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## Vice President Radhakrishnan Lands in Kashmir for Maiden Visit, Security Blanket Across Valley

To Address 21st Convocation of University of Kashmir; Over 59,000 Degrees to Be Conferred

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Vice President C P Radhakrishnan arrived in Kashmir on Wednesday evening on his maiden visit to the Valley, where he is set to attend and address the 21st convocation of the University of Kashmir amid unprecedented security arrangements. The Vice President landed at the technical airport here around 5 PM and was received by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, and senior civil and police officials. From the airport, his cavalcade proceeded to the Lok Bhawan, where he will stay overnight. On Thursday, Radhakrishnan will be the chief guest at the



varsity's 21st convocation, marking his first official engagement in Kashmir since assuming office. Lieutenant Governor Sinha, who serves as Chancellor of the university, will preside

over the ceremony, while Chief Minister Abdullah, the Pro-Chancellor, will attend as Guest of Honour. A record 59,558 degrees are slated to be awarded during the convocation, including 44,910 undergraduate and 13,545 post-graduate degrees. The list also comprises 461 MD/MS, four MCh, 18 M.Phil and 620 Ph.D degrees. Meanwhile, authorities have thrown a comprehensive multi-layered security grid around Srinagar, particularly in and around the Hazratbal area where the university campus is located. Security forces have been deployed in strength at vulnerable points, with intensified checking, surveillance

● Turn on Page 2

## Omar Abdullah Rolls Out Rs. 190-Cr Urban Overhaul for Srinagar, Budgam

Major sewerage, drainage and river restoration projects launched to revive Jhelum River and Doodh Ganga, boost climate resilience



■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday laid the foundation stones for a series of infrastructure and river conservation projects worth over ₹190 crore across Srinagar and Budgam, marking a significant push towards strengthening urban infrastructure and restoring

● Turn on Page 2

## Omar Abdullah Applauds Youth Talent at Chrysanthemum Garden Contest

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday felicitated the winners of the Photography and Reel Competition organised to mark the inauguration celebrations of the Chrysanthemum Garden in Srinagar, praising young participants for creatively showcasing the Valley's floral splendour.

The felicitation ceremony, organised by the Department of Floriculture, Gardens and Parks, honoured participants for their artistic excellence in capturing the

● Turn on Page 2

## Delhi-Katra Expressway Back on Fast Track, Completion Set for March 2027

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, FEB 25:** The Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway is back on track and slated for completion by March 2027, a senior official of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) said on Wednesday, reaffirming the strategic and religious significance of the mega infrastructure project. The National Expressway-5 (NE-5), construction of which began in April 2021, witnessed major setbacks last year due to Operation Sindoor and heavy rains and floods across northern states. However, officials said the pace of work has since picked up and the revised deadline remains firm.

● Turn on Page 2

## First-Ever Green Research Complex Coming Up at IIM Jammu ; Dr Jitendra Singh Applauds Aroma Mission's National Honour



■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAMMU, FEB 25:** Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technol-

ogy and Earth Sciences, and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh on Tuesday laid the foundation stone of a state-of-the-art green building at the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM) here, describing it as a landmark step

● Turn on Page 2

## J&K Identifies Land for 579 Panchayat Ghars, 204 Ready as Govt Pushes Grassroots Infra

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAMMU, FEB 25:** Stepping up efforts to strengthen grassroots governance, the Jammu and Kashmir government has identified land for 579 panchayat ghars across the Union

● Turn on Page 2

## ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY AGAINST ILLEGAL MINING IN J&K: DY CM

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, FEB 25:** Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today reiterated the Government's firm commitment to a zero-tolerance policy against illegal mining across Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that strict action will be taken against violators as well as the negligent officials.

During an inspection of the riverbed area near the 4th Bridge over



River Tawi, the Deputy Chief Minister took serious note of mining activities allegedly being carried out in violation of established norms.

The Deputy Chief Minister was accompanied by Director Mining, Chief Engineer PWD, ADC Jammu, ASP South Jammu and other senior officers.

Taking serious note of mining issues near the bridge, the Deputy Chief Minister directed the

● Turn on Page 2

## Will Use Money To Build Skill Centre In Kashmir: Nagi

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Roubie Nagi, an educator and activist recently awarded the prestigious Global Teacher Prize 2026, said on Wednesday that she plans to use the USD 1 million prize money to build a skill and learning centre in Kashmir.

Nagi, a Jammu-born artist and social worker, received the award at the World Government Summit in

● Turn on Page 2



## Rs 1,677-Crore Srinagar Airport Expansion Sparks Optimism Across Valley

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** The expansion of the civil enclave at Srinagar International Airport, approved at a cost of Rs 1,677 crore by the Union Cabinet, has triggered widespread optimism across Jammu and Kashmir, with stakeholders hailing it as a transformative step for the region's connectivity, tourism and overall

economy.

The project, spread over 73.18 acres, will feature a state-of-the-art terminal building covering 71,500 square metres and designed to handle up to 10 million passengers annually. It will also include an expanded apron with 15 aircraft parking bays and a multi-level car parking facility for 1,000 vehicles. The new terminal will blend mod-

ern design with Kashmir's traditional woodwork and craftsmanship, while incorporating eco-friendly elements such as rain-water harvesting and energy-efficient lighting.

Tourism operators described the expansion as a turning point for the Valley's travel industry. They said improved infrastructure

● Turn on Page 2

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

**Pollution-Free, Prosperous Jammu & Kashmir**

A Visionary Step by **Jenab Omar Abdullah** Chief Minister, J&K

**Towards Sustainable Development**

Foundation stones laid for **VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS** worth **About ₹191 Cr**

Construction of BAB-UL-SULTAN-UL-ARIFEEN City Gateway with Artistic Calligraphy Landmark at Rainawari Chowk <b>₹1.30 Cr</b>	Pollution abatement and conservation of River Jhelum at Chuntikul & Gowkadal areas <b>About ₹71 Cr</b>	Construction of Sewerage Treatment Plant for daily dry weather flow into Doodh Ganga, Alluchi-Bagh, Srinagar (DG-1) <b>About ₹51 Cr</b>	Technology intervention for dry weather flow into Doodh Ganga Nallah from Chadoora to Baghi-i-Mehtab (DG-2) <b>About ₹68 Cr</b>
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**Let's build a Sustainable Jammu & Kashmir together!**

DIPK: 11355/25 | Dated: 25-02-2026

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

**Vice President.....**

and area domination exercises carried out across the Valley.

Additional checkpoints have been established at key entry and exit points of the city, especially along routes leading to the university. Random vehicle checks and surprise inspections are being conducted to thwart any potential threat.

Traffic advisories have also been issued, with several roads connecting to the university venue diverted. Boulevard Road and Foreshore Road around the campus have been sealed to the general public as a precautionary measure.

Welcoming the Vice President's visit, Chief Minister Abdullah said students were eagerly awaiting the moment to receive their degrees and medals from him, describing the visit as significant for the academic community in the region.

**Omar Abdullah.....**

key water bodies in the Valley.

The projects, spanning five constituencies, focus on drainage upgrades, advanced sewage treatment facilities and pollution abatement measures aimed at rejuvenating the Jhelum River and Doodh Ganga. Officials said the initiatives are designed to enhance civic amenities, prevent waterlogging and build climate-resilient infrastructure in the rapidly expanding urban centres.

At Rainawari, the Chief Minister laid the foundation for the construction of Bab-ul-Sultan-ul-Arifeen, a landmark gateway featuring artistic calligraphy at Rainawari Chowk. The 1.30 crore project, to be executed by the Public Works (R&B) Department, aims to add aesthetic and cultural value to the historic locality.

At Brari-Nambal in Munawarabad, he launched a major pollution abatement and conservation project for the Jhelum River at Chuntikul and Gowkadal. The 70.90 crore initiative, to be implemented by the Urban Environmental Engineering Department under the Housing & Urban Development Department, includes the installation of an 8 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) to reduce untreated wastewater discharge into the river.

In a further push to curb pollution in Doodh Ganga, the Chief Minister laid the foundation for two additional STPs – a 14 MLD facility at Aloochoi-Bagh in Srinagar costing 50.60 crore, and a 6 MLD plant at Mochua in Budgam with an outlay of 67.72 crore. These facilities will treat dry weather flow from Chadoora to Baghi-i-Mehtab and significantly strengthen wastewater management in the region.

Addressing a modest gathering, the Chief Minister said the event was deliberately kept low-key in view of the holy month of Ramzan, though projects of such magnitude would ordinarily merit a large public function. He emphasised that Srinagar and Jammu, as capital cities, create the first impression of Jammu and Kashmir and must reflect modern infrastructure and planned development.

Highlighting recurring waterlogging issues, he said even brief spells of rain often submerge parts of the city due to inadequate drainage systems. He noted that through Central schemes, UT Capex, District Capex and other funding mechanisms, the government is working to comprehensively upgrade Srinagar's infrastructure.

Referring to erratic rainfall patterns linked to climate change, he stressed the need for infrastructure capable of handling extreme weather conditions. He also underscored the importance of ensuring that treated sewage improves river water quality rather than harms it, calling for the restoration of the Valley's lakes and canals to their former glory.

The Chief Minister further announced plans to develop major housing colonies in peripheral areas to ease congestion in the inner city, assuring that within the next three to three-and-a-half years, the government aims to present a transformed Srinagar with improved infrastructure and renewed character. Senior officials and public representatives were present on the occasion.

**Omar Abdullah.....**

beauty and grandeur of the newly inaugurated garden. The Chief Minister presented Certificates of Merit along with cash prizes, awarding 20,000 for first place, 10,000 for second, and 5,000 for third in each category.

Congratulating the winners, Omar Abdullah said such initiatives offer a meaningful platform for creative engagement and youth participation. He described Kashmir's gardens as living symbols of heritage, creativity and cultural pride, adding that through photography and digital reels, young people have beautifully captured the spirit of the garden and shared it with a wider audience.

He said encouraging artistic expression around nature and public spaces strengthens community bonds and promotes eco-consciousness. When young people use their talent to celebrate nature, he added, they become ambassadors of Kashmir's beauty

and values, underscoring the need for more such platforms to inspire innovation and cultural expression.

The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from both aspiring and seasoned photographers, reflecting a growing interest in nature-based creative pursuits and digital storytelling across the Valley. The ceremony was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Director Floriculture, Gardens and Parks Kashmir, and other senior officials of the department.

**Delhi-Katra.....**

Rajiv Kumar, Project Director, NHAI (Project Implementation Unit Jammu), said the expressway has been envisioned as a dedicated religious corridor connecting the Sri Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar with the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra, two of the country's most revered pilgrimage destinations.

Upon completion, the expressway will reduce the Delhi-Katra distance from 727 km to 588 km, slashing travel time from around 14 hours to nearly six hours. The corridor is expected to significantly enhance connectivity, offering pilgrims a faster road alternative alongside existing rail and air services.

Kumar admitted that only five to six months of effective work could be carried out last year as security concerns led to manpower shortages, with many workers leaving project sites. Additionally, heavy rainfall washed away two bridges, disrupting supply lines and slowing progress.

Strategically, the expressway runs parallel to sensitive stretches near the International Border and is expected to facilitate faster troop deployment and improved logistics for defence forces in Jammu and Kashmir.

Advanced segmental bridge construction technology, previously used in major urban infrastructure projects, is being employed in key stretches, including a 21.5-km elevated corridor along the Jammu-Samba section. Officials said the work was executed without disrupting heavy traffic movement.

With the annual Amarnath Yatra approaching, authorities have set a target to complete nearly 30 km of the Jammu-Kathua stretch before the pilgrimage begins later this year.

Once operational, the Delhi-Katra Expressway is expected to emerge as a transformative corridor, strengthening regional connectivity, promoting religious tourism and enhancing strategic mobility in the region.

**First-Ever Green.....**

in strengthening scientific infrastructure in Jammu.

The upcoming Biological, Chemical and Quality Control and Quality Assurance (QCQA) block will complement the existing campus by providing advanced laboratory and support facilities to scientists and researchers. The minister said the complex would be the first green construction of its kind in Jammu, incorporating non-fossil energy resources and modern research infrastructure in line with global standards.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Singh hailed the conferment of the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar by the President of India on the "Team Aroma Mission" under IIIM, terming it a national recognition of the "Purple Revolution" that began in Jammu & Kashmir. He said large-scale lavender cultivation under the mission has created sustainable livelihood opportunities for farmers and youth, particularly in remote areas, and transformed the region into a hub of aroma-based agri-economy.

Highlighting the significance of the new building, the minister said the enhanced biological, chemical and QCQA facilities would strengthen the institute's capacity to produce and export high-quality medicines, reinforcing India's position in the global pharmaceutical sector.

Referring to concerns over drug abuse in parts of Jammu & Kashmir and Punjab, Dr Singh said the institute's unique Cannabis project under the PPP model aims to channel such substances for regulated medicinal use, including pain management. He said the initiative would promote health-oriented research and send a constructive societal message.

The minister also announced that a new guest house would be constructed at IIIM – the first of its kind across the chain of CSIR institutions in the country – to facilitate academic collaboration and scientific exchange.

Earlier, IIIM Director Dr Zabeer Ahmed said the building has been sanctioned at an estimated cost of 54.55 crore and will come up over approximately 7,500 square metres. The project is expected to be completed within 18 months.

He said the block will house fully equipped laboratories for plant sciences, pre-clinical animal research, natural product chemistry, and accredited quality control and quality assurance sections, along with conference halls, meeting rooms, utilities and adequate parking facilities, ensuring a conducive environment for cutting-edge research.

Officials said the facility will significantly

enhance the institute's capabilities in modern drug discovery and natural product research, further strengthening India's scientific and pharmaceutical landscape.

**J&K Identifies.....**

Territory, with 204 already completed, officials said on Wednesday.

The Panchayati Raj Department had fixed a target of constructing 640 panchayat ghars to enhance infrastructure at the village level. Of the identified sites, work has been allotted in 435 cases, while construction of 204 buildings has been completed so far.

Reviewing progress, Director Panchayati Raj Sham Lal directed district officers to ensure that the remaining structures are completed strictly by March 31. He described panchayat ghars as vital public assets meant to serve as venues for gram sabha meetings and as designated workplaces for panchayat secretaries and staff to streamline administrative functioning at the grassroots.

