclusion across Jammu & Kashmir. The programme proceedings were efficiently conducted by Dr. Sajid Ramzan, Senior Lecturer, Humanities.

Kashmir records severe cold; Shopian coldest at minus 6.4°C

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 6: Kashmir continued to reel under intense cold conditions on Saturday as minimum temperatures dipped further across the Valley, with Shopian emerging as the coldest place at minus 6.4 degrees Celsius, according to data.

Pulwama and Pampore recorded the second-lowest minimum temperature at minus 5.2 degrees Celsius, followed by Baramulla at minus 5.1 degrees and Anantnag at minus 4.9 degrees Celsius.

In other areas, the minimum temperature at Srinagar Airport settled at minus 4.8 degrees Celsius, Pahalgam at minus 4.4 degrees, Qazigund at minus 4.2 degrees, and Srinagar city at minus 4.1 degrees Celsius. Budgam also recorded minus 4.1 degrees.



Awantipora registered a low of minus 3.8 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara and Bandipora recorded minus 3.5 degrees and minus 3.4 degrees respectively.

Ganderbal reported minus 3.1 degrees Celsius, followed by Sonamarg at minus 3.0 degrees and Gulmarg at minus 2.6 degrees Celsius.

Kulgam recorded minus 1.2 degrees Celsius, whereas Kokernag remained the warmest in the Valley at minus 0.2 degrees.

Cold wave conditions are likely to continue in the coming days as night temperatures remain well below the freezing point across most parts of Kashmir. (KNS)

Mughal road tunnel project progressing steadily; tendering expected in coming months: MP Mian Altaf Ahmad

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 06: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) Member of Parliament Mian Altaf Ahmad on Saturday said that the long-pending Mughal Road Tunnel Project is finally moving in the right direction and that the authorities are likely to issue tenders for the project in the coming months.

He said the Border Roads Organization (BRO) has been working actively on the project.

"The Mughal Road Tunnel project is on the right track. I expect the tendering process to begin within a few months. The BRO is seriously pursuing this project. Just last month, I met the Chief Engineer of the BRO, and I was satisfied with the progress and the direction of the work," Mian Altaf said as per news agency Kashmir Indepth News Service (KINS).

He also provided an update on the Loran-Tangmarg road project.

"This is an old and important connectivity project. I have been following it closely in Delhi, and I am hopeful that work on this road will finally begin and be completed," the MP said.

Reflecting on the completion of one year of the Omar Abdullah-led government, Mian Altaf said that although the administration has made efforts, several issues need to be resolved.

"There are still many challenges—whether in Jammu, or the Kashmir Valley. We need a stronger system in sectors like health, education, and road connectivity. These areas require consistent focus and real improvement," he added.

Responding to questions about reported differences between Raj Bhavan and the elected government, the MP said the situation was being overstated.

"As per my opinion, the media is exaggerating it. Yes, there may be differences of opinion, but not the kind of conflict that is being portrayed," he said. (KINS)

BJP has given Dr Ambedkar his true honour: Sat Sharma

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 06: Jammu and Kashmir BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma (CA) on Saturday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has given "true honour" to Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar by upholding and promoting his legacy of social justice and equality through concrete initiatives.

Speaking at a programme organised on Mahaparinirvan Divas, Sat Sharma, along with senior BJP leaders including Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Prof. Gharu Ram, Dharminder Kumar, Balbir Ram Rattan and several DDC members, paid floral tributes to Dr. Ambedkar.

"Dr. Ambedkar was a visionary who achieved greatness despite immense hardships. His life is a source of inspiration for every Indian. The BJP has always recognised his unparalleled contribution to the nation and honoured him with sincerity," Sat Sharma said.

He highlighted the BJP-led government's 'Panchteerth' initiative, under which five key sites linked to Dr. Ambedkar's life were developed as national monuments. "This demonstrates our deep respect and commitment to Ambedkar's philosophy," he added.

Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal said Dr. Ambedkar's lifelong struggle for equality continues to guide the BJP's welfare policies.



"Numerous schemes under the Modi government—from education to social justice—are aligned with Ambedkar's dream of an inclusive society," he noted.

Prof. Gharu Ram said Dr.

Ambedkar's influence goes far beyond drafting the Constitution. "He was a pioneering reformer in economics, human rights and social transformation. Under BJP rule, his teachings have reached the grassroots more effectively," he said.

BJP SC Morcha President Dharminder Kumar reaffirmed the Morcha's commitment to fulfilling Ambedkar's mission of empowerment, especially for Scheduled Castes and other marginalised groups.

The event proceedings were conducted by Morcha General Secretaries Rahul Hans, Mohinder Bhagat and Seema Devi, who also thanked participants for paying homage. (KINS)

Commissioner SMC reviews winter preparedness, Unveils advanced Snow & Dewatering response Plan

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 06: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, today chaired a high-level review meeting at the SMC Central Office, Karan Nagar, to evaluate the Corporation's readiness for snow clearance and dewatering operations ahead of the winter season.

The meeting was attended by Joint Commissioners, Executive Engineers, Chief Sanitation Officer, Chief Transport Officer, Stores Officer, and other senior officials.

The Commissioner assessed a comprehensive deployment plan for workforce and machinery across all municipal wards to ensure timely and efficient snow clearance. He directed officers to prioritize key public routes, particularly those connecting hospitals, ration depots, shrines, and government institutions, to ensure uninterrupted accessibility during snowfall.

Highlighting SMC's enhanced capabilities, the Commissioner



stated that the Corporation is equipped with state-of-the-art snow clearance machinery,

advanced dewatering systems, and modern mobility support, enabling SMC to respond swiftly

and effectively to winter-related challenges. To ensure seamless

coordination, the Commissioner instructed the Snow Monitoring Committee and the 24x7 Control Room to maintain full operational readiness. "The 24x7 Control Room must remain proactive and responsive to public concerns, ensuring immediate action on snow clearance and related issues," he emphasized.

On dewatering preparedness, the Commissioner directed that all permanent dewatering stations be maintained in optimal working condition. He also stressed the rapid deployment of high-capacity mobile pumps in vulnerable and low-lying areas to mitigate waterlogging.

Reiterating the Corporation's commitment to public safety and service continuity, the Commissioner affirmed that SMC's modern infrastructure, proactive planning, and dedicated workforce form the core of its winter response strategy.

He noted that the Corporation is fully geared to keep Srinagar accessible, safe, and resilient throughout the winter season.

District-Level IHIP & Outbreak Management Training Programme concludes at Shopian

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 06: A district-level Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) and Outbreak Management Training Programme was today conducted by the District Surveillance Unit Shopian in coordination with the State Surveillance Office (SSO) Kashmir.

The programme aimed at enhancing real-time digital reporting and strengthening disease surveillance mechanisms across the district.

The training programme was inaugurated by CMO Shopian, Dr. Arshad Hussain Tak, who underscored the critical importance of accurate, timely and coordinated reporting for effective public health action. He highlighted that digital surveillance under IHIP has become an indispensable tool for early detection and rapid response to potential outbreaks.

CMO appreciated the efforts of the District Surveillance Unit and urged all participants to apply the training effectively to improve public health



preparedness in Shopian.

State Training Consultant, Dr. Omar Aziz, delivered a detailed and informative session on the IHIP workflow, case-based reporting procedures and the system's vital role in early outbreak identification.

State Data Manager, trained the participants on digital reporting protocols, data quality improvement and optimal utilization of the IHIP portal. He stressed the need for standardized reporting to ensure accuracy at all levels of the health system.

Microbiologist, DPHL, highlighted the role of laboratory services in disease confirmation, quality assurance and timely outbreak investigation, emphasizing coordinated laboratory-field reporting for effective surveillance.

During the training programme officers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening digital surveillance, ensuring timely data flow and enhancing rapid response mechanisms across the district.

ADDC Shopian stresses timely completion of targets under HADP, JKCIP

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 06: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone today Chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of implementation under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP).

During the meeting, the ADDC reviewed the achievement of targets by various departments and took stock of services being provided under these schemes, along with progress of KKGs and Daksh Kisan.



The status of applications, registrations and coverage of eligible families was also thoroughly examined. The ADDC stressed that no eligible or deserving family should remain uncovered and directed all concerned officers to work with greater dedication and coordination to achieve the requisite targets within the set timelines.

He further instructed departments to expedite pending cases and ensure smooth, transparent delivery of services under all components of HADP and JKCIP and emphasized on accountability, saturation of beneficiaries and timely completion of all assigned tasks.

The meeting was among others attended by LDM, CAO, CHO, CAHO, and other concerned line department Officers.

J&K Tourism bags Eco-Tourism hotspot award at IITM, Hyderabad

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

HYDERABAD, DECEMBER 06: The J&K Tourism has bagged the Eco-Tourism hotspot award at the India International Tourism Mart being held here at Hyderabad.

The tourism fest was inaugurated on December 04, 2025 and it is witnessing participation of many states and Union territories besides delegations from Malaysia, Nepal, Botswana and other countries.

The J&K Tourism was awarded for its eco-tourism practices having been adopted for sustainable tourism across J&K by the Department. Besides this also coincides with the continued thrust and series of promotional activities carried by the department across the tourism markets in the country in recent months.

The stall set up by the J&K Tourism department evinced keen interest



among the members of travel trade and customers who showed a great interest in the products on display particularly related to adventure, MICE and Wedding.

The delegation comprised Chief Executive Officer, Kishtwar Development Authority, Kaisar Ahmad Bhawani; Chief Executive Officer, Wullar-Manasbal Development Authority, Ahsanul Haq Chishty; General Manager,

JKTDC, Riyaz Ahmad, Assistant Director, Tourism, Jammu, Arif Ahmad Lone and Assistant Tourist Officer, Sajid Kirmani besides many travel operators from J&K.

Meanwhile on the sidelines of the tourism fest, the delegation had a series of meetings with tour operators' bodies from Hyderabad and other parts of the country besides facilitating proactive B2B sessions between the tourism stakeholders from J&K and their counterparts from other states. These include meetings with Tour Operators Association of Telangana, FTCCI, UFTC, representatives of SKAL International besides heads of prominent travel companies of the country.

The discussions underscored the importance of more synchronised and cohesive approach between the local stakeholders and their counterparts across the country.

DC Kupwara reviews preparations for IPPI-2025 programme

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, DECEMBER 06: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, today chaired a meeting of the District Task Force (DTF) to review and finalize the preparedness for the Intensified Pulse Polio Immunization (IPPI)-2025 programme scheduled to be conducted across the district on 21st December.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner received a comprehensive briefing from the Health Department regarding the strategies, logistics, and targets to be achieved under IPPI-2025.

He emphasized the critical importance of ensuring complete coverage of all eligible children, reiterating that no child should be left unvaccinated during the campaign.

Stressing the need for dedication, coordination, and timely execution, the Deputy Commissioner instructed officers to mobilize adequate manpower, strengthen field-level monitoring, and ensure seamless functioning of all vaccination booths.

He directed the health teams to intensify community outreach and awareness activities so that parents are fully informed about the significance of polio



immunization.

Earlier, the meeting was apprised through a detailed presentation covering the district's plan, booth-wise arrangements, logistics management, transit and migratory population coverage, and communication strategies for the Pulse Polio round scheduled for December 21, 2025.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Medical Officer Kupwara, District Information Officer, Deputy CMO, Block Medical Officers, CDPOs, and other concerned officials from the health and ICDS departments.

Avny Lavasa conducts surprise inspection of MVD Tax Collection Post at Lakhapur Emphasizes cashless transactions, action against overloaded vehicles

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KATHUA, DECEMBER 06: Secretary Transport, Avny Lavasa, today conducted a surprise visit to MVD Tax Collection Post at Lakhapur and had a detailed review of its functioning.

During the inspection, the Secretary interacted with the staff on duty and directed the RTO Kathua to ensure complete discontinuation of manual cash transactions. She instructed that all tax collections must be carried out strictly through the POS machines installed at the post.

Avny Lavasa asked the officers to ensure that vehicles from outside the UT without valid documents are not allowed entry into Jammu and Kashmir through the Lakhapur post.

The Secretary also inspected



the non-functional weighing bridges presently under the control of the State Taxes Department at the entry point. She directed the RTO Kathua to prepare an estimate and DPR for repair and upgradation of at least two weigh bridges. The functional weighing facility, she emphasized, will help in ensuring strict action against the overloaded goods vehicles.

RTO Kathua, Surinder Paul Sharma, apprised the Secretary of the need for real-time data sharing by the National Highways Authority of India regarding overloaded vehicles passing through NHAI weigh bridges at Lakhapur. He urged for issuing necessary so that appropriate enforcement action can be taken to prevent revenue loss to the government.

The Secretary assured that the matter will be taken up with NHAI.

Later, speaking to media persons, the Secretary said that regular checking drives will be intensified across the UT to curb traffic violations. She said that the department is committed towards providing hassle-free services and ensuring safe transport facilities for the commuters.

Avny Lavasa added that strict action, including suspension of driving licences, route permits and registration certificates of habitual traffic violators, will be taken to minimize road accidents and safeguard the human lives. She also stated that infrastructure of MVD Kathua will be upgraded in line with the departmental requirements.



