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Under The Guidance of Hon'ble PM Modi, We Have Scripted a New History of All-Round Development: LG Sinha

Lays Foundation For 449 New Homes In Kathua, Samba

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 9: In a major rehabilitation push for families affected by recent natural calamities, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday laid the foundation stone for the construction of 449 new homes across Kathua and Samba districts.

Speaking at the ceremony, the LG said the initiative symbolised compassion, collective action, and the administration's commitment to inclusive development in Jammu and Kashmir. "Unity is strength. Collective action can surmount challenges which appear unconquerable and we witnessed this spirit during the crisis in August.



Welfare of the people of J&K is our top priority," he said, addressing the gathering.

Of the total new homes, 344 will be built in Kathua at an estimated cost of Rs. 34 crore, while 105 homes in Samba—damaged in recent flash floods—will be reconstructed at a cost of Rs. 10.50 crore. The project is being financed by the High-range Rural Development Society (HRDS India), which will also equip the houses with modern amenities.

The LG lauded HRDS India for coming forward to support affected families, calling the effort "a noble partnership for human dignity and secure living." He

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Appeasement-Driven Division of Vande Mataram Triggered Partition : Amit Shah in Rajya Sabha

HT NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI, DEC 9: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday asserted in the Rajya Sabha that the division of the national song Vande Mataram for "appeasement politics" was a major factor that eventually led to the partition of India.

Speaking during a discussion marking 150 years of the iconic composition, Shah lashed out at the Opposition for questioning the timing of the debate and attempting to link it with the upcoming West Bengal elections.

Shah described Vande Mataram as a "mantra of India's cultural awakening" that ignited patriotism during the freedom struggle and continues to hold the same relevance in nation-building today.

"Some say this debate is happening because elections are coming in Bengal. Why diminish the importance of Vande Mataram by reducing it to electoral politics?" he said.

He also targeted the Congress, accusing



former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of restricting the national song to only two stanzas in 1937 a move he termed the beginning of vote-bank politics.

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IGP Kashmir Tightens Security Grip in Shopian

Orders Crackdown on Drugs, Online Radicalisation

HT NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN, DEC 9: In a decisive security escalation, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, V.K. Birdi-IPS, on Monday directed an intensified crackdown across Shopian district, calling for stronger surveillance, faster response systems and stricter action against crime networks and anti-national elements.

During his visit to the district, Birdi conducted a comprehensive review of the region's security landscape, examining crime patterns, operational preparedness and the performance of local police units including the Special Operations Group (SOG).

A high-level meeting was held at the DPO Conference Hall, attended by DIG SKR Anantnag, Javid Iqbal Matoo-IPS, SSP Shopian Mush-taq Ahmad Choudhary-JKPS, along with Additional SP, SDPOs, DySPs and district SHOs. SSP Shopian briefed the IGP with a detailed presentation on current policing operations and law enforcement strategies.

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CM Omar Pushes Aggressive Tourism Promotion Drive Calls for Smart Marketing to Boost J&K Visibility



HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 09: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday laid out an ambitious roadmap to reposition Jammu and Kashmir as a premier global tourism destination, calling for targeted, strategic and technology-driven promotional campaigns across major domestic and international travel circuits.

Chairing a high-level review meeting of the Tourism Department, the Chief Minister directed officials to prepare an annual calendar of festivals, sports events and promotional engagements well in advance to ensure seamless planning and stronger public outreach.

"We need a more focussed and innovative approach to tourism promotion—one that builds visibility and drives meaningful engagement with potential travellers," Abdullah said. He stressed that all publicity materials, travel mart stalls, and marketing visuals must reflect "the true strength, diversity and potential" of J&K tourism.

As part of the new strategy, Abdullah instructed the department to zero in on the top ten airports in India in terms of tourist traffic—including Jaipur, Udaipur and Goa—and roll out high-impact advertising campaigns to capture the attention of holiday seekers at key transit points.

A major highlight of the meeting

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CM Omar reviews urban projects taken up under SASCI

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 09: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today reviewed the projects of the Housing & Urban Development Department being implemented under the scheme,

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CM reviews progress of Jal Jeevan Mission in J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 09: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a high-level review meeting on the status of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) projects across Jammu and Kashmir

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Cold wave deepens as dry conditions prevail in J&K, Ladakh

HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, DEC 09: Amid the prevailing dry spell, the cold wave intensified across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on Monday, with minimum temperatures plummeting sharply.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) in the Kashmir, Pulwama recorded the lowest temperature

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Kashmir receives over 3.5 crore poultry birds this year

HT NEWS DESK / KNO

QAZIGUND, DEC 09: Authorities on Tuesday said that nearly 3.5 crore poultry birds have reached Kashmir through road transportation this year, with an average of 50–60 vehicles carrying poultry and bovine livestock entering the Valley every day.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Dr Mohammad Ashraf Dar, Livestock Officer

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Signals alone can't manage traffic, says SSP Srinagar City

HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, DEC 09: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic City, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, on Tuesday said that traffic lights in Srinagar cannot function independently at present due to excessive pressure and incomplete supporting infrastructure. This, he said, compels authorities to manually regulate

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CS Pushes for Expansion of MBBS and PG Seats Across the GMCs in J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 09: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting to comprehensively review the augmentation of undergraduate and postgraduate seats across Government Medical Colleges (GMCs), Dental Colleges, Ayurvedic and Unani Colleges by the Health & Medical Education (H&ME) Department in J&K.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, Health & Medical Edu-

cation Department; Director, SKIMS; Principals of Government Medical Colleges; Director, Coordination; and other senior officers of the department.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took a detailed appraisal of the MD/MS, DM/MCh, DNB and MDS seats that were augmented during the previous academic year and reviewed the roadmap prepared by the medical colleges for further expansion in the coming session. Emphasising

the need to strengthen super-speciality health care in the UT, he directed the two Super Speciality Hospitals and SKIMS Medical College to ensure allocation of DM and MCh seats from the next academic session.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the status of additional MBBS seats sanctioned for various medical colleges and urged the remaining institutions to apply for an additional 50 MBBS seats as soon as the application portal

is opened by the National Medical Commission (NMC). He informed the meeting that a college-wise assessment would be undertaken immediately after the portal is opened to closely monitor progress and ensure timely submissions.

Further, the Chief Secretary directed the Principals of Government Dental Colleges at Jammu and Srinagar to take all necessary measures to introduce new MDS courses and increase intake capac-

ity. He also called upon the Ayurvedic and Unani Colleges to actively pursue enhancement of seats in their respective institutions.

Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah, informed the meeting that each medical institution has designated a Nodal Officer for augmentation of UG and PG seats to ensure strict compliance with NMC norms

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Div Com Kashmir reviews ATR on Stray Animal issues as per SC Directions

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 09: To ensure effective implementation of the directions issued by the Supreme Court of India in the *Suo Moto Writ Petition "City Hounded by Strays, Kids Pay Price"* vs State of Andhra Pradesh, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Tuesday chaired Divisional level Committee meeting with Deputy Commissioners, SSPs, and divisional heads of all concerned departments to review the Action Taken Reports submitted by respective officers and agencies.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner called for the immediate constitution and registration of Societies for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals



(SPCA) by all Deputy Commissioners. He directed departments to conduct a survey and mapping of government offices and establishments to prevent the entry of stray animals by ensuring proper fencing and deployment of chowkidars.

Garg also instructed departments to nominate nodal officers for collecting data from institutions and establishments regarding compliance with the Supreme Court's directions.

The Div Com further directed the Director Health Services, Principal GMC Srinagar, Director RDD, Director Colleges, and Director School Education to launch extensive IEC campaigns to raise awareness among the public and students about first aid after dog

bites and the essential follow-up treatment measures.

The Director of Animal Husbandry was instructed to run similar IEC campaigns on the protocols for adopting pets.

Regarding the availability of essential medical supplies, the Div Com asked the Health Department to ensure adequate stock of Anti-Rabies Vaccines in all health institutions.

He also called for the identification of land in each district for setting up Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres and facilities for the rehabilitation of stray animals.

Additionally, Garg urged SMC officials to regulate waste management dumps, which often attract stray dogs and pose risks to children and the elderly.

J&K Resident Commission holds workshop on "Mental Awareness & Work-Life Stress"

HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, DEC 09: The Resident Commission, Jammu & Kashmir government, organised an exclusive workshop on "Mental Awareness & Work-Life Stress" in collaboration with MAsterG. A team of expert doctors, led by Dr. Sunita, Director and Professor at Maulana Azad Medical College, Dr. Siddarth, a renowned Consultant Dermatologist and Skin Specialist and Dr. Rajiv Mehta, Director and Professor of Physiotherapy at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, provided specialized medical services during the event.

The programme was organised in association with the government AYUSH Dispensary, Resident Commission under the supervision of Additional Resident Commissioner, J&K, Anil Sharma.

Around 100 officers and officials of the Resident Commission and its sub-offices participated in the workshop.

The Additional Resident Commissioner, while presenting vote of thanks, said that the session would significantly benefit the employees and staff in managing mental stress and maintaining a healthier work-life balance. He said that similar programmes shall be organised in the coming days.

Time to Honour Shia Festivals: AJKSA President Urges Centre to Add Missing Holidays to J&K Calendar

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 9: The All Jammu & Kashmir Shia Association (AJKSA) President, Molvi Imran Reza Ansari, has renewed his appeal to the Centre, urging Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh to ensure that key Shia religious observances are officially added to the Jammu & Kashmir holiday calendar.

In his fresh communication, Molvi Ansari noted that despite forming nearly 15 percent of J&K's population, the Shia community is currently acknowledged with only two official holidays—Navroz and Ashura. He termed it an "imbalance and oversight," pointing out that previously observed dates like 11th Muharram and Chehlum were gradually removed from the



calendar.

Calling the absence of these observances "a gap that needs rightful correction," he urged the government to officially include two significant Shia dates: 13th Rajab and Eid-e-Ghadeer. He further emphasized that several regions, including Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, and Ladakh, already

recognize these festivals with state holidays making J&K's omission even more pronounced.

"Official recognition of these days is not just symbolic it is a meaningful step toward inclusion, respect, and representation of Shia cultural and religious identity in the region," Molvi Ansari stated.

He added that this request has been consistently raised over the years and expressed hope that the UT administration, along with the Union Ministry, will finally act to implement the changes in next year's calendar.

The AJKSA President said such a move would not only address a long-standing demand but would also reinforce the government's commitment to equity and harmony among all communities of Jammu & Kashmir.

Khyber Cement, IEI Launch Training for Kashmir Engineers

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 09: Khyber Cement collaborated with The Institution of Engineers (India) for Zabaan-o-Bunad: Empowering Non-Engineer Builders through Urdu-Medium Technical Training, a two-day workshop held on 5th and 6th December at the IEI Auditorium, Church Lane, Sonwar Bagh, Srinagar. Led by The Institution of Engineers (India), the initiative focused on structured learning for the grassroots construction professionals, enabling them to enhance their technical understanding and contribute more effectively to Kashmir's development.

The inaugural session featured a distinguished Expert Resource Panel comprising leading academicians, technical experts, and senior engineers from NIT Srinagar, JKPPD, GCET, and SSM College of Engineering, setting a strong technical direction for



the workshop. The workshop was attended by, Fazlul Haseeb, IAS, Commissioner SMC / CEO SSCL, underscoring the administration's support for technical learning in the region.

Speaking on the successful completion of the programme, Mr Riaz Trambo, Director of Operations, Khyber Cement, said: "Providing structured technical training to non-engineers is vital because the knowledge they gain directly reflects in the structures built across Kashmir. With proper training, that experience transforms into safer, more reliable construction. Supporting Zabaan-o-Bunad is our way of strengthening the hands that shape Kashmir's future."

Reflecting on the collaboration, Mr Umar Trambo, Director Corporate & Strategy, Khyber Cement, added: "This programme gives non-engineers the technical clarity needed to strengthen Kashmir's infrastructure. For Khyber Cement, initiatives like these are part of our core belief system. Our collaboration goes beyond financial support as it reflects Khyber Cement's long-standing commitment to empowering communities and uplifting the people who build Kashmir every day"

For Khyber Cement, the association represented an ongoing commitment to uplift and grow Kashmir's communities. The brand has consistently invested in people-centred initiatives across the region, from supporting sports and nurturing young athletes to providing equipment, training, and ongoing skill-building opportunities, and this partnership with The Institution of Engineers (India) for Urdu-medium technical training is a deliberate extension of that work.

With the 105-year legacy of The Institution of Engineers (India) and Khyber Cement's strong grassroots connect, Zabaan-o-Bunad emerged as a significant step in strengthening Kashmir's construction landscape. Featuring expert-led sessions, live demonstrations, and practical learning for non-engineer participants, the workshop reinforced Khyber Cement's belief in education, empowerment, and progress built in the language of the people.

Kulgam Police Organises Seminars on the Role and Ideology of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, DEC 09: In a significant initiative to honour the legacy of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Kulgam Police organised a series of seminars across different educational institutions in the district. The events were held at L/ NK Shri Nazir Ahmad Wani Government Boys Model Higher Secondary School Kulgam, Altaf Memorial GDC Kilam, Government Model Higher Secondary School DH Pora, and Government Girls Higher Secondary School Yaripora. The programme aimed

to promote patriotism, civic responsibility, and awareness about India's rich historical heritage among students.