In a parallel move to institutionalise training and capacity building, the government has established 32 Panchayat Learning Centres (PLCs) across Jammu and Kashmir. The director instructed Assistant Commissioners Panchayats to make the centres fully operational and to prepare short documentary films highlighting achievements of villages where PLCs are functional to promote awareness and facilitate exposure visits.

Stressing the need for effective planning, he said Gram Panchayat Development Plans must be prepared with full momentum and uploaded on the e-GramSwaraj portal immediately after formal instructions are issued.

Referring to the 'Mera Gaon, Meri Dhara' initiative, he said the dedicated portal is aimed at documenting and showcasing the unique identity of selected villages, with officers asked to upload photographs and concise write-ups on heritage, historical landmarks, notable personalities and other distinctive features.

On the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana, the director directed that, in coordination with the Labour Department, registration of eligible labourers be completed by March 15. (AGENCIES)

**Will Use Money.....**

Dubai, which was handed over by Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum.

Global Teacher Prize, a USD 1 million annual award launched by the Varkey Foundation in collaboration with UNESCO, recognises teachers who made exceptional contributions to the profession.

The largest prize in the world for educators' awardee was selected among 5,000 nominations and applications received from 139 countries, according to the Global Teacher Prize website.

In an interaction with reporters here, Nagi expressed her vision for the centre, aiming to bring together children, youth, and women under one roof to facilitate learning.

"I want to open a very good institutional skill-cum-learning centre in Kashmir, where people learning at different places can come together under one umbrella." Nagi, whose Rouble Nagi Art Foundation has undertaken various initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir for the betterment of the lives of the people in the Union territory. She visited the LoC village of Amrohi in Tangdhar, in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, with the support of the Army.

She distributed blankets among needy families and interacted with students. Nagi also said she will work to get more learning centres in villages along the LoC to empower women and youth.

Her foundation already operates education and skill centres in various parts of India, and she would continue to impart learning and skill education.

"If we were thinking of doing ten things, we can now do 15. You all know my work, and that will continue," she added.

Reflecting on receiving the award, Nagi said, when you receive recognition on a huge platform, apart from responsibility, you also get encouragement.

"This prize is for the whole team, all the teachers, and for the vision of Viksit Bharat. We all need to come together and support each other to bring every child towards education, which is the most important thing in every child's life," she said.

Nagi said the award's recognition should not be credited to a single individual. This award is for all the teachers and children who have been a part of this movement.

It strengthens the respect for teachers across the country, she added.

**Zero tolerance.....**

Chief Engineer, PWD, to register a formal complaint and lodge an FIR to ensure stringent legal action against those involved.

"Presently, all mining blocks are non-functional and no extraction activity should be allowed. Any operation within this prohibited zone is illegal and will invite strict action," the Deputy Chief Minister stated.

He emphasized that, as per the existing mining regulations, no extraction is permitted within 500 meters upstream or down-

stream of a bridge. "This is very unfortunate that mining activities are carried out under the bridge and the concerned have failed to take action. We have adopted a zero-tolerance approach and will not allow such unlawful operations," he added.

The Deputy Chief Minister informed that the Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, who serves as Chairman of the District Task Force on Mining, along with the Senior Superintendent of Police, Jammu and the District Mineral Officer (DMO), have been directed to ensure strict enforcement of mining regulations.

He made it clear that no vehicle shall be allowed to transport mining material without valid documentation.

He further directed the immediate seizure of vehicles involved in illegal transportation, imposition of penalties and prompt initiation of appropriate legal proceedings against the violators.

Expressing concern over reports of extraction from non-functional or unauthorized blocks, the Deputy Chief Minister ordered that responsibility be fixed and accountability ensured. He reiterated that mining can only be undertaken in duly identified and approved blocks after completion of all required formalities.

Voicing displeasure over lapses in enforcement, he remarked that officials must act responsibly and proactively. "It is unacceptable that senior authorities are compelled to intervene due to negligence at the field level," he said.

He also underlined that no department, including those engaged in flood control or dredging works, shall undertake any activity without prior approval from the competent authority. Unauthorized deployment of machinery in riverbeds will not be tolerated, he added.

The Deputy Chief Minister expressed confidence that the inspection would lead to visible improvements on the ground and assured the public that the administration remains fully committed to safeguard the natural resources, upholding the rule of law.

During the tour, the Deputy Chief Minister also took stock of ongoing works at the 4th Bridge and called for expediting the pace of work for timely completion.

**Rs 1,677-Crore.....**

and enhanced passenger capacity would encourage more domestic and international visitors to choose Kashmir as a preferred destination.

Hoteliers noted that a seamless airport experience creates a lasting first impression for tourists, adding that the project would directly benefit hotels, guesthouses, restaurants and transport services while generating employment for local youth.

Business leaders, including representatives of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir, termed the airport an

economic gateway for the Union Territory. They said the expansion would attract investment, strengthen trade and retail sectors, and create fresh opportunities across multiple industries.

Travellers also welcomed the development, saying modern facilities and faster processing would make journeys smoother and more comfortable, reflecting positively on Kashmir's image as a safe and well-equipped tourist destination.

Local residents expressed hope that the economic benefits would reach grassroots levels, supporting taxi operators, shopkeepers, artisans and tour guides who depend heavily on tourist inflow.

Reacting to the Cabinet decision, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the move would strengthen connectivity and give a boost to Jammu and Kashmir's economy, while Defence Minister Rajnath Singh described it as a landmark step towards modernising aviation infrastructure in the region.

The expansion is expected to be completed in phases over the coming years, with stakeholders hopeful it will usher in a new era of growth and opportunity for the Valley.

**J&K Police.....**

debut during the ongoing Khelo India Winter Games in Gulmarg, where it has been deployed to secure athletes, officials and visitors at elevations reaching nearly 14,000 feet.

Senior police officials said the unit has been constituted to respond to evolving terror threats in high-altitude zones, where militants often attempt to exploit harsh weather and rugged terrain to evade security forces. Drawn primarily from the Special Operations Group (SOG), the Snow Leopard squad functions as a dedicated wing trained specifically for snow and mountain warfare.

The personnel underwent over six months of rigorous and specialised training in coordination with elite formations, including the Army's Para Commandos and the Greyhounds Special Forces, to sharpen combat readiness and operational synergy.

Officials said the squad has been trained to operate in sub-zero temperatures plunging to minus 20 degrees Celsius, low-oxygen environments, dense forests and avalanche-prone terrain. In addition to counter-terror roles, members have also received disaster management training to effectively respond to avalanches, landslides and other natural emergencies common in mountainous areas.

Comprising more than 100 highly trained personnel, the Snow Leopard squad is now equipped for deployment across Jammu and Kashmir wherever specialised high-altitude security operations are required, officials added.

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## SANJY-2026: DC Srinagar, SSP visit Yatra Transit Camp Pantha Chowk

Take onsite stock of preparations to augment facilities for pilgrims and ensure seamless conduct of annual yatra

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** In connection with the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo along with Senior Superintendent of Police, Sundep Chakravarthy on Tuesday visited the Yatra Transit Camp at Pantha Chowk to take onsite stock of the preparations being undertaken for the smooth and seamless conduct of annual SANJY-2026.

The DC reviewed arrangements related to registration, accommodation, bedding, sanitation, drinking water supply, electricity, healthcare facilities, security deployment, traffic management and other essential services at the Transit Camp, a halt site for pilgrims traveling to the Shri Amarnathji cave. He also took stock of other amenities to ensure they meet the needs of the yatri.

The DC also inspected the readiness of Yatri Facilitation Center, which will handle critical services such as e-KYC verification, RFID card distribution, and registration to streamline the pilgrimage process.



The DC directed the concerned departments to undertake proactive measures for necessary augmentation of facilities well ahead of the commencement of the Shri

Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026 to ensure timely completion of all works and to maintain close coordination for the smooth and efficient management of the Yatra. He stressed upon

maintaining high standards of hygiene, safety and public convenience to facilitate a hassle-free stay for the visiting pilgrims.

The DC also directed the Super-

intending Engineers of R&B and PHE Departments to ascertain requirements on ground for further facilitation of the Yatri.

Emphasizing pilgrim comfort, the DC stressed the need for seamless coordination among departments to enhance services at the Camp. Special attention was laid on ensuring proper sanitation facilities, availability of clean drinking water, electricity and setting up of Langars (community kitchens) to provide nutritious meals.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Aadil Fareed, Joint Commissioner SMC, Syed Abul Qasim, Superintending Engineer R&B, Tatheer Manzoor, Superintending Engineer, Jal Shakti, Anbreen Anjum, SDM East, Zubair Ahmad, Deputy Director Information, Mohammad Rafiq Zulla, DPO Panthachowk Zohaib Ahmad, DSP Traffic, Suhail Ahmad, Tehsildar Pantha Chowk, Muzamil Zaman, Chief Sanitation Officer, Mudasir Ahmad Bandy, & other senior Officers of Police and District Administration Srinagar accompanied the DC and the SSP during the visit.

## IUST Celebrates International Mother Tongue Day with Grand Literary Programme

■ GULFAM BARJI

**AWANTIPORA, FEB 25:** The Habba Khatoon Centre for Kashmiri Language and Literature at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) in collaboration with the Young Dramatists Society and the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture & Languages organized a grand programme to commemorate International Mother Tongue Day at the university campus.

The event commenced with an inaugural session at the Conference Hall, where Dr. Afshana delivered the welcome address and greeted the distinguished guests. Felicitations were presented to invited dignitaries, followed by remarks from Prof. Afroz Ahmad Bisati, Dean School of Humanities & Social Sciences,



and Prof. A.H. Moon, Dean Academic Affairs, who highlighted the significance of preserving and promoting mother languages in contemporary times.

The Guest of Honour, Prof. Majrooh Rashid, and the Chief Guest, Prof. Shafi Shauq, delivered insightful addresses emphasizing the central role of language in shaping cultural identity, safeguarding heritage, and transmitting values to future generations.

On the occasion, Prof. Shafi Shauq, Prof. Rashid Majrooh, Dr. Syed Iftikhar Ahmad (JKACL), and Dr. Irshad Shamsi (A.S. College) were felicitated for their outstanding contributions to the promotion of Kashmiri language, literature, and culture.

The programme concluded with a presidential address by Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, IUST, who stressed the urgent need to preserve and strengthen the Kashmiri mother tongue. The vote of thanks was presented by Dr. Masroor Muzaffar.

The inaugural session was followed by a Kashmiri literary session chaired by Prof. Shafi Shauq, featuring special lectures, short story presentations, and poetry recitations by eminent writers and scholars. A notable highlight of the event was the performance of Ladishah by Mr. Sheikh Shuja, based on the works of noted writers, which received wide appreciation from the audience.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from academicians, students, writers, and language enthusiasts, reaffirming a collective commitment to preserving and promoting Kashmir's rich linguistic and literary heritage.

## DGP Prabhat Cracks Down On Terror Ecosystem In Budgam, Orders Aggressive Intelligence-Driven Operations

■ HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**BUDGAM, FEB 25:** Director General of Police (DGP) J&K, Nalin Prabhat, on Wednesday conducted a high-level security review in Budgam district and called for intensified, intelligence-led operations to dismantle the terror ecosystem and its support networks.

DGP Prabhat, chaired a comprehensive Security Review Meeting in Budgam to assess the prevailing security scenario and operational preparedness of the district Police. The meeting was attended by Shri S.J.M. Geelani, IPS; Special DGP Coordination; IGP Kashmir Zone Shri V.K. Birdi, IPS; DIG Central Kashmir Range Shri Rajeev Pandey, IPS; SSP Budgam Shri Nikhil Borkar, IPS; besides Additional SP Budgam, all SDPOs, DySSPSOG, SHO, DOs, and other senior officers of District Budgam.

During the review meeting, SSP Budgam presented detailed briefing on counter terror operations, law and order management, measures to prevent crime, action against drug trafficking, area domination plan and overall security scenario of the district.

The DGP reviewed ongoing kinetic and non kinetic operations, anti terror strategies and measures to dismantle overall separatist and terror ecosystem in the district. He stressed for actionable intelligence generation by field officers and directed to maintain sustained operational momentum. Highlighting, the current security challenges, DGP directed officers to undertake non traditional, non conformist and modern tactics to neutralize Pakistani terrorists.

He called for focused approach and renewed efforts against terrorists, their support networks to eliminate terrorism and establishing peace in the district.

To strengthen the overall security grid, the DGP emphasized on maintaining seamless coordination with sister agencies, effective area domination plan and surveillance on traditional terror sympathisers and separatists network of the district. While reviewing law and order, he stressed on taking preventive measures against miscreants, engaging peace loving citizens in day to day activities of policing and adopting measures to bridge the gap between police and public. Before the conclusion of the meeting, the DGP urged officers to continue counter terror operations in the area and remain committed to establish long lasting peace and stability in the district. (KNC)

## SKUAST-K Initiative Strengthens Livelihood Support for Tribal Farmers in Kupwara

150 Tribal Farmers Receive Fodder and Agricultural Inputs at KVK Kupwara

■ DR. AB QAYOOM

**KUPWARA, FEB 25:** The Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kupwara organized a Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) Input Distribution Programme aimed at strengthening the livelihoods of tribal farmers in the district. The programme was conducted in collaboration with the Regional Fodder Station Shuhama, Ganderbal, and the Dryland Agriculture Research Station (DARS) Budgam under the aegis of the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir. The event was inaugurated by Prof. G. M. Bhat, Head of KVK Kupwara, who welcomed the chief guest Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-Kashmir, along with officials from collaborating institutions. Around 150 tribal farmers from various villages of Kupwara district participated in the programme and received agricultural and fodder inputs to enhance livestock-based farming and ensure fodder security. Addressing the gathering, Director Extension Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth emphasized the importance of scientific fodder cultivation in strengthening the livestock sector, particularly in tribal and hilly regions. She highlighted that improved fodder management practices can significantly enhance farm productivity and income while helping farmers overcome seasonal fodder shortages during winter months. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Aijaz Ahmad Lone from DARS Budgam elaborated on dryland agricultural technologies and crop management practices suitable for rainfed farming condi-



tions prevalent in Kupwara district.