Div Com Kashmir takes review of Handicrafts & Handloom Department

Calls for integration of calender of activities of H&H with Tourism Department

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 06: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg today took a comprehensive review of the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom (H&H) in a meeting here.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner SMC, Director Handicrafts & Handloom, Director Tourism Kashmir, DD Planning, officers of Floriculture and H&H.

At the outset, Director H&H gave overview of the envisioned projects and strategies, to promote H&H sector, including Operationalization of Kashmir Haat on the Pattern of Dilli Haat, Fencing of DHHK Land Near Secretariat and PCR, Craft Gallery under Srinagar Smart City Project at Batmaloo, PM Unity (Ekta)

Mall Proposal at Kashmir Haat, Know Your Artisan Series under Soulful Kashmir Brand, Craft Tourism Villages Scheme and Dovetailing Handicrafts with Tulip and Chrysanthemum Festivals.

The meeting held threadbare discussion regarding the agenda points to promote local craft & artisans through meticulous blending of inter-departmental calendar of activities.

To address the car parking issue near Kashmir Haat, the Div Com instructed Director H&H to adopt a judicious mechanism for optimum utilization of available parking space to facilitate visitors to Exhibition Ground.

He also asked Commissioner SMC to earmark some shops for Hi-end craft entrepreneurs at



Souq Market Batmaloo for the promotion and showcase of GI-tagged products.

The meeting also discussed the envisioned project of developing and Operationalization of Kashmir Haat on the Pattern of Dilli Haat with the objective to convert it into a vibrant cultural and commercial hub.

Director H&H shared success of 'Know Your Artisan Series' under Soulful Kashmir Brand and proposed institutionalizing future events by integrating artisan stalls, live demonstrations, cultural showcases, and market linkages.

He also apprised land transfer issue for the development of Craft Tourism Village of Sonpah near Doodhpathri.

Speaking on the occasion, the Div Com emphasized on

drafting holistic plan for 'Know Your Artisan' events to be held in Schools, colleges and other institutions.

He also stressed on integration of calendar of activities with Tourism Department to organize activities at Tourist Sites, Heritage Places, Yatra Stations and other vibrant locations around Dal Lake besides during the winter games.

He called for training of tour guides to engage and encourage tourists to visit craft clusters in Srinagar and also advised for taking hoteliers and tour operators on board for collaboration in enhancing visits.

Regarding sale of fake Handloom products, the Div Com directed for strict action against erring hoteliers selling counterfeit goods to tourists.

DC Kishtwar reviews progress of works under District CAPEX Budget 2025-26

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KISHTWAR, DECEMBER 06: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of developmental works being executed under the District Capex Budget 2025-26.

At the outset, the DC reviewed in detailed the ongoing works as well as the projects allotted in the current financial year. He emphasized the need to accelerate the pace of execution to ensure timely physical and financial completion of all developmental initiatives.

The DC issued strict directions to all line departments to expedite their activities and avoid any delays.

Stressing the importance of optimal utilization of the limited working season, the DC directed all departments to immediately start all pending allotted works.



The Executive Engineers were directed to submit 100% bills of completed works and 70-80% bills of new works in the treasuries in the current month itself. It was further instructed that the salaries of the concerned DDOs will be withheld in case of non-compliance with these timelines.

He also called upon all Engineering divisions and concerned departments to intensify their efforts to meet public expectations by achieving 100% completion of targets within the stipulated timelines.

The CPO was directed to share a complete list of all works with the SDMs so that they can physically verify the projects and submit weekly progress reports to the office.

He was also instructed to share a Google Sheet with the concerned officers and dealing assistants, incorporating details such as actual expenditure, bills submitted in treasuries and pending or uncleared bills, so that the matter may be taken up with the Finance Department for timely clearance.

The meeting was attended by CPO Akhil Thakur, ACD Manoj Kumar, EO MC, Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal, CEO Sanjay Dogra, Executive Engineers and other concerned.

District Admin Bandipora Observes Armed Forces Flag Day

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 06: District Administration Bandipora on Saturday observed Armed Forces Flag Day to honour serving soldiers, veterans, and the families of martyrs.

The programme was led by Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, and attended by officers from the Zila Sainik Welfare Office, district officers, ex-servicemen and Next of Kin (NOKs).

In her remarks, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that our collective gratitude must reflect the depth and magnitude of the sacrifices made by the Armed Forces. She noted that soldiers remain on the frontlines, often in the harshest terrains and hostile environments, so that citizens may live in peace. She added that while symbolic gestures like the Armed Forces Flag Day hold immense

emotional value, true gratitude must translate into consistent respect, support for veterans, timely resolution of welfare issues, and sustained recognition of martyrs' families. Such gestures, she said, strengthen the moral bond between the administration and the defence community.

She remarked that while both civil services and the Armed Forces serve the nation, the lifelong bond within the forces, especially with ex-servicemen and families of martyrs remains unique and deeply rooted.

The DC further acknowledged that many personnel working in essential public service departments also make significant sacrifices in the line of duty. She said such contributions deserve recognition and appreciation from society.

Speaking on the occasion, the Zila Sainik Welfare Officer highlighted that the Armed Forces



represent one of the oldest and most respected institutions of the nation, entrusted with safeguarding

territorial integrity and maintaining internal stability. He added that contributions received from the

HOME GUARDS, CIVIL DEFENCE CELEBRATE 63RD RAISING DAY IN SRINAGAR

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 06: 63rd Annual Raising Day of Home Guards & Civil Defence was celebrated in the premises of SDRF 1st Battalion Srinagar with a march past by contingents of Home Guards, Civil Defence from Srinagar and Budgam, SDRF, NDRF and Pipe Band.

DIG (Director Home Guards Kashmir), Ramesh Angral, was Chief Guest, who presided over the function and took over the Salute of the March Past.

DIG (Director Civil Defence & SDRF Kashmir), Imtiyaz Hussain Mir, was Guest of Honour on the occasion. The function was also attended by Commandant SDRF 1st Bn Srinagar, Masroor Ahmad Mir, DySPs and other officers Wardens, volunteers and prominent citizens.

The chief guest while addressing



the gathering commended the role of Civil Defence and Home Guard volunteers during various exigencies like Operation Sindoor, Flash Floods, Cloudburst, Floods and other exigencies.

On the occasion, Commendation Certificates with Cash Reward of Rs 10,000 each from Commandant General

HG, CD & SDRF J&K were distributed among the civilians who has shown exemplary bravery and commendable effort in saving human lives after Pahalgam attack on 22nd April 2025 and powerful explosion in Police Station Nowgam Srinagar on 14th November, 2025.

Besides, Commendation Certificates with cash reward of Rs 5,000 each from Commandant General HG, CD & SDRF J&K were distributed among the Civil Defence Wardens and Volunteers who have shown extraordinary performance while conducting Civil Defence Training/ Awareness Camps and Rescue Activities. At the conclusion of the function, DIG (Director Civil Defence & SDRF Kashmir) commended selfless services of volunteers towards the nation and its citizens and emphasised upon them to work for the society with greater enthusiasm, zeal and zest in future also.

SHEW Shopian conducts awareness camp at Hermain

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 06: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Shopian, today organised a comprehensive awareness programme on Women Empowerment Schemes and Initiatives, with a special focus on Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) and Child Marriage Prevention at Anganwadi Centre (AWC) Hermain, Shopian.

The programme aimed to educate women, adolescent girls, parents, and community members about various government schemes designed to uplift and empower women socially, economically, and educationally.



Officials from Mission Shakti provided detailed information on different women-centric schemes, including support for education, health, skill development, financial independence, and safety. Special emphasis was laid on the objectives and benefits of the BBBP campaign, highlighting the importance of valuing the girl child, promoting their education, and ensuring their protection.

A dedicated session on Child Marriage was also conducted, where participants were made aware of the legal provisions under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) 2006, the legal age of marriage, penalties for violations, and the negative impact of early marriage on the health, education, and future of girls.

Kathua Admin finalises arrangements for National Immunization Day

DC calls for 100% Pulse Polio coverage

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KATHUA, DECEMBER 06: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting of the District Task Force to review preparedness for the National Immunization Day (Pulse Polio) scheduled on 21 December 2025. It was informed that the district has a target of 92,238 children (0-5 years), for which 580 vaccination booths will be established across 5 blocks. A total of 2,320 booth team members, 115 supervisors, 16 transit teams, 9 mobile teams and 35 vaccine delivery points have been mobilized



to ensure smooth conduct of the drive. The district has mapped 112 high-risk areas including slums, brick kilns, nomadic clusters, industrial zones and stone crusher sites. Transit vaccination points identified include Lakhampur, Atal Setu Basohli, Mashka Basohli and major railway stations at Kathua, Budhi, Dayalchak and Hiranagar. Workforce deployment includes 594 ICDS workers, 783 Health staff, 12 from Education, 747 ASHAs and 184 local volunteers. It was given out that booth-level vaccination will be held on 21 December at designated centres, while house-to-house coverage will be carried

out on 22 and 23 December across all blocks. The Deputy Commissioner directed all stakeholders to ensure 100 percent vaccination of the target population with special focus on high-risk habitations and transit points. He called for close coordination, timely logistics, and real-time monitoring so that no child is left uncovered during the Pulse Polio campaign. ADDC Kathua Surinder Mohan Sharma, PO ICDS Mohd Syed Khan, CMO Kathua Dr Vijay Raina, Dy CMO, District Immunization Officer, DHO and officers from ICDS, Education, Social Welfare and other stakeholder departments were also present.



Time to Secure the Orchard Economy

For decades, horticulture has been celebrated as the backbone of Kashmir's economy. From apples to walnuts, almonds to cherries, the region's produce is recognized globally for its distinct quality and taste. These fruits travel far beyond the boundaries of the Valley, contributing significantly to the income of Jammu & Kashmir and strengthening India's agricultural export basket.

However, this crucial sector continues to face recurring setbacks. Irregular weather patterns, untimely rainfall, hailstorms, and rising temperature fluctuations have repeatedly devastated fruit orchards. Farmers and orchardists have been left counting their losses year after year, without any substantial mechanism to cushion the financial blow.

The absence of an insurance framework for both agriculture and horticulture in Jammu & Kashmir has only deepened the problem. Despite repeated appeals from farmers and stakeholders, there has been no headway in implementing crop insurance particularly the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), which is already operational in most states and union territories across the country.

It is disappointing that the agencies responsible especially the agriculture and horticulture departments—have failed to translate these demands into policy action. With governance now under an elected administration, there is a clear opportunity and responsibility to act without further delay.

While implementing PMFBY in a union territory may involve procedural challenges, they are not insurmountable. In fact, recent remarks by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan urging the J&K administration to take steps toward implementation should be seen as a constructive opening. It is now up to the UT administration and concerned departments to initiate dialogue with the Union government and fast-track the process.

Introducing crop insurance will not just mitigate individual losses it will stabilize the broader horticulture ecosystem, restore confidence among growers, and encourage investment in modern cultivation practices. For a region where thousands of families depend on orchards for livelihood, insurance is not a luxury it is a necessity.

The longer the delay, the deeper the losses. It is time for the government to prioritize what truly sustains the Valley's economy and identity. Implementing a robust crop insurance scheme must move from paperwork to reality urgently and decisively.

For Kashmir's orchard economy, protection is not merely policy—it is survival.

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A Review of Book "Echoes" by Asrar Bine Yaqoob



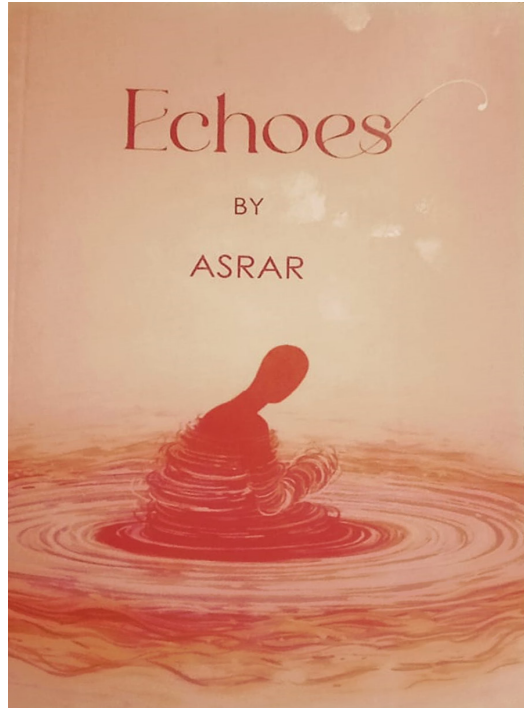
■ SHAH NAWAZ NAZIR

Echoes by Asrar Bine Yaqoob is not merely a poetry collection; it is an emotional, philosophical, and deeply human journey through love, loss, and self-realization. Divided into three significant sections—Illusion, Shattered, and Acceptance—the book traces the natural evolution of human emotions from hopeful beginnings to painful breakdowns and finally to hard-earned inner peace. Through simple language and powerful emotional honesty, Yaqoob invites readers into a world that feels intimate, familiar, and deeply reflective.

Asrar Bine Yaqoob is a Kashmiri poet, writer, educator, and visual artist whose creative work stands at the intersection of literature and visual expression. His themes consistently explore longing, identity, alienation, memory, and resilience, drawing from mythology, philosophy, and personal experience. As the author of Echoes, and a contributor to notable anthologies such as All That Wasn't Said and Autumn Dreams, Yaqoob's poetic voice is shaped by both cultural depth and contemporary emotional awareness. This layered creative background is clearly reflected in the emotional and philosophical range of Echoes.