The seminars witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of students, who shared insightful perspectives on Sardar Patel's monumental contributions to India's freedom struggle, his visionary leadership, and his pivotal role in the integration of princely states post-independence. Speakers also highlighted Patel's unwavering commitment to justice, administrative foresight, and his lifelong

dedication to strengthening national unity. Students elaborated on various facets of Patel's life, emphasising his efforts in reinforcing national integrity, promoting unity, nurturing discipline, and exemplifying strong and selfless leadership. Their thoughtful presentations left a positive impact on the audience, inspiring young minds to imbibe the values essential for meaningful nation-building. On the occasion, police officers including DySP Headquarters Kulgam, SDPO DH Pora, and DySP DAR Kulgam addressed the gatherings.

They encouraged students to adopt the ideals of Sardar Patel in their daily lives and underscored the importance of youth participation in constructive and community-oriented activities. The officers also reiterated the police department's commitment to organising educational and patriotic initiatives for the younger generation. The events concluded with the distribution of certificates and mementoes among participants and winners. Senior police officers appreciated the students for their creativity, enthusiasm, and disciplined par-

ticipation. They also expressed gratitude to the school administrations for their support in ensuring the smooth conduct of the programmes.

This initiative reflects the ongoing efforts of Kulgam Police to engage youth in productive activities, foster awareness of India's historical icons, and instil values of patriotism, discipline, and civic responsibility. Such programmes, officials said, not only provide a platform for students to express themselves but also encourage them to contribute positively to society and the nation.

PMEGP Implementation Reviewed at UT-Level Meet; Banks, Agencies Asked to Clear Backlog Within a Week

FAROOQ RATHER

SRINAGAR, DEC 9: The Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC), State Office Jammu, held a high-level review meeting of the Union Territory Level Monitoring Committee (UTLMC) to assess the progress of the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) across Jammu & Kashmir. The meeting took place at the Conference Hall of JLN Udyog Bhawan at 1:30 PM and was chaired by Commissioner/Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Shri Vikramjeet Singh, who attended as the Chief Guest.

The meeting commenced with a welcome address by Shri Rajesh Kumar, State Director KVIC for J&K and Ladakh, who outlined PMEGP's crucial role in promoting entrepreneurship and generating employment across both UTs. He emphasized

the scheme's expanding impact in rural and semi-urban sectors.

Following this, Shri Anil Kumar Sharma, Nodal Officer PMEGP, delivered an extensive presentation covering objectives, implementation strategies, progress indicators, achievements, and challenges faced at various operational levels.

Detailed Assessment of Performance and Challenges

The UTLMC undertook a comprehensive review of the scheme's performance, focusing on enhancing coordination between implementing agencies and financial institutions. Key issues discussed included:

- District-wise progress for 2024-25 and projections for 2025-26
- Performance updates from KVIC, KVIB, and DIC
- Bank-wise rejection and pendency trends
- Accumulated backlog of

applications pending with banks and implementing agencies

- Status of Margin Money (MM) subsidy, including priority SC/ST cases
- Physical verification reports by the Department of Posts
- Referred-back SC/ST claims requiring immediate attention
- Dipstick survey observations on NPAs, unit viability, and district-level gaps
- Field challenges such as signage non-compliance, unauthorised trading, and issues in sanctioning high-value loan projects
- Cross-Department Participation
- Senior representatives from the Industries & Commerce Department, KVIB, J&K Bank, SBI, PNB, JK Grameen Bank, Ellaquai Dehati Bank, SC/ST Corporation, Panchayati Raj Department, State Women Development Corporation,



SIDBI, and NABARD participated, offering detailed insights into implementation hurdles and opportunities.

Commissioner/Secretary

Issues Firm Instructions

In his address, Commissioner/Secretary Shri Vikramjeet Singh highlighted the urgent need for:

- Stronger monitoring systems
- Swift processing of applications
- Coordinated action among banks, agencies, and line departments
- Improved transparency in PMEGP operations
- He directed all implementing agencies—KVIC, KVIB, and DIC—along with all banks to clear pending cases from 2021-22 onwards within a week. He stressed that applications pending either at bank level or agency level must be processed without delay, and compliance reports must be submitted promptly.
- He also instructed J&K Bank, the Convenor Bank, to closely supervise pendency across financial institutions and ensure timely disposal of cases.
- Technology-Aided Monitoring Introduced
- To facilitate real-time prog-

- ress tracking, login credentials for the PMEGP portal were provided to all concerned officers. These will allow access to range-wise, district-wise, and agency-wise dashboards, enabling more effective monitoring and timely decision-making.
- Discussion on DRPSCI Matters
- The meeting also covered key issues relating to the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee (DRPSCI), ensuring alignment with parliamentary expectations and required compliance.
- Conclusion and Vote of Thanks
- The meeting concluded with a Vote of Thanks by Shri Anil Kumar Sharma, who acknowledged the contribution of all stakeholders and reaffirmed KVIC's commitment to strengthening PMEGP implementation and expanding employment avenues across Jammu & Kashmir.

Satish Sharma inaugurates blood donation camp at Trikuta Group of Colleges

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 9: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs; Information Technology; Transport; Youth Services & Sports and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, today inaugurated the 10th blood donation camp at Trikuta Group of Colleges, Jammu.

The camp was organized in memory of the institution's Founder Chairman, Late Dr. Roop Lal Sharma, on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

Satish Sharma commended the Trikuta Group and Shri Sain Charitable Trust for consistently upholding the spirit of social responsibility through meaningful initiatives.

He emphasized that voluntary blood donation is a noble act that not only saves lives but also strengthens the culture of compassion and civic duty among the youth.

He stated that the government remains committed towards supporting such humanitarian endeavors and ensuring robust



health infrastructure across Jammu & Kashmir.

The Minister appreciated the

exemplary participation from students, faculty and staff. "The willingness of over 100 volunteers

to come forward and donate blood reflects the positive mindset and commitment of our youth towards

nation-building," asserted the Minister.

The event began with a tribute to Late Dr. Roop Lal Sharma, whose vision of education rooted in service to society continues to guide the institution. His contributions to educational development and social upliftment were fondly remembered by all present.

Chairperson of Shri Sain Charitable Trust, Suman Sharma, spoke about the importance of regular and voluntary blood donation for supporting the hospitals and critical-care patients. She thanked the Minister for his continued encouragement towards his community-focused initiatives.

The programme was attended by the Managing Directors of the Trust Ritesh Sharma, Ravish Sharma and CEOs of the Trust besides the Principals and senior faculty members of the colleges under the Trikuta Group.

The Minister reiterated that strong community participation can significantly complement the government efforts in strengthening healthcare systems.

DDC Chairperson Chairs General Council meeting at Awantipora

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

PULWAMA, DECEMBER 09: Chairperson District Development Council, Pulwama, Syed Abdul Bari Andrabi today chaired the General Council Meeting at the mini-secretariat Awantipora.

At the outset, Chief Planning Officer Pulwama, Aashiq Hussain Khanday, delivered a comprehensive



presentation outlining sector-wise progress, physical and financial status under District Capex Budget 2025-26, status of works under the Area Development Fund (DDC/BDC/PR), and the achievements and pending interventions across key departments.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC Chairperson highlighted the importance of the Panchayati Raj Act in strengthening grassroots democracy and ensuring responsive local self-governance. He stressed the need for conducting regular and meaningful Gram Sabhas, noting that they serve as crucial platforms for participatory planning and identifying development priorities in rural areas.

The Chairperson urged all departments to complete pending works in a time-bound manner, avoid any lapses of funds, and maintain strict adherence to prescribed timelines and quality parameters.

He further called upon officers to work in close coordination to ensure seamless service delivery, effective monitoring and improved field-level responsiveness.

During the meeting, the Chairperson also reviewed the status of Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) in the district and directed concerned officers to accelerate efforts, strengthen sanitation outcomes and address gaps at the earliest.

A detailed assessment of winter preparedness was also carried out, wherein the Chairperson and the members of council reviewed the power supply scenario, readiness of restoration teams, and the stock position of ration, LPG and fuel.

The council also assessed the functioning of healthcare facilities, availability of essential drugs, and the arrangements put in place for timely snow clearance to ensure hassle-free movement of ambulances, vehicles and essential services during snowfall.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioners of Pulwama, Awantipora and Tral, Chief Education Officer, Pulwama; Assistant Commissioner Development, Pulwama; Chief Medical Officer, Pulwama; DDC Members and officers from line departments

GDC Shopian Hosts Session on "Transforming Higher Education into a Knowledge Society"

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 09: Government Degree College (GDC) Shopian today conducted a special academic session on the theme "Transforming Higher Education into a Knowledge Society", echoing the reformative spirit of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The event aimed to foster dialogue on strengthening India's higher education system for a rapidly evolving global knowledge ecosystem.



The programme commenced with a welcome address by the Principal, Prof. Mohammad Shafiq, who highlighted the urgent need to reimagine and redesign higher education to meet contemporary challenges and prepare students for emerging opportunities.

Coordinator IQAC, Dr. Nazir Ahmad Bhat, delivered the Keynote Address, presenting an in-depth and insightful presentation on the central theme. He underscored the significance of educational transformation in leveraging India's demographic potential and building a creative, competitive, and knowledge-centric society.

During the session, the key features of NEP-2020, particularly those focused on higher education reforms, innovation, and experiential learning, were deliberated upon.

The programme concluded with a shared commitment to advancing academic excellence and contributing to the vision of a vibrant knowledge society.

DC Kupwara Visits Fire-Affected Family at Malik Mohallah Conveys condolences, reviews relief measures

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, DECEMBER 9: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, today visited Malik Mohallah, Kupwara, where a tragic fire incident occurred late last night, resulting in the unfortunate loss of a young life and injuries to another person.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Kupwara, Mufti Fareed-u-Din, DySP Headquarters and other senior officers of the district administration.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner met the bereaved family, expressed profound sorrow over the tragic loss of life, and conveyed heartfelt condolences on behalf of the district administration. He assured the family that all possible support and assistance would be extended to them during this difficult time.

The Deputy Commissioner also took stock of the medical treatment being provided to the injured and directed the concerned health authorities to ensure the best possible medical care.

He emphasised that there should be no lapse in the provision of timely and adequate treatment.

DC Kupwara further directed the concerned Tehsildar to carry out a detailed assessment of the damage



caused by the fire and to process the case for relief as per the extant norms and guidelines. He stressed the need for prompt relief measures so that the affected family does not face any further hardship.

While interacting with members of the local community, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the importance of fire safety awareness, particularly during the winter season when such incidents tend to increase.

He urged residents to remain vigilant, adopt necessary precautionary measures and adhere to safety advisories issued by the authorities from time to time.

The Deputy Commissioner reaffirmed the commitment of the district administration to strengthening disaster preparedness and emergency response mechanisms across the district to minimise loss of life and property in such incidents in the future.

DC Baramulla Reviews Progress of Award Money, CSR Projects Directs timely completion, immediate UCs submission

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BARAMULLA DECEMBER, 09: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired a review meeting regarding the ongoing projects under Award Money and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office, Baramulla.

During the meeting, the DC

took a comprehensive review of the physical and financial progress of the works being executed during the financial year 2025-26.

The DC directed the concerned officers to complete all the pending works of previous award-related projects in the Agriculture and allied sectors in the current month without fail.

Meanwhile, the DC instructed



the concerned department heads to submit the Utilization Certificates (UCs) for all completed and ongoing projects immediately.

Furthermore, Minga Sherpa directed SICOP to submit geo-tagged photographs of all 20 construction sites, along with the latest status of execution and progress reports, for proper documentation and verification.

The chair emphasized strict adherence to timelines, transparency in execution, and accountability at all levels to ensure effective utilization of public funds.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, Principal Government Medical College Baramulla, Medical Superintendent Associated Hospital GMC and other officers.

IMPARD organises workshop on "Development of Capacity Building Plans"

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 9: The Jammu & Kashmir Institute of Management, Public Administration and Rural Development (J&K IMPARD) in collaboration with the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) today organized a one day workshop on Development of Capacity Building Plans (CBPs) for the government departments of the Union Territory at Convention Centre, Jammu.

Director, J&K IMPARD, Rehana Batul, highlighted the importance of systematic capacity building for strengthening the governance and service delivery.

Commissioner Secretary GAD,

M Raju was also present on the occasion.

The workshop was e-inaugurated by Chairperson, Capacity Building Commission, Radha Chauhan, from Delhi.

In her inaugural address, she emphasized the need for every department to institutionalize a structured approach to capacity building. She highlighted that formulation of department specific Capacity Building Plans marks the next crucial phase towards outcome-driven governance and improved service delivery. She also underscored the national vision of Mission Karmayogi and the role of structured Capacity Building Plans in building a future-ready



civil service.

Dr. Alka Mittal, Member

(Admin) Capacity Building Commission also addressed the

audience through virtual mode from Delhi.

Principal Advisor (States), Chandrulekha Mukherjee, in her presentation, delivered an orientation lecture on formulation of Capacity Building Plans with the help of AI Tool. She also shared the insights gained from similar initiative recently undertaken at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Over 200 officers from various departments participated in the workshop. Fourteen of these departments included General Administration, Social Welfare, School Education, Rural Development, Housing and Urban Development, Agriculture, Health Services, Home/Police, Transport, Command Area Development, Higher Education, Information

Technology, Hospitality and Protocol besides Information & Public Relations. The participants prepared draft Capacity Building Plans for their respective departments.