During the programme, annual and perennial fodder grass seeds were distributed among farmers by officials of the Regional Fodder Station Shuhama, while improved agricultural inputs were also provided by DARS Budgam to promote sustainable farming practices. Showkat Masoodi, Head of Civil Society Kupwara, appreciated the initiative and encouraged farmers to adopt modern agricultural technologies introduced by SKUAST-Kashmir to improve productivity and resilience in changing climatic conditions. Senior scientists of KVK Kup-

wara, including Dr. Firdous Ahmad Raina, Dr. Shahid Ahmad Hakeem, and Dr. Faisal Nabi Bhat, guided farmers on scientific fodder cultivation, balanced livestock nutrition, and effective utilization of the distributed inputs. The programme concluded with an interactive session where farmers shared field-level challenges and received expert recommendations. The initiative is expected to play a significant role in improving fodder availability and strengthening livelihood security among tribal farming communities in Kupwara district.

## DIPR conducts drug de-addiction awareness programme at GDC Samba

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SAMBA, FEB 25:** A Drug De-Addiction Awareness Programme was organised by the District Information Office Samba at Pandit Prem Nath Dogra Government Degree College with the aim of sensitising students about the serious consequences of substance abuse and motivating them to adopt a healthy and responsible lifestyle.

The programme was held under the banner of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, reinforcing the government's commitment to building a drug-free society.

Through engaging nukkad natak, skits, cultural performances and motivational songs, students were encouraged to take a firm stand against drug abuse and become ambassadors of positive change in society. The cultural programme was presented by the artists of Saraswati Sangeet Art and Culture Group, Samba, conveying the message "Say No to Drugs" in an engaging and relatable manner.

Principal of the college, Dr. Nirlape Kour, faculty members and a large number of students attended the programme. The college administration appreciated the initiative of the department and emphasised that such awareness activities play a crucial role in guiding youth towards constructive and meaningful pursuits.

## Naseer Ahmad Wani Chairs Meet, Reviews School Readiness 2026

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Following the reopening of schools for classes 9th to 12th across the Kashmir Division, the Director School Education Kashmir, Mr. Naseer Ahmad Wani (JKAS), today convened a high-level meeting of all Chief Education Officers (CEOs) of Kashmir division to review the ground

arrangements and assess the overall scenario after the winter break.

During the meeting, the Director undertook a detailed review of the basic facilities at the grass-root level and sought comprehensive reports regarding school visits conducted on the first day of reopening. He emphasized the need for effective monitoring and coordination to ensure that all

institutions are fully prepared to provide a safe, welcoming and academically conducive environment for students. The Director issued clear directions to ensure that all necessary arrangements are in place for students of classes 1st to 8th, who are scheduled to attend schools on Monday following the winter vacation. He directed all CEOs, Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs) and Cluster

Heads to conduct intensive visits to schools on Monday, personally welcome the students, and oversee the arrangements on the ground. Mr. Wani stressed that every school must be covered through field visits and that officers should interact directly with students to understand and address their concerns. He instructed that any issue raised at the institutional level must be

resolved promptly to ensure the smooth commencement of the academic session 2026.

During the meeting Mr. Wani directed all the CEOs to conduct review of their respective districts with respect to various issues highlighted in the meeting. On the occasion, the Director School Education Kashmir stated, "Our collective endeavour must be to ensure that every child

returns to a well-prepared, secure and academically vibrant school environment. Field-level monitoring and timely redressal of issues shall remain our top priority to guarantee a smooth and successful academic session." During the meeting, the Personnel Officer in DSEK, Dr. Iqbal Hussain Mir, briefed the Director regarding other current departmental and administrative

matters. Joint Directors of the School Education Department, Mr. Syed Shabir Ahmad, Mr. Hakeem Tanveer and Mr. Muhammad Mushtaq, Chief Accounts Officer Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Khanday, and the Additional Secretary, Legal DSEK, Mtr. Rifat Jabben also attended the meeting and apprised the chair of the progress of ongoing activities.

# Budgam Administration bids Farewell to outgoing Deputy Commissioner

Officers laud his visionary leadership and people-centric governance

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, FEB 25:** District Administration Budgam today organized a warm farewell function in honour of the outgoing Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, on his transfer to district Anantnag as the Deputy Commissioner.

The function was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Budgam, Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Budgam, all Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs), all Tehsildars, and officers and officials from various departments.

During the occasion, several senior officers shared their experiences of working under the leadership of Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, appreciating his commitment, efficiency, and people-centric approach. They remarked that he carried out his responsibilities with utmost sincerity, dedication, and professionalism, ensuring that all administrative



tasks were handled effectively and within stipulated timelines. His ability to maintain transparency, responsiveness, and strong inter-departmental coordination was widely acknowledged and praised.

While speaking at the farewell, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the entire district administration team for their constant support, dedication, and collaboration throughout his tenure in Budgam.

He acknowledged the valuable contributions of officers at every level, stating that the achievements during his term were the result of collective efforts rather than individual merit.

He also extended his sincere thanks to the people of Budgam for their warmth, trust, and cooperation.

The event concluded on a heartfelt note, with warm wishes, gratitude, and sincere prayers for the outgoing DC's continued success and well-being in his new assignment.

## Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament held at GDC Shopian

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, FEB 25:** An inspiring and intellectually stimulating Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament was today organized by GDC Shopian in collaboration with Mera Yuva Bharat Shopian at Government Degree College, Shopian with the theme "50 Years of Emergency-Lessons for India".

Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament is a platform for young voices to engage in national discussions and contribute to shaping the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. It fosters leadership, civic participation, and meaningful policy dialogue, enabling students to deliberate on key national issues.



The venue was beautifully decorated to resemble a Parliament, with the Speaker, Dr. Aftab Ahmed in the Chair presiding over the proceedings.

The event featured two full-fledged sessions of the House along with an engaging Zero Hour, providing participants the opportunity to raise issues and present their viewpoints.

The young participants delivered impactful speeches on various contemporary topics, reflecting confidence, awareness and a deep understanding of democratic values. They eloquently threw light on 50 years of Independence, highlighting the nation's journey, achievements and the responsibilities of citizens in strengthening democracy.

The programme was graced by MLA, Zainapora, Showkat Hussain Ganie. On the occasion, he threw light on the theme of the event and appreciated organisers for providing such a meaningful platform to the youth.

SSP, Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary also attended the program and emphasized that participation in such activities strengthens leadership qualities, enhances public speaking skills and prepares young minds to work hard and shine in their future endeavors.

Principal, GDC, Prof. Tariq Ahmed, Dy. CEO, Aijaz Ahmed, Shopian, BDO, Shakeel Ahmed, NSS, Coordinator, GDC, Dr. Mudassir Iqbal, faculty members, students and youth in large numbers participated in the programme.

## District-Level Volleyball Championship Kicks Off at Kupwara

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA, FEB 25:** District-level Volleyball Championship under the Youth Engagement Programme commenced today at Natnussa in Kupwara, witnessing enthusiastic participation from around 240 players representing 24 blocks of the district.

The championship is being organised under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, as part of sustained efforts to channelize the energy of youth towards constructive and competitive sporting activities. The event was formally inaugurated by Assistant Commissioner Kupwara, (ACR) Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad in the presence of DYSSO Kupwara, Nazir Ahmed and officials of the Youth Services & Sports Department.

Speaking on the occasion, the ACR highlighted the importance of sports in fostering discipline, teamwork, and a spirit of healthy competition among youth. He emphasized that such platforms not only nurture sporting talent at the grassroots level but also contribute to the overall physical and mental well-being of young participants.

The Youth Services & Sports Department has devised a comprehensive calendar of sports activities across the district to ensure sustained engagement of youth in positive pursuits.

The initiative aims to provide equal opportunities to aspiring sports persons from all blocks and to identify promising talent for higher-level competitions.

The championship will continue over the coming days, with teams competing in a vibrant display of skill, sportsmanship, and unity, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for sports across Kupwara district.

## Shahzad Alam assumes charge as Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Chairs introductory meeting

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, FEB 25:** Shahzad Alam today assumed charge as Deputy Commissioner Kulgam. Soon after taking over charge, the Deputy Commissioner chaired an introductory meeting with district and sectoral officers at the Conference Hall mini-secretariat Secretariat.

During the meeting, he interacted with officers and reviewed the overall functioning of various departments. Emphasising coordinated efforts and responsive governance, he called upon officers to work with dedication, transparency, and accountability to ensure effective



implementation of government schemes and timely redressal of public grievances. He stressed the importance of strengthening public service delivery mechanisms and maintain-

ing close coordination among departments for achieving developmental goals of the district. Senior officers from various line departments attended the meeting.

## Sheep Husbandry Department Shopian achieves major Milestones in 2025-26, boosts Rural Livelihoods

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, FEB 25:** Sheep Husbandry Department, Shopian has registered remarkable progress during the financial year 2025-26, reinforcing its pivotal role in strengthening the rural economy and ensuring sustainable livelihoods for sheep and goat rearers of the district. Through targeted investments, scientific interventions, and large-scale service delivery, the department has achieved measurable outcomes across income generation, employment, livestock health, productivity, fod-

der development, and wool marketing.

A total of 185 income generating sheep units were established under various government schemes with a financial outlay of Rs 165.18 lakh, resulting in direct employment generation for 452 persons and a substantial enhancement in mutton and wool production. These units were established under the Integrated Sheep Development Scheme, HADP, JKICP, RKVY, Tribal Sub Plan, and National Livestock Mission, collectively strengthening the livestock production base of Shopian. To promote adoption of

scientific sheep husbandry practices, the department conducted 20 awareness, training, exposure, and demonstration programmes under ATMA-SMAE and ASCAD components, benefiting 505 sheep farmers, who were sensitized on improved livestock management, disease control, and productivity enhancement.

Livestock health coverage was implemented on an extensive scale, ensuring disease prevention and public health safety, with 20,785 animals treated during the year. The department provided 3,72,272 lakh dosing and 2,75,328 lakh vac-

cinations.

Free FMD and PPR vaccinations and provision of medicines to farmers at 50-75% subsidized rates significantly reduced disease incidence and economic losses for farmers during the ongoing year.

Productivity enhancement efforts were further reinforced through the distribution of 116 elite government breeding rams among progressive breeders, contributing to mutton production of 7.59 lakh kilograms and wool production of 2.24 lakh kilograms during the period.

To support sustainable livestock

productivity and fodder security, the department distributed 453 fodder seed kits free of cost, comprising 224 kits of Perennial Rye Grass and 229 kits of Perennial Red Clover, strengthening the hortipastoral system of the district.

Overall, the achievements of the Sheep Husbandry Department, Shopian during 2025-26 clearly demonstrate a result-oriented, farmer-centric, and development-driven approach, reflecting a focused approach towards genetic upgradation, scientific sheep rearing, and long-term productivity improvement in the district.

## Director Agriculture Kashmir inaugurates Exhibition cum Awareness Programme for GI-Tagged Saffron

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, today inaugurated an Exhibition cum Awareness and Promotion Programme dedicated to GI-tagged Kashmir Saffron at the Agriculture Complex, Lalmandi, Srinagar.

The event was organized by the Spices Board of India, Regional Office, Srinagar (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India). It aimed to showcase the exceptional qualities of Kashmir saffron, create greater awareness among stakeholders, and promote its international market potential following the award of the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

In his inaugural address, the Director highlighted the various initiatives undertaken by the Department of Agriculture for the promotion and development of GI-tagged saffron. He reaffirmed the department's full commitment to providing technical support, guid-

ance, and assistance to saffron farmers to improve productivity, enhance production, and strengthen market linkages. He said that Saffron is our niche heritage crop, and Kashmir has the proud distinction of producing one of the finest and most premium saffrons

in the world. The GI tag has opened new global opportunities for our saffron, ensuring its authenticity and commanding higher value in international markets, he added. He called for a unified and collective approach among all stakeholders to further strengthen and promote the saffron sector.

The Director emphasized that the GI tag is playing a key role in enabling saffron growers to receive remunerative prices, thereby ensuring economic sustainability and long-term viability of saffron cultivation in the region.

Sartaj Ahmad Shah directed all concerned officers to ensure proactive outreach so that every saffron farmer is fully aware of the

departmental schemes, programmes, and support measures available for the advancement and modernization of the saffron industry.

Earlier, the Director visited various exhibition stalls set up by the India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre (IISKSTC), Spices Board of India, and private entrepreneurs. These stalls displayed saffron products, cultivation practices, post-harvest techniques, and value-addition opportunities.

The programme was attended by representatives from the Spices Board of India, officers from IISKSTC and the Agriculture Department, and saffron growers.

This initiative reflects the strong collaboration between the Department of Agriculture Kashmir and the Spices Board of India to protect, preserve, and globally promote Kashmir's iconic saffron while empowering farmers through better awareness, improved market access, and sustainable development practices.

## DSWO Srinagar organizes Training-cum orientation Programme under NMBA

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** District Social Welfare Office (DSWO) Srinagar successfully organized a Training-cum orientation Programme under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) at Government College for Women, M. A. Road, Srinagar.

The programme was conducted with the objective of creating awareness about substance abuse prevention and strengthening to build capacities and enhance institutional mechanisms for early identification, counselling, and rehabilitation of individuals affected by drug abuse. The event witnessed the active participation of Assistant Professors and esteemed members of the college faculty.

During the programme, a medical expert delivered a comprehensive presentation on the harmful effects of drug abuse, early warning signs, preventive strategies, and available de-addiction facilities. The session emphasized the critical role of edu-



cational institutions in addressing substance abuse among youth.

A clinical Psychologist from ATF Psychiatric Hospital, Rainawari also addressed the gathering and highlighted the psychological dimensions of addiction, behavioural indicators, and the importance of timely counselling and psychosocial intervention. The expert elaborated on the Drug De-Addiction Programme framework and discussed strategies for providing emotional and psychological support to vulnerable individuals.

An interactive question and answer session was held during which

faculty members actively engaged with the experts, raising important queries regarding identification of at-risk students, referral mechanisms, counselling procedures, and community involvement. The experts provided detailed responses, making the session highly informative and impactful.