The first section, Illusion, captures the fragile and radiant phase of falling in love—the moment when emotions are new, delicate, and full of wonder. These poems carry the innocence of early affection and the excitement of emotional discovery. There is a soft glow in this section, a tenderness that shapes every verse. Poems like The Moment I Saw You and If This Is Love express the thrill of a first connection and the quiet realization of self within another's presence. The language is intentionally simple, ensuring that the feeling stays at the center. These poems allow the reader to relive the warmth, uncertainty, and beauty of emotional beginnings. Illusion becomes not just a state of love, but a state of being—where hope is untouched and the heart dreams freely.

The emotional tone dramatically shifts in the



second section, Shattered, which serves as the emotional core of the book. Here, love confronts its breaking point. The poems in this section explore heartbreak, misunderstanding, emotional disillusionment, and inner conflict. Pieces such as Set Me Free and A Smile I Misread reveal the painful complexities of relationships—how words fail, how expectations collapse, and how silence becomes heavier than sound. The poet does not escape suffering; instead, he leans into it with raw honesty. The emotions here are intense yet controlled, painful yet dignified. This section reflects the reality of human vulnerability and the ways in which emotional wounds reshape identity. Shattered stands as a reminder that pain is not weakness—it is a deep, transformative teacher.

The final section, Acceptance, opens the door to healing. After emotional destruction comes reflection, after loss comes growth. This section is quieter, wiser, and gentler in its emotional strength. Poems like I Am Enough and Ocean's Grace bring forward themes of self-worth, forgiveness, emotional surrender, and inner balance. Acceptance here does not mean forgetting pain—it means learning to live with it without letting it define one's entire existence. These poems feel like deep breaths

after a long struggle. They carry spiritual calm and emotional grounding, offering reassurance that brokenness does not last forever. This section provides the reader with a sense of emotional closure and peaceful understanding.

One of the most powerful strengths of Echoes lies in its language and structure. The poet avoids decorative complexity and instead chooses clarity and emotional directness. The poems are short, yet layered with meaning. Each verse feels intentional, each line purposeful. This simplicity allows the reader to connect instantly with the emotions without the burden of interpretation. The emotional journey from Illusion to Shattered to Acceptance feels organic and psychologically honest. It mirrors the real cycles of human experience—how we fall, break, and rise again.

Asrar Bine Yaqoob's identity as both a writer and visual artist is subtly present throughout the collection. There is a strong sense of imagery, emotional framing, and symbolic depth shaped by his interdisciplinary artistic vision. His engagement with philosophy and mythology adds quiet depth without overpowering the emotional core. The recurring themes of identity, alienation, memory, and resilience run like quiet undercurrents beneath the poems, giving the book a layered emotional resonance.

Overall, Echoes is a moving and deeply relatable exploration of the human heart. It is a book about love that begins with innocence, breaks through reality, and finds meaning in self-acceptance. It speaks to those who have loved deeply, lost painfully, questioned themselves quietly, and searched for peace silently. The poems do not shout; they whisper truths that linger in the mind and heart long after reading.

This collection offers comfort without illusion, pain without despair, and healing without false promises. It reminds readers that every emotion—joy, heartbreak, confusion, and peace—has its rightful place in the human journey. Most importantly, Echoes makes the reader feel understood. It assures them that their emotions are not isolated, that their struggles are shared, and that healing is always possible.

Echoes is not just a book of poems—it is an emotional map of the soul. The book is available on Amazon, Flipkart and bookscape.

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A KASHMIRI WOMAN'S JOURNEY THROUGH PUBLIC TRANSPORT



■ RAKSHANDA GUL

In Jammu & Kashmir, every journey a woman takes on public transport has never been a simple act of day-to-day life. It has been a test of courage and awareness and can often be very trying on the patience. Each journey carries its own challenges, small or heavy, but almost invisible to the world around us. Mine is just one story among thousands, yet it reflects shared experiences that many Kashmiri women silently carry with them day in and day out.

With each outing, I did not carry just my bag or plans for reaching a destination. I carried a silent fear, an alertness that always stayed with me until the journey was over. The moment I walked towards the bus, my mind would start preparing for the challenges ahead. Women in Kashmir are strong and resilient, but even strength has its moments of worry especially when travelling alone.

What should have been a straightforward and uneventful bus ride too often became an internal battle: selecting where to sit, whom to sit next to, and how to guard personal comfort and dignity throughout the journey.

Each time I stepped onto the bus, my eyes did a quick sweep over the occupied seats. My only wish was to find a seat next to a woman. Of course, if one seat was open beside any female passenger, I could feel the small wave of relief that washed over me. Sitting beside another female meant safety, comfort, and a sense of shared under-

standing—no explanations needed.

But many times, all the seats next to the women were filled; that is when real fear would start. When no female-seated place was available, I had to sit next to a male passenger. Even if he said nothing, even if he behaved normally, the fear never left. My mind stayed alert the whole ride. What if he says something inappropriate? What if he tries anything? What if he makes me uncomfortable? These questions stayed in my heart until I stepped off the bus.

Sometimes the men were utterly respectful, yet the fear remained. It wasn't about them; it was about that traceable history of women's experiences, the stories heard and unheard, the silent warnings passed down through generations. That fear stayed with me till the end of the journey.

One more issue that always troubled me was the misuse of seats reserved for women. Many buses clearly have seats marked for women, yet men sit there without hesitation. And if a woman or girl happens to enter the bus, they often do not get up or pretend not to notice. And now, the question arises: if those seats are kept for women, why do the men sit there in the first place? Even if they are sitting there due to the rush, why don't they immediately leave their seats when a woman boards the bus? Reserved seats exist for our comfort, dignity, and safety, and respecting them is a basic responsibility, not just some rule.

There were days when the bus was totally filled, and I had to travel standing all the way. Standing in a crowded bus is even more stressful for a woman shoulders brushing, people moving, and no space to breathe. You are just stuck, holding your bag close to you, trying not to lose your balance, hoping no one uses the situation to invade your space. Sometimes I would pray silent-

ly that this ride would soon end, that I would reach safety.

These moments were physically and emotionally exhausting. Every stop felt like a long wait, every movement around me felt like something I had to keep an eye on. This is not a singular experience. Every other Kashmiri woman, schoolgirl, college student, office worker, and homemaker has experienced similar apprehensions. We develop silent habits of quickly checking the seats, holding our bags tightly, opting for certain routes, avoiding crowded timings, or preferring to travel only when necessary.

Despite all this, Kashmiri women travel, study, work, run households, and move ahead every day. This is our strength. The telling of this story brings to light the emotional and psychological burden women carry during something as simple as travelling.

It reminds us that: Safety is not just physical; it is emotional and psychological.

Public transportation needs to be planned with women in consideration.

People around us must be aware and responsible.

Women deserve peaceful, comfortable, and stress-free journeys.

A safe environment allows women to travel as much as they desire and participate in education, work, and social life with confidence; they contribute more to society. Positive changes are reshaping the travel experience for women as Jammu & Kashmir moves forward today.

Government policies, especially the recently launched free bus travel scheme for women, denote a growing recognition of the mobility needs of women. The Zero-Ticket Travel Initiative of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has reduced financial pressure besides encouraging more women to use public transport with dignity and independence.

More women travelling together also means a greater sense of safety. Smart buses, improved routes, better lighting, CCTV monitoring, trained staff, and awareness programs are gradually building a safer environment for female passengers.

And most importantly, these steps honour the struggles of the past while offering the promise of a future in which young Kashmiri girls can board a bus without fear, focusing on the journey rather than safety.

For real change, we have to keep working on:

Awareness campaigns on dignified behaviour, Tech-based safety systems and helplines, Training programs for drivers and conductors, better-designed bus stops and lighting and stronger reporting and response mechanisms

Through the coming together of communities, policymakers, and transport workers, public transport becomes a shared responsibility, not just a system.

Every time I got on a bus, I had fear and courage simultaneously. The fear of the unknown, yet the courage to keep moving forward in spite of it. These experiences have shaped my daily routine and furthered my understanding of what women go through in public spaces. By sharing this story, I honour my journey along with the journey of every Kashmiri woman who travels with strength, resilience, and hope.

The future can be different, and with the right steps, it will be. Someday, I believe, young girls in Kashmir will take the bus without difficulty, free from fear; confidently and with not a single shadow of fear in their eyes. And when that day comes, our stories will stand as reminders of how far we have come.

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Mecca's Kaaba is seen like a bright light in stunning pictures taken from space!



■ BY M S NAZKI

Those most complete in faith are those best in character and kindest to their families. A parent can give a child no greater gift than good manners!.....The man who said was one of the greatest!

He is not one of us who does not show mercy to our young ones and esteem to our elderly!.....He was a prophet!

None of you will have faith until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself. Seek knowledge from cradle to the grave. No two things have been combined better than knowledge and patience!.....!

The greatest of richness is the richness of the soul. Verily, with hardship comes ease!.....We do not have to who said it!

The story I got was 'Orbital views of Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The bright spot in the center is the Kaaba, Islam's holiest site, visible even from space'!

Frankly admitting I did not know how to treat the same but as my habit is 'go in for an effort ... the aim would be achieved'!.....!

And this is how I made an effort!

I latched on to this story:

Young Zayd, a shepherd boy in ancient Mecca, loved the quiet desert but felt a pull toward the bustling Kaaba, a place of idols and trade, yet respected; one day, during a flood-damaged rebuild, tribal leaders argued over placing the sacred Black Stone;

Zayd, known for his honesty, suggested a shared effort, holding cloth corners with leaders to lift the stone, a moment of wisdom that united them, foreshadowing the truth he'd later embody as the trustworthy 'Al-Amin' in a city ripe for guidance.

Zayd's days were spent tending sheep on the arid slopes, finding solace in the vastness, but Mecca pulsed with life—caravans brought goods, merchants debated, and idols filled the Kaaba, a structure central to their world.

He watched the city, noticing the unrest when the Kaaba needed repair after a flood, the leaders fearing offense in deciding who placed the precious Black Stone back.

One scorching afternoon, the leaders gathered, a dispute brewing, when Zayd, quiet but observant, approached. He saw their frustration and offered a simple solution: "Let us all carry it," he proposed, suggesting they hold the corners of a cloth, placing the stone in the middle.

The leaders, struck by his wisdom, agreed. Together, they lifted the cloth, brought the stone to its place, and Zayd set it in. In that moment, the city saw not just a shepherd, but a wise soul, a glimpse of the truth that would one day define Mecca.

The History:

Mecca's history is rooted in its ancient origins as a trade hub and religious center, becoming the birthplace of Islam and the site of the Kaaba in the early 7th century.

The prophet Muhammad received his first revelations there, conquered the city in 630 AD after being exiled, and established it as Islam's holiest city. Following a period of control by various empires, including the Ottomans, Mecca became part of modern-day Saudi Arabia in 1925.

Ancient origins

Trade and pilgrimage: By the 6th century AD, Mecca was a significant commercial and religious center, located at a vital caravan route. The Kaaba, a sanctuary used by competing clans, was at its heart and attracted pilgrims.

Quraysh control: The Quraysh, the city's ruling elite, controlled trade and pilgrimage rights, using them to gain influence and income.

Rise of Islam and Muhammad:

Birthplace of Muhammad: The founder of Islam, Muhammad, was born in Mecca around 570 AD.