The organizing team from J&K IMPARD and CBC was comprised of Dr. Jahan Ara Jabeen, I/C Academics (Kashmir), Dr. Ruqaya Amin, Associate Professor, Muhammad Yassin, FA/CAO, J&K IMPARD, Dr. Ruchi Gupta, Assistant Professor, Syed Uzair Simnani and others.

The event concluded with departmental presentations, marking a significant step towards finalising the data-driven Capacity Building Plans for the Union Territory.

Durga Nagar Welfare Coordination Committee calls on Jal Shakti Minister

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 09: A delegation of Durga Nagar Welfare Coordination Committee (DNWCC) today called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, here at the Civil Secretariat Jammu.

The delegation sought Minister's urgent intervention in resolving the water supply issues affecting Durga Nagar, Dogra Nagar and adjoining localities.

The delegation apprised the Minister that the existing water supply services remain inadequate, leaving residents to face hardships due to irregular and insufficient water availability.

They expressed concern that households are increasingly compelled to rely on private water



tankers. The members of the committee further pointed out that the population in the area has grown significantly over the years, leading to increased demand on the already stressed water supply system.

They urged the need for comprehensive upgradation of the existing infrastructure, including

construction of an additional water reservoir and upgradation of Muthi feeder to ensure equitable distribution.

Seeking Minister's personal intervention, the delegation requested immediate and long-term measures to establish a permanent, reliable and sustainable water supply

mechanism for the affected neighbourhoods.

The Minister issued necessary directions to Chief Engineer Jal Shakti, Jammu, SE and Executive Engineer Jal Shakti concerned for immediate action to ensure adequate water supply to the applicants.

Rana stressed that water supply systems must not only be consistent but also meet stringent standards of cleanliness. He added that strict monitoring and regular surveillance are essential to maintain quality and safety.

Several other individuals and delegations also called on the Minister to highlight various public concerns.

The Minister, while responding to their issues, assured them that all remedial measures would be initiated to sort out the same.

3-day Mobile Passport Van Service camp commences at Kishtwar

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KISHTWAR, DECEMBER 09: A three-day Mobile Passport Van Service Camp commenced here today as part of the Public Outreach Programme launched by the Regional Passport Office (RPO) Jammu.

The camp was organized in collaboration with the District Administration Kishtwar and under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Pawan Kotwal inaugurated the camp in the presence of Section Officer MEA- Gol Sunil K. Khar and other officers.

Interacting with the media, the ADC and the Section Officer from RPO Jammu informed that residents of Kishtwar district availed the facility by booking appointments through the official website — www.passportindia.gov.in

They added that applicants had already selected their slots for the Passport Van

Service, which will remain stationed at the DC Office Complex Kishtwar from December 09 to December 11, 2025.

The DC, on behalf of the District Administration, appreciated the initiative of RPO Jammu aimed at extending vital services to the residents of Kishtwar.

Section Officer RPO Jammu informed that similar camps will be organized in other districts of Jammu Province in the coming months to extend passport-related services to citizens residing in remote and far-off areas.

The Mobile Passport Van is fully equipped for biometric enrolment and on-site document verification, ensuring convenience and efficiency for applicants. This citizen-centric initiative is expected to significantly improve accessibility, save time and streamline passport services for residents of remote regions.

AD Planning RDD Ashraf Wani, along with other officers and concerned staff of RPO Jammu were present on the occasion.

GMC Udampur launches Spine Surgery Services

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, DECEMBER 09: The Department of Orthopaedics, Government Medical College Udampur has announced successful initiation of the spine surgery services. Over the past week, the Orthopaedics team performed two lumbar laminectomies and discectomies for patients suffering from chronic lower back pain and radiating limb pain.

Both cases were operated successfully, marking a significant step forward in delivering advanced orthopaedic care to the region.



The surgeries were performed by the Orthopaedic faculty team consisting of Dr. Omeshwar Singh, Dr. Qazi Waris and Dr. Sayar Ahmed.

They extended sincere gratitude to Prof. (Dr.) Anil Gupta, HOD Orthopaedics for his vision and guidance and to Prof. (Dr.) Parmod Kalsotra, Principal GMC for his continuous support and facilitation of essential logistics that made these services possible.

The team also acknowledged the vital contribution of the Anaesthesia team — Dr. Vishal and Dr. Vandana — and the seamless coordination provided by Ravi, OT Incharge, along with the dedicated theatre staff.

"The milestone reflects our commitment to expanding comprehensive spine care services and enhancing patient outcomes at GMC Udampur," the Medical Team said.

DC Ramban leads district-level awareness programme

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, DECEMBER 09: As part of the ongoing "Hamara Shauchalay- Hamara Bhavishya" campaign being observed from 19th November to 10th December 2025 under World Toilet Day initiatives, the District Administration Ramban today organized a comprehensive district-level awareness programme in the Conference Hall of DC Office.

The event was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan and coordinated by the Rural Development Department (RDD).

The program witnessed enthusiastic participation from ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak; ACD Sheraz Ahmed and BDO Sunil

Kumar besides officials from the line departments, prominent citizens, students and local residents.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of collective responsibility in safeguarding public health through proper sanitation practices. He appreciated the efforts of the Rural Development Department, field workers, and community members who have played a pivotal role in making Ramban an Open Defecation Free (ODF) district. He urged the people to continue maintaining sanitation standards, regularly use household toilets, and promote hygienic practices within their families and neighbourhoods.

To recognize outstanding



contributions, the District Administration felicitated several employees and local residents who have worked consistently to maintain ODF status and strengthen cleanliness initiatives in their areas. Their dedication was acknowledged as a model for others to follow.

Earlier, the speakers, including departmental representatives and students, highlighted the critical role of toilets in ensuring dignity, safety, health, and a better future for families, stressing that sanitation is directly connected to disease prevention and quality of life. Students presented their views on behavioral change, the need for cleanliness at home and in public spaces and the importance of sustained community participation.

Public grievances redressal camp held at Panchayat Seripura-Gool

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, DECEMBER 09: Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Gool Imtiaz today convened a Public Grievances Redressal Camp at Panchayat Seripura in Block Sangaldan. The camp was organised as part of the administration's ongoing outreach initiative aimed at strengthening grassroots level governance and ensuring timely resolution of public grievances.

A large number of residents from Seripura and adjoining areas participated in the programme and raised issues related to basic amenities, infrastructure development and delivery of public services. The SDM gave a patient hearing to the delegations and individuals and assured prompt



action on the demands projected. The people projected varied

demands seeking road connectivity, adequate power and water supply, ration availability, health facilities and agricultural support. Officers from concerned departments noted the public demands. Many grievances were addressed on the spot.

The SDM appreciated the active participation of the local community and assured that such outreach initiatives will continue across other panchayats of the sub-division to ensure equitable development and efficient public service delivery.

The programme was attended by Naib Tehsildar, ZEO, TSO, AEE PWD and officials from Jal Shakti, Agriculture, Sericulture, Fisheries, Power Development Department, Health and ICDS.

DC finalises Stamp Duty rates in Poonch

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

POONCH, DECEMBER 09: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma chaired a meeting in his office chamber today to deliberate upon and finalize the stamp duty rates in the district.

As the discussion ensued, the Revenue Officers provided a comprehensive analysis of the existing stamp duty rates and apprised the Deputy Commissioner about the percentage of hike proposed in different areas under their respective jurisdictions.

They also presented detailed justifications for the proposed increase in stamp duty rates. A threadbare discussion was held on the valuation rates received from the rural and urban areas of the District.

The discussion ensured a fair and equitable determination of stamp duty rates that reflect the prevailing market dynamics and property values in different regions of the district.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of striking a balance between the need for revenue generation and the overall well-being of the residents.



He stressed that the revised stamp duty rates should be reasonable and reflective of the market conditions, while also considering the socio-economic factors impacting the local population.

The Deputy Commissioner further highlighted the significance of stamp duty as a crucial source of revenue for the government, enabling it to undertake various developmental initiatives for the welfare of the inhabitants of the district.

Elaborate deliberations were held during the meeting, along with the insights shared by the attending officers, which will pave the way for a fair, transparent and judicious determination of stamp duty rates that will benefit all stakeholders involved.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik; GM DIC Naheem Un Nissa Bhatti; SE PWD Kewal Kumar; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Mohammad Sayeed; SDM Mendhar Imran Kataria, DPO Khalil Ahmed Bandy besides other concerned officers.

SMVDU hosts one-day workshop on Innovation and Entrepreneurship

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 09: School of Energy Management and School of Business, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) successfully organized a one-day workshop on Innovation and Entrepreneurship in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Science Technology and Innovation Council, Department of Science and Technology, UT of J&K.

The event aimed to promote an ecosystem of creativity, problem-solving and start-up culture among students, researchers and early-stage innovators.

The workshop commenced with a welcome address by Associate Professor School of Energy Management Dr. Sanjeev Anand, who highlighted the importance of innovation-driven growth for regional and national development.

Dean Faculty of Management, Prof. Ashutosh Vaishshtha emphasized that platforms like these are crucial for nurturing young talent and empowering them with the skills required to translate ideas into viable entrepreneurial ventures.

The Chief Guest of the function,



Vice Chancellor SMVDU Prof. Pragati Kumar shared insights on emerging opportunities in technology-driven sectors, government support mechanisms and the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration for impactful innovation. He shared many examples of recent innovation and stressed that the participants should look into this

emerging issue.

Assistant Director JKSTIC, Shruti Khanna briefed the participants about government schemes, funding opportunities and innovation support programs offered by the Council.

Head Department of Continuing Education and Extension (DCEE) University of Delhi, Prof. Kumar Ashutosh spoke

on "Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Tourism in Jammu Region," highlighting the shift from pilgrimage to adventure, eco and heritage tourism. He emphasized innovation, local entrepreneurship, success cases like Patnitop Ropeway and Bhaderwah model, challenges of seasonality, skills and opportunities in wellness and

digital platforms, advocating a balanced, sustainable ecosystem.

Prof. Amisha Gupta from the Business School University of Jammu delivered an insightful session on Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Startups. She emphasized sustainability-driven business models, showcased impactful green startups and detailed key government schemes including Atal Innovation Mission, Startup India Seed Fund and NIDHI-PRAYAS to support young entrepreneurs.

A series of interactive sessions and experience-sharing engagements enabled the participants to learn about design thinking, intellectual property rights, and steps involved in establishing a start-up.

Participants included students, faculty members and research scholars from SMVDU. The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Ketan Bhatt, Assistant professor, School of Business.

The Workshop was coordinated by Head School of Energy Management, Dr. Vineet Tyagi and Head School of Mechanical Engineering, Dr. Yatheshth Anand.

Rotten meat controversy refuses to die down

There seems to be no end to the controversy surrounding rotten meat and associated things. Couple of days back the Jammu & Kashmir Police recovered severed heads of animals on the banks of Sindh river at Kangan in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. The presence of severed heads was noticed by some locals and accordingly police were informed. Following this the police swung into action and recovered the heads.

The presence of severed heads sent shock waves not only among the residents of Ganderbal district but among people living across the length and breadth of the union territory. People as a whole are perplexed as to where the severed heads came from and who dumped them along the banks of the river Sindh. This is a million-dollar question and the people ideally would want the answer to the same as early as possible. Any delay in this regard would not go well with the common masses.

Ever since the rotten meat controversy has surfaced not many people are willing to purchase meat and meat related items from the market. Same is the case with chicken and fish related food items. Most people opine that it is not safe to purchase such food stuff from the market. There are many people who are somewhat skeptical in purchasing mutton from the market saying that there is no surety whether the animal has been slaughtered in a proper manner or not.

The restaurant business has also been badly hit due to the controversy surrounding rotten meat. The restaurant owners and the staff working there could be seen sitting idle at their workplaces with very few customers to be attended. These people could be seen glued to their mobile phones with very little work to do. As and when some customer comes to a restaurant the eyes of staff members lit up and they want to serve the particular customer with utmost devotion.

Since people are apprehensive about the quality of meat most of them are not willing to order anything from the restaurants selling non-vegetarian items. In such a scenario the restaurant owners are suffering huge losses and, in some cases, laying of staff have taken place. As such many more unemployed youth have been added to the long list of unemployed youth in the Kashmir valley. This has sounded an alarm bell among these youth and their families.

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Houses in Kashmir Need More Modifications



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

The Kashmir Valley is unique throughout the world, and every corner of it has adopted different cultures for centuries. This valley is blessed by Almighty Allah with unlimited blessings, and every part of Kashmir holds great importance. The waterfalls, water springs, and green carpet-like grass attract everyone towards themselves.

One of the great poets beautifully described Kashmir Valley:

"If there is paradise on earth, it's this, it's this, it's this."

The sky-touching, lofty mountains appear completely white during peak winters when snowfall blankets their shoulders. These mountains attract nature lovers and reflect the divine power of Almighty Allah.

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says that every sign in the universe—from giant bodies to microscopic organisms—is a symbol for those who have strong faith in Allah and believe in the Day of Judgement.

In this article, I want to share my views on how the construction of houses in Kashmir Valley is not suitable for our climatic conditions. For the last couple of decades, people have preferred constructing "Sheesh Mahal"-type houses with large windows and big glass panels. Kashmir experiences four seasons, and we have scorching heat only for about two months—mid-June to mid-August—mainly in the cities. In remote villages near forests, people still use earthen fire pots (pots used to keep fire for heating).