The programme concluded with a felicitation segment acknowledging the contributions of the resource persons and appreciating the cooperation of the college administration and faculty for their active support in furthering the objectives of Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

# Javid Dar inaugurates Modernised Cattle Feed Plant at Bari Brahmana, Wool Trade Mandi at Kartholi, Samba

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SAMBA, FEB 25:** In a significant push to strengthen the livestock and agriculture sectors, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, on Tuesday inaugurated the modernised Cattle Feed Plant at Bari Brahmana and the newly developed Wool Trade Mandi at Kartholi in Samba district.

MLA Vijaypur, Chander Prakash Ganga, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Agriculture Production Department, Dr Ashish Chandra Verma, Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta, Director Animal Husbandry Jammu Sanjay Gupta, Director Horticulture Jammu, Director Sheep Husbandry Jammu and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

The Minister was informed that the modernization and upgradation of the Cattle Feed Plant has been executed by the



Jammu and Kashmir Agro Industries Development Corporation Limited at a project cost of 499 lakh.

The plant has been upgraded with a fully automatic PLC-based automation system enabling centralized process control, auto-

matic batching and micro-dosing systems for precise ingredient proportioning. It also features online monitoring of moisture, temperature and production flow, ensuring improved efficiency and quality control.

Speaking on the occasion, the

Minister said that with controlled formulation technology, the plant now operates on scientific feed manufacturing principles, ensuring high precision within minimal tolerance limits. He stated that the modernization will substantially enhance the productivity,

operational efficiency and quality assurance standards.

Javid Dar said such initiatives would provide farmers easy access to high-quality cattle feed, leading to better livestock health and increased milk production. He reiterated the government's commitment towards equipping the farming community with modern infrastructure and necessary facilities to strengthen the livestock and agriculture sectors.

The Minister also inaugurated the Wool Trade Mandi at Kartholi, developed under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) at a cost of 1 crore. He said the Mandi would provide farmers and sheep rearers a dedicated marketing platform to secure remunerative prices for their wool and related products.

Emphasising the need for comprehensive livestock support, the Minister stressed establishment of a veterinary centre in the area to provide improved healthcare services for animals.

## Javid Dar Inaugurates Pesticide Lab, Wool Centre in Kathua; asks for strict surveillance on livestock, poultry entering J&K

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA, FEB 25:** In a significant boost to agricultural quality control and livestock infrastructure, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, on Tuesday inaugurated a state-of-the-art Pesticide Testing Laboratory and a Common Facilitation Centre (CFC) for Wool in Kathua district.

He also inspected the Fish and Poultry Feed Plant and the Rinderpest Checkpost at Lakhampur.

MLA Kathua, Dr Bharat Bhushan, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Agriculture Production Department, Dr Ashish Chandra Verma, Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma, Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta, Director Animal Husbandry Jammu Sanjay Gupta, Director Horticulture Jammu, Director Sheep Husbandry Jammu and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

The Minister said the Pesticide Testing Laboratory has been established at an estimated cost of 481.25 lakh under NABARD funding. It is the second such facility in Jammu division and the third in the Union Territory.

He said the laboratory will strengthen the enforcement mechanisms by detecting spurious pesticides, verifying active ingredient composition and ensuring formulations remain within prescribed safety limits. "This facility will safeguard the farmers from substandard inputs and enhance crop productivity in the region," he stated.

Inaugurating the Common Facilitation Centre for Wool, the Minister said Kathua district has more than five lakh sheep and goats, indicating vast potential in the wool sector. The centre will support sheep and goat rearers through improved processing, value addition and better market linkage.

During inspection of the Fish and Poultry Feed Plant, the Minister directed the officials to ensure timely execution of the project and strict adherence to technical parameters while preparing Detailed Project Reports (DPRs). He emphasised assessing long-term viability and future potential before project approval.

At Lakhampur Rinderpest Checkpost, he instructed the officials to maintain strict surveillance on livestock and poultry entering the Union Territory from outside. "There must be no compromise on the health parameters fixed by the department," he said, directing thorough checking of poultry birds and cattle to prevent disease transmission.

The Minister also interacted with the farmers and listened to their grievances, issuing on-the-spot directions to concerned departments for resolution of issues. He further directed the officials to submit a comprehensive report on buildings damaged due to recent floods for necessary action.

Reiterating the government's commitment towards strengthening agricultural infrastructure and protecting farmers' interests, Javid Dar said that quality assurance, disease control and scientific planning remain central to sustainable rural development in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Director SEK reviews Post-Winter reopening arrangements

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Following the reopening of schools for classes 9th to 12th across the Kashmir Division, the Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani, today convened a high-level meeting of all Chief Education Officers (CEOs) of Kashmir division to review the ground arrangements and assess the overall scenario after the winter break.

During the meeting, the Director undertook a detailed review of the basic facilities at the grassroots level and sought comprehensive reports regarding school visits conducted on the first day of reopening.

He emphasized the need for effective monitoring and coordination to ensure that all institutions are fully prepared to provide a safe, welcoming and academically conducive environment for students.

The Director issued clear directions to ensure that all necessary arrangements are in place for students of classes 1st to 8th, who are scheduled to attend schools on Monday following the winter vacation.

He directed all CEOs, Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs) and Cluster Heads to conduct intensive visits to schools on Monday, personally welcome the students, and oversee the arrangements on the ground.

The Director stressed that every school must be covered through field visits and that officers should interact directly with students to understand and address their concerns. He instructed that any issue raised at the institutional level must be resolved promptly to ensure the smooth commencement of the academic session 2026.

During the meeting, he directed all the CEO's to conduct review of their respective districts with respect to various issues highlighted in the meeting.

On the occasion, the Director School Education Kashmir stated, "Our collective endeavour must be to ensure that every child returns to a well-prepared, secure and academically vibrant school environment. Field-level monitoring and timely redressal of issues shall remain our top priority to guarantee a smooth and successful academic session."

Joint Directors of the School Education Department, Chief Accounts Officer and Additional Secretary, Legal DSEK also attended the meeting and apprised the chair of the progress of ongoing activities.

## District Admin Baramulla bids farewell to outgoing DC

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA, FEB 25:** A grand farewell function was organised in honour of the outgoing Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, at Dak Bungalow Baramulla today.

The farewell function witnessed overwhelming gathering of senior officers including DIG North Kashmir, Maqsood ul Zaman, SSP Baramulla, Gurinderpal Singh, SSP Sopore, Iftkhar Talib along with all district and sectoral officers of the District Administration Baramulla who assembled to bid a warm and respectful farewell.

Speaking on the occasion, DIG NKR lauded the outgoing DC for his exemplary leadership, dedication, and administrative acumen, describing his tenure as marked by professionalism, integrity, and people-centric governance.

SSP Baramulla and SSP Sopore, appreciated the close coordination



between the civil and police administration during Minga Sherpa's tenure and noted that the outgoing DC always prioritized transparency, teamwork, and swift decision-making, which contributed immensely in maintaining law and order.

The officers from the civil administration also spoke on the occasion and praised the outgoing DC for rendering exemplary service during his

tenure as Deputy Commissioner Baramulla. They congratulated him on his successful stint and wished him the very best of luck for his future assignments.

In his address, Minga Sherpa expressed heartfelt gratitude to the officers and officials of the district administration, the police department, and other line departments for their unwavering cooperation and teamwork. He especially thanked the people of Baramulla for their constant support, trust, and active participation in developmental initiatives, stating that their faith and encouragement remained his greatest strength throughout his tenure.

Meanwhile, during the day, members of civil society from various parts of the district visited the DC Office Baramulla to personally express their gratitude in acknowledgement of his responsive administration and extend best wishes for his future endeavours.

# DC Kupwara reviews status of implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act

### Stresses upon comprehensive strategy for empowerment

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA, FEB 25:** Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, today chaired a meeting of concerned officers to review the implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act in the district.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, Assistant Director FCS&CA, Lead District Manager, CSC Manager, and representatives from the R&B and Social Welfare Departments.

Chairperson of Empowering WO&DP Trust J&K also participated in the deliberations.

A comprehensive discussion was held on key issues concerning PwDs in the district. These included the coverage of Unique Disability ID (UDID) cards, coverage under VB-G RAG M, PMAY and SBM, accessibility in government buildings, banks as well as transport, Suganya Bharat Abhiyan, Coverage under different social security schemes, issues related to FCS&CA department.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the progress on each aspect and directed the Chief Medical Officer and other concerned departments to devise a block-wise schedule for conducting special outreach camps for Persons with Disabilities to address the grievances as well as



coverage of different schemes as per eligibility.

With regard to accessibility, the Deputy Commissioner directed a comprehensive audit of all government buildings and bank

branches in the district. The audit will assess infrastructure gaps and initiate necessary modifications to make these facilities PwD-friendly.

To ensure seamless banking

experience for especially abled citizens, the Lead District Manager was directed to establish a dedicated helpline number to address issues. This helpline will facilitate timely redressal of grievances faced by PwDs in accessing banking services.

Discussions also held regarding Setting up of District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC) which would provide rehabilitative support to persons with disabilities.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed that district-level efforts will continue to align with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and national frameworks for empowerment of the Persons with Disabilities.

## Central University of Jammu Organized Workshop on "Patent and copyright filing procedures in India"

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, FEBRUARY 25 :** The Institute Innovation Council (IIC) of the Central University of Jammu successfully concluded the workshop on Patent and copyright filing procedures in India, organized at the SDCCS (ISRO Building), Second floor, Seminar hall in the premises of the university campus.

On the day, the Workshop witnessed active participation of 87 Research scholars, with individuals presenting their innovative ideas and queries before the IP and Copyright Experts. The participants demonstrated keen interest in understanding the legal and

procedural frameworks governing patents and copyrights, while exploring how their domain-specific research could be translated into protected intellectual assets. Such numbers suggested future accommodations to be held at a larger hall. The workshop was held under the patronage of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Jammu. It was supervised by Prof. Rakesh Kumar Jha, President, Institute Innovation Council, while Dr. Vinita Sharma, Convenor, IIC, along with Prof. Pawan Kumar, Associate Dean, Research, coordinated the smooth-sailing of the event and ensured effective interaction between

experts and participants. The organizing team is supported by IIC staff member Mr. Naveen Kumar and student volunteers, facilitating seamless execution of the workshop. The first session was delivered by Mrs. Sangeeta Nagar, Senior Scientist, Patent & Design at M/s S.S. Rana & Co., formerly a Scientist-F with Patent Facilitating Centre (PFC) at TIFAC, and winner of Nari Shakti Puraskar from the Hon'ble President of India. Starting from the basics and history of patents to correlating them with real-world examples and data helped students visualize their journey of patent filing. She also went into the details of patentability criteria on what

can be patented and what cannot. She concluded her session by highlighting key departments, software, and funding schemes, and government policies, while enlightening all about future training session prospects on startups and MSMEs.

The second session, conducted by Mrs. Pooja Thakur, Associate Partner, Copyright and Trademark at M/s S.S. Rana & Co., continued the inspiring journey delving into copyright and trademark. Differentiating among all three terminologies and their applications while also touching upon AI tools, fair use and fair dealing examples, starting from the basics.

## H&H Deptt Kashmir organizes Trainee Products' sale at Kashmir Hatt Srinagar

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, FEB 25:** Handicrafts & Handloom (H&H) department inaugurated 2-day Trainee Products' Sale at Kashmir Haat here today.

During the sale, Craft products like hand-knotted woollen carpets, Gl-tagged Pashmina shawls and stoles, Crewel curtains, Sozni embroidered shawls, Zari & Aari embroidered suits, tweed cloth, Chain Stitch rugs and cushion covers, tapestry, Gabba and Nanda products, papier mâché and willow wicker souvenir and décor items, prepared by trainees of Training Centers across all 10 districts of Kashmir Division are being showcased.

The products available at extremely affordable rates, with pricing calculated only on the material component

used and no labour cost is added, thereby ensuring cost-to-cost availability of authentic handmade crafts to buyers, besides providing platform for trainees to exhibit their skills.

District stalls are expected to record encouraging sales during the current exhibition, with particular interest anticipated in carpets, Pashmina, and other GI tagged crafts. The initiative continues to serve as a vital platform for trainees to gain exposure, besides promoting Kashmir's rich craft heritage.

The sale will continue tomorrow. Pertinently, the last three trainee products' exhibitions together generated a revenue of Rs. 57 lakh, reflecting the overwhelming public response and demand for Kashmir's handmade products.

HT EDITORIAL

**Fast Tracks, Firm Resolve: Completing the Jammu-Srinagar Rail Promise**

The temporary deferment of the direct Jammu-Srinagar run of the Vande Bharat Express should be viewed not as a setback, but as a pause in an otherwise remarkable journey of transformation. The rail renaissance in Jammu and Kashmir is real, visible, and historic — and for that, the Railway authorities deserve unequivocal appreciation.

For decades, rail connectivity to the Kashmir Valley was spoken of in hopeful tones but hampered by terrain, climate, and complexity. The successful completion of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link changed that narrative forever. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the project was pushed with determination, turning engineering audacity into operational reality. The Valley is now connected by an all-weather rail network that stands as one of independent India's proudest infrastructure achievements.

The introduction of the Vande Bharat service to Srinagar was more than a ceremonial milestone. It symbolised confidence, progress, and integration. Sleek, modern, and efficient, the train reflects the broader transformation taking place across the Union Territory. The Railway Board's intent to upgrade the service to a 20-coach rake and extend it directly to Jammu Tawi further reinforced that commitment to capacity enhancement and passenger convenience.

That the March 1 launch has been placed on hold due to "unavoidable circumstances" does not dilute the vision. Large-scale operations in a region of such unique topography demand precision and preparedness. If anything, the cautious approach reflects institutional responsibility. The Railway authorities have demonstrated, time and again, that they prioritise safety, sustainability, and long-term viability over haste.

Yet, the aspiration for a seamless Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat service remains both legitimate and compelling. Direct connectivity between the twin capitals is not merely logistical; it is symbolic. It strengthens internal cohesion, boosts tourism and trade, and eases travel for students, patients, businesspersons, and families who frequently move between the two regions.

The groundwork has been laid. The infrastructure stands completed. The momentum is undeniable. What is now required is focused administrative resolve to operationalise the direct service at the earliest feasible date. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have already witnessed what determined governance can achieve in the most challenging conditions.