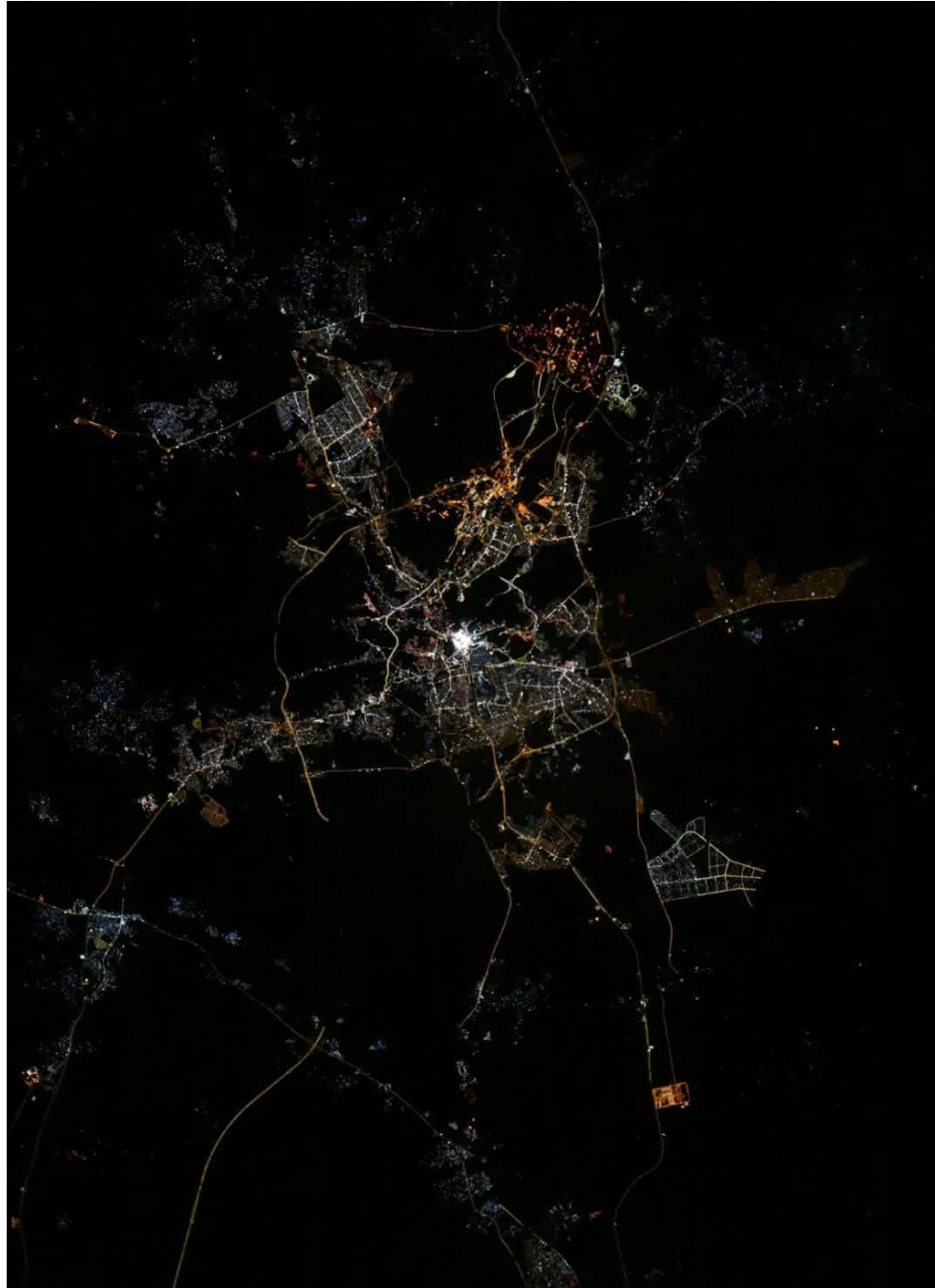
First revelations: According to Islamic tradition, Muhammad began receiving revelations in Mecca around 610 AD.

Exile: Muhammad and his followers faced resistance, leading to their migration to Medina in 622 AD.

Conquest of Mecca: In 630 AD, Muhammad led his followers back to Mecca, and the city surrendered peacefully. He destroyed the idols in the Kaaba and rededicated it to the worship of one God.

After the Prophet: Early Islamic control: Following Muhammad's death, Mecca continued as the spiritual center of the growing Islamic empire.

Ottoman and Saudi periods: After centu-



ries of rule by various caliphates and empires, the Ottoman Empire controlled the region before being challenged by the Arab Revolt. Mecca officially became part of modern-day Saudi Arabia in 1925.

Significance and modern era:

Holiness: Mecca remains the holiest city in Islam, with the Kaaba at its center.

Annual pilgrimage (Hajj): Millions of Muslims make the pilgrimage to Mecca each year, a journey known as the Hajj.

Modern development: The 20th century saw significant changes, including the establishment of municipalities, schools, and a major university, as well as events like the 1979 Grand Mosque seizure and the 1997 Mecca fire.

The Kaaba's history:

The Kaaba's history is ancient, predating Islam, with Muslims believing it was first built by Adam and later rebuilt by Abraham and his son Ismail. It was a site of monotheistic worship for a time before becoming a pagan sanctuary housing idols. Upon conquering Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad cleansed the Kaaba of idols in 630 CE, restoring it as the central focus of Islamic worship. Since then, it has been damaged and rebuilt multiple times due to events like floods and conflict.

Pre-Islamic history:

Muslims believe the Kaaba was originally built by Adam and later rebuilt by Abraham and his son Ismail as a sanctuary for monotheistic worship.

According to tradition, the pre-Islamic Kaaba was a simple, unroofed rectangular structure.

Over time, the Kaaba became a center for pagan worship and was filled with idols, though it retained its sacred status.

The Quraysh tribe rebuilt the structure around 608 CE with alternating courses of masonry and wood to better protect it from intruders and floods.

Islamic history

The Kaaba has been rebuilt several times throughout history due to damage.

In 930 CE, an extremist Shi'i sect known as the Qarmatians carried away the Black Stone, holding it for ransom for almost 20 years before it was returned.

Major renovations and rebuilds occurred during the reigns of various Islamic caliphates, such as the Umayyads, Abbasids, and Mamluks.

A devastating flood in 1631 CE required a complete rebuilding of the Kaaba and the surrounding mosque, which is the structure that largely exists today.

Modern renovations, including major modifications in the 1950s by the Saudi Arabian government, have been carried out to accommodate the large number of pilgrims.

Feed the hungry and visit a sick person, and free the captive, if he is unjustly confined. A good word is charity. What you spend on goods is for parents and relatives and orphans and the needy and the traveler. And whatever you do of good - indeed, All his Knowing of it!

Mecca's Kaaba is seen like a bright light in stunning pictures taken from space!

Using a high-resolution Nikon camera, astronaut Don Pettit, renowned for his artistic space photography during his fourth ISS mission, captured the scene from the station's cupola window.

Nasa astronaut Don Pettit, who recently returned from the International Space Station (ISS), shared the image on X (formerly Twitter) with the caption: "Orbital views of Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The bright spot in the center is the Kaaba, Islam's holiest site, visible even from space".

Pettit, renowned for his artistic space photography during his fourth ISS mission that lasted between September 2024 and April 2025, captured the scene from the station's cupola window using a high-resolution Nikon camera.

The image reveals Mecca's urban sprawl nestled in rugged valleys, with the Grand Mosque (Masjid al-Haram) dominating the frame.

The Kaaba, a cube-shaped structure draped in black kiswah cloth, stands out due to constant floodlighting, reflecting sunlight and artificial illumination toward orbit, creating a beacon amid surrounding hills and pilgrimage tents.

From the ISS's vantage, cities like Mecca appear as glowing patches at night due to light pollution from millions of LEDs and sodium lamps, which scatter in the atmosphere and remain detectable by sensitive ISS cameras.

The Kaaba's prominence stems from the mosque's 24/7 illumination for prayer and Hajj pilgrims, enhanced by the station's 28,000 km/h speed allowing rapid captures during orbital passes over the Arabian Peninsula.

Pettit's expertise in long exposures counters the ISS's motion, sharpening details like roads tunneling through mountains.

Pettit, who has photographed auroras, cities, and cosmic phenomena, continues sharing Earth's wonders to inspire awe. His latest image symbolises humanity's spiritual landmarks enduring under the stars.

We had to close the story also:

While no single famous youth story originates from the Kaaba itself (besides the birth of Ali), Islamic history offers powerful tales of youth around the Kaaba, like young Prophet Muhammad helping place the Black Stone (Hajar al-Aswad) in 605 CE, showcasing

wisdom and uniting clans, or the faithful youth of Ashab-e-Kahf fleeing to a cave to protect their faith from idolatry, symbolizing steadfastness in trials, teaching lessons of trust in God, courage, and the fleeting nature of worldly power.

The Young Muhammad & the Black Stone (605 CE)

The Dilemma: The Kaaba needed rebuilding, but the honored clans couldn't agree on who should place the sacred Black Stone back into its corner.

The Solution: They decided to let the next person who arrived decide. That person was Muhammad, aged 35, known for his honesty.

The Act: He spread a cloth, placed the stone in the center, and had each clan hold a corner, lifting it together. Muhammad then placed the stone himself, resolving the dispute peacefully.

Significance: This early act showed his fairness and wisdom, foreshadowing his leadership, even before his prophethood.

The Youths of the Cave (Ashab-e-Kahf)

The Setting: A time of tyranny where a group of young believers refused to worship idols.

The Refuge: They fled to a cave to escape persecution, seeking Allah's

protection.

The Miracle: Allah put them to sleep for centuries; they awoke to a changed world, their faith intact.

The Lesson: A powerful symbol of holding onto faith amidst overwhelming opposition, showing that true strength comes from God, not worldly power.

A Modern Tale: The Empty Wheelchair:

The Heart: An elderly man, fulfilling a promise, pushes an empty wheelchair around the Kaaba during Hajj, feeling his departed wife with him, proving Hajj is about love, memory, and devotion, not just the physical act.

The Spirit: A reminder that the spirit of faith, memory, and submission (Islam) transcends the physical, a lesson for all ages, including the youth.

The final lines: Conduct yourself in this world as if you are here to stay forever, and yet prepare for eternity as if you are to die tomorrow. The strong is not the one who is physically powerful, but indeed, the one who controls himself when angry. It is better to sit alone than in company with the bad, and it is better still to sit with the good than alone. It is better to speak to a seeker of knowledge than to remain silent, but silence is better than idle words!.....We do not have to say as who said it!

For Creatures Made of Storm and Sadness



■ ROMAISHA JAN

*I know you from the shrill cry of your birth,
I know how beautifully you were melted in the kiln,
I know what it takes to be a butterfly.*

*I know your delicateness, I know your smoothness,
I know how you give yourself to the world
with all your capacities.*

*I know what storms your head, and
what chills your heart,
I know what thins your skin and what greys your hair,
I know what steals your beauty and
what robs your smile.*

*I know what draws sadness on your soul and what
makes your limbs shiver,
I know the depth of the cracks your hands
and hearts hold,
I know the depths of your wrinkles and the
darkness of your freckles.*

*I know what strength it takes to be a
payless, jobless being,
And I know what it takes to be the
busiest creature living.*

*I know how many mountains you have
stacked on your heart and brain,
In order to suppress your emotions, sufferings,
Pains, sorrows, guilt, and dreadful stories.*

*I know what it takes to be the creature made
of storm and sadness
I know what it takes to be a woman*

The author is a Sidiq Colony, Sopore

www.Ms-Software.co.uk

Requirement of Our Body



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

The Almighty has structured our body uniquely, and every part, whether internal or external, performs great and important functions. Therefore, our body needs plenty of liquids, minerals, and a balanced diet.

The human body requires several types of food items for proper development, growth, and functioning. These include vegetables, cereals, meat, fish, fruits, dry fruits, and beverages (tea, coffee, etc.).

The requirement for food depends on the age, size, and weight of a person.

There are very few individuals who take an adequate amount of all essential nutrients. We often lack basic components of food like vitamins, fats, proteins, water, and fibre-rich food items (especially green leafy vegetables that help proper digestion and the removal of waste from our body).

All the basic components of food are required daily in limited quantities for growth and proper development. These nutrients are essential to keep our body fit and healthy and protect us from various diseases. Every food component plays a vital role in our body's development.

Food Components and Their Functions

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the main source of energy. Food items rich in carbohy-

drates are called energy-giving foods. They are a major part of our diet and are cheap and easily available.

Carbohydrates are found in three forms:

Sugar: the simplest form.

Sources: glucose, sugarcane, jaggery, fruits.

Starch: a complex form.

Sources: rice, wheat, maize, potatoes.

Cellulose: a complex carbohydrate. It is obtained from roughage or fibrous foods. Humans cannot digest cellulose.

Sources: onion, maize, spinach, etc.

Fats

Fats are an important source of energy and provide double the energy of carbohydrates.

Sources:

1. **Animal sources:** milk, ghee, butter, cheese, meat, fish, eggs

2. **Plant sources:** vegetable oils (coconut oil, groundnut oil), nuts

Proteins

Proteins are essential nutrients required for growth and repair of body tissues, so protein-rich foods are called body-building foods. They are made of amino acids.

Functions:

1. **Help in growth and development**

2. **Repair damaged body parts**

3. **Form enzymes that help digestion**

Children especially need more protein.

Sources:

1. **Animal sources:** milk, fish, meat, eggs

2. **Plant sources:** pulses (peas,

soybean), cereals (contain small amounts)

Vitamins

Vitamins are very important for the proper functioning of the body, even though they are required in small quantities. Deficiency can cause several diseases, so vitamins are also called protective foods.

Types and Functions:

■ **Vitamin A** Keeps eyes, hair, and skin healthy.

Sources: carrots, yellow and green vegetables, butter, milk.

■ **Vitamin B** -Keeps skin and mouth healthy; needed for

growth.

Sources: whole grains, cereals, legumes, eggs, green leafy vegetables.

■ **Vitamin C** Helps growth, healthy teeth and gums, and increases immunity.

Sources: citrus fruits, tomatoes, lemon, cabbage, amla.

■ **Vitamin D** Helps bones grow properly.

It is made in the body when skin is exposed to sunlight.

Sources: fish, liver oil, eggs, milk, butter.

■ **Vitamin K** Helps in blood clotting.

Sources: liver, spinach, cauliflower, tomatoes.

■ **Vitamin E** -Needed for glowing skin.

Sources: tomato, germinated seeds.

Vitamins are classified into two groups:

■ **Water-soluble:** Vitamin B-complex, B1, B2, B9, C

■ **Fat-soluble:** Vitamins A, D, E, K

Minerals

Like vitamins, minerals are also very important for the proper functioning of the body. Our body requires small quantities of different minerals, each having a specific function. They also help in water retention.

Common minerals: iron, calcium, iodine, sodium, potassium, fluorine, magnesium, etc.

Water

Water is a very important component of our body. About 70% of body weight is water.