In this article, I want to share my views on how the construction of houses in Kashmir Valley is not suitable for our climatic conditions. For the last couple of decades, people have preferred constructing "Sheesh Mahal"-type houses with large windows and big glass panels. Kashmir experiences four seasons, and we have scorching heat only for about two months—mid-June to mid-August—mainly in the cities. In remote villages near forests, people still use earthen fire pots (pots used to keep fire for heating)

Why Do We Follow Trends?

Unfortunately, we follow trends instead of understanding the climatic needs of our region. Kashmir lies in the extreme northern part of the country, so we experience harsh winters. Our houses should be designed in such a way that everyone feels comfortable in all seasons. Sheesh Mahal-style houses are not suitable for a healthy lifestyle in

Kashmir.

First of all, the government should design building guidelines based on the climate. There must be a full-fledged architectural department. No construction should take place without the prior permission of the authorities because many people lack awareness about structural safety. Due to ignoring engineering techniques, houses often collapse during harsh weather.

How Construction Usually Happens in Kashmir

People in Kashmir usually follow a simple trend: When constructing a house, we look at someone else's home, get excited, and start building on the same pattern. We do not even consult an engineer, nor do we ask whether a design is suitable for our land or climate.

Recently, I met a friend who is planning to build a house. His idea was lengthy and lacked experience. I advised him to consult an engineer who could suggest the right design based on the area. But he replied, "Oh dear, I have a mason who is more experienced than any engineer. Why should I give money to an engineer for no reason?"

This mindset is dangerous and leads to unsafe houses.

What Type of Houses Should Be Built in Kashmir
I believe Hammams should be mandatory, especially for elderly people who suffer during harsh winters and are more vulnerable to viral infections, common cold, and cough.

There should be rooms specially designed for winter with fewer windows, no cement layer on the walls, mud layering instead, and wooden panelling in the kitchen and the room for elderly persons.

We must take care of our elders because they have played a vital role in our lives. Whatever we are today is because of them. Their comfort should be our priority.

We should also keep ample space inside the house so that children can play indoors and remain healthy during winter.

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Human Rights Day



■ SHOAIB MOHAMMAD BHAT

Human Rights Day is celebrated every year on 10 December to mark a historic milestone: the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. That momentous occasion heralded a new era for humankind in recognizing that all human beings are born with dignity and inalienable rights. The day acts as a stirring reminder of our shared commitment to their protection and promotion for everyone everywhere.

Human rights are the basis of justice, peace, and equality in the world. They include the right to life, liberty, education, equality before the law, freedom of thought, and the right to live without fear or discrimination. These rights pertain to all individuals irrespective of their nationality, culture, religion, gender, physical condition, or social status. They are not privileges that may be given by governments or taken away from people. They are what essentially make us human.

Decades may have passed since the establishment of the UDHR, but the struggle for human rights is far from over. Much of the world continues to hold on to violence, oppression, forced migration, unlawful killings, child abuse, gender-based violence, poverty, and discrimination. Innocent people, still deprived of basic needs, are also denied education and even the right to free speech. The fact that this suffering exists binds us to remember that the struggle is not yet complete. This day calls the world to reflect, to act, and to stand up for those who cannot.

Being a citizen of India, I recognize the fundamental rights provided to us through our Constitution. Freedom of speech, equality, education, and protection of life—these all give opportunities for growth, the pursuit of ambitions,



and ways in which we can contribute to society. We are allowed to express ourselves, dream of a better future, and demand justice when it is needed. These freedoms allow us to live with dignity and confidence.

But on this global day, let us also remember that not all people in the world enjoy the same rights. There are countries in conflict, ruled by authoritarian regimes, occupation, and discrimination that continue to shatter the dreams and lives of common people. There are places in the world where children are not allowed to pursue their education, voices of journalists have been silenced, women and girls are continuously subjected to violence, and minorities are continuously oppressed for their identity and faith. Human rights are universal—but not yet universally enjoyed.

On Human Rights Day, we must bring attention to voices that go unheard. We remember those who pray for safety every night, who long for justice, and who hope for basic respect and equality. Their struggle is not just their own; it is that of humankind. When the rights of one are denied, it is the dignity of the world that is shaken.

Human rights protect us against cruelty and injustice, but they also remind us of our duties. Making sure of rights is not only the work of governments or international organizations. Each of us has a responsibility in building a society of fairness. The way we speak, how we treat others, how we

stand up for fairness—these actions shape a world where the rights of everyone are respected. Small acts of kindness, courage, and understanding can together create a wave of change around the world.

Education on human rights is equally important. Awareness is the initial step toward protection. If people are aware of their rights, then they can protect themselves and others from exploitation and injustice. Once equality and respect become part of a community's lives, dangerous social practices begin to disappear. In this case, education becomes that tool which empowers society and reaches an understanding to maintain peace.

In today's world, at a time when technology has made instant connections possible, messages of unity and calls for justice can spread faster than ever before. Social media is one platform that has been used to raise awareness about human rights, from climate justice to gender equality and protection of refugees. It is the youth who hold the power to change the world through their voice, creativity, and passion. Their involvement in activism and community support is a beacon of hope for the future.

Much was achieved in this century, yet humanity is still beset with immense challenges. Conflicts continue to displace millions. Racism, hate crimes, and intolerance spread fear and divide people. Economic inequalities deny many a fair chance in life. Women are still fighting for equal

rights, safety, and respect. Immediate attention is called for from the global community on these issues. Laws must be strengthened, institutions must act fairly, and justice must be delivered without delay.

Human Rights Day reminds us that peace is not just the absence of war; peace is the presence of fairness, respect, and compassion. A peaceful society is built when every individual feels valued and protected. When human rights are upheld, societies flourish, and the world becomes a better place for future generations. Humanity needs to rise above selfishness, prejudice, and violence and embrace love, unity, and empathy.

Today, as we commemorate Human Rights Day, my message is simple yet powerful: Every human being deserves basic rights—rights to life, dignity, and freedom. These rights must not depend on geography, power, or wealth. They must be equal for all. Let us be the voice for those who are silenced. Let us stand with the oppressed, the vulnerable, and the forgotten. We can uphold human rights and protect the values that make us truly human together. I dream and hope that a day will come when the world becomes a home of peace and equality. A day when no child goes hungry, no woman lives in fear, and no man is denied justice. A day when every religion, every race, and every culture coexist with respect and harmony. A day when humanity stands united beyond borders and differences. May blessings reach every nook and corner of this globe.

Let love replace hatred, let justice overpower injustice, and let freedom be a natural right for all. On this Human Rights Day, let us resolve to work towards a future where dignity is not a dream but a lived reality, where each human being enjoys the full protection of their rights and lives with honor, safety, and joy. Human Rights Day is not a time to celebrate, but a time to remind: a reminder that we are part of one human family. A reminder that the world shines only when the dignity of every person is protected. Let us create that world together, starting today.

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Hazrat Abbas (A.S): The Standardbearer Of Loyalty And Light



■ **SYED SAHRAAN HUSSAIN**
BUKHARI NAQVI

Lineage of light – The Birth of a Warrior of Wilayah

Hazrat Abbas ibn Ali (a.s), born on 4th Sha'ban 26 AH in the blessed city of Madinah, came from a union that was not ordinary – it was a divine decree.

A Marriage Destined by Heaven

Imam Ali (a.s), the lion of Allah, married Ummul Banin (s.a) – Fatimah bint Hizam alkilabiyyah, a women chosen for her purity, bravery, and noble lineage. Her tribe was known for courage, loyalty, and battlefield honor. Imam Ali (a.s) said when marrying her:

“I seek a wife from a tribe known for bravery, so she may give birth to sons who will stand with my son Hussain.”

This was a prophecy.

Abbas(a.s) was born for Karbala.

A Birth that Brought Noor

When Abbas(a.s) was placed in the arms of Imam Ali(a.s), the Commander of the Faithful kissed his baby son repeatedly. Ummul Banin(sa) asked:

“Why do you kiss his arms so much?”

Imam Ali(a.s) said with tears:

“A day will come when these arms will be cut defending Hussain.”From the moment he opened his eyes, Abbas (a.s) was born for sacrifice.

Lineage that Embedded Bravery

From his father, he inherited:

- **Knowledge**
- **Patience**
- **Spiritual authority**
- **The Noor of Wilayah**

From his mother, he inherited:

- **Courage**
- **Loyalty**
- **Strength**
- **Tribal valor**

Hazrat Abbas(a.s) was not merely the son of Ali (a.s) – he was the reflection of Ali(a.s)'s courage and Fatimah al-Kilabiyyah's loyalty.

Childhood in the House of Imam

The childhood of Abbas(a.s) was not ordinary play; it was training under the greatest teacher after the Prophet(s.a.w.w) – Imam Ali (a.s).

Raised in the Shade of Najaf

In Kufa, little Abbas(a.s) would follow Imam Ali(a.s) to the battlefield, watching him fight like a lion. He saw his father's humility in worship, his justice, and his love for the poor.

Once, Abbas(a.s) watched Ali (a.s) feed orphans and said:

“Father, I want to be like you.”

Imam Ali (a.s) replied:

“You will be the pride of Banu Hashim.”

The Eyes of Abbas(a.s)

It is narrated that Imam Ali (a.s) would say:

“The eyes of Abbas(a.s) are the eyes of Hussain's shield.”

Even in childhood, Abbas(a.s) did not play with swords; he trained for one purpose – to protect Imam Hussain(a.s).

First Encounter with Imam Hussain(a.s)

When Imam Hussain(a.s) carried child Abbas(a.s), he said:

“This brother of mine will defend me on the day when supporters will abandon me.”

Every breath of Abbas(a.s) was tied to Hussain(a.s).

Their bond was not brotherhood – it was soul-to-soul loyalty.

The Rise of Qamar Bani Hashim

As he grew, Abbas(a.s) became recognised as:

- **The tallest**
- **The strongest**
- **The most disciplined**
- **The most handsome**

His face shone so brightly that he became known as:

“Qamar Bani Hashim – The Moon of the

Hashemites.”

But the beauty of Abbas(a.s) was not in his face.

it was in his obedience.

Embodiment of Adab

Whenever Abbas(a.s) walked, he would walk behind Imam Hussain(a.s).

When he spoke, he would not raise his voice in front of Hussain(a.s).

When he stood guard, he stood like a mountain.

His loyalty was his identity.

His obedience was his worship.

His life was his pledge:

“My life is for Hussain(a.s).”

Karbala Begins – Abbas(a.s) as the Shield of Hussain(a.s)

The childhood of Abbas(a.s) was not ordinary play; it was training under the greatest teacher after the Prophet(s.a.w.w) – Imam Ali (a.s).

Raised in the Shade of Najaf

In Kufa, little Abbas(a.s) would follow Imam Ali(a.s) to the battlefield, watching him fight like a lion. He saw his father's humility in worship, his justice, and his love for the poor.

Once, Abbas(a.s) watched Ali (a.s) feed orphans and said:

When Imam Hussain(a.s) left Madinah, Abbas(a.s) walked behind him holding the Alam – the flag that would later become the symbol of loyalty across centuries. The journey was not a migration; it was the unfolding of destiny.

The Guardian of Caravan

Abbas(a.s) did not sleep on the journey. At every stop:

- **He checked the tents,**
- **Guarded the Children,**
- **Walked the perimeter at night,**
- **Watched every direction with vigilance.**

The caravan knew peace because Abbas(a.s) was awake.

At Karbala

On 2nd Muharram, when they reached the plains of Karbala, the Horse of Imam Hussain(a.s) stopped.

Hussain(a.s) immediately understood – this was the place Allah had chosen.

The first thing Imam Hussain(a.s) did was call:

“Abbas!”

Because where Hussain(a.s) stands, Abbas(a.s) becomes the shield.

Confrontation with Ibn Sa'd

When the army of Yazid surrounded them, it was Abbas(a.s) who stepped forward and asked:

“What do you want from us.”

The enemy shook when Abbas(a.s) spoke – they knew the son of Ali (a.s) was in front of them. But Abbas(a.s) did not come with arrogance; he came with dignity and calm courage.

He stood like a mountain between the evil and the family of Hussain(a.s).

The Night of Ashura – Abbas(a.s) and the Covenant

The night of Ashura was the night when truth separated from falsehood, and Abbas(a.s) showed the world what it means to be a servant of the Imam.

When Hussain(a.s) Extinguished the Lights

Imam Hussain(a.s) turned off the lamps



and told his companions:

“You are free to leave. The enemy wants only me.”

The first voice to rise was Abbas(a.s).

He said words that shook the skies: “Why would we leave you?

Life without you has no meaning.”

He then said:

“I will never abandon you, my master.”

This sentence alone is the entire theology of Wilayah.

The Night Patrol

While others prayed, Abbas(a.s):

- **Surrounded the tents**
 - **Protected the orphans**
 - **Stood guard with his sword unsheathed**
 - **Watched the desert for any sudden attack**
- He did not blink that night. A symbol of absolute vigilance.

The Children's Trust in Abbas(a.s)

Whenever fear entered the hearts of the children, they would run to one person:

“Ya Uncle Abbas!”

Because in every heart of Karbala, Abbas(a.s) was safety.

The Mission of Water – Abbas(a.s), the Saqqa of Karbala

The thirst in Karbala was not ordinary.

The children cried:

“Al-Atashi! Al-Atashi!”

They called not for food, not for comfort

– but for water, a basic right denied by the army of Yazid.

When their weal voices reached Abbas(a.s), something broke inside him.