The railways have delivered a dream once thought impossible. Completing the final link between Jammu and Srinagar through a direct Vande Bharat run will not only fulfil a promise, it will reaffirm that development in this region is steady, inclusive, and irreversible.

**Libraries: A Comprehensive Way to Learn and Achieve Goals**

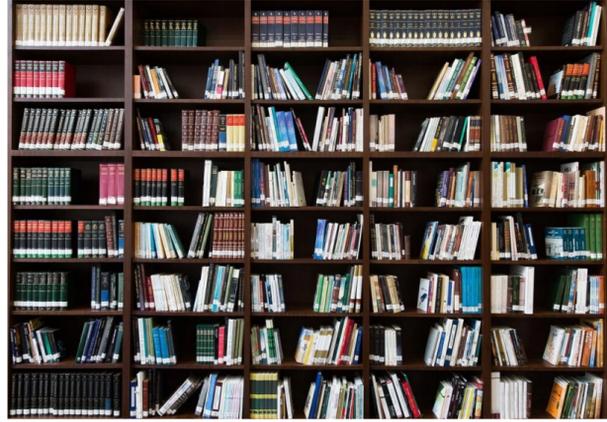


■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Libraries play a vital role in shaping the intellectual, moral, and professional growth of society. In today's fast-changing world, knowledge has become the strongest tool for personal development and national progress. To meet the growing educational demands, it is essential that all ten districts and tehsils of the Kashmir Valley have full fledged public libraries that function 24x7, especially for aspirants preparing for competitive examinations. Such libraries should be equipped with modern books, digital resources, electronic gadgets, printing facilities, and expert librarians. A well developed public library system can become a strong foundation for learning, innovation, and success.

Nowadays, public libraries have become a pressing demand among students and aspirants. Many young people openly discuss the urgent need for such facilities. Libraries can serve as a common knowledge hub where students from different backgrounds gather under one roof with a shared purpose to learn and to achieve their goals. In a world where education is recognized as the key to empowerment, it is impossible to ignore the importance of libraries.

Today's world is full of advanced and incredible technologies. From artificial intelligence to digital learning platforms, technology has transformed how we gain knowledge. Giant machines, smart devices, and innovative tools surround us everywhere. The question arises: why should education lag behind when every other sector is progressing rapidly? The reason for discussing these technological advancements here is clear education must move alongside modern innovations. From an educated person to an illiterate one, everyone now understands the value of education. As rightly said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which can change the world."



Education never discriminates; it empowers everyone equally.

When we understand the demands of the present time, why should we hesitate to implement meaningful changes? Why should genuine demands like public libraries not be placed before higher authorities? Education plays a pivotal role not only in an individual's personal life but also in the overall development of a nation. Across the world, education is highly appreciated, and it has produced eminent scientists, doctors, engineers, and innovators. Every day, new discoveries and inventions take place, contributing to human welfare. All of this is possible because of strong educational foundations, where libraries act as silent contributors.

Public libraries are especially essential for youth preparing for competitive examinations such as civil services, banking, defense, and other national-level tests. Most aspirants face numerous challenges, including lack of study space, limited access to books, poor internet connectivity, and an unhealthy study environment at home. A well equipped library can solve many of these problems by providing a peaceful atmosphere, updated study material, and access to digital resources.

In the Kashmir Valley, the education sector has always played a crucial role in identifying and nurturing talent across all age groups. Educational institutions provide a platform where students can share ideas related to social, economic, educational, environmental, moral, ethical,

health, and technological issues. Such interaction helps in developing critical thinking and broad perspectives. Unfortunately, since 1989, the valley has been passing through difficult and uncertain circumstances due to ongoing tensions. These challenges have directly or indirectly affected the education sector.

Whenever uncertainty arises, educational institutions are often the first to face closures. Orders from state, district, or tehsil-level administrations frequently disrupt academic activities. As a result, students suffer academically and mentally. In such situations, public libraries can act as alternative learning spaces. Even if schools and colleges are closed, libraries can continue to function and ensure continuity in education.

Another major concern is that a large portion of the population in the Kashmir Valley lives in villages and small hamlets where basic facilities are still inadequate. While it is fortunate that the government provides the fundamental right to education, implementation remains challenging. The Right to Education Act, introduced through the 86th Constitutional Amendment in 2002, inserted Article 21-A, which guarantees free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen years. However, providing education under uncertain conditions and without proper infrastructure remains a serious challenge.

In the present era, we often talk about education, knowledge, moral values, and personality development,

but we ignore essential support systems like libraries. Without proper facilities, it becomes difficult to achieve educational goals. Education does not only mean classroom teaching; it requires access to books, research materials, and a healthy learning environment.

Due to the lack of facilities, many students from Kashmir prefer to move outside the state for competitive exam preparation. Delhi has emerged as a major hub for aspirants. Students leave their homeland and face numerous hardships related to accommodation, finances, and emotional well-being. The question is: why are they forced to leave? The answer is simple better facilities, cooperative administration, and a supportive environment.

If similar facilities were available within the state, students would not need to migrate. The government and society must work together to encourage local talent. Providing well-established libraries at district and tehsil levels would greatly reduce the burden on aspirants. These libraries should offer uninterrupted electricity, high-speed internet, updated books, newspapers, journals, online databases, and guidance from trained librarians.

A public library is not just a building filled with books; it is a center of enlightenment. It promotes self-study, discipline, and intellectual curiosity. It also encourages inclusivity, as students from different economic backgrounds can access the same resources. In this way, libraries contribute to social equality and national integration.

In conclusion, libraries are a comprehensive way to learn, grow, and achieve life goals. For the youth of Kashmir, especially competitive exam aspirants, public libraries can become a ray of hope. Establishing 24x7 libraries in every district and tehsil is not a luxury but a necessity. Such an initiative will strengthen the education system, empower youth, reduce migration, and contribute to nation-building. It is time for policymakers to recognize this need and take concrete steps toward building a knowledgeable and progressive society.

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**Kashmiri Language Tarana - A Celebration of Identity and Heritage**



■ RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

Each year on 21st February, the world celebrates International Mother Language Day to promote linguistic diversity and encourage people to speak and preserve their mother tongues at home, in workplaces, and in society. In Srinagar, this year's celebration was marked with remarkable enthusiasm and cultural vibrancy. A grand provincial-level literary event was organized at Tagore Hall by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages. The event witnessed the participation of eminent litterateurs, poets, and authors from across the Valley. A special poetry session was also held, where distinguished poets captivated the audience with their soulful and thought-provoking verses. During the programme, speakers strongly reiterated that every possible step—at individual, societal, and governmental levels—would be taken to promote and preserve the Kashmiri language and literature, safeguarding its centuries-old legacy and rich heritage. Similar celebrations were organized at district and tehsil levels, as well as in various educational institutions.

When we speak of our mother tongue, Kashmiri, it is not merely a language or a medium of communication; it is our collective identity. As the noted Kashmiri writer Amin Kamil rightly said:

"Kashri sith chhi Kashir sari nata; waranik hearan kaaw"

(Through Kashmiri we are bound together as Kash-

miris; otherwise, we would be like bewildered crows scattered in the wilderness.). This year's celebration will be especially remembered for the release of a thematic Tarana (anthemic poem). Written years ago by the versatile poet and academician Shad Ramzan, the Tarana was formally released on International Mother Language Day to commemorate the glorious heritage of the Kashmiri language. The musical composition was crafted by noted vocalist Waheed Jeelani, while its production was undertaken by the legendary writer, broadcaster, and poet Dr. Rafiq Masoodi. The videographic backdrop of the song is mesmerizing and deeply evocative, capturing the scenic beauty and emotional depth of Kashmir, thereby enchanting both hearts and minds. Unlike conventional songs performed by one or two singers, this masterpiece stands apart. Many leading literary figures of the Valley contributed to its recitation and release. Among them were Dr. Satish Vimal, Shahi Mumtaz, Raja Bilal, Prof. Naseem Shifayi, and Shazia Bashir, alongside Shad Ramzan and Waheed Jeelani. This collective artistic endeavor beautifully symbolizes unity, cultural pride, and a shared commitment to preserving the Kashmiri language for generations to come. Be a Kashir Zaban Chas (I am the Kashmiri language) is a prominent and beautiful Tarana (anthem poem) in the Kashmiri language written by renowned poet Shad Ramzan. It serves as a profound tribute to the Kashmiri language and culture. According to Shad Ramzan, Kashmiri language has been blessed with the crown of prosperity and has inherited the grandeur of knowledge. It carries centuries of dignity within its bosom and its melodies echo across ages. It holds within it the fragrance of flowers and carries the colours of culture and tradition. It speaks with sweetness and elegance and is adorned with intellectual and poetic reflection. Sages and saints have drawn enlightenment and it is enriched by guides and spiritual masters. It is filled with wisdom and lofty thought and nurtures refined and elevated

minds. It echoes in valleys and towering mountains and flows like a river in lyrical expression. It's words shimmer with beauty and it's voice is both melodious and pure. It preserves heritage and identity and safeguards culture and tradition. It unites hearts in love and harmony and stands as a symbol of collective pride. It carries the legacy of thought and awareness and shapes understanding and consciousness. That is why he praises it with utmost devotion, honor and with heartfelt admiration. With the release of this masterpiece tarana, the glory and rich cultural heritage of the Kashmiri language are set to reach a much wider readership and earn well-deserved accolades across the globe. Its production and composition have been executed with such meticulous care and artistic brilliance that within minutes of its release, it began circulating widely across various social media platforms. Literary circles as well as common listeners showered praise upon the author, producers, and composers alike. The diction of the tarana is undoubtedly profound and intellectually demanding. Rendering such poetic brilliance into a compelling musical composition was no small challenge. Yet, under the able leadership and creative vision of Dr. Rafiq Masoodi and Waheed Jeelani, it has been produced and composed with remarkable finesse and aesthetic excellence. History reminds us that Ahista Ahista by Janbaz Kishitwari did not initially gain widespread popularity until it was melodiously rendered by Samad Sofi and Gulzar Ganie. Likewise, one hopes that Shad Ramzan's Kashmiri language tarana will now attain the recognition it truly deserves, having been given voice by noted literary figures and elevated through the masterful production and composition of Dr. Rafiq Masoodi and Waheed Jeelani. May this artistic endeavour continue to illuminate and celebrate the timeless beauty of the Kashmiri language.

Writer is a columnist based in Qazigund Kashmir.

# Why Innocence Dies: Ophelia, Anna Karenina and Cordelia



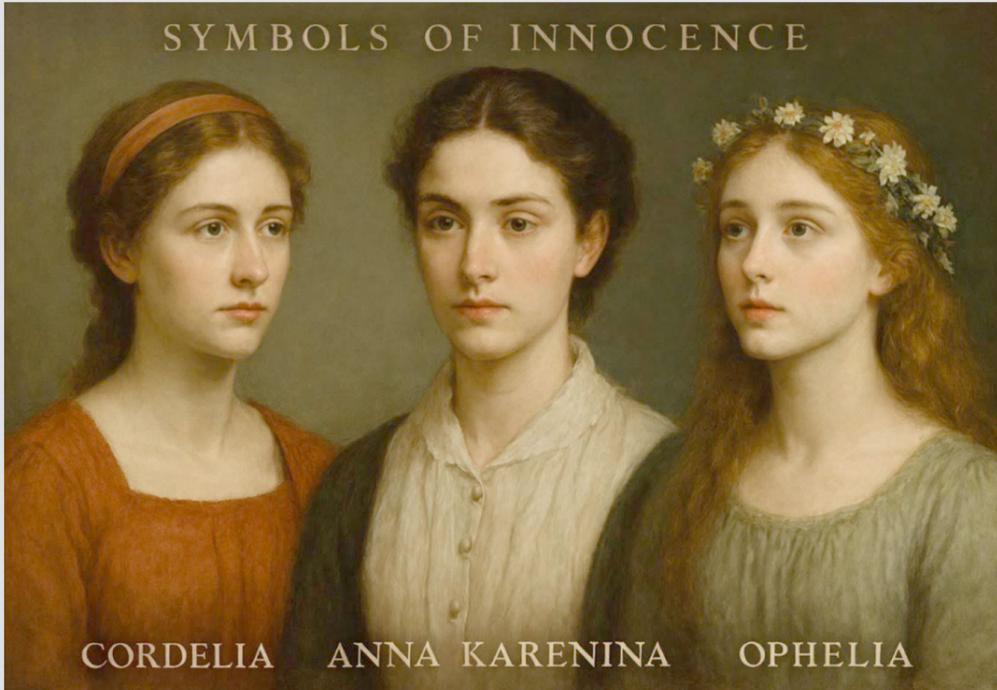
DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

In literature, innocence is rarely allowed to survive untouched. It is born luminous, trusting, receptive to beauty and affection, yet it exists in a world governed by power, suspicion, social codes, and emotional violence. The tragedy is not merely that innocent characters suffer; it is that their very innocence becomes the cause of their destruction. William Shakespeare and Leo Tolstoy, separated by centuries and cultures, created women whose inner purity cannot coexist with the structures around them. Ophelia in Hamlet, Anna in Anna Karenina, and Cordelia in King Lear do not die only as individuals; they represent the death of tenderness in political, social, and familial systems hardened by pride and moral hypocrisy.

Innocence in literature does not mean childish ignorance. Rather, it is a form of moral transparency — a refusal to manipulate, calculate, or disguise truth. Such characters do not know how to survive in a world that depends on performance. The tragedy is therefore structural: the world does not merely wound innocence; it systematically rejects it. Ophelia is perhaps the most fragile embodiment of innocence in Western drama. She lives not as an independent person but as a reflection of others' expectations. Her father Polonius treats her as property, her brother Laertes warns her against love, and Hamlet uses her as an instrument of his feigned madness. She has no private emotional territory in which she can exist freely. Every relationship she inhabits demands obedience.