Functions:

■ **Transports nutrients to different body parts**

■ **Maintains body temperature**

■ **Helps in excretion of waste**

■ **Helps in absorption of food**

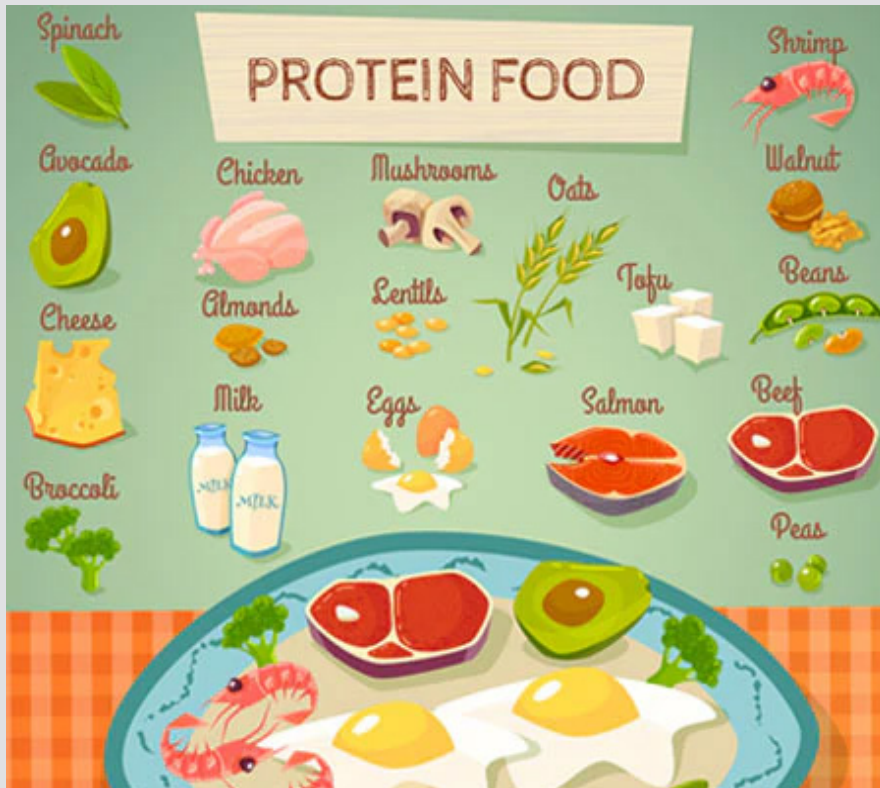
■ **Roughage**

Fibres are carbohydrates present in some fruits and vegetables. They cannot be digested but help remove unwanted waste from the body. This is known as roughage.

Sources: drumstick, beans, pumpkin stems, gourd, spinach, etc.

It prevents constipation and ensures proper bowel movement.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com



THE DE NOVO LIPOGENESIS

How Carbohydrates Become Fat and Its Implications for Human Health



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

De Novo Lipogenesis (DNL) is a fundamental metabolic pathway through which the human body converts excess carbohydrates into fatty acids. While this process is essential for energy storage, modern lifestyles—marked by excessive intake of refined sugars, processed foods and reduced physical activity—have overstimulated this pathway. As a result, individuals are increasingly predisposed to obesity, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

UNDERSTANDING DE NOVO LIPOGENESIS (DNL)

The term De Novo Lipogenesis literally means “creation of new fat.”

This process primarily occurs in the liver and, to a lesser extent, in adipose tissue. When glycogen stores are full and immediate energy needs are met, the surplus glucose is converted into fatty acids for long-term storage.

Although DNL is naturally low in humans, diets rich in refined carbohydrates—particularly fructose and glucose—can significantly increase this pathway's activity.

HOW CARBOHYDRATES TURN INTO EXCESS FAT

Carbohydrates themselves do not directly cause fat gain. The issue arises when excess intake and metabolic dysregulation push the DNL pathway into overdrive. Several biological mechanisms explain this:

1. **Glycogen Saturation Triggers Fat Synthesis**

The body has limited glycogen storage:

➤ 400–500 g in skeletal muscle

➤ ~100 g in the liver

Once these stores are full, any additional glucose is diverted into fat production via DNL.

2. **High-Glycemic Foods Cause Insulin Spikes**

Refined carbohydrates—white rice, bread, sweets, sugary drinks—rapidly elevate blood sugar. In response, the pancreas releases large amounts of insulin, a hormone that:

➤ **Stimulates fatty acid synthesis**

➤ **Promotes triglyceride storage**

➤ **Inhibits fat breakdown (lipolysis)**

Repeated insulin surges shift metabolism toward long-term fat deposition.

3. **Fructose Accelerates DNL Disproportionately**

Fructose, found in soft drinks, juices and high-fructose corn syrup, bypasses several regulatory steps and enters the liver directly. It fuels DNL far more efficiently than glucose, causing rapid accumulation of liver fat and visceral fat.

WHY THE PANCREAS PRODUCES EXCESS INSULIN (NOT GLUCOSE)

The pancreas does not produce glucose—the liver does, via:

➤ **Gluconeogenesis**

➤ **Glycogenolysis**

The pancreas produces insulin and glucagon. However, certain states create the illusion of ‘excess glucose,’ prompting

higher insulin output.

1. **High Carbohydrate Load**

Carb-heavy meals raise blood glucose sharply, forcing the pancreas to release more insulin.

2. **Insulin Resistance**

Due to chronic overeating, inactivity or obesity, cells become less responsive to insulin. The pancreas compensates by producing even more insulin—a condition known as hyperinsulinemia. This leads to:

➤ **Persistent high blood glucose**

➤ **Further activation of DNL**

➤ **Increased liver and abdominal fat accumulation**

3. **Fructose-Induced Liver Stress**

Fructose metabolism increases liver fat, triggering hepatic insulin resistance.

The liver starts producing excess glucose even during fasting, forcing the pancreas to secrete more insulin—creating a vicious metabolic cycle.

WHY THIS METABOLIC STATE IS DANGEROUS

Chronic activation of DNL combined with insulin resistance alters the body's metabolic architecture and leads to serious health consequences:

1. **Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)**

Excess DNL is a major contributor to fat buildup in the liver—often more than dietary fat itself. NAFLD can progress to:

➤ **Fibrosis**

➤ **Cirrhosis**

➤ **Hepatocellular carcinoma**

2. **Obesity & Visceral Fat Accumulation**

DNL primarily increases visceral fat, the harmful fat surrounding internal organs. This raises the risk of:

➤ **Type 2 Diabetes**

➤ **Hypertension**

➤ **Coronary artery disease**

➤ **Stroke**

3. **Hyperinsulinemia & Type 2 Diabetes**

Long-term insulin overproduction exhausts the pancreatic beta cells. When they fail:

➤ **Blood glucose rises chronically**

➤ **Type 2 diabetes develops**

➤ **Complications like neuropathy, retinopathy and kidney disease follow**

4. **Metabolic Syndrome**

This cluster of abnormalities includes:

➤ **Central obesity**

➤ **High blood pressure**

➤ **Elevated triglycerides**

➤ **Low HDL**

➤ **High fasting glucose**

5. **Cardiovascular Disease**

Fatty acids and triglycerides generated through DNL increase:

➤ **LDL cholesterol**

➤ **Systemic inflammation**

➤ **Atherosclerosis**

PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVE: WHY AWARENESS IS ESSENTIAL

Modern diets include unprecedented quantities of:

➤ **Sugary beverages**

➤ **Refined grains**

➤ **Processed foods**

➤ **High-fructose sweeteners**

Combined with low physical activity, these factors hyperactivate DNL and drive global metabolic disease.

Key preventive measures include:

➤ **Balanced carbohydrate intake**

➤ **Whole grains instead of refined carbs**

➤ **High dietary fiber**

➤ **Regular exercise**

➤ **Avoiding sugary drinks**

CONCLUSION

De Novo Lipogenesis is a natural and necessary metabolic pathway—but becomes harmful when overstimulated. Excess refined carbohydrates, especially fructose, push the liver to convert surplus glucose into fat while forcing the pancreas to produce more insulin. Over time, this creates a metabolic environment favoring:

➤ **Obesity**

➤ **Fatty liver disease**

➤ **Insulin resistance**

➤ **Type 2 diabetes**

Adopting balanced nutrition, reducing refined sugars and maintaining an active lifestyle are essential to safeguarding long-term health in today's metabolically challenged world.

The author is a Faculty, Science Department Sri Amritsar Sahib, Punjab

CS Reviews Development, Schemes in Samba

HT NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA, DEC 06: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today visited Samba and took comprehensive review of developmental scenario and implementation of key government schemes across the district in a meeting held at District Administrative Complex here.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar; Deputy Commissioner Samba, Ayushi Sudan; Chief Conservator of Forests Jammu; Chief Engineers of CPWD, Jal Shakti (PHE), Flood Control, and PWD; Directors of Agriculture, Command Area, Geology and Mining departments, Director Colleges, all district-level and sectoral officers of Samba district attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary undertook a detailed appraisal of targets and achievements across multiple sectors and flagship programmes. The review encompassed critical schemes like Jal Jeevan Mission, PMGSY, AMRUT 2.0, NABARD works, school education initiatives, solarisation of government buildings, Swachh Bharat Mission, National Tuberculosis Elimination

Programme, Nasha Mukta Abhiyan, Mission Youth, HADP targets, IWMP, agriculture and horticulture schemes, Poshan Abhiyan, and various health sector indicators. Progress under major infrastructure projects, particularly the Amritsar-Katra Expressway was also assessed during the meeting.

The Chief Secretary directed all departments to strengthen inter-departmental coordination, expedite ongoing works, and submit monthly progress reports on priority schemes to ensure their timely completion and effective implementation.

He emphasized on the need for expanding coverage under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, encouraging higher enrolment in government schools, and accelerating flood-control measures across the district. He also directed officials to ensure completion of pending works under PWD, irrigation, and road infrastructure departments.

Progress under Mission YUVA and vibrant village initiatives was thoroughly reviewed during the meeting and special emphasis was laid on timely delivery of public services and transparent



implementation of welfare schemes.

The Chief Secretary further called for breaking the nexus between illegal mining, arms trafficking, and drug smuggling. He underscored the need for strict enforcement, proactive intelligence-sharing, and coordinated field action, directing the district administration to intensify vigilance and ensure that illegal operations are curbed through systematic and sustained crackdowns. He stressed that strict action must be taken against all

and directed the district administration to significantly ramp up disbursement numbers under Kisan Credit Cards, Mission Youth initiatives, livelihood schemes, and other citizen-centric programmes. He stressed on saturation and coverage of eligible beneficiaries, removing procedural delays that hinder effective outreach.

Regarding health sector, the Chief Secretary instructed officers to strengthen institutional deliveries, upgrade maternal and child health monitoring systems and address gaps in rural health infrastructure. He called for better coordination between the Health department, ICDS, and field-level officers to ensure timely service delivery and improved health outcomes across the district.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the Chief Secretary handed over sanction letters under Mission YUVA to selected beneficiaries, encouraging youth engagement, self-employment opportunities, and capacity-building initiatives. The gesture reflected government's commitment to empowering the youth and fostering entrepreneurship in the district.

BJP holds first meeting of newly constituted Morcha teams in Jammu

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 06: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday held a key meeting of its newly constituted Morcha teams at the party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, aimed at strengthening organisational coordination and preparing for upcoming programmes.

The meeting was chaired by BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma, General Secretary (Organisation) Ashok Koul, and Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma. General Secretaries Baldev Singh Billawaria, Sanjita Dogra, Gopal Mahajan and Anwar Khan were also present.

The leaders administered the oath of Atmanirbhar Bharat, reaffirming the party's commitment to Swadeshi and self-reliance.

Addressing the Morcha leadership, Sat Sharma said the reconstitution of teams reflects the party's resolve to deepen outreach.

"Each Morcha has a vital role in connecting with diverse communities and ensuring that welfare schemes reach the grassroots. The new teams must work with discipline, innovation and renewed energy," he said.

He urged the leaders to expand public engagement and strengthen coordination between the organisation and the people.

General Secretary (Organisation) Ashok Koul outlined the upcoming programmes, directing Morcha teams to contribute actively to Good Governance Day, Mann Ki Baat activities, and the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign. He instructed them to form district-level teams quickly and ensure efforts extend down to every booth.

"Booth-level strength is the backbone of the party. Continuous coordination and timely execution will be crucial in the coming months," Koul said.

Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma emphasized the need for tighter coordination between Morchas, district units and booth cadres. He said the newly nominated teams must focus on grassroots mobilisation, countering misinformation and spreading awareness about government initiatives.

The proceedings were conducted by General Secretary Gopal Mahajan.

Prominent attendees included Morcha Presidents Neha Mahajan, Brahmjot Satti, Dharminder Kumar, Rakesh Pant, Arun Prabhat Singh and Ranjodh Singh Nalwa, along with their teams.

The meeting concluded with a collective resolve to enhance the party's organisational strength and ensure effective implementation of upcoming programmes. (KINS)

Javid Ahmad Dar inaugurates key Eco-Tourism, development projects in Baramulla

HT NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA, DEC 6: In a major push towards strengthening eco-tourism and boosting employment opportunities in Jammu & Kashmir, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives, and Elections, Javid Ahmad Dar, today inaugurated several key development projects in Baramulla district.

The Minister inaugurated newly constructed Block Officer Forest Huts at Kiter Daji and Ladua. He also laid foundation stones for upcoming Forest Eco-Parks at Harwan and an Inspection Forest Hut at Zaloor, Baramulla.