Imam Hussain(a.s) Gives Permission

Abbas(a.s) came to Imam Hussain(a.s) and said:

“Brother, the children are dying of thirst. Permit me to bring them water.”

Hussain(a.s) looked at him with love. He knew that this would be Abbas's last mission.

He said:

“Go, my brother.”

The Alam Rises

Abbas(a.s) lifted the Alam high. The desert of Karbala brightened.

He rode towards the Euphrates like a storm.

When he reached the river, he kneeled and took water in his hands. But he threw it back.

He said:

“O nafs!

How can you drink while Hussain(a.s) and the children are thirsty?”

This was the moment the skies cried.

Carrying Water Back to the Tents

Abbas(a.s) filled the mashk(water bag) and carried it against his chest.

He whispered:

“I am coming Sakina(sa). I will not let you down.”

The entire Yazidi army attacked him

– not to kill him, but to stop the water from reaching the tents.

For they knew:

The courage of Abbas(a.s) was not their fear

the water reaching Hussain(a.s)'s children was.

The Martyrdom – The Fall of the Moon

One soldier struck the right arm of Abbas(a.s).

He said:

“By Allah, even if you cut my right arm, i will defend my Imam!”

Another struck his left arm.

Still he said:

“I will not let this water split”

He held the mashk with his teeth.

Then, someone struck the water bag. When Abbas(a.s) saw the water fall... he stopped fighting

it was not his arms, not his strength – it was the hope of the children that mattered.

When the arrow hit his eyes, he fell from the horse crying:

“Ya Akhi! Adriknii!”

(O my brother, come to me.)

Imam Hussain(a.s) ran to him, sat beside his brother, and lifted his head.

Abbas(a.s) said:

“Forgive me, my brother... I could not bring water.”

Hussain(a.s) whispered:

“You have carried the flag of loyalty to heights no one can reach.”

Spiritual Legacy & Lessons for Today's Youth

Hazrat Abbas(a.s) is not just a historical figure.

He is a role model, a moral compass, a spiritual path.

1. Loyalty Above Everything

Abbas(a.s) teaches that loyalty to truth is greater than life itself.

2. Serve Your Imam, Your Purpose

He lived and died serving Imam Hussain(a.s) – teaching us to dedicate our lives to a higher cause.

3. Protect the weak

He stood for the orphans, the women, the oppressed.

4. Adab with your Imam / Leader

No one in history showed respect like Abbas(a.s) did toward Hussain(a.s).

5. Strength with HumilityHe was the strongest warrior but the most gentle soul.

6. Purity of Intention

He refused to drink water – because sincerity is greater than desire.

Conclusion

Hazrat Abbas(a.s) remains the eternal symbol of:

- **Loyalty**

- **Service**
- **Sacrifice**
- **Courage**
- **Purity**
- **Obedience**

His story is not read with eyes – it is read with the heart.

He is the definition of what it means to stand with the truth, no matter the cost. For the lovers of Ahlul Bayt(a.s), Abbas(a.s) is not a memory – he is a living inspiration.

Author's Note

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

There are personalities in history whose lives are written in ink, and then there are those whose stories are engraved upon the hearts of humility. Among them stands Hazrat Abbas ibn Ali(a.s) – not merely as a warrior, but as a river of loyalty, a mountain of courage, and a sanctuary for the broken and thirsty. To write about him is not an academic task; it is an act of devotion, a journey through a valley where every grain of sand still remembers his footsteps.

As I write these words, I am humbled

The enemy shook when Abbas(a.s) spoke – they knew the son of Ali (a.s) was in front of them. But Abbas(a.s) did not come with arrogance; he came with dignity and calm courage. He stood like a mountain between the evil and the family of Hussain(a.s).

by the weight of his name.

Abbas(a.s) was not just the brother of Hussain(a.s); he was his fortress, his right hand, his silent shadow, his loyal soul. Every sentence written about him feels too small, every word too weak, to contain the ocean of his greatness. Yet the heart insists on trying, because love demands expression, and grief demands remembrance.

This paper is not simply a retelling of history.

It is a tribute – from one servant of the Ahlul Bayt(a.s) to the greatest servant they had. It is a whisper of love across centuries, a humble attempt to honor the man whose broken arms still lift the spirits of the oppressed, whose torn standard still flies over the hearts of believers, and whose martyrdom still teaches humanity what true loyalty means.

Hazrat Abbas(a.s) is the embodiment of a truth that shines brighter than swords: the one who gives everything for the sake of truth is never defeated.

As the Alamdar of Karbala, he carried not just a flag, but the honour of Hussain(a.s).

As the Saqqa, he carried not just water, but hope.

As the brother, he carried not just love, but destiny.

As the martyr, he carried not just wounds, but a message that echoes to this day:

“Loyalty is heavier than life.”

I pray that this research becomes a small gift placed at the feet of Hazrat Abbas(a.s), and a reminder to every reader – especially the youth – that in a world full of uncertainty, the path of Abbas(a.s) remains the path of dignity, courage, and unshakable faith.

May Allah accept this humble offering, and may the spirit of Qamar Bani Hashim(a.s) guide every heart that seeks truth.

Written with love, respect, and humble devotion By a servant of the Ahl al-Bayt(a.s)





The Tough Get Quitting

Giving up on cigarettes is probably one of the toughest things that you will ever do

Smoking is not only a hazard to your own health, but also to those around you. It's time to quit.

Quitting cigarettes is probably one of the toughest things that you will ever do. Some people I meet recount with pride how they quit smoking in a single day. It is a landmark in an ex-smoker's life. Let's take a look at how to make what you now believe is impossible, possible.

THE PURPOSE:

Ask yourself why you want

to quit? No amount of external influence will help unless you are intrinsically motivated to stop smoking. You must be true to yourself with the reason. It will be your strongest pillar of support. Here are some quick pointers that may aid you in finding your sense of purpose:

Finance: A packet of cigarettes costs anywhere between Rs 100 to Rs 300. Assuming you finish a pack a day, this would mean burning up Rs 3000 to Rs 9,000 per month or Rs 36,000 to Rs 1,08,000 a

year. Even if you are in the lower end of the spectrum, it is a lot of cash to burn! Why not buy an iPhone instead?

Health: Whether sedentary or active, smoking adversely affects everyone. Loss of stamina, compromised sense of taste and smell are the surface indicators. Deep down inside, regularly drawing smoke into your lungs has severe implications for your health. In fact, the first things you would notice immediately upon quitting smoking are an

enhanced sense of taste and smell, high energy, greater cardiovascular efficiency and lowered blood pressure.

Social: Smokers are not welcome everywhere. They smell and they pollute. In certain countries, smoking outdoors is prohibited other than in specially demarcated zones. An airport smoke-room feels like a gas chamber. So, why put in all this effort and money to be shunned socially?

THE PLAN:

Decide on the "D-Day" that

you will quit and QUIT! Prior to the event, get rid of your tobacco inventory. Go so far as to give away your lighters and other smoking accessories.

Decide on whether you want to opt for nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). Common NRTs are skin patches or nicotine gums. They are available at any medical store and do not require a doctor's prescription. You can try out an NRT of your choice earlier and see if it works for you.

Sometimes, oral substitutes like natural mouth fresheners,

sugarless gums and natural candies also work great when the urge to smoke arises. Stock up on these.

On D-Day, be prepared to suffer a tremendous urge to smoke. Make use of the NRT when the urge arises. Keep in mind that the urge lasts for only 3 to 5 minutes. It is not long when you weigh it against the larger picture of your health, wealth and a much better quality of life.

Be aware that the urge to smoke dramatically reduces with time. The first day or two

will be tough. Thereafter, it becomes progressively easier.

Set up a support system of friends and family. Avoid fellow smokers and be careful at parties and social occasions. Alcohol and cigarettes go hand in hand. Do not fall into this trap!

The implementation of the plan involves addiction management and behavioural change. But, above all, it requires a resolute purpose to stick with the plan. So act now and frame your strategy.

Courtesy Healthline

The Smell Of Sweat

All humans have a distinctive, identifiable body odour, usually pleasant but sometimes not so. It is not due to our sweat, which is odourless, but due to bacteria living on our bodies. These bacteria break down the sweat and keratin proteins on the surface of the skin. This occurs mainly in "sweaty areas" such as the underarms and groin. Sweating cannot be prevented. It is the body's natural way of cooling down, so if it is very hot or after heavy exercise, the whole body will sweat.

Babies smell pleasant because they do not sweat. Sweating starts around the fifth month. It then increases, and at puberty, under the influence of hormones, sweating and body odour profoundly increase. Older people smell different. This is partly because they often have certain diseases and also because their skin has greater concentrations of an unsaturated aldehyde called 2-nonenal. The Japanese even have a special name for the odour of older people. They call it "kareishu".

Body odour increases when excess sweat is secreted. This can occur in hot weather, with heavy exercise, in overweight individuals and when spicy food is eaten. Body odour changes with certain diseases such as diabetes and liver and kidney failure. The air breathed out can also be foul-smelling (halitosis) and can be unpleasant if there are caries (in teeth), sinusitis or lung infections.



All these contribute to the general odour around your body. The smell of spices, garlic and onions can also ooze out of the pores of the skin.

Many people use talcum powder to combat body odour. It is made from finely ground hydrated magnesium silicate mixed with perfume. It can absorb moisture and reduce friction between skin folds as well as between skin and clothes. It should not be used in babies as it can produce allergies and also be inhaled during application, damaging the lungs. It should not be applied to the genital area, especially in women, as a link has been found between the use of talcum powder in

this area and ovarian cancer.

Smelly feet are a social problem for some people. To prevent it, add 5ml of 3 per cent solution of hydrogen peroxide to 100ml of water, soak a soft towel in it and wipe the feet.

Always dry the feet thoroughly. Use only absorbent cotton socks and change socks every day and after every gym work out. For work and daily use, alternate between two sets of footwear.

As for diet, a high carbohydrate one with lots of red meat is associated with more body odour. A diet with 4-6 helpings of fruits and vegetables a day produces less odorous sweat. Regular alcohol consumption and smoking also

change body odour. In addition, use of tobacco causes foul-smelling breath.

If sweating increases and body odour suddenly changes, it may be due to an infection. If simple measures do not correct the problem, a doctor should be consulted.

Tackle Tricks

- **Remove underarm and groin hair as they trap both sweat and bacteria. Bacteria cannot breed in dry areas of the body**
- **Bathe twice a day using antibacterial soap. Do not apply the soap directly to the skin. Use a towel, loofah or herbal scrubber. Dry the armpits, groin and the areas under any skin folds thoroughly**
- **Change clothes after exercise and do not reuse them without washing**
- **Use small-masking agents such as perfumes, body spray or deodorant**
- **Apply an antiperspirant to the armpits. This is usually a product that contains aluminium. Deodorants are different – these merely mask the smell of sweat. Combination products (deodorant and antiperspirant)**

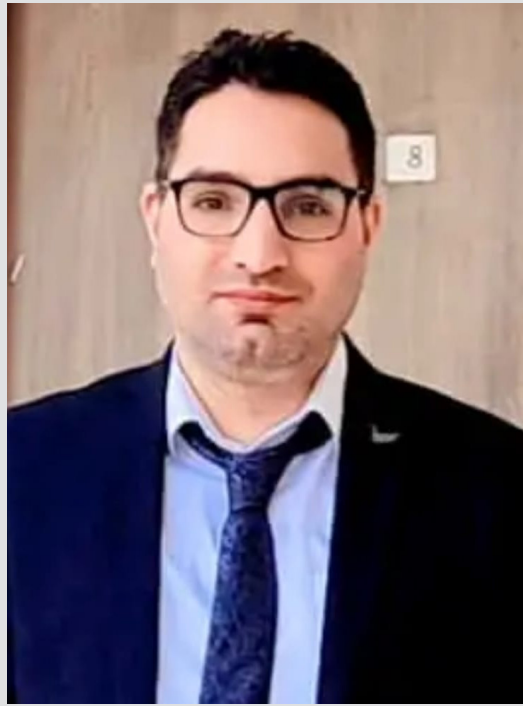
Courtesy Healthline

J&K Doctor Dr Tasaduk Hussain Itoo Selected for Prestigious ACP Guided Fellowship Program

HT HEALTH DESK

SRINAGAR: Renowned Kashmiri doctor, public health expert, medical educator and author, Dr Tasaduk Hussain Itoo, has been selected for the highly esteemed Guided Fellowship Program of the American College of Physicians (ACP), USA.

Beginning January 2026, the ACP Guided Fellowship Program is a three-year structured and mentored academic pathway designed to support



physicians in progressing toward Fellowship of the American College of Physicians (FACP) – considered among the most respected professional distinctions in the field of internal medicine globally.

During the program, Dr Itoo will undertake a comprehensive portfolio of professional development tasks, including guided mentorship, leadership training, scholarly research engagement, and contribution to advancing clinical practice standards. The fellowship also provides opportunities for international collaboration with top medical experts and peers, fostering innovation, knowledge exchange, and excellence in patient care.

Dr Itoo already holds several prestigious international recognitions. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health (FRSPH), UK; Fellow of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), Belgium; and International Practitioner of the UK Faculty of Public Health (IPFPH). He is affiliated with several esteemed global medical bodies including the American College of Physicians (USA) and Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI).

The American College of Physicians is the largest medical specialty organization in the United States, committed to advancing internal medicine through research, education, advocacy, and professional recognition.