Her love for Hamlet is sincere, but sincerity becomes dangerous in a political environment. The Danish court is saturated with surveillance. Polonius instructs her to reject Hamlet's letters and affections, not because he doubts Hamlet's feelings, but because he fears impropriety and royal scandal. Ophelia obeys. This obedience is the first fracture in her identity. She must deny her own emotions in order to fulfill paternal authority. She does not rebel because innocence trusts authority; she assumes elders understand reality better than she does. Hamlet's cruelty toward her accelerates the collapse. During the "nunnery scene," Hamlet rejects her violently, using harsh, ambiguous language. Ophelia cannot interpret his behavior. She does not know he is performing madness, nor does she know he suspects betrayal. For Hamlet, the world is corrupt; for Ophelia, the world is still meaningful. When he tells her "I did love you once... I loved you not," he destroys the emotional structure on which her identity rests. She cannot reinterpret reality through irony as Hamlet can. Her mind depends on emotional coherence.

The death of Polonius finally shatters her psychological stability. Polonius is not a loving father in a modern sense, yet he is the organizing center of her life. When Hamlet kills him, Ophelia experiences three simultaneous losses: her father's protection, Hamlet's love, and her social position. She becomes unanchored. The songs she sings afterward are not random madness but fragments of broken emotional logic — memories of love, sexuality, betrayal, and death. She speaks truths others suppress. Her madness is the language innocence uses when reality becomes unbearable. Her drowning is ambiguous — accident or suicide — but symbolically inevitable. Water in literature often signifies a return to pre-social existence, a retreat from structured human cruelty. Ophelia does not fight death; she floats, surrounded by flowers. She dies without accusation, without revenge. Her innocence cannot transform into resistance. It dissolves instead. Shakespeare suggests that innocence cannot survive political consciousness. In Hamlet, intelligence lives, cor-



ruption rules, but innocence simply disappears.

Cordelia, another Shakespearean heroine, represents a stronger form of innocence. Unlike Ophelia, she is not submissive; she is truthful. Yet truthfulness is equally dangerous in a world dependent on flattery. At the beginning of King Lear, Lear asks his daughters to declare their love publicly. Goneril and Regan exaggerate affection. Cordelia refuses rhetorical performance. She answers, "Nothing." Her statement is not lovelessness but sincerity. She believes love does not need theatrical expression.

Lear interprets honesty as rejection. The tragedy here is not misunderstanding but incompatibility between political ego and moral integrity. Lear's kingship depends on praise. He cannot distinguish between devotion and manipulation. Cordelia cannot lie because her innocence is moral, not emotional. She loves her father deeply but will not distort truth to please him. Her banishment marks the first death of innocence — not physical death but social erasure. Society rewards deception and punishes honesty. Cordelia is removed from power, while the hypocritical sisters gain authority. Shakespeare shows that innocence is not weak; it is simply incompatible with systems based on vanity.

Later, when Lear descends into madness, he gradually understands reality. His suffering teaches him empathy. The storm scene transforms him from king to human being. Yet this awakening arrives too late. Cordelia returns not with revenge but forgiveness. She raises an army not for conquest but for restoration. Her love has no resentment. She nurses Lear, comforting him as a child. This reversal — daughter caring for father — represents moral maturity. Cordelia's innocence evolves into compassion rather than madness, unlike Ophelia's collapse. Her death, however, is the cruelest moment in Shakespeare. After reconciliation, she is executed in prison. The audience expects restoration, but tragedy refuses consolation. Lear enters carrying her dead body, crying in disbelief. The universe of King Lear does not guarantee moral reward. Cordelia dies not because she errs but because goodness does not control history.

Here innocence dies not through internal weakness but through external brutality. If Ophelia is destroyed by psychological fragility, Cordelia is destroyed by political violence. Shakespeare implies a terrifying truth: virtue offers no protection. The world is morally indifferent. Anna Karenina belongs to a different literary tradition — the psychological realism of Tolstoy — yet her innocence is equally doomed. At first glance, Anna seems unlike Ophelia and Cordelia. She is married, intelligent, socially admired, and emotionally complex. Yet her tragedy also originates in sincerity. Anna

cannot live divided between feeling and social duty. Her society, nineteenth-century Russian aristocracy, depends on appearances. Marriages often exist without love, but they must preserve reputation.

Anna's marriage to Karenin is orderly but loveless. Karenin values propriety more than emotional connection. He is not cruel; he is emotionally sterile. Anna's inner life remains unfulfilled. When she meets Vronsky, she experiences genuine passion for the first time. Her love is not calculated rebellion; it is spontaneous emotional awakening. She cannot pretend indifference because her nature is transparent. Like Cordelia, she refuses performance, but unlike Cordelia, her truth conflicts with social morality. Russian high society tolerates discreet affairs by men but condemns visible passion in women. Anna cannot maintain secrecy. Her emotional honesty exposes her. She abandons hypocrisy, and society punishes her not for adultery alone but for sincerity. Other women commit similar actions but survive through concealment. Anna refuses concealment because she desires authentic life rather than respectable illusion.

Karenin's reaction intensifies the tragedy. He insists on preserving external marriage despite emotional collapse. He values public reputation above private reconciliation. Anna becomes socially exiled. She loses her son, her friends, and her identity. Love, instead of liberating her, isolates her. Vronsky loves her but cannot replace the entire social world she has lost. Gradually, suspicion and insecurity consume her. Without social belonging, the human mind seeks certainty; she demands absolute emotional assurance from Vronsky, which no human being can provide. Her psychological deterioration resembles Ophelia's but arises differently. Ophelia is broken by imposed reality; Anna is broken by exclusion. Society withdraws recognition, and the self disintegrates. Tolstoy portrays consciousness with minute detail — jealousy, fear, longing, resentment. Anna begins to interpret ordinary events as signs of betrayal. The world becomes hostile because she no longer occupies a legitimate place within it.

Her suicide under the train is both personal and symbolic. The train, a modern industrial force, represents impersonal modern society. Unlike Ophelia's gentle water death, Anna's death is mechanical and violent. She throws herself into motion, as if seeking silence from relentless thought. Her innocence lies in her belief that authentic love should harmonize life. When reality refuses harmony, she cannot adjust. Society demands compromise; she demands wholeness. The result is annihilation.

Comparing these three figures reveals different forms of innocence. Ophelia's innocence is emotional dependence, Cordelia's is moral truthfulness, and

Anna's is psychological authenticity. Each encounters a different oppressive structure: political intrigue, patriarchal authority, and social hypocrisy. Yet the outcome is identical. The world requires adaptability, ambiguity, and performance. Innocence refuses these strategies and therefore cannot survive. Another important similarity is their relationship with language. All three fail to manipulate speech strategically. Ophelia speaks honestly until madness fragments her language into songs. Cordelia refuses ornamental rhetoric. Anna expresses feelings openly instead of disguising them through polite convention. Their speech contrasts with surrounding characters. Polonius uses verbose diplomacy, Goneril and Regan use flattering exaggeration, and Russian aristocrats use formal etiquette. Language becomes a social armor others possess but these women lack. Without rhetorical protection, they are vulnerable.

The men around them also reveal society's limitations. Hamlet is intellectual but indecisive; Lear is powerful but blind to truth; Karenin is respectable but emotionally rigid; Vronsky is passionate but shallow. None intentionally seeks the women's destruction, yet each contributes to it. Tragedy therefore emerges not from villainy alone but from structural misunderstanding between emotional integrity and social expectation. Their deaths also transform others. Ophelia's death deepens Hamlet's awareness of mortality. Cordelia's death awakens Lear's humanity. Anna's death forces society momentarily to confront its cruelty, though it soon resumes normalcy. Innocence, paradoxically, gains meaning only after disappearance. While alive, these women are misunderstood; after death, they are recognized.

Why must innocence die? Because innocence assumes reciprocity. It believes love will be returned, truth respected, and sincerity understood. Tragic worlds operate differently. Power values control, society values conformity, and individuals value security. Innocence destabilizes these systems because it exposes artificiality. Cordelia reveals the emptiness of ceremonial loyalty. Ophelia reveals the emotional cost of political schemes. Anna reveals the hollowiness of social morality. Their deaths restore order, not justice. Society eliminates what it cannot assimilate. Yet literature preserves them. Readers continue to feel compassion because these characters represent an ethical possibility humanity fears losing. Their destruction produces moral discomfort. Shakespeare and Tolstoy do not merely narrate suffering; they accuse the world indirectly. If innocence cannot live among us, the problem lies not in innocence but in civilization.

In the end, these three women embody different tragedies of the human condition. Ophelia shows the mind collapsing

Lear interprets honesty as rejection. The tragedy here is not misunderstanding but incompatibility between political ego and moral integrity. Lear's kingship depends on praise. He cannot distinguish between devotion and manipulation. Cordelia cannot lie because her innocence is moral, not emotional. She loves her father deeply but will not distort truth to please him. Her banishment marks the first death of innocence — not physical death but social erasure. Society rewards deception and punishes honesty. Cordelia is removed from power, while the hypocritical sisters gain authority. Shakespeare shows that innocence is not weak; it is simply incompatible with systems based on vanity.

when love and trust vanish. Cordelia shows truth destroyed by pride and authority. Anna shows the self destroyed by social alienation. Together they form a continuum — psychological, moral, and social tragedy. Innocence dies not because it is weak but because it refuses falsity. It cannot negotiate with a world that survives through compromise. Their deaths remain unforgettable because they reveal a disturbing paradox: goodness is not always protective. Literature therefore becomes a memorial space where innocence survives symbolically though not physically. Readers grieve them because we recognize what disappears with them — tenderness, honesty, and emotional authenticity.

Thus Ophelia sinks into water, Cordelia falls under injustice, and Anna is crushed beneath iron wheels. Three cultures, three narratives, one truth: innocence cannot live where human systems value appearance over compassion. The tragedy is universal. We do not mourn them only as characters; we mourn the part of humanity that perishes whenever sincerity encounters power.

**International Tagore Awardee  
Formerly Affiliate Faculty Virginia  
Commonwealth University & Retd.  
Associate Professor and Head  
Post Graduate Dept of English  
Dum Dum Motijheel College and  
President Kolkata Indian  
American Society Email  
prof.ratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com**



Government Of Jammu & Kashmir  
**Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri**

Subject: Application of SARA BEGUM W/O ABDUL RASHID AKHOON R/O KREERI for the issuance of Dependent certificate

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Regarding the subject cited above in this context a report sought from patwari halqa concerned .The report of patwari halqa concerned and the death certificate issued by competent Authority reveals that ABDUL RASHID AKHOON S/O ABDUL AHAD AKHOON R/O KREERI Tehsil kreeri has passed away on 23/02/2023

Moreover family structure of the applicant is as under  
1... SARA BAGUM wife 63 years H/W widow  
2...RIFAT BEGUM daughter 39 years H/W married  
3...ZUBIADA RASHID daughter 37 years H/W married  
4...RUQIYA RASHID daughter 35 years H/W Married

The applicant has applied for Issuance of Dependent certificate in favour of SARA BEGUM if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

**Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri**

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir  
**Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri**  
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoor) chokedar hassubmitted case file pertainingto Birth of AFNAN MANZOOR HAJAM S/O MANZOOR AHMAD HAJAM R/O KREERI Tehsil KREERI Dist. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/11/2009 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

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

**Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri**

**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on the name GH QADIR CHOPAN S/O KHZIR MOHD CHOPAN R/O RANJEE Tehsil KHOIE Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040005254 wants to be permanent disconnection of the above mentioned electric connection .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/ She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication ofthis notice after that no objection will be entertained

**Name...FAYAZ AHMAD CHOPAN S/O ...ABDUL AZIZ CHOPAN R/O ...RANJEE BARAMULLA**

**Public Notice**

This is to notify the general public that the name recorded in the Aadhaar database is incorrect.Name shown in Aadhaar: Munaza Hassan

Correct name: Muneera Hassan, Father's Gulam Hassan Shiekh

Address:Ananwan Kralgund Handwara Kupwara Jammu and Kashmir 193302.The above mentioned person( Munaza Hassan ) hereby declares that the name printed on the Aadhaar is incorrect and that her correct and legal name is Muneera Hassan.Any objection to this correction should be brought to the attention of the UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra, Office Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the necessary correction procedures may be undertaken.

**Public Notice**

My name has been wrongly written as RAFIQA BEGUM W/O ABDUL RASHID KOLAS in my Bank Account bearing account No ...007504080000448 while my correct name is RAFEEQA BEGUM W/O BASHIR AHMAD POSWAL R/O ..BANDI BALA which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/ she may file his/her objection in the office of J & K BANK , BRANCH CHANDUSA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

**Name....RAFEEQA BEGUM. W/O ....BASHIR AHMAD POSWAL R/O....BANDI BALA DISTT....BARAMULLA**

Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir  
Office of the Tehsildar Budgam

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY BACKWARD CLASS CERTIFICATE.**

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION DETAILS**

Date of Application : 25/02/2026  
Application Reference Number : JK-REV-RBA/2026/11498

**Applicant Details**

Name of Applicant : MUZAMIL AHMAD PARRAY  
Name of Father / Guardian / Person on whom Dependent : BASHIR AHMAD PARRAY  
Applied for : RESIDENT OF BACKWARD AREA  
Address of Applicant : HANJAN BUDGAM  
Address of Father / Guardian / Person on whom dependent : HANJAN  
Mobile Number / E-Mail : 9086608779 / saiqumzamil@gmail.com

**Payment Details**

Payment Reference No. : 27446901142  
Payment Date : 25/02/2026  
Payment Mode : PayUbiz  
Amount Paid : ₹ 20.0

You will be notified through eMail once the application is processed by Authorities (Facilitated by National Informatics Centre, Powered by ServicePro)

**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on the name GH RASOOL GANIE S/O SUBLE GANIE R/O AUTHOORA Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040006280 wants to be registered on my correct name MOHAMMAD YOUSUF GANIE S/O GH MOHAMMAD GANIE R/O AUTHOORA .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication ofthis notice after that no objection will be entertained

**Name..MOHAMMAD YOUSUF GANIE S/O ...GH MOHAMMAD GANIE , R/O ....AUTHOORA**

**Public Notice**

This is to notify the general public that the name recorded in the Aadhaar database is incorrect.Name shown in Aadhaar: Munaza Hassan Correct name: Muneera Hassan, Father's Gulam Hassan Shiekh Address:Ananwan Kralgund Handwara Kupwara Jammu and Kashmir 193302.The above mentioned person( Munaza Hassan ) hereby declares that the name printed on the Aadhaar is incorrect and that her correct and legal name is Muneera Hassan.Any objection to this correction should be brought to the attention of the UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra, Office Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the necessary correction procedures may be undertaken.