Addressing the gathering, Javid Dar

underscored the strategic importance of these forest facilities, noting that the Forest Department has been developing Rest Houses and Inspection Huts in remote forest interiors not only for management and monitoring but also due to their unmatched scenic beauty.

"These forest locations, overlooking majestic mountain ranges and tranquil streams, are among the most pristine places in the region," asserted the Minister. "To involve people in conservation efforts, the government has decided to open these Forest Rest Houses and Inspection Huts for the nature lovers, wildlife enthusiasts and individuals committed

to preserve our natural heritage."

The Minister reaffirmed the government's dedication towards promoting such sites under Eco and Broader Tourism development initiatives, emphasizing their potential to generate livelihood opportunities for the local communities.

Assuring residents of the area, he stated that all the pending public demands will be addressed on priority basis.

The event witnessed the presence of Chief Conservator of Forests, Kashmir, Irfan Rasool Wani; Conservator of Forests, North Circle, Irfan Ali Shah; Divisional Forest Officer Owais Farooq Mir, senior district administration officials and local residents.

Balwant Thakur Meets Chairman, Sangeet Natak Akademi; Seeks J&K-Specific Support

HT NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI, DEC 6: Eminent theatre director and former Cultural Diplomat of India to South Africa and Mauritius, Balwant Thakur, today met Mrs. Sandhya Purecha, Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi (National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama), at Rabindra Bhawan, New Delhi. In a detailed interaction, Thakur urged the Akademi to initiate a dedicated, region-specific intervention for the preservation, documentation and promotion of the performing arts heritage of Jammu & Kashmir, a region known for its extraordinary diversity yet facing an alarming decline in its traditional art forms.

Thakur expressed deep concern over the rapidly fading indigenous performance traditions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. He highlighted that several folk, classical and ritualistic art forms once vibrant carriers of community identity are today struggling for survival due to lack of systematic support, generational discontinuity and socio-economic pressures. Many practices, he stressed, are already on the verge of extinction, and a few have disappeared entirely.

Calling this a "critical moment for cultural rescue," Thakur appealed to the Sangeet Natak Akademi to play a proactive role in reversing this decline. He recommended targeted programmes such as field research, artist fellowships, major revival projects, training programmes and workshops for young practitioners, scholarships for apprentices, and inclusion of J&K's unique forms in national festivals and cultural exchanges. "The cultural heritage of Jammu & Kashmir is one of the richest in the country, and it deserves urgent national attention before irreplaceable traditions are lost forever," he noted.

Balwant Thakur's request carries special weight given his four decades long contribution to the performing arts of Jammu and Kashmir and India



as a whole. Widely regarded as one of the most impactful cultural figures of India from the region, Thakur has dedicated his career to preserving and promoting J&K's folk and theatrical traditions. Through his landmark productions such as Ghumayee, Bawa Jitto, Mata Ki Kahani and numerous multilingual folk presentations, he brought the region's cultural identity to national and international platforms. His work has not only revived interest in traditional forms but also provided livelihood opportunities to countless folk artists from remote regions.

Beyond Jammu & Kashmir, Thakur's contributions as a cultural diplomat expanded India's artistic footprint across continents. His initiatives in South Africa and Mauritius

strengthened cultural cooperation, showcased India's performing arts globally, and built enduring cultural institutions abroad. He continues to be a strong voice advocating for the dignity, visibility and sustainability of traditional artists.

Mrs. Sandhya Purecha appreciated Thakur's concerns and acknowledged the importance of safeguarding J&K's cultural heritage. She assured that the Akademi remains committed to supporting diverse artistic traditions and will explore structured collaborations to uplift the performing communities of the region.

The meeting concluded with optimism that renewed national attention and institutional support will help rejuvenate the artistic landscape of Jammu & Kashmir.

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, R&B DIVISION URI Extension Notice

Subject: Repair and Renovation of Residential Quarters at Uri.
Ref: e-NIT No. 80 of 2025-26 issued under endrst No. 2025-26/6793-6801 dated: 25-11-2025.
In view of poor response, the bid submission for above mentioned NIT is hereby extended upto 09-12-2025 upto 12:00 Noon and opening of Bid online shall be 09- 12-2025 at 01:00 PM. All other terms and conditions will remain the same.
No: 2025/7133-38 | Dated: 06-12-2025
Sd/- Executive Engineer, R&B Division, Uri

Government of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Office of the Zonal Education Officer Narbal, Budgam NOTICE INVITING BIDS / AUCTION NOTICE

No: ZEO/N/25/ | Dated: 06/12/2025

In pursuance of Chief Education Officer Budgam's communication No. CEOB/Plg/Auction/2025/23932 dated 24-10-2025, sealed bids are hereby invited from interested persons/firms for the auction of salvage material of the unsafe structure of GMS Razwan, declared unsafe by the R&B Department SE/BUD/3819-21 dated 24-09-2025.

4. Particulars of Property
a. Name of Property: Salvage material of the unsafe building of GMS Razwan
b. Location: Razwan, District Budgam.
c. Assessed Salvage Value: ₹5,77,412/- (Rupees Five Lakh Seventy-Seven Thousand Four Hundred and Twelve only)

5. Terms & Conditions
a. The structure will be auctioned on an "as-is-where-is" basis.
b. Interested bidders may inspect the site on any working day during office hours up to 03/01/2026.
c. Security Deposit: ₹10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand only) in the form of CDR pledged to Zonal Education Officer Narbal or can be deposited in cash on the spot, in order to participate in the refundable to unsuccessful bidders.
d. The highest bid shall be subject to approval by the Chief Education Officer, Budgam.
e. The successful bidder shall deposit the full bid amount within 7 days from the date of approval.
f. The successful bidder shall remove the entire salvage material from the site within 20 days at his/her own risk and cost, after full payment.
g. The auction committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.
h. Any damages caused during dismantling or removal shall be borne by the successful bidder.
i. All disputes, if any, shall be subject to the jurisdiction of District Budgam.

6. Date, Time & Place of Auction
a. Date: 05/01/2026 Time: 12:00 Noon
b. Venue: Office of the Zonal Education Officer, Narbal
All interested parties are invited to participate in the auction under the terms and conditions mentioned above.
Sd/- Zonal Education Officer Narbal
DIPK: 8795/25 | Dated: 06-12-2025

Sakeena Itoo visits GHSS Hawal Pulwama

Delivers Keynote Address at Annual Day celebrations

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

PULWAMA, DECEMBER 06: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Hawal, Pulwama and attended the Annual Day celebrations of the school.

MLA Rajpoora, Ghulam Mohidin Mir; Principal GHSS Hawal Pulwama, senior officers of district administration, faculty of institution, large number of students and their parents were present on the occasion.

Delivering keynote address at the Annual Day celebrations, Minister Sakeena lauded the efforts of the school in promoting academic excellence and nurturing holistic development among students. She emphasized the government's commitment to strengthening the education sector and ensuring that institutions, especially in rural and semi-urban areas, receive adequate infrastructure and academic support. "Omar Abdullah led government is modernising education and establishing best facilities in government schools to enhance enrolment in Government schools", the Minister stated.

She further added that education is not only about



textbooks, it is about empowering young minds to think, innovate, and lead. "Our youth are our greatest

strength, and it is our responsibility to provide them with opportunities and make them confident, capable

and compassionate citizens", Minister Sakeena said.

On the occasion, the Minister also interacted with students and staff, acknowledging the hard work of teachers and encouraging students to pursue their aspirations with dedication. She praised the school's achievements in academics, sports, and extracurricular activities, and assured support for further development of facilities at the institution.

MLA Rajpoora, Ghulam Mohidin Mir also spoke on the occasion and said that demands raised by students and school management will be addressed soon by the Government.

Speaking on the occasion, the Principal of the school presented the Annual Report, highlighting key accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, and future goals aimed at enhancing the learning environment in the institution.

Earlier, the Minister visited various stalls established by students showcasing innovative projects. She appreciated the students for thinking out of box and coming up with such projects which can bring positive changes in society in coming times.

The Minister assured the students that the Government will provide them all possible assistance and support for realising their dreams and aspirations.

2-day Divisional Level National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) Training concludes at Jammu

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 06: The State Surveillance Unit, IDSP Jammu Division on Saturday successfully concluded two-day Divisional Level National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) Training for districts of Jammu division held in the Conference Hall Gandhi Nagar Hospital.

The programme was organized under the guidance and support of Mission Director National Health Mission J&K Baseerul Haq Chaudhary and overall supervision of Director Health Services Jammu Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar.

The programme was conducted under the One Health Approach to strengthen inter-sectoral coordination across Human health, Animal health and Municipal administration.

Addressing the participating medicos, State Epidemiologist / State Surveillance Officer IDSP Jammu Division Dr. Harjeet Rai emphasized the importance of robust rabies surveillance, timely case management and coordinated multisectoral response. He highlighted India's commitment to achieving the "Zero by 2030" National goal for rabies elimination, urging districts to ensure synchronized efforts with animal husbandry and municipal agencies.

Dr. Narinder Bhutyal, Medical Superintendent, Gandhi Nagar Hospital Jammu graced the event and expressed appreciation for the efforts of the surveillance team and participating districts. He reaffirmed the hospital's support for ongoing training, awareness initiatives, and rabies control activities.

The event was attended by Dr. Simmi Thakur, Assistant Director, Health and Education Bureau (HEB), Directorate of Health Services Jammu who acknowledged the importance of capacity-building and intersectoral collaboration for rabies control.

Technical sessions were delivered by expert faculty including Dr. Rashmi Sharma, Associate Professor, Community Medicine, GMC Jammu; Dr. Gourav Chowdhary, Animal Welfare Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation; Dr. Sandeep Pandita, Technical Assistant to Joint Director, MS Institute of Animal Health & Biological Products, R.S. Pura and Dr. Prem Lata, Medical Officer, Epidemiologist Office, Directorate of Health Services Jammu.

Key topics included human Rabies



surveillance, bite management protocols as per NRCP Guidelines, ABC/ARV strategies, dog population control and integrated One Health approach to prevention and control.

As part of the practical component, Vishal Patil, Supervisor Pharmacist conducted a hands-on training session on correct administration techniques for Anti-Rabies Vaccine (ARV) and Anti-Rabies Serum (ARS), covering dosing, intradermal route and special case considerations.

The training was attended by District Nodal Officers (DNOs), Medical Officers, Pharmacists and Vaccinators representing all districts of the Jammu division. The programme aimed to strengthen district-level capacities for effective NRCP implementation and to accelerate Jammu & Kashmir's progress toward the national target of rabies elimination by 2030.

The two-day programme concluded with an interactive session and a reaffirmation of the collective commitment to achieving a Rabies-free Jammu & Kashmir by 2030 through enhanced coordination between human, animal and environmental health sectors.

DC Ramban chairs BOCA meeting of Patnitop Development Authority

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, DECEMBER 06: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan today chaired a meeting of the Building Operations Controlling Authority (BOCA) of the Patnitop Development Authority (PDA) to review and decide key matters pertaining to planning, building permissions and construction activities within the PDA jurisdiction.

The meeting was attended by CEO PDA Virender Kumar Manyal; ACR Shokat Hayat Mattoo; XEN PWD, DFO and officers from concerned departments, who provided technical, legal, and environmental inputs. Town Planner Manoj Kumar joined the meeting through virtual mode.

At the outset, the CEO PDA presented the agenda before the committee, following which detailed discussions were held on various cases. The meeting examined applications related to construction of residential and commercial buildings, repair and renovation of existing structures, permissions sought by hereditary local residents and development of land, including both fresh and pending cases.

All matters were assessed on merit with strict focus on adherence to the Patnitop Master Plan and applicable building bylaws.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for transparency, timely disposal of applications and strict action against unauthorized constructions.

He directed all departments to strengthen interdepartmental coordination to ensure smooth, lawful and efficient processing of building permission cases. He further stressed the importance of executing development works strictly in accordance with the Master Plan to preserve the ecological and tourism value of the Patnitop area.

AHD Jammu staff thanks Agriculture Minister, ACS, Director for clearing long pending promotions

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 06: The para-vet staff of Animal Husbandry Department Jammu has expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Minister for Agriculture Production Department Javid Ahmad Dar, Additional Chief Secretary Agriculture Production Department Shailendra Kumar and Director Animal Husbandry Department Jammu, Dr. Sanjay Gupta for approving the long-pending departmental promotions across various cadres. The para-vet fraternity stated that this long-awaited decision has benefitted 128 employees, bringing well-deserved

recognition to the field level workers who are tirelessly serving livestock farmers across Jammu division. They further appreciated the proactive and employee-friendly approach of the department's leadership for delivering justice to the deserving employees. "This proactive move has significantly boosted the morale of the staff and strengthened confidence among the grassroots level workforce of the department," they stated. The para-vet staff members reaffirmed their pledge to continue serving the department with renewed enthusiasm, dedication and professional commitment.

DC reviews progress of financial inclusion & social security schemes, solarization of govt buildings, SASCI scheme and District Capex Budget 2025-26

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, DECEMBER 06: To review the progress achieved under the financial inclusion and social security schemes, solarization of government buildings, SASCI scheme and the District Capex Budget 2025-26, the Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai today chaired a meeting of officers of line departments in the Conference Hall DC Office.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Jugal Kishore; GM DIC Kishore Singh Katoch; Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Umesh Shan; Assistant Commissioner Development Om

Parkash; ACP Dr. Ashwani Hansa besides other district officers and bankers.