Do good, eat good

Set a to-do-list – there's nothing better than the satisfaction of ticking off your achievements.

Focus on eating natural, unprocessed foods. Tune into your hunger and satiety levels; your body's own regulatory system is more advanced than any diet sheet or calorie chart will ever be.

Saving starchy carbohydrates such as sweet potatoes, rice, and oats for the first thing in the morning or straight after exercise will allow you to take advantage of your body's increased sensitivity to insulin and reduced glycogen levels at these times.

Remember good fats are also essential. They should be eaten daily. Nuts, seeds, avocado, egg yolk and raw butter are great sources.

Foods that support the immune system

Blueberries contain a type of flavonoid called anthocyanin, which has antioxidant properties. Research found that people who ate foods rich in flavonoids were less likely to get an upper respiratory tract infection.

Dark chocolate contains an antioxidant called theobromine which may help boost immunity. But it is to be had in moderation.

Turmeric has curcumin, a compound that has anti-inflammatory effects. Broccoli is a good source of Vitamin C and antioxidants.

Sweet potatoes are rich in beta carotene, a source of Vitamin A. Good for healthy skin.

JUMP, IT'LL PUMP YOUR BRAIN

Exercise can change how crucial portions of our brain communicate as we age, improving aspects of thinking and remembering, according to a fascinating new study of ageing brains and aerobic workouts. The study, which involved older African-Americans, finds that disconnected portions of the brain's memory centre start interacting in complex and healthier new ways after regular exercise, sharpening memory function.

The findings expand our understanding of how moving moulds thinking and also underscore the importance of staying active, whatever our age.

The idea that physical activity improves brain health is well established. Experiments involving animals and people show exercise increases neurons in the hippocampus, which is essential for memory creation and storage, while also improving thinking skills. In older people, regular physical activity helps slow the usual loss of brain volume, which may help to prevent age-related memory loss and possibly lower the risk of

dementia.

There have been hints, too, that exercise can alter how far-flung parts of the brain talk among themselves. In a 2016 MRI study, for instance, researchers found that disparate parts of the brain light up at the same time among collegiate runners but less so among sedentary students. This paired brain activity is believed to be a form of communication, allowing parts of the brain to work together and improve thinking skills, despite not sharing a physical connection. In the runners, the synchronised portions related to attention, decision-making and working memory, suggesting that running and fitness might have contributed to keener minds.

But those students were young and healthy, facing scant imminent threat of memory loss. Little was known about whether and how exercise might alter the communications systems of creakier, older brains and what effects, if any, the rewiring would have on thinking.

So, for the new study – published in Neurobiology of Learning and

Memory – Mark Gluck, a professor of neuroscience at Rutgers, the state university of New Jersey, US, and his colleagues decided to see what happened inside the brains and minds of much older people if they began to work out.

Helpfully, as the director of the Aging & Brain Health Alliance at Rutgers, he already was leading an ongoing exercise experiment. Working with local churches and community centres, he and his collaborators had previously recruited sedentary, older African-American men and women from the Newark, New Jersey, area. The volunteers, most of them in their 60s, visited Gluck's lab for checks of their health and fitness, along with cognitive testing. A few also agreed to have their brain activity scanned.

Some then started working out, while others opted to be a sedentary control group. All shared similar fitness and memory function at the start. The exercise group attended hour-long aerobic dance classes twice a week at a church or community centre for 20 weeks.

Local Employment, Market Order Dominate Beopar Mandal–BMC Interaction Meet in Bhadarwah

■ AMIR IQBAL KHAN

BHADARWAH, DEC 9: An inter-actional meeting convened by the Beopar Mandal Bhadarwah on Tuesday saw members of the local trade body taking up a string of civic and business-related issues with the Bhadarwah Municipal Committee (BMC), represented by its Executive Officer.

The meeting, held under the chairmanship of Beopar Mandal President Naseer Mehboob was attended by Vice President Rishi Kotwal, Suresh Gupta (Sarparast), Secretary Jeevat Kotwal and members Mintu Mughal, Manoj Kotwal and Mushtaq Chumna among others.

During the deliberations, the traders pressed for giving preference to local unemployed youth while issuing vending permissions and facilitating their self-employment ventures. Speakers urged the municipal authorities not to allow non-local vendors to operate in major market areas and business hubs, though they clarified that visitors from outside are always welcome in Bhadarwah.

However, the members reiterated their demand that a designated area near New Bus Stand Kotli be ear-



marked for non-local vendors to set up vending shops and temporary establishments. "The need is to balance opportunities for locals while keeping the town's business ecosystem orderly," one of the participants said.

Expressing discontent over the proposed development of a park in the middle of the historical Seri Bazaar, the members sought its partial removal to ease traffic congestion

and reduce public inconvenience. They maintained that the move was creating "avoidable nuisance" in a key commercial stretch.

The traders also called for urgent renovation of lanes, bylanes and drains across the township and sought an overall facelift of the area ahead of the upcoming tourist season noting that improved civic infrastructure would add to Bhadarwah's growing attraction as a hill destination.

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application FIRDOUS AHMAD HAJAM S/O Lt. ABDUL REHMAN HAJAM R/O AUTHOORA RESHIPOR Tehsil KREERI for the issuance of OBC (Other Backward classes) in favor of self

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of OBC in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of AUTHOORA RESHIPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the HAJAM community having annual income 130000/ (One lack thirty thousand) the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1... FIRDOUS AHMAD HAJAM self 32 years contractual
- 2... HILAL AHMAD HAJAM Brother 38 years Labour
- 3... NAZIR AHMAD HAJAM Brother 42 years Labour

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

Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Public Notice

I have lost the RC of my Bolera Pickup 4*4 bearing registration number LA01 4935. Now I want to apply for its duplicate. Anybody having any objection may contact ARTO Kargil within the period of 7 days.

**Name - Mohd Abass
S/O- Iqbal Ali
R/O- Rolatoo District Kargil
Contact no- 7051894829**

Public Notice

I, Sameer Ahmad, S/o Ab Hamid, Resident of Shalteng, Srinagar, do hereby inform that the particulars mentioned in my Driving Licence No: JK-0120120073769 are incorrect.

The incorrect details recorded are:

Name: Sameer Ahmad
Father's Name: Ab Hamid
The correct details should be read as:
Name: Sameer Ahmad Rather
Father's Name: Abdul Hameed Rather

I am applying for correction of the same in the RTO Office concerned.
Objections, if any, may be conveyed to the concerned authority.

Public Notice

My DOB is wrongly mentioned as 10-09-2020 in my school records but my actual DOB is 10-09-2021. Now I want to do its correction anybody having any objection should report to the concerned authorities .

**Name - Mohd Hussain
S/O- Mohd Abass, R/O- Apati Kargil
School Name- Govt. Middle School, Biathang
Shilikhey Kargil.**

Public Notice

I am applying for fresh Pesticide License under the name MOHD IRFAN DAR In this regard if anybody is having any objection may file the same to PPO Lal Mandi Srinagar within the time period of 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Name..... MOHD IRFAN DAR
S/O AB RASHID DAR
R/O ...PUTHAR AUTHOORA BARAMULLA**

Public Notice

I have changed my name from (Old Name)PEERZADA FAYAZ AHMAD to (New Name) FAYAZ AHMAD PIR in future I will be know as (New Name)FAYAZ AHMAD PIR if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact with passport Office Srinagar within 7 days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Public Notice

I have lost my Date of Birth certificate Session Annual Regular 2020 .Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may Contact Board of School Education Sub office Baramulla within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**MOHAMMAD UMAR MIR S/O GHULAM MOHI UD
DIN MIR R/O LOLIPORA KUNZER**

Forest Minister chairs meeting to finalize RE 2025–26, BE 2026–27

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 09: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a meeting at the Civil Secretariat here to review and finalize the Revised Estimates (RE) 2025–26 and Budget Estimates (BE) 2026–27 under the UT CAPEX and REVEX budgets. The meeting featured extensive deliberations on aligning sectoral priorities with the Government's broader development agenda. The discussions focused on optimizing the budgetary allocations to promote sustainable development, strengthen conservation initiatives and enhance service delivery across various wings of the Forest department.

The Minister instructed the department to ensure that budget proposals reflect realistic financial requirements, outcome-oriented planning and timely execution of ongoing projects. He stressed the need for comprehensive documentation of expen-



ditures, progress achieved, existing gaps and additional resources required to meet the annual targets.

Rana emphasised that allocations must prioritize key sectors such as forest protection, wildlife conservation, afforestation, tribal livelihood enhancement, water conservation, climate-resilient infrastructure and ecological sustainability. He observed that the budgeting exercise should serve as a strategic roadmap to reinforce the environmental governance and ensure optimal utilization of public resources.

Calling for improved

coordination and stricter monitoring, the Minister cautioned against delays in project execution.

"Effective planning and financial discipline are crucial for safeguarding our ecology, strengthening conservation systems and ensuring reliable access to safe and sustainable water resources. Our budget must reflect long-term commitment, efficiency and accountability," maintained the Minister.

He directed the concerned officers to finalize all proposals within the stipulated timelines for submission.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Forest, Ecology & Environment Department, Sheetal Nanda; Secretary in Forest, Ecology & Environment, Rajinder Singh Tara; Chief Wildlife Warden/Forest Protection Force, Sarvesh Rai; Chairperson, Pollution Control Committee; Director, Social Forestry/Soil & Water Conservation; Director, Forest Research Institute; Managing Director, JK Forest Development Corporation; Chief Conservators of Forests Jammu & Kashmir; CEO, CAMPA and other senior officers.

Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that I, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, son-in-law of the late Zaman Dar, resident of Khanpeth Pattan, am applying for a name change in the electricity records of KPDC Sub-Division Sopore.

Old Name on Electricity Bill: Zaman Dar
New Name to be Updated: Bashir Ahmad Bhat
Any person having objection to this name change may contact the undersigned or the concerned KPDC office within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections will be entertained thereafter.

New Name: Bashir Ahmad Bhat
Consumer ID: 021304006313
Address: Khanpeth Pattan
Mobile: +91 9484209667

Public Notice

It is notified for the information of the general public that my name and my father's name have been wrongly recorded as:

**Name: Furqan Ahmad Pandit
Father's Name: Manzoor Ahmad Pandit
Address: Booh Awantipora**
The correct particulars are as follows:
**Name: Furqan Ahmad Pandith
Father's Name: Manzoor Ahmad Pandith
Address: Booh Awantipora**

In case anyone has any objection to the above correction, they may contact the concerned authorities. After this notice, the correct particulars shall be used for all official purposes.

Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North) Sopore

Short term e-Tender

NIT No: PHE/MDNS/NIT/E-34 of 2025-26

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, sealed e-tenders in two covers are invited from experienced, reputed and registered firms/ genuine manufacturer/authorized distributors/ dealers/ workshop holders / SSI Unit holders for the following work:

S. No.	Name of work	Cost of tender document	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Earnest money	Time of completion	Programme Head	Technical Sanction No.	AAA No. and Date
1.	Providing and fitting of Air Release Valve to 150 mm dia GI rising main at WSS Sidiq Colony and Model Town under UT Capex	Rs 200.00	Rs 2.00	02% of the estimated cost	30 Days	UT Capex	CE/PHE/DB/ 928 of 05/2023, 16-05-2023	CE/PHE/DB/ 364 of 03/2023, 27-03-2023
2.	Installation, testing and commissioning of already procured electro-mechanical equipment and allied works to be carried out at WSS Shakurdin Mohalla Shahgund Stage 2 nd under UT Capex	Rs 500.00	Rs 8.574		30 Days	UT Capex	31 of 12/2025	CE/PHE/DB/ 145 of 09/2019 18-09-2019
3.	Electrical repairs to 10HP open well submersible pumping unit at WSS Khanu Babgund under M and R	Rs 50.00	Rs 0.175		02 Days	M and R	146 of 12/2025	Budgetary provision under M and R
4.	Repairs to various Water Supply Schemes of Handwara Section under M and R	Rs 50.00	Rs 0.195		--do--	--do--	147 of 12/2025	

The tenders consisting of qualifying/eligibility criteria, technical specifications, general and commercial terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> from 09-12-2025 (10:00 am).

The bids shall be submitted in electronic format on the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> from 09-12-2025 (10:00 am) to 17-12-2025 (6:55 pm).

Prequalification bids shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North) Sopore on 18-12-2025 at 02:00 pm under which the financial bids of qualifying bidders shall be opened. In case offices happen to be closed due to holiday, or any other reason, on the schedule date of opening, the bids will be opened on the next working day.

The complete bidding shall be online.

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of bids.

No: PHE/MDNS/DB/4810-15

Dated: 08-12-2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer

Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North) Sopore

DIPK: 8859/25 | Dated: 09-12-2025

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DC Kupwara reviews compliance with SC orders on stray dog management at DLC meeting

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, DECEMBER 9: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse today chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC) to review and strengthen measures aimed at curbing the stray dog menace across the district.