**Public Notice**

Name CORRECTION IN PASSPORT  
My NAME HAS BEEN WRONGLY MENTIONED IN MY PASSPORT  
ABDUL HAMID S/O MOHD ISHAQ R/O WAKHA INSTEAD OF ABDUL HAMID S/O MOHD ISSAQ R/O WAKHA. ANYBODY HAVING ANY OBJECTION MAY CONTACT PASSPORT OFFICE SRINAGAR  
**ABDUL HAMID S/O MOHD ISSAQ R/O WAKHA**

**NOTICE**

This is to inform the general public that the electricity connection bearing Consumer No. 0204050001087 & Installation No.: 7722-R1-L 0.500 in the name of Mr. Gh. Ahmad Khutu son-in-law of Ab. Khaliq Dar R/O Gori Mohalla chatterhama is to be transferred in favour of Mr. Hafizullah khutoo S/O Ghulam Ahmad khutoo R/O Gori mohalla chatterhama.

Any person having any claim or objection regarding the proposed change may contact the office of Power Development Department (PDD) within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

**Gh Amad Khutu Son-in-law of Ab. Khaliq Dar**

**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on my Fathers name Gh Mohi ud din Rather S/O Ab Khaliq Rather Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040003446 wants to be registered on my own name Irshad Ahmad Rather S/O Gh Mohi ud din Rather .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/ her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication ofthis notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**IRSHAD AHMAD RATHER S/O GH MOHI UD DIN RATHER R/O WARIPORA BALA**

**Public Notice**

My Son's name has been wrongly mentioned as ZOHAI B GANAIE S/O ASHIQ AHMAD GANAIE in his Date of Birth certificate issued by SDH kreeri while her correct name is AZHAAN GANAIE S/O ASHIQ AHMAD GANAIE which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of BMO / SDH kreeri within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name....ASHIQ AHMAD GANAIE F/O...AZHAAN GANAIE R/O...WATERGAM WAGOORA**

**Public Notice**

My daughter's name has been wrongly mentioned as HANIYA MUSHTAQ in her Date of Birth certificate issued by SDH kreeri while her correct name is ZAINAB MUSHTAQ which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of BMO / SDH kreeri within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

**Name...MUSHTAQ AHMAD RATHER F/O...ZAINAB MUSHTAQ**

**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on the name AB RASHID MIR S/O GH AHMAD MIR R/O SALOOSA Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040008285 wants to be registered on my correct name GH RASOOL GANIE S/O GH AHMAD GANIE R/O SALOOSA .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication ofthis notice after that no objection will be entertained

**Name..GH RASOOL GANIE S/O ... GH AHMAD GANIE R/O ....SALOOSA**

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir  
**Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri**  
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoor)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertainingto Birth of AFNAN MANZOOR HAJAM S/O MANZOOR AHMAD HAJAM R/O KREERI Tehsil KREERI Dist. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 01/11/2009 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

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

**Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri**

**Public Notice**

This is to notify the general public that the name recorded in the Aadhaar database is incorrect.Name shown in Aadhaar: Munaza Hassan

Correct name: Muneera Hassan, Father's Gulam Hassan Shiekh

Address:Ananwan Kralgund Handwara Kupwara Jammu and Kashmir 193302.The above mentioned person( Munaza Hassan ) hereby declares that the name printed on the Aadhaar is incorrect and that her correct and legal name is Muneera Hassan.Any objection to this correction should be brought to the attention of the UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra, Office Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the necessary correction procedures may be undertaken.

**Public Notice**

This is for the information of the general public that the Electricity Connection of Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (JKPDC) bearing Consumer ID No. 0122040003552 and the Water Connection Agreement of Jal Shakti Department (PHE Department), installed at my residential house situated at Dolipora, Kreeri, District Baramulla, are presently recorded in the name of my grandfather: Haji Ab Gani Mir S/o Mohammad Subhan Mir R/o Dolipora Kreeri, District Baramulla

That my grandfather has expired, and after his death, I am in possession and occupation of the said house. Therefore, I request the concerned departments to transfer the above-mentioned electricity and water connections into my name: Sharif Ud Din Mir S/o Gh Mohammad Mir R/o Dolipora Kreeri, District Baramulla

I hereby undertake to pay all outstanding dues, if any, against the said connections after the death of my grandfather.

If any person has any objection regarding the proposed transfer of the above connections, he/she may file objections before the concerned authorities within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

**Sharif Ud Din Mir, S/o Gh Mohammad Mir R/o Dolipora Kreeri, District Baramulla**

**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on my Grand Fathers name GHULAM PANDITH S/O GH AHMAD PANDITH R/O AUTHOORA Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040006289 wants to be registered on my MUDASIR HUSSAIN PANDITH S/O GH MOHAMMAD PANDITH R/O AUTHOORA .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication ofthis notice after that no objection will be entertained

**Name..MUDASIR HUSSAIN PANDITH S/O ... GH MOHAMMAD PANDITH R/O ....AUTHOORA**

UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SOPORE**  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
**NIT No: 168 of RnB-Sopore of 2025-2026 e-tendering DATED: 25.02.2026**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K, e-tenders (in Single Cover System) are invited on Percentage rate basis from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S.No.	Name of Work	Adv. cost	T.D Cost	E/M	Position of TS
1	Minor Repairs at Girls Middle School Duroo.	1.00	200/-	2000/-	152 /TS of 2025-26 dated:24.02.2026 Rs. 1.00 lacs
2	Minor Repairs at Girls Middle School Dardpora Zalloora.	1.00	200/-	2000/-	154 /TS of 2025-26 dated:25.02.2026 Rs. 1.00 lacs
3	Minor Repairs at Girls Middle School Sher Colony	1.00	200/-	2000/-	155 /TS of 2025-26 dated:24502.2026 Rs. 1.00 lacs
4	Minor Repairs at High School Nowpora .	1.00	200/-	2000/-	156 /TS of 2025-26 dated:25.02.2026 Rs. 1.00 lacs

**Time for completion of work: 10 Days**  
**Class of Contractor: DEE**  
**Project Authority: Director Samagra Shiksha**  
**Position of AA: Accorded Director Samagra Shiksha vide his order No: 396-Chirag of 2026 dtd: 4.2.2026 for an amount of Rs. 1.00 Lacs each**

**Time & Date of Opening of Bid: 03-03-2026**  
**M.H of Account: MP Shri PAB 2025-26)**  
**Position of funds: Available**

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

1	Date of issue of tender Notice	25.02.2026	
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	25 .02.2026	03.03.2026 ( upto 4.PM)
3	Bid Submission start date	25 .02.2026	
4	Bid submission End date	03.03.2026 (4.00 PM)	
5	Date and time of opening of bides (online)	03.03.2026(4.20 PM) in the office of Ex. Engineer R&B Division. Sopore	

- Bids must be accompanied by a Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) with NIT No. Name of work and S.No. deposited in M.H. 0059 in the name of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document.
- At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore . Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released after submission of a performance security of 5% of the quoted cost which will be released after completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.
- (b). Geotag Photographs Minimum 03 sets (01 set Comprising of Photograph before, during and after execution of work) of size 26 cm x21 cm to be provided.

Unbalanced Bid:- In case bid of the successful bidder is unbalanced, the Successful bidder will have to provide additional performance security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender receiving authority) vide Principal Secretary to Government Finance department's circular issued under endorsement No: DF-Code/ 441/ 2021-02-158 dated" 8.8.2025.

- Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee/ security percentage shall be Incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.
- Where the bid price is 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be Incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.
- The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is 0.5% or more.
- The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security . Additional performance security shall be taken only after approval of next higher authority.

The additional performance security shall be released only after successful completion of work.

- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of the Tender receiving authority ).
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of technical Bids.
- Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in acquaint bid submission process.
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendor.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No Financial bid will be accepted in physical form..
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid. Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

**No: 11089-98 | Dated: 25-02-2026**  
**DIPK: 11343/25 | Dated: 25-02-2026**

**For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT**  
**Sd/- Executive Engineer, R&B Division Sopore**

# DC Ramban reviews anti-drug measures at NCORD meeting

## Calls for coordinated action to curb the menace

HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAMBAN, FEBRUARY 25:** A District-Level Narco Coordination Committee (NCORD) meeting was held here today to review ongoing anti-narcotics measures and reinforce the same to eliminate the menace of drug abuse from the district.

Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan chaired the meeting. He emphasized the need to identify drug abuse hotspots and adopt a coordinated strategy to tackle the menace effectively. He called for innovative interventions and focused analysis to understand the root causes pushing youth towards substance abuse.

Directing strict enforcement, the DC asked the Drug and Food Control authorities to take effective action against perpetrators in close



coordination with the Police Department. Tehsildars were directed to submit details of Drug-Free Panchayats for cross-verification and ensure proper surveillance in such areas.

The CEO was directed to activate school-level monitoring Committees at Middle, High and Higher Secondary Schools. Deployment of a counsellor at the Panchayat level was also stressed. The DSWO

was asked to intensify awareness under the 'Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan' by hosting IEC activities in government and private schools, colleges, ITIs, Polytechnic institutes and libraries.

Reviewing the functioning of the De-addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital, the DC directed the CMO to ensure proper medical care, counselling and follow-up support for rehabilitation and prevention of relapse.

Among others present in the meeting included Superintendent of Police, Arun Gupta; ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak; ACD Sheraz Ahmed; Tehsildar Hqr Reejuta Mahajan; DSWO, CMO, CAO, Drug Control Officer and officers from various enforcement and line departments. Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Tehsildars participated through virtual mode.

# DC Ramban reviews implementation of HPV Vaccination Programme

HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAMBAN, FEB 25:** Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, today chaired a meeting of the District Task Force (DTF) to finalize modalities for the implementation of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme in district Ramban.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the preparedness of the Health Department for the effective rollout of the HPV vaccination drive, scheduled to be launched on February 28, 2026 at 11 identified health centres across the district.

Detailed deliberations were held regarding the target population, infrastructure readiness, availability of trained manpower, cold chain management and identification of vaccination sites.

The Committee was informed that an estimated 3,304 girls aged around 14 years have been identified as the target group. Out of these, 2,789 girls have been verified through headcount surveys conducted by ASHAs, AWWs and other field functionaries. All identified health facilities have functional cold chain points, dedicated Medical Officers for AEFI management and the required IT infrastructure for U-WIN implementation.



The Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among health officials to ensure smooth and timely vaccination, proper awareness generation and 100 percent coverage of eligible beneficiaries within the prescribed timeline. He directed the concerned officers to maintain close monitoring to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out.

He also directed the Chief Education Officer to coordinate with schools to facilitate vaccination of eligible girls enrolled in educational institutions across the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Medical Officer Kamal Je Zadu, MS DH Ramban Dr. Surdasha Katoch, District Immunization Officer, Block Medical Officers and other concerned officers of the Health & Family Welfare Department Ramban, besides the Chief Education Officer.

# Inter-Block District Level YSS Cricket Cup "Leagues of Classics" kicks off in Doda

HT NEWS NETWORK

**DODA, FEB 25:** The District Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Department Doda today commenced the Inter-Block District Level YSS Cricket Cup - Leagues of Classics, marking a significant initiative towards strengthening the sports culture and promoting healthy competition in the region.

The mega cricket championship is witnessing enthusiastic participation from 17 Blocks and 03 Municipal Committees, setting the stage for a vibrant and competitive sporting event and reflecting the growing passion for sports among local youth.

The matches are being conducted simultaneously at four designated venues across the district at Departmental Sports Ground- Ghat, Government Degree College Bhandarwah, University Campus Bhandarwah and Helipad Ground Bhalessa.

The prestigious championship is being organized under the guidance of Director General YSS J&K, Anuradha Gupta, Joint Director Jammu, Vinakshi Koul and Deputy Director (Activities), Megha Baogia. The competitions are being conducted by DYSSO, Jaffar H. Sheikh and concerned Zonal Physical Education Officers (ZPEOs), ensuring smooth and professional conduct of the tournament.

The opening match held at the Departmental Sports Ground-Ghat witnessed an impressive performance by Block Thathri as it defeated Block Marmat by 8 wickets.

Batting first, Marmat posted a competitive total of 97/3 in 10 overs, with Sameer Ahmed top-scoring with a fine knock of 36 runs. From Thathri's bowling side, Yasub Khan and Sami claimed one wicket each.

In response, Thathri chased down the target convincingly in just 6.3 overs. Yasub Khan played a brilliant innings of 42 runs, well supported by Babar Ahmed, who contributed 25 runs. For Marmat, Zahid and Amit picked up one wicket each.

The match was officiated by an expert panel from the YSS Department comprising Faheem Farooq Zargar, Shahnawaz Wani, Imran Mughal, Muzamil Hussain, Pawan Sharma, Mohd Saleem, Indrajeet Singh and Anil Kumar, ensuring fair and smooth conduct of the game.

# Entrepreneurship awareness programme held at ITI Billawar

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA, FEB 25:** An Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme (EAP) was organized at Government ITI Billawar by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, through MSME-Development and Facilitation Office (DFO) Jammu in collaboration with District Administration Kathua.

The programme aimed at motivating unemployed educated youth and PM Vishwakarma artisans to establish enterprises in rural areas and promote self-employment.

Over 180 participants, including ITI students and PM Vishwakarma artisans, attended the programme and evinced keen interest in the entrepreneurship and self-employment initiatives.

Young Professional, MSME-DFO Jammu, Shahid Hussain Wani delivered the welcome address and highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship in strengthening the local economy.

Assistant Director, MSME-DFO Jammu, Devender Kumar Tyagi (IEDS) apprised the participants about the flagship MSME schemes, detailing eligibility criteria, benefits and application procedures.

Superintendent ITI Billawar, Jitender Sharma spoke on the practical aspects of entrepreneurship, underscoring the significance of innovation, skill upgradation and proactive approach for successful enterprise development. Representative of District Industries Centre Kathua, Masqueen Babu elaborated on Prime Minister's Employment Genera-



tion Programme (PMEGP) and other UT Government schemes, explaining financial assistance and incentives available to aspir-

ing entrepreneurs.