The DC called for 100% enrollment of eligible individuals under financial inclusion and social security schemes. She stressed on absolute saturation of schemes by strengthening the field mechanism and intensive awareness activities. The DC also appreciated the officers for scaling up progress in recent months.

While reviewing the progress of solarization of government buildings, the DC sought a status report on the same.

The DC also reviewed the physical and financial progress under the District Capex Budget 2025-26 and directed departments to enhance the pace of ongoing



works and complete all projects within the stipulated timelines.

An extensive assessment was carried out on sector-wise

performance under each component of the District Capex Budget. She took feedback on status of works taken up under

DDC, BDC, PRI Grants and Untied Grants, covering PHE, PWD, RDD, Health, Education and Power sectors.

Emphasizing timely execution and judicious utilization of funds, the DC instructed the departments to expedite allotment of works at the earliest and accelerate utilization of released funds. She further directed the concerned officers to prioritize completion of pending projects in mission mode and initiate billing of completed works without delay.

The DC stressed strict adherence to timelines and emphasized conducting regular field inspections to ensure quality, transparency and accountability in all developmental activities across the district.

H&H Directorate hosts 1-day Workshop on Natural Dyeing of Wool, allied products

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 06: The Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom (H&H) Jammu on Saturday organised a highly engaging and knowledge-enriching One Day Natural Dyeing Workshop under the Integrated Wool Development Programme of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. The event was held under the overall guidance of Commissioner Industries & Commerce Department, Vikramjit Singh and under the leadership of Director Handicrafts & Handloom Jammu, Mohammad Nazir Sheikh. At the onset of the programme, Assistant Director Rupali Mahajan formally welcomed the participants and introduced the theme of the workshop, highlighting the growing global relevance of natural, eco-friendly textile processes. She emphasised how sustainable dyeing methods not only support environmental

conservation but also significantly enhance the quality, value and marketability of wool-based handloom products produced across Jammu & Kashmir.

The workshop highlighted the cultural and economic significance of the handloom sector in Jammu & Kashmir, where weaving is deeply embedded in the social fabric. One of the most captivating components of the programme was the session conducted by the female resource person from Ladakh, who brought with her a rich repository of traditional knowledge.

Ladakh has a long-standing heritage of natural dyeing, with communities using locally found natural materials—plant roots, bark, wild herbs, flowers, onion peels, and walnut shells to colour wool and Pashmina. She explained the significance of mordants, soaking duration, heat variations and dye-bath preparation with remarkable clarity. Her demonstrations helped



participants understand how subtle changes in natural ingredients can produce multiple shades, and her insights fascinated the 150 weavers who had travelled from districts including Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur, Reasi, Rajouri and Poonch. The resource person from the Weavers' Service Centre further enhanced the

learning experience by presenting the scientific side of natural dyeing. He explained fibre chemistry, colour fastness, dye penetration and how natural dyes can be integrated into larger-scale production. The live demonstration segment brought the workshop to life. Using readily available materials such as haldi,

beetroot, tea, coffee, flower petals and walnut shells, the experts showcased a wide variety of shades achievable through natural dyeing. Rich yellows from haldi, rose-pink tones from beetroot, deep browns from tea and coffee, and earthy hues from plant matter were produced on wool through step-by-step demonstrations.

Participants observed how dye concentration, duration of boiling, and use of mordants influenced the resulting colours.

Throughout the workshop, the atmosphere remained vibrant and interactive. Weavers recorded videos, took notes, and continuously asked questions, engaging enthusiastically with the resource persons to deepen their understanding. Officers from the department—including Joint Directors, Deputy Directors, District Officers, Assistant Directors and officials from various wings—were present, interacting with artisans and encouraging their participation.

In the concluding address, the Director Handicrafts & Handloom appreciated the energy and involvement of the artisans. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of the resource persons and the organising team and remarked: "Natural dyeing represents the future of sustainable craft development.

Our artisans must preserve traditional wisdom while adapting it to modern market needs. The department will continue organising such workshops to ensure continuous upskilling, exposure and innovation in the handloom sector.

The One Day Natural Dyeing Workshop emerged as a landmark initiative for the handloom sector in Jammu & Kashmir. By combining traditional wisdom from Ladakh, scientific guidance from the Weavers' Service Centre, practical demonstrations and strong departmental support, the programme successfully reinforced the Directorate's mission of preserving heritage crafts while empowering artisans through eco-friendly, innovative and market-driven approaches. The day ended with a collective sense of learning, satisfaction and a renewed commitment to elevating the future of wool and handloom in the region.

ED files supplementary chargesheet against Reliance Power over SECI tender fraud

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI (DECEMBER 6) : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday filed a supplementary chargesheet in a case involving alleged fake bank guarantees submitted by Reliance Power Limited to the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) to secure a tender.

The ED initiated its investigation based on FIRs registered by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi. One FIR was against Reliance NU BESS Limited (a 100% subsidiary of Reliance Power Limited) following a complaint by SECI, and another was filed by Reliance NU BESS Limited against Biswal Tradelink Private Limited and its Managing Director, Partha Sarathi Biswal.

An ED Official said, "Reliance Power Limited (through its subsidiary Reliance NU BESS Limited) submitted a bid for an

SECI tender to set up 1000 MW / 2000 MWh standalone Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) projects under tariff-based competitive bidding. The bidder was required to submit a bank guarantee of Rs. 68.2 crore. As per the tender conditions, if the bank guarantee is issued by a foreign bank, it requires endorsement from an Indian branch of that bank or from the State Bank of India (SBI)."

The ED stated that its investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) revealed that Reliance Power Limited, with mala fide intent, hired the services of a shell entity, Biswal Tradelink Private Limited, to arrange a fake bank guarantee. This guarantee was purportedly from a non-existent branch of FirstRand Bank in Manila, Philippines, and from ACE Investment Bank Limited, Malaysia. Furthermore, endorsements of the fake guarantees were created using



aspoofed SBI email ID and forged endorsement letters.

"A fraudulent domain, s-bi.co.in (a look-alike of sbi.co.in), was used for this purpose. Additionally, Reliance Power

Limited routed Rs. 6.33 crore from its other subsidiary, Rosa Power Supply Company Limited, to the shell entity Biswal Tradelink Private Limited under the guise of bogus transportation services

to fund the arrangement of the fake bank guarantee," the ED said.

The investigation further revealed that a fake work order and fake invoices were executed

by Reliance Group officials in collusion with Partha Sarathi Biswal. After the fraudulent bank guarantee was arranged, Reliance Power Limited also paid a hefty fee of Rs. 5.40 crore to the shell entity to portray the arrangement as a genuine commercial transaction.

The ED alleged that Reliance Group officials were fully aware that a fake bank guarantee with fraudulent endorsements was being submitted to SECI from a spoofed SBI email ID. When SECI detected the fraud, the Reliance Group arranged a genuine bank guarantee from IDBI Bank within a day of being notified. However, SECI refused to accept the new guarantee as it was submitted after the due date.

Since Reliance NU BESS Limited had emerged as the L-2 (second lowest) bidder, its officials, in an attempt to save the tender, tried to arrange a fresh endorsement for the fake foreign bank guarantee from an

SBI branch in Kolkata. During this process, they signed a dummy agreement and obtained a "Certificate of Enlistment" from the Kolkata Municipal Corporation by submitting bogus address documents. When they failed again to get the endorsement, they filed a complaint against Biswal Tradelink Private Limited and its MD to shift the blame onto the intermediary, the ED claimed.

The PMLA investigation has established the connivance and mala fide intentions of the Reliance Group in attempting to secure the SECI tender by submitting fake bank guarantees and forged SBI endorsements. During the investigation, the CFO of Reliance Power Limited, Ashok Kumar Pal, and other facilitators were arrested and are currently in judicial custody.

Ahead of filing the chargesheet, the ED also attached proceeds of crime worth Rs. 5.15 crore in the case.

Indigo continues to grapple with cancellations, delays

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 6 : IndiGo, India's largest airline, is grappling with a cascading operational crisis that has forced the cancellation of more than 1,500 flights a day since Tuesday, as staffing shortages collide with newly imposed crew regulations.

The disruptions have left passengers across major hubs, including Delhi, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Kolkata, confronting hours-long delays and sharply rising fares.

Amid mounting frustration, sources said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has summoned IndiGo's senior leadership to account for the turmoil and present a plan to stabilise operations.

As a result of the fewer numbers of flight connecting domestic routes, fares have shot up to 4-5 times normal rates.

The cheapest non-Indigo economy class flights to Mumbai from Delhi for Sunday was selling for over Rs 22,000, while Indigo whose flights were grappling with delays and cancellations were selling at the lower end for over Rs 14,000.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Friday accepted Indigo's request for relaxation in rules related to pilot night duty after a large number of the airline's domestic flights were cancelled.

In the approval issued by the DGCA on Friday, it stated that Indigo has been granted exemption from two provisions of the Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) until February 10, 2026.

Airlines argued that the sudden change, introduced during the peak winter schedule, exacerbated existing crew shortages and destabilised rosters nationwide.

IndiGo was the worst affected, with over 750 flights cancelled on Friday, following more than 550 cancellations on Thursday.

The disruption entered its third consecutive day, forcing IndiGo airline to suspend all 235 domestic departures from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport until 11:59 pm on Friday.

For Indigo, night duty will now be considered from 12 midnight to 5 am until February 10. Under existing rules, night duty is defined as from 12 midnight to 6 am. UNI

The Bharat Paradox: Why India exports CEOs but imports brands

SUMEET PAHWA

NEW DELHI, DEC 6 : Walk into a boardroom in Manhattan or London, and the person at the head of the table is increasingly likely to be of Indian origin. From Satya Nadella to Leena Nair, India has proven it can produce the world's best managers. We build half the world—writing the code, doing the math, and engineering the future. And yet, we cannot convince a Londoner to buy an Indian shampoo.

It is a stinging paradox: We are the "Pharmacy of the World," yet we don't have a Pfizer. We are the IT back office of the globe, yet we don't have a Microsoft. We grow the "Champagne of Teas" in Darjeeling, yet the world drinks Twinings. Where are the Indian equivalents of Toyota, Samsung, or IKEA? Why does a country with such extraordinary capability lack global consumer brands?

To understand this, we must look beyond economics and analyze

the underlying dimensions of global brand building.

Global consumers buy not just a product, but the perceived national essence behind it. We associate Japan with precision, France with luxury, and Switzerland with perfection. India, however, has a weak "Country of Origin" (COO) meaning in aspirational categories. As per Anholt Nation Brand Index Survey (it measures the power and appeal of each country's "brand image" by examining global perceptions) in 2024 India's rank was 44, while in 2023 it was 38. Globally, we are trusted for IT, pharmaceuticals, and spices. But in premium FMCG, beauty, or lifestyle, we lack authority. The world sees India as the land of "spirituality and tech support," not "luxury and lifestyle". This weakens the psychological advantage global brands rely on.

Countries that manufacture rarely capture brand margins. India is caught in a "functional trap,"

marketing itself almost exclusively on benefits like "It works" and "It's cheap". True Brand Equity is built on emotional benefits. The Trap: We sell the tea leaf (commodity). The Goal: We need to sell the tea party (experience). When you buy a German car, you aren't just buying transportation; you are buying a feeling of invincibility. When you buy Indian, you are often buying a feeling of savings. To compete, we must move from selling products to selling meaning.

Global brands do not win on product alone; they win on identity. Apple stands for creativity; Nike for personal greatness. Indian brands, by contrast, often anchor themselves in functionality rather than a sharp, culturally resonant identity. Without this symbolic depth, our brands struggle to build the emotional equity required to travel globally.

Research shows that brands don't become global by just "going global"—they become global by first becoming powerful cultural

symbols at home. Coca-Cola symbolized American optimism; Harley-Davidson embodied American rebellion. India has dominant companies, but very few "local cultural icons"—brands that stand for modern Indian identity in a vivid, emotionally charged way. We need brands that capture our cultural imagination at home before they can capture it abroad.

India's enormous domestic market is a hidden obstacle. Companies can scale to hundreds of millions of users and become billion-dollar giants without ever leaving India. Unlike Sweden or South Korea, where small domestic markets forced early internationalization, India's abundance creates a psychological barrier. If you can get rich without buying a passport, you may never build a global brand.

Finally, our ecosystem is misaligned. Companies prioritize logic over magic, viewing branding as a cost rather than an asset.

Investors reward efficiency and quick revenue, rarely backing long-term identity building. Government supports exports (getting the product abroad) but lacks support for identity creation (getting it chosen). Good infrastructure gets you into a market; good branding gets you out of the discount aisle.

We have spent decades proving to the world that Indian minds can run their biggest companies. Now, the challenge is to prove that Indian brands can capture their hearts. It is time to stop being the invisible engine inside the global Ferrari and start designing the car ourselves. We must stop competing on the 'Cost of Production' and start competing on the 'Quality of Imagination.' The world already trusts Indian hands to write the code and stitch the shirt. The question is: When will we make them trust the Indian label on the collar? We have mastered the supply; it is time to master the dream. UNI

Remembering Dr Ambedkar: Congress reaffirms commitment to equality and justice

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 6 : Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Rahul Gandhi led tributes to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on his 70th Mahaparinirvan Diwas, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of equality, justice, and human dignity for which he stood.