The meeting was attended by SSP Kupwara, Syed Al-Tahir Gilani; ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan; SE R&B, DySP Handwara, ACD, CEO, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Executive Officers of Municipal

Committees, and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on a range of critical issues, including identification and securing of various institutions like hospitals, sports complexes, panchayat ghar, schools and bus stands, establishment of designated feeding spots and ensuring adequate animal shelter capacity, progress on sterilization and vaccination of stray dogs under ABC (Dog) Rules, 2023, conducting regular inspections to ensure no stray dog habitats on



institutional premises, ensuring mandatory stock of Anti-Rabies Vaccine (ARV) and Immunoglobulin in all hospitals, conducting awareness programmes in schools on preventive behavior, first aid, and reporting dog-bite incidents, deployment of adequate security and ground-keeping staff at stadiums and sports complexes, securing transport hubs and improving waste management systems to prevent stray dog congregation, review of monthly reports from Municipal bodies, appointment of Nodal Officers

by all departments, preparedness of Health Department (Government & Private Hospitals) to maintain adequate stock of ARV and immunoglobulin and ensure proper management of dog-bite cases.

All concerned departments were instructed to designate Nodal Officers for effective coordination.

The District Administration will supervise, coordinate, and monitor all related activities to ensure timely and effective implementation of the directions issued.

DLSA B'la to hold 4th National Lok Adalat on December 13

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BARAMULLA, DECEMBER 09: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Baramulla, in collaboration with the Tehsil Legal Services Committees, has announced that the 4th National Lok Adalat for the year 2025 will be held on 13 December 2025 at the District Court Complex Baramulla and at all Tehsil headquarters across the district.

The Lok Adalat is being organized as part of the Annual Plan of Action and Calendar of Activities issued by the J&K Legal Services Authority to provide accessible, affordable and speedy justice to the



public.

In the Lok Adalat, a wide range of pre-litigation as well as pending cases will be taken up for amicable settlement. The categories include cases under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, bank recovery matters, labour disputes, electricity and water bill issues (excluding non-compoundable matters), and other criminal compoundable, matrimonial and civil disputes. Pending cases before various courts, such as MACT cases, land acquisition matters, rent disputes, easement rights, injunction suits and suits for specific performance, will also be listed for settlement.

The DLSA has appealed to all concerned litigants, parties and advocates who wish to get their disputes resolved through the National Lok Adalat to approach the District Legal Services Authority Baramulla or their respective Tehsil Legal Services Committees on or before 10 December 2025 for registration of their cases.

The Lok Adalat aims to reduce litigation burden and promote peaceful, mutually agreeable resolutions in a time-bound manner.

DC reviews Progress of restoration measures on Damaged Chadoora Bridge Approves temporary steel Bridge for Public Convenience

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, DECEMBER 9: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, today chaired a review meeting to assess the follow-up actions after the joint re-inspection of the damaged Chadoora bridge.

The DC was briefed on the findings of the inspection conducted by the R&B Department and NIT technical experts.

After reviewing the technical inputs, the DC directed the concerned engineer to immediately start the restoration work, stressing that no further delay will be acceptable given the critical nature of the bridge.

The DC emphasised that the Chadoora bridge is a vital commuter link, and restoring connectivity is a top-priority responsibility of the district administration.

He instructed that the restoration plan must be executed strictly as per technical recommendations and that each step must ensure structural safety, durability, and public protection.

The DC issued clear instructions for the engineering teams to mobilise resources on the ground without delay, maintain continuous field monitoring, and provide daily progress updates to the district administration.

He reiterated that any lapse, slow progress, or procedural delay



would be viewed seriously.

To ensure smooth public

movement during the restoration period, the DC also approved the

installation of a temporary steel bridge. He directed the R&B Department to initiate this process on fast-track mode, ensuring that the temporary structure is made fully safe, reliable, and fit for regular commuter load until the main bridge is restored.

He urged all departments to work in close coordination, remove administrative bottlenecks, and maintain accountability throughout the process.

The meeting was attended by SDM Chadoora, Superintending Engineer R&B Budgam, Executive Engineer Building Design-I DIQC, Executive Engineer R&B Chadoora, Tehsildar Chadoora, DySP Traffic (Rural) Budgam, and EO Municipal Committee Chadoora.

Br MSME DFO Srinagar organises Awareness Program on IPR at South Campus of University of Kashmir

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 09: Br MSME DFO Srinagar, under the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, organised a one-day Awareness Program on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) at the University of Kashmir, South Campus.

The program witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 100 attendees, including MSMEs, startups, researchers, aspiring entrepreneurs, and students.

Director South Campus, Waseem Bari, welcomed the initiative and appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of MSME in strengthening the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem. He emphasized that academic-industry collaborations are crucial for nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets and driving sustainable business development.

Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Director, Ministry of MSME, Saheel Alagband, delivered an insightful session on the importance of IPR in today's competitive business environment. He highlighted that the Ministry of MSME provides extensive



mentoring support through Intellectual Property Facilitation Centres (IPFCs) along with financial assistance under the MSME Innovative Scheme. He shared that more than 100 Intellectual Properties have been filed in the last two years, with several already approved and granted, reflecting the growing innovation culture among MSMEs.

IP Attorney, Zainab Syed, delivered a comprehensive presentation on various components of IPR, covering patents, trademarks, copyrights,

designs, and the procedures for filing and protection.

Later, participants were also briefed on flagship schemes of the Ministry of MSME, including CGTMSE (Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro & Small Enterprises) and SRI Funds, aimed at empowering startups and MSMEs through institutional financial support.

The participants appreciated the valuable inputs and expressed interest in availing IP related support and other MSME schemes for business growth and innovation.

DC Bandipora launches Green initiative at DH; Conducts surprise inspection of OSC

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 09: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today launched an institutional plantation drive at District Hospital (DH) Bandipora, organised by the Social Forestry Division Baramulla in collaboration with the Health Department and District Administration Bandipora.

As part of the initiative, the DC planted conifer saplings within the hospital premises, formally marking the start of the plantation programme aimed at enhancing the district's green cover and encouraging community participation in environmental conservation.

On the occasion, the DC also distributed 400 saplings of male poplar and Ulmus among 40 beneficiaries under the Farm Forestry Scheme, provided free of cost to promote household-level afforestation.

The programme was attended by DFO Social Forestry Division Baramulla, Danish Khan; Medical Superintendent DH Bandipora, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad; Range Officer Bandipora, and medical and field staff from the organising departments.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner paid a surprise visit to the Sakhi One Stop Centre



(OSC) Bandipora to assess its functioning and service delivery mechanisms for women in distress. She inspected case registers, counselling records, intake processes and follow-up mechanisms to evaluate the quality of support being provided.

She emphasised the importance of timely interventions, victim protection, and regular follow-ups while calling for strengthened inter-departmental coordination to ensure effective handling of women-related cases.

The DC reiterated that the OSC must remain a safe, accessible and responsive support system for women facing violence or crisis situations.

DC Baramulla Chairs Sector-wise Review of District Capex Budget 2025-26 Works

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BARAMULLA, DECEMBER 09: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired a detailed sector-wise review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress of works being executed under the District Capex Budget 2025-26.

Officers from key departments—including Rural Development, Education, Health, PWD, Jal Shakti and others—presented updates on ongoing and completed projects, expenditure patterns, and progress against targets. The DC took a comprehensive appraisal of each sector and sought clarification on the status of priority works.

Stressing timely completion and optimal utilization of funds, the DC directed all departments to strictly adhere to set timelines and maintain quality standards during execution. He said that the administration's focus remains on delivering tangible development outcomes at the grassroots level.

The DC instructed departments to expedite the tendering and allotment processes for pending works to ensure early execution, particularly in areas that may face weather-related challenges. He reiterated

the need to achieve 100% physical and financial progress within the stipulated period. Calling for stronger inter-departmental coordination, the DC urged officers to regularly update progress on monitoring portals and ensure transparency in field-level reporting. He also emphasized prioritizing high-impact projects related to water supply, road connectivity, health infrastructure and education.

The DC asked officials to resolve land-related and technical issues at the earliest and incorporate sustainability and safety measures in all ongoing works. He warned that undue delays or lapses would be viewed seriously and may attract administrative action. Earlier, sectoral heads highlighted achievements, challenges, and requirements for administrative intervention. The DC assured full support from the district administration to facilitate smooth and timely execution.

Concluding the meeting, the DC directed all departments to work with renewed dedication to meet development targets under the District Capex Budget 2025-26, ensuring that the benefits of public welfare projects reach citizens efficiently and on time.

DC Bandipora launches Training programme under Phase-II of IEC campaign against Drug Abuse

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 09: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today launched a training programme for resource persons nominated for phase-II of IEC Campaign against Drugs at the Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

Resource persons from Police, Education, Municipal Committees, Youth Services & Sports, Social Welfare, NRLM, ATF and other departments participated in the inaugural session. The DC interacted with all participants and encouraged them to actively contribute to the district's anti-drug awareness efforts.



Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to learn from past mistakes, understand the purpose of the campaign, and work with a clear strategy. She explained the concept and importance of IEC, emphasising that participants from diverse departments were chosen because each is closely linked with society and can play a vital role in tackling the drug menace.

"You are blessed with the opportunity to serve society. Your participation reflects your potential to guide communities away from this growing social evil," she said, expressing concern over the rising trend of substance abuse.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner urged resource persons to first gain complete knowledge and then educate people effectively. She emphasised constant communication with children and advised conducting IEC activities in religious congregations and community gatherings to widen outreach.

Among others, the event was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development (Nodal Officer for IEC Campaign) Bandipora; Dy District Election Officer; Dy Chief Education Officer; District Information Officer; BDOs and other concerned officers and officials.

Shah, Kharge clash in parliament on Vande Mataram sparks political fireworks

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 9: The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday witnessed sharp exchanges for a second day on Tuesday between the government and the Opposition as the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram transformed into a wider political confrontation.

Initiating the discussion, Home Minister Amit Shah urged Members of Parliament to inculcate the spirit of Vande Mataram among the younger generation, calling the national song a timeless symbol of India's unity and civilisational pride. Shah said the song, which guided India's freedom struggle, would continue to shine a light on the country's progress in the coming days.

However, the Opposition struck back sharply. Beginning his address with a ringing chant of Vande Mataram, Congress President and Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge launched a blistering counterattack, accusing the BJP of appropriating patriotic symbols while neglecting urgent national concerns.

Shah told the lower house,

"Vande Mataram helped India gain freedom, and it will help make the country Viksit." He also declared that the government would celebrate the song's 150th anniversary on a grand scale throughout the year.

The Home Minister attacked the Congress over what he called its historical discomfort with the national song. He claimed that certain Congress MPs had even opposed singing Vande Mataram in the past and said he would place their names on the House record.

Recalling past political conflicts, he remarked, "When Vande Mataram turned 100, opposition leaders were thrown in jail, Emergency was imposed, and the country was held captive."

The Home Minister also accused former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of dividing the song into parts to appease certain groups, asserting that the move weakened its unifying force.

He emphasised Vande Mataram's deep cultural roots, calling it "the soul of the freedom movement." Freedom fighters like Shyamji Krishna Varma, Madam



Bhikaiji Cama, and Veer Savarkar, he noted, had woven the song into India's nationalist flag.

Shah, replying to opposition charges levelled on Monday, insisted that the debate was not political theatre. "We do not fear discussions on important issues," he said, countering Opposition allegations that the ruling party was using nationalism to shape political narratives.

Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge led the opposition charge against the government, stating, "We have a habit of singing Vande

celebration to divert public attention from pressing issues and the upcoming West Bengal Assembly elections.

Taking a swipe at the Prime Minister and the Home Minister, he said, "PM Modi and Amit Shah leave no chance to insult Jawaharlal Nehru and other Congress leaders. But that is only natural. Wherever PM goes, Amit Shah follows!"

The fiery back-and-forth turned the commemorative debate into a battleground of competing political narratives. While the BJP highlighted Vande Mataram as a unifying national mantra rooted in India's heritage, the Congress accused the government of exploiting the song for electoral messaging.

Despite the political heat, both sides acknowledged the historic significance of Vande Mataram, composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay 150 years ago, and its role as a rallying cry during the freedom movement. The government's planned year-long celebrations aim to reintroduce the song's legacy to the younger generation. UNI

First India-Brunei Defence JWG charts roadmap for stronger maritime and military ties

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 9: Expanding military-to-military exchanges, strengthening maritime security, enhancing Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief cooperation, and exploring defence industry and technology partnerships were at the core of discussions as India and Brunei held the inaugural meeting of their Joint Working Group (JWG) on Defence Cooperation in the national capital today.

The meeting marked a significant step forward in advancing the bilateral defence partnership between the two nations.

The meeting was co-chaired by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Amitabh Prasad and Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Brunei, Poh Kui Choon. Prior to the meeting, the co-chairs signed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the estab-



lishment of JWG on defence cooperation.

The signing of the ToR marked the beginning of a new era of bilateral defence cooperation. The JWG serves as a constructive platform to review ongoing defence engagements and explore new avenues for cooperation.

Both sides welcomed the growing momentum in the defence partnership and agreed to implement a structured roadmap for cooperation under the JWG mechanism. They indorsed their shared commitment to maintaining peace, stability, and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.

The visiting Deputy Permanent Secretary also called on Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh in New Delhi, as part of his two-day visit. Poh Kui Choon also visited DPSU Bhawan, a central hub for all 16 Defence Public Sector Undertakings, to foster collaboration, innovation, and showcase India's defence manufacturing capabilities to the world. UNI

Trump threatens fresh tariffs on Indian Rice, Delhi says will adopt wait and watch policy

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, DEC 9: US President Donald Trump has threatened to slap fresh tariffs on agricultural imports, singling out rice from India and fertiliser from Canada, as trade negotiations with both countries dragged on.