In a post on X, Rahul Gandhi paid his "Humble tributes to Babasaheb Ambedkar on his Mahaparinirvan

Diwas," stating that Dr Ambedkar's "timeless legacy of equality, justice, and human dignity strengthens my resolve to defend the Constitution and inspires our collective struggle for a more inclusive, compassionate India." It is worth noting that in April 2025, Congress conducted a nationwide campaign titled 'Samvidhan Bachao' (Save the Constitution), with rallies held across all states.

Mallikarjun Kharge offered

profound gratitude to the "architect of our Constitution and an unflinching voice for social justice."

He urged the nation to uphold Ambedkar's values: "Throughout his life, Babasaheb stood firmly for the Democratic principles of liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice.

Today, more than ever, we are called upon to uphold, preserve, and defend the values he lived for and his greatest gift to the nation, the Constitution of India.

Rajnath's Sardar Patel claim on Babri sparks fierce Congress rebuttal

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 6 : A political controversy has erupted following a claim by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel opposed a supposed proposal by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to use public funds for the reconstruction of Babri Masjid.

Speaking at a rally in Gujarat, Singh asserted that Sardar Patel was "truly secular", and "firmly opposed and ultimately prevented" Nehru from using government money on the "Babri Masjid issue," contrasting this with the publicly-funded reconstruction of Somnath temple, which Patel spearheaded. "Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was truly secular," Singh stated. "When Jawaharlal Nehru spoke about spending government funds on the Babri Masjid issue, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel opposed it. At that time, he did not allow Babri Masjid to be built with government money."

The claim, immediately backed by BJP leaders citing the book Inside Story of Sardar Patel: The Diary of Maniben Patel, 1936-50, rests on an interpretation of an entry in the diary of Patel's daughter and private secretary, Maniben Patel.

BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi asserted that the diary clarifies that no government money could be used for the Babri construction, unlike the Somnath temple, which was funded by a trust using public donations.

The Congress has swiftly and sharply rebutted the claim, accusing the Defence Minister of propagating "falsehoods" and "twisting and turning history."

Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh challenged the assertion on social media, presenting what he claims is the original Gujarati diary entry from Maniben Patel's journal (found in the book Samarjit Padchhayo Sardarno).

Ramesh posted the image of the Gujarati entry, declaring, "There is a huge difference between what is contained in the original diary entry and what Rajnath Singh ji and his fellow distorters are propagating."

He vehemently demanded a public retraction, stating, "the Defence Minister must apologise for the falsehoods he is spreading, simply to improve his relationship with the PM."

Other Congress leaders have echoed this dismissal, labeling the statement a "lie" and an attempt to "divert attention" from current political issues. The row highlights the ongoing political contest over the historical legacies and interpretations of India's founding figures.

'Sell to Russia' Session draws record participation at India-Russia Business forum

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 6 : The India-Russia Business Forum witnessed a strong turnout, with over 2,300 participants attending the strategic session 'Sell to Russia: New Opportunities for Indian Business,' co-organized by the Roscongress Foundation, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and the Indian Ministry of Industry and Trade.

The session set the tone for deepening bilateral trade, with Deputy Chief of Staff of the Presidential Executive Office, Maxim Oreshkin, emphasizing Russia's strategic commitment to India and highlighting the rapid growth of bilateral trade, which expanded at approximately 80 percent annually between 2022-2024, reaching USD 64 billion last year. He noted that Indian goods currently account for only 2 percent of Russian imports and stressed the goal of raising bilateral trade

to USD 100 billion by 2030 through a more balanced and diversified approach. "We have come for Indian goods and services. This is a strategic choice for the development of relations between the third and fourth largest economies in the world," Oreshkin said, adding that Russia is ready to facilitate the entry of Indian products into its market. Russian Minister of Economic Development Maxim Reshetnikov underlined the need to diversify trade by increasing imports of pharmaceuticals, food, chemicals, equipment, auto parts, textiles, and electronics, calling diversification essential to achieving the USD 100 billion target set by the two nations' leaders.

"Diversifying trade is essential to achieve the USD 100 billion target set by our leaders," he said.

The session brought together senior government officials and ministers from both countries representing over 1,000 Indian organizations and 150 Russian



ones across more than 40 sectors, including legal services, healthcare, IT, logistics, media, tourism.

Minister of Agriculture of the Russian Federation, Oksana Lut, said that India and Russia are pursuing similar policies in developing agribusiness and noted the enormous potential for expanding bilateral trade and cooperation in science, technology, and education. She emphasized

the role of Indian equipment in boosting Russian food production, saying, "India and Russia share a common vision for agribusiness. Indian equipment can play a crucial role in increasing our food production by 25% by 2030."

Highlighting healthcare and pharmaceuticals, Mikhail Murashko, Minister of Healthcare of the Russian Federation, said that India is a key player in the global

market and that cooperation between the two countries has been expanding steadily over decades of trust and collaboration. He noted, "Indian drugs account for 10% of registered medicines in Russia, reflecting decades of trust and growing cooperation in the healthcare sector." Deputy Minister Alexey Gruzdev noting that India supplies USD 4.5 billion in industrial goods to Russia annually and highlighting prospects for localization and integration of Indian suppliers into Russian value chains. On the second day, participants also engaged in detailed discussions on expanding cooperation in healthcare, food supply, aerospace and automotive industries, sustainable production corridors, artificial intelligence, digital technologies, B2B negotiations, and the exchange of skilled professionals, signaling a comprehensive effort to strengthen economic ties between the two countries. UNI

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11



Narine Enters Elite 600-Wicket T20 Club

KKR's globetrotter shines across leagues and vs Rohit

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

SHARJAH: Sunil Narine reached the landmark of 600 T20 wickets in his first over of ILT20 2025-26, playing for Abu Dhabi Knight Riders against Sharjah Warriors. He dismissed Tom Abell to become just the third player in T20 history to get there, after Rashid Khan (681) and Dwayne Bravo (631). Here are some of his notable achievements along the way.

Best economy and 100-plus wickets for two teams

Across 568 T20 matches, Narine has maintained an economy rate of 6.16, the best among 117 bowlers with a minimum of 200 wickets in the format.

Narine is one of only five bowlers in T20 history to take 100 or more wickets for two teams alongside Dwayne Bravo, Lasith Malinga, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Shadab Khan.

One-franchise IPL career with KKR

Narine is one of three players to play for a single IPL franchise alongside Virat Kohli and Kieron Pollard (minimum 150 matches). He has played all his IPL cricket for Kolkata Knight Riders, featuring in 189 matches, joint-most by an overseas player in the league with Pollard.

With 192 wickets, he is the leading overseas wicket-taker in IPL history. Overall, 210 of his 600 T20 wickets have come for KKR, the most by any player for a single franchise, ahead of Lasith Malinga (195 for Mumbai Indians).

The ruler of Punjab Kings

Narine's only T20 five-wicket haul came in the 2012 IPL against Kings XI Punjab [now Punjab Kings], making him the first overseas spinner in IPL history to take a five-for. Since then, only Adam Zampa (2017) and Wanindu Hasaranga (2022) have achieved the feat as overseas spinners.

In 2013, Narine also took his only T20

hat-trick, again against Punjab Kings, against whom he has the most dismissals in the format (36).

Dominance against Rohit Sharma and at Eden Gardens

Narine has dismissed Rohit Sharma ten times in T20 cricket, the joint-most dismissals of a batter by a bowler, alongside Dwayne Bravo, who has dismissed Pollard ten times.

Narine also has 72 wickets at Eden Gardens, the most by any bowler in Kolkata in T20s. His next best venue is the Shere Bangla Stadium, Mirpur, where he has 38 wickets.

CPL's leading wicket-taker

Narine is currently the leading wicket-taker in the Caribbean Premier League, with 133 wickets, ahead of Imran Tahir (130). Out of the 133 wickets, 102 have come for Trinbago Knight Riders, making him one of the only three bowlers to take 100-plus wickets for a team in CPL.

Hope holds firm as West Indies drag New Zealand into fifth-day battle

■ SHASHANK KISHORE

CHRISTCHURCH: A depleted New Zealand attack - effectively reduced to just two-and-a-half frontline bowlers - was made to toil as a defiant West Indies rearguard stretched the contest into a fifth day on an increasingly docile Hagley Oval surface.

Forced off the field on day three by an eye infection, Shai Hope returned with sunglasses under his helmet to compile an unbeaten 116. It followed his first-innings 56 and marked his second century in three innings, a seamless extension of the defiance he showed while stonewalling India for long periods in New Delhi in October.

If Hope was the fulcrum, Justin Greaves was the anchor beside him. He reined in his instincts to play a composed, almost uncharacteristically restrained hand to finish 55 not out off 143 balls. His unbroken fifth-wicket partnership with Hope was worth 140 as New Zealand's attack toiled under the blazing Christchurch sun.

Nathan Smith did not come out to bat and spent the entire innings off the field with a side strain. When Matt Henry left the field after the 35th over - later heading to hospital next door for scans - with West Indies 92 for 4, New Zealand may have hoped to finish off the game quickly.

But with his bowling resources rapidly thinning, Tom Latham - already standing in with the gloves due to Tom Blundell's torn hamstring that ruled him out of not just this Test but the next - was left to lean heavily on Rachin Ravindra and Michael Bracewell's part-time spin around pacer Jacob Duffy. On a surface that only got easier to bat on against the old ball, Hope and Greaves settled in and applied themselves admirably.

Having begun with positive intent, Hope was tested periodically with the short ball, Duffy setting a square leg halfway to the rope along with a short leg and fine leg for the pull. Hope mostly swayed and ducked out of harm's way, and on the rare occasions he was tempted into the shot, he did well to keep it down. He brought up his fourth Test century off 139 deliveries.

Duffy employed a similar plan to Greaves, whose natural game is far more instinctive. But to his credit, Greaves appeared to take a cue from Hope, choosing restraint instead. He played only when the ball was at his body, using his height to ride the bounce and fend safely. While he was a lot more enterprising against spin, the fundamental of his knock was crease occupation.

Hope and Greaves laid down the template for those who perished prior to their arrival. Tagenarine Chanderpaul and John Campbell were put through a stern new ball test by Foulkes and Henry as they repeatedly tested both their edges in an engaging first spell. Chanderpaul's propensity to shuffle across got him into trouble more often than not, and was out to a short ball that he inside-edged to the keeper for 6 off 45 balls.

Campbell - out an over earlier - was taken out by Foulkes as he jabbed at an away-swing with no feet movement as Bracewell took a superb low catch at second slip. In the overs prior to his dismissal, Campbell wore a blow on his boot as he smashed one back off an inside-edge, making him groan in discomfort. This may have eventually had a hand in his dismissal.

Alick Athanaze never got going, and the frustration of being unable to score had him attempt a pull, only to be rushed into the stroke by Bracewell. He only managed to toe-end a pull to mid-on. And when Roston Chase fell in eerily similar fashion to his dismissal in the first innings - nibbling at a Henry away-swing while being rooted to the crease - West Indies were collapsing swiftly and were 72 for 4.

ESPNCricinfo

Hazlewood suffers Achilles soreness during hamstring rehab

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

PERTH: Josh Hazlewood's hopes of playing a part in the Ashes series have suffered another setback after he reported Achilles soreness during the early stages of his return from a hamstring injury.

Hazlewood had been due to join the Test squad in Brisbane to continue his recovery but that trip has been shelved. He had returned to bowling off a few paces in Sydney last week having been ruled out of the start of the series after picking up the hamstring injury against Victoria last month.

"Josh Hazlewood reported achilles soreness this week during his rehabilitation from recent hamstring injury," a Cricket Australia statement said. "It is a low-grade issue and he is expected to recommence running and bowling next week."

Hazlewood was never a realistic prospect of featuring in Adelaide but now could face a race to feature in Melbourne or Sydney.

It continues a running theme with Hazlewood in recent years



of other injuries flaring in the immediate aftermath of a significant injury, and a continuation of calf and Achilles issues.

In 2022-23 he suffered a side strain in the first home Test of the summer and missed three Tests before returning. He then

suffered ongoing Achilles soreness after his first Test back in early January and missed the entire tour of India in early 2023 and was not selected in the World Test Championship final in June as he was slightly underdone in his recovery.

Last summer, Hazlewood suffered a side strain in the opening Test against India and missed the second Test in Adelaide. But after rushing back for the third Test in Brisbane he strained a calf and missed the final two matches of the summer, the tour

of Sri Lanka and the Champions Trophy before finally returning midway through the IPL.

He had an uninterrupted run from there playing in the IPL, the WTC final, three Tests in the Caribbean and the five white-ball series, including different formats, against South Africa, New Zealand and India, until his only Sheffield Shield game of the summer in the lead-in to the Ashes.

He strained his hamstring playing for New South Wales against Victoria, which a scan did not initially detect, and there were concerns about a tendon issue. However, Australia coach Andrew McDonald was confident he could still play a part later in the series. But a delay in his running and bowling loads due to Achilles soreness will narrow his chances to appear in either of those Tests.

Australia's pace-bowling depth has been tested in the early stages of the Ashes with Sean Abbott also sidelined by a hamstring injury. Pat Cummins was close to a return at the Gabba but has been held back until Adelaide.

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