"India should not be dumping rice in the US," Trump said during an event at the White House, where he announced a multibillion-dollar relief package for American farmers.

The remarks made during the event marked a fresh round of escalation in the Republican government's long-running critique of foreign agricultural suppliers, particularly those in Asia including India and Thailand.

During the 2024-25 fiscal year, India shipped



USD 337.1 million worth of Basmati rice to the United States, a volume of 274,213 metric tons that made the U.S. the fourth-largest destination for the premium grain, according to data from the Indian Rice Exporters Federation.

Exports of non-Basmati rice to the United States were far smaller. India sent USD 54.64 million in non-Basmati varieties, totaling 61,342 metric tons, placing the U.S. 24th among global buyers of that category.

Commerce Ministry officials said that they would have to wait and watch what form the extra tariff would take. "Rice is sold in several broad categories globally with differing tariff imposts. So we have to watch which kinds of rice will be hit by the latest decision."

Globally, trade authorities slap tariff in Global rice tariffs on specific categories of rice such paddy, husked, milled, broken or those with GI tags such as Basmati.

Trump who was speaking at a function where he unveiled what he described as "USD12bn in economic assistance" for US farmers, insisted the programme would be financed through tariff revenues already collected from trading partners.

He argued that rising imports were placing pressure on domestic farmers and vowed to continue using tariffs as a primary tool to shield American agriculture.

The latest comments come in the wake of Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India to discuss bilateral defence and trade ties.

Trade talks are expected to continue this month between Indian and US officials. UNI

ICG Ship Sarthak makes maiden port call at Kuwait, boosting bilateral maritime ties

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 9: As part of its Overseas Deployment (OSD) to the Gulf region, Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Ship Sarthak, an indigenously designed and built Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV), arrived at Suwaikh Port in Kuwait, today.

This maiden port call signifies a new chapter in India-Kuwait maritime engagement and reflects India's commitment to enhancing regional cooperation under the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) vision.

The visit aims at strengthening existing maritime linkages and reinforcing India's role as a reliable partner in ensuring safe, secure and clean seas, a statement from the ICG spokesperson stated.

The arrival of ICG Ship Sarthak comes at a significant moment, following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation in December 2024 during the historic visit of the Prime Minister of India to Kuwait. The MoU has paved the way for expanding defence and maritime collaboration as part of the growing India-Kuwait Strategic Partnership.

During the four-day stay in Kuwait, the ship's crew will undertake a series



of professional interactions with the Kuwait Coast Guard and other maritime stakeholders. The programme includes courtesy calls on senior leadership, familiarisation visits to key maritime facilities, and joint training activities focusing on marine pollution response, maritime search and rescue, and maritime law enforcement.

Cultural and sports exchanges, including joint yoga sessions and friendly matches, will further deepen interpersonal bonding and mutual understanding between the maritime forces of both nations.

The ship's visit reinforces these

shared objectives and demonstrates the commitment of both sides to building stronger operational synergy, enhancing interoperability, and promoting a safe maritime domain in the Gulf.

After the Kuwait visit, ICG Ship Sarthak will continue its OSD with planned port calls to Iran and Saudi Arabia. These engagements collectively reflect India's comprehensive approach to strengthening maritime cooperation across West Asia and advancing regional stability, capacity building and collaborative maritime governance, the statement added. UNI

From Kitchens to Confidence: Women entrepreneurs rewrite their journeys at Saras Mela

PARWINDER SANDHU

NEW DELHI, DEC 9: "There is no limit to what women can accomplish," the sentiment echoed powerfully at the Saras Aajeevika Food Festival, which concluded in the national capital today, leaving behind not just the aroma of regional cuisines but also a trail of stories of courage, rediscovery and newfound confidence.

For hundreds of women entrepreneurs from villages and small towns, stepping out from the confines of their homes for the first time, the festival became a vista of business opportunities, a turning point, a journey in self-belief and empowerment.

For 35-year-old Satvinder Kaur, a widow with two daughters, the festival marked a new beginning. Hailing from Faridkot in Punjab, Kaur had set up the stall selling Makki Di Roti and Sarson Da Saag.

"I lost my husband a few years ago. With no male member left in my family, I had no option but to lease out our agricultural land. This is the first time I have come out of my house to earn on my own. It is a new experience and I am going back with so much confidence," Kaur said, adding that she has earned around Rs. Five lakh in profit, an amount she once never imagined making independently.

Hailing from Manpur Village of



Udham Singh Nagar in Uttarakhand, for Kajal, the participation in Saras festivals across the country means supporting her husband in running the house. Her husband runs a roadside cart selling chowmein and momos, and rising household expenses had begun to push the family into distress. "Since 2022 I have been participating in the festival and have travelled to Kerala, Noida, and Gurgaon. I make around Rs 5-6 lakh, an amount that has not only ensured a better life for my family but also renewed the confidence in me," she added.

From the Kashmir Valley came 27-year-old Rumeena Ahad. A postgraduate currently pursuing B.Ed, Rumeena carries an aspiration many young women nurture silently, to fund her own education. For her, the festival was a classroom in marketing, communication and courage. "Initially, I used to be very hesitant

to interact with strangers. But now, I know how to sell my products and also explain the significance of the ingredients used to make our traditional Kashmiri cuisine."

Organised jointly by the Ministries of Rural Development, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, and Women and Child Development, the ten-day festival saw women from 25 states serving over 500 traditional and delicious dishes through 62 stalls.

Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan said that our "Lakhpati Didis" have proved that they wield immense powers. "In fact, they have written a new saga of progress, development and prosperity with their hard work. Today, Lakhpati Didis have come from 25 states and many of them are showing the way to the entire country with their qualities, hard work and dedication," the minister said. UNI

Rahul Gandhi leads push for election reforms, says 'Nation is Fabric Woven by Vote'

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 9: In a sharp and compelling address in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday led the Opposition's push for comprehensive electoral reforms, invoking the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and raising strong concerns about institutional integrity and equality in India's democracy.

Highlighting the sanctity of the vote as the binding force of the nation, Gandhi said, "Our nation is a fabric which is woven together by the vote." He underlined that voting is not merely a procedural act but the foundation of India's unity and strength.

Participating in the high-stakes discussion on electoral reforms RPT electoral reforms, the Congress leader also raised concerns about institutional autonomy, alleging the RSS-led government is capturing key institutions such as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Election Commission (EC), and others.

"The RSS is capturing the CBI to attack the opposition and anyone who opposes them... and the third capture is the Election Commission," Gandhi warned. He questioned the removal of the Chief Justice of India from the EC selection panel and the immunity granted to the Election Commission, implying a decline in institutional checks and balances.

Gandhi recalled the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi by Nathuram Godse, setting a somber tone for his argument. "1948... three bullets pierced the chest of Mahatma Gandhi. Nathuram Godse assassinated the father of our Nation," he said, emphasising the threat posed by divisive forces to India's democratic fabric.

Gandhi accused the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) of orchestrating a wholesale capture of India's institutions. "RSS fundamentally does not believe in equality, they believe in a hierarchy," he asserted.

Gandhi went on to attack the RSS directly, stating, "The idea that every person in India is equal disturbs my friends in the RSS. They are happy to see the fabric, but they cannot stand the idea that every single person in the fabric of our country, regardless of religion, community, or language, should be equal because they believe they should be on top of that hierarchy."

The Congress leader's remarks sparked a brief but sharp exchange in the House when union Minister Kiren Rijiju interrupted, accusing him of straying from the subject of electoral reforms. "The Leader of the Opposition has not made a single remark on electoral reforms," Rijiju said, drawing murmurs from both sides.

Despite the interruption, Gandhi remained firm on his message. He invoked the symbolism of Mahatma Gandhi's khadi to emphasise unity and equality, describing India as "a collective fabric where each citizen represents an equal thread."

Rahul Gandhi's speech underlined the Opposition's broader concerns about the preservation of democratic principles, equality, and the integrity of electoral processes in India. UNI SKA



Gill, Hardik Back as India Kick Off T20 WC Build-Up

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

CUTTACK: The return of Shubman Gill and Hardik Pandya will lend fresh sheen and much-needed completeness to reigning world champions India when they begin their official march towards the home T20 World Cup with the opening match of a five-game series against South Africa, here on Tuesday.

This series marks the start of India's formal build-up to the February showpiece, where they will play 10 T20Is -- five against South Africa followed by another five against New Zealand -- before opening their title defence against the USA at the Wankhede on February 7.

The defending champions will look to enter this phase with clarity of intent as they refine roles, streamline combinations and settle the XI that will carry the weight of expectations in front of home crowds.

India have been a formidable T20I unit post their World Cup triumph in the format last year, where they won eight matches in a row to lift the title. Since then, they have extended their tally to 26 wins with only four losses, including a seven-match streak during their Asia Cup victory in Dubai. They have not lost a T20I series in this period, and with only minor tweaks needed, they will be hoping to sharpen the edges against the side they defeated in the T20 World Cup final.

Gill's return comes after he missed almost a month of cricket owing to a neck spasm suffered while attempting a slog sweep during the opening Test against the Proteas. Having played non-stop cricket since the last IPL and with India facing a packed season ahead, his workload management will be closely monitored.

But for Gill, who has 837 runs from 33 T20Is at an average of 29.89, this series also doubles up as vital preparation heading into the ICC event.

His reunion with Abhishek Sharma brings back a high-impact opening pair that marries brute force with clean, classical strokeplay.

Abhishek, fresh from a standout tour of Australia where he topped India's scoring charts with 163 runs in the 2-1 victory, has been in monstrous domestic touch. In the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20s, the Punjab left-hander hammered 304 runs at an average of 50.66.

Bazball is dead (even if England aren't quite yet)

■ ANDREW MILLER

BRISBANE: The Ashes are not yet over, but Bazball most emphatically is. It died, to all intents and purposes, with Ben Stokes' shockingly frank admission after another crushing defeat, that his team of mindset-driven genre-benders have been found wanting in the heat of a battle that their entire ethos had been geared towards.

Specifically, it received its terminal diagnosis under the floodlights on the third evening at the Gabba. England's display up to that point had been deeply flawed, not unlike so many other Tests of the Bazball era, but this abject passage of play - six wickets in a session, when the daylight resumption promised a flat deck and rich rewards for any batter who could apply themselves - was its point of no return.



Theologians have spent thousands of years examining belief systems, watching their rise and fall, and who rightly knows what gives some concepts more stickability than others. England don't even acknowledge that their curious but compelling cult is actually a thing, let alone that it has a universally recognised name.

But fundamentally, if you believe that there is belief within a system, then there is belief. Cogito Bazball sum, as it were. Right now, there is no sense that England believe in their methods any more. Ergo, the entire philosophy crumbles, or worse. A fiery demise always seemed a plausible endgame.

And with it goes every remaining defence of the preparations that went into England's tour. The cosiness, the togetherness, the lackadaisical attitude to warm-up matches ... all of it could be justified by the knowledge that this team, with full-bore mental focus, could be capable of truly extraordinary deeds: specifically of going where their timid, samey forebears could not, and pulling off a series win in Australia for the first time in four dismal visits.

That's not to say, however, that the series has yet been surrendered. Not after a contest in which Stokes and Joe Root were England's two stand-out performers, it hasn't.

Henry, Santner, Nathan Smith ruled out of rest of West Indies Test series

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

DUBAI: New Zealand's bowling spearhead Matt Henry (calf strain), seam-bowling allrounder Nathan Smith (side strain) and spin-bowling allrounder Mitchell Santner (groin injury) have all been ruled out of the rest of the home Test series against West Indies.

Glenn Phillips, who joined the squad in Christchurch early as a substitute fielder, has officially been added to the Test squad for the remainder of the series, New Zealand Cricket confirmed. This after he proved his match fitness in the Plunket Shield before joining the squad for the first Test, and he could be in contention to be selected in the XI for the second Test.

In another bit of good news for New Zealand, Daryl Mitchell, who put in a long shift as a substitute fielder in the first Test, is set to be available for the second and slot back in as their middle-order mainstay.

Wicketkeeper-batter Tom Blundell had already been sidelined from the second Test in Wellington after suffering a hamstring injury while batting on day one in Christchurch. Mitchell Hay has been added to the squad and could make his Test debut.

Also, a day after uncapped seamer Michael Rae was called up to the Test squad, Kristian Clarke, a seam-bowling allrounder from Northern Districts, was added to it. With Kyle Jamieson and Will O'Rourke managing "return to play" protocols, New Zealand were left scrambling for last-minute replacements, with the Wellington Test set to begin on November 10.

Both Rae and Clarke were



pulled out of the third round of the Plunket Shield. Clarke didn't bowl for ND in the final innings against Otago in Hamilton, with rookie James Naylor stepping in

as his replacement.

Clarke, 24, is uncapped in Test cricket, but was recently part of the ODI series against England as a replacement player after

Henry had suffered a separate calf injury. He has now earned his maiden Test call-up as a like-for-like replacement for Smith.

"On the cricket field, I'm a bowling allrounder, you know, and I pride myself on trying to offer as much as I can in the game," Clarke said in October after breaking into the ODI side. "I just want to be a good person around the group also and just offer as much as I can." Clarke has played 27 first-class games so far, taking 77 wickets at an average of 33 and scoring 893 runs at an average of 23.50. He was also part of a New Zealand A tour to Bangladesh during the winter. Though bowling is his primary skill, Kristian is also a capable batter and had notched up his maiden century in senior cricket, against Central Districts in the one-day Ford Trophy, in October.

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