A representative from Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Dheeraj Handu briefed the participants about the J&K Startup Policy and the support ecosystem including mentorship, funding and incubation facilities. Director, RSETI Kathua, Utpala Sekia along with Faculty Member Neha Salaria conducted sessions on financial literacy and credit linkages, emphasizing the role of financial inclusion in empowering first-generation entrepreneurs.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Senior Faculty Member, ITI Billawar, B.K. Dogoria, who reiterated the commitment of all stakeholders towards fostering entrepreneurship and self-reliance among the youth of Kathua district.

# DLSA Reasi team meets accused lodged in Police Lockup

HT NEWS NETWORK

**REASI, FEB 25:** Under the visionary leadership of Chairman District Legal Services Authority, Reasi (also Pr. District and Sessions Judge Reasi), Khalil Choudhary and the guidance of Secretary Pooja Gupta, a team of Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) led by ALADC-Niharika Bamotra on Wednesday met under trial lodged at Police Station Reasi.

The ALADC listened to the grievances and legal issues of the inmates and provided necessary legal guidance and assistance. They were apprised about their legal rights, availability of free legal aid and the various services being provided by the Legal Services Authorities under



the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. An awareness programme on "Child Labour and Old Age Pension Schemes" was organized at LAC Dewal B (Mahore). The PLVs elaborated on eligibility criteria, the application process and the benefits under the scheme. A promotional event themed "Say No to Drugs" was held at Medical Centre Buttan, Katra. The PLVs highlighted the growing menace

of substance abuse and its impact on families and society at large. The participants were informed about the provisions of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and the legal repercussions associated with drug-related offences.

Meanwhile, Para Legal Volunteers of DLSA organised an awareness Programme on "Right to Education" in Main Market Reasi. The programme was conducted with the objective of spreading awareness among the general public, shopkeepers, parents and youth about the fundamental Right to education as guaranteed under Article 21-A of the Constitution of India and the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.

# Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan: SWD organises awareness rally at Thathri

HT NEWS NETWORK

**THATHRI, FEB 25:** The Department of Social Welfare today organised a mega awareness rally at Thathri under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (Drug-Free India Campaign).

The rally was taken out as part of the nationwide campaign led by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, with the objective of sensitizing communities—particularly the youth—about the perils of drug addiction and encouraging positive lifestyle choices.



Participants, including students, officials, civil society members and local residents actively took part in the rally carrying banners and placards displaying powerful messages such as "Say No to Drugs" and "Choose Life, Not Drugs." The event aimed to mobilize collective community action against substance abuse and strengthen preventive efforts at the grassroots level.

During the programme, awareness activities including street plays (Nukkad Natak) highlighting the social and health consequences of drug abuse were presented to educate the public in an engaging manner. Informative speeches were delivered by officials, teachers, healthcare professionals and individuals, advocating for a drug-free society, emphasizing the importance of awareness, early prevention and rehabilitation.

Pamphlets and informational materials were also distributed among the public to educate them about the ill effects of drug addiction, available counseling services and rehabilitation support mechanisms.

# New batch of Desktop Publishing Training begins at SBI RSETI Kishtwar

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KISHTWAR, FEB 25:** In a meaningful step towards promoting skill development and self-employment among rural youth, SBI RSETI Kishtwar today kicked off a new batch of Desktop Publishing (DTP) training.

A total of 25 candidates have been enrolled in this 45-day basic computer course with a focus on Desktop Publishing.

The training has been designed to impart practical computer operation and design skills to unemployed youth, thereby improving their employability and opening doors to self-employment opportunities.

The programme was inaugurated by Assistant General Manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Nikhil Sharma, as the chief guest.

The event was also graced by Lead District Manager Harsh Rawal and Director, RSETI Sanjay Kumar, along with other staff members of the institute.

Addressing the participants, AGM, NABARD, Nikhil Sharma underscored the increasing importance of skill devel-

opment in today's economic landscape. He highlighted NABARD's active role in supporting skill enhancement and capacity-building initiatives through RSETIs to empower rural youth and foster sustainable livelihoods.

The Lead District Manager, Harsh Rawal, briefed the trainees on various credit and financing options available through banks for trained youth and budding entrepreneurs.

He also provided information about the Mission YUVA programme and encouraged participants to take advantage of government and banking support schemes to launch income-generating ventures.

Director, RSETI Sanjay Kumar spoke about the core mandate of RSETIs in promoting self-employment through targeted, need-based training programmes. He assured the trainees of continued handholding and institutional support in their skill development and entrepreneurial journey.

The event concluded with an interactive session during which participants shared their enthusiasm and expressed a strong commitment to completing the training successfully.

# DHP&M hosts 3rd Multi-Stakeholder Platform Meet at Kissan Ghar Narwal

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, FEB 25:** The Department of Horticulture Planning and Marketing (DHP&M) today organized the 3rd Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) Meet of 2026 here at Kissan Ghar Narwal Jammu. The event was held under the aegis of Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIP), marking an important step towards strengthening collaboration among key stakeholders in the agriculture and horticulture sectors.

Director Horticulture Planning & Marketing Ghulam Jeelani Zargar inaugurated the meet as the chief guest. The Director welcomed the audience and briefed them about the significance of Multi-Stakeholder Platform meets for overall development of Agri/Horticulture Sector. The event was also attended by the Dy. Commissioner Sales & Taxes, Director Horticulture, Jammu, Director Agriculture Jammu, Dy. Director Animal Husbandry, experts from SKUAST Jammu, Central University, along with officers from the financial institutions. Their presence added immense value to the deliberations and highlighted the importance of inter-institutional coordination. In his inaugural address, Mr. Zargar laid emphasis on the uplift of the

farming community through flagship initiatives such as the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and JKCIP. He urged the participants to actively project their concerns, challenges and suggestions on such platforms to enable effective, inclusive and farmer-centric policy formulation. He reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening agricultural value chains, improving market access and enhancing farmers' incomes. The meet witnessed an overwhelming response from a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including members of the Kisan Advisory Board, FPOs, progressive farmers, entrepreneurs, traders and HADP/JKCIP beneficiaries. The platform facilitated threadbare and constructive discussions on critical issues related to supply chain management, marketing linkages, post-harvest infrastructure and institutional financing. The concerns and suggestions raised by participants were addressed in detail by the officers of stakeholder departments. Gen. Secretary Jammu Fruit Association Narwal, Jammu Nitin Jain demanded waiving off GST on walnut to benefit growers / traders and ultimately the consumer. Deputy Commissioner Sales & Taxes assured to take up the matter with the higher authorities for relief. UNI

# Apollo Tyres launches outdoor tyre testing facility in Finland

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**KOCHI, FEB 25:** Apollo Tyres Ltd has formally inaugurated its state-of-the-art dedicated outdoor tyre testing facility at Ivalo in Finland, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to delivering high-performance winter and all-season tyres globally.

The facility, which was announced a few months ago, became fully operational in December 2025. Its formal inauguration underscores the company's long-term focus on advancing winter mobility solutions and enhancing product excellence in challenging climatic conditions.

Developed under a long-term agreement with UTAC, a globally recognised automotive testing and certification group, the new testing centre represents a strategic investment in advanced evaluation capabilities. The move strengthens Apollo Tyres' position at the forefront of tyre innovation, safety, and performance engineering, a release said.

The facility was jointly inaugurated by Vice Chairman and Managing Director Neeraj Kanwar, Chief Commercial Officer Benoit Rivallant, and Chief Technology Officer Daniele Lorenzetti, reaffirming the company's commitment to safety, precision engineering,



and technological advancement.

Purpose-built to meet the rigorous demands of modern tyre development, the outdoor testing facility features dedicated snow and ice tracks designed to replicate diverse real-world winter driving conditions.

It is equipped with advanced measurement systems that enable precise data collection for braking, handling, traction, and stability assessments.

The infrastructure has been specifically tailored for comprehensive tyre performance evaluation, offering the company complete autonomy over its winter testing operations.

This independence ensures flexible scheduling throughout the winter season, faster development cycles, and the ability to conduct tests under varied and

optimal climatic conditions.

By centralising and upgrading its winter testing operations, Apollo Tyres expects significant gains in operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Engineering teams can now conduct continuous testing without external constraints, resulting in faster product validation timelines, greater repeatability and accuracy of results, reduced logistical complexity, and improved utilisation of resources.

These advancements are expected to directly contribute to the development of superior winter and all-season tyres that meet the highest standards of safety, durability, and performance.

The facility has been developed in compliance with all current technical and legal requirements, while also anticipating future

regulatory standards. Its systems and infrastructure are designed to adapt to evolving testing methodologies and certification frameworks, ensuring alignment with global industry regulations.

Describing the inauguration as more than just the opening of a facility, Neeraj Kanwar said the investment reinforces the company's ability to develop tyres that perform reliably in the most demanding winter conditions while maintaining year-round versatility.

Benoit Rivallant noted that beyond testing, the facility would also enable customers to experience winter testing firsthand, strengthening their understanding of tyre development and performance.

Daniele Lorenzetti said the dedicated outdoor testing centre significantly enhances the company's research and development capabilities by providing highly consistent real-world data, enabling faster validation and quicker speed to market while improving performance, safety, and sustainability.

With winter mobility standards continuing to rise globally, the new facility positions Apollo Tyres to effectively meet the evolving expectations of customers, partners, and regulators in the years ahead. UNI

## Nasuni expands Hyderabad R&D Centre to strengthen enterprise AI file Data Platform

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, FEB 25:** Nasuni, a global enterprise file data platform provider, on Tuesday announced the expansion of its Research and Development (R&D) Centre in Hyderabad to accelerate innovation in unified file data management, protection, and AI-driven enterprise solutions.

With unstructured data volumes continuing to grow across industries including manufacturing, financial services, healthcare, media, energy and the public sector, the Hyderabad center strengthens Nasuni's global engineering capacity to support enterprise modernization initiative worldwide, the Boston based company said in a release here.

Established in partnership with Summit Consulting and ANSR to support capability development, talent strategy, and operational scaling, the Hyderabad facility was formally inaugurated by Telangana Special Chief Secretary for IT, Electronics & Communications and Industries & Commerce, Sanjay Kumar, in the presence of Nasuni Chief Executive Officer Sam King.

The expansion underscores Telangana's growing status as a global technology and innovation hub and strengthens Nasuni's long-term engineering and AI development presence in India.

The expanded centre will work closely with Nasuni's global teams in the United States and Ireland to advance its enterprise file data platform, including AI integration, file data indexing, and resilient infrastructure design.

Speaking on the occasion, Nasuni CEO Sam King said enterprise AI adoption depends heavily on unified and secure



file data infrastructure, adding that the Hyderabad expansion will strengthen the company's engineering capabilities and accelerate delivery of secure, scalable, and analytics-ready file data services globally.

The Hyderabad facility is Nasuni's first centre in India, and the company has not yet commenced commercial operations in the country, she said. The Hyderabad R&D teams will focus on semantic indexing, predictive analytics, AI-driven operations, metadata intelligence, zero-trust access controls, and ransomware detection to strengthen enterprise data readiness for artificial intelligence applications.

Nasuni's Hyderabad R&D centre currently has a workforce of 40 employees and is expected to scale up to 125 by the end of this year, against a total capacity of 145, a senior company official said.

The expansion is expected to strengthen the company's global engineering capabilities and support enterprise digital transformation initiatives worldwide.

The company currently serves more than 800 enterprise customers across over 70 countries, offering integrated storage, backup, disaster recovery, ransomware protection, and analytics through a hybrid cloud platform. UNI

## Stock market dragged lower by sell-off in IT; Sensex down over 1,000 points

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, FEB 25:** The Stock market today slumped, with both BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty crashing by up to 1.28 per cent, dragged lower by a sharp sell-off in IT shares.

At closing, Sensex settled 1,068.74 points or 1.28 pc lower at 82,225.92, while the broader Nifty was at 25,424.65, down 288.35 points or 1.12 pc. Earlier in the day, the Sensex opened at 83,052.54, declining by 242.12 points or 0.29 pc.

In terms of stocks, IT plunged over 4 pc, Nifty Realty declined by over 2 pc leading the losing ends.

On the gaining side were PSU Bank, Pharma, Metal and Oil & Gas in the range of 0.3 to 1 pc. On Nifty, the key gainers were HUL, Hindalco Industries, Coal India, NTPC, JSW Steel. Biggest losers included Tech Mahindra, Eternal, Infosys, TCS, HCL Technologies.

About 1,382 shares advanced, 2,670 shares declined and 129 shares were unchanged. On the BSE, around 90 stocks touched their 52-week high while nearly 350 stocks touched their 52-week low. Those on the highs were Bank of Maharashtra, NTPC, Polycab India, Astral, Bharat Forge, Torrent Pharma, Union Bank of India, Jindal Steel, JB Chemicals, Marico, Bank of India, Cummins, Indian Bank, Federal Bank, SBI, L&T, among others.

The key ones on the low included LT Technology, KPIT Technologies, Hexaware Technologies, Zensar Technologies, Tata Tech, Info Edge, Tata Elxsi, Sonata Software, Infosys, TCS, CE Info Systems, Cyient, Network 18, Wipro, Vedant Fashions, SRF, Just Dial, among others.

Notably, the share price of Bharti Airtel fell 2 pc on Rs 20,000 crore investment in Airtel Money.

Indian rupee traded in a narrow range and settled 6 paise lower at 90.95 against the US dollar. UNI

## Trump highlights economic gains, warns Iran in state of the union address

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**WASHINGTON, FEB 25:** President Donald Trump used his Tuesday state of the union address to highlight what he described as economic progress and emphasize his role in major international conflicts.

The address came shortly after the Supreme Court struck down his signature global tariffs, as he considers a second round of potential military strikes on Iran. The United States has pursued the goal of preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons for decades, Trump said.

"For decades, it has been the policy of the United States never to allow Iran to obtain a nu-

clear weapon," Trump said in his state of the union address to Congress.

This comes amid a military buildup by the US in West Asia. Delivering his annual address to Congress, Trump reiterated that he would prefer to resolve the conflict through a diplomatic deal, but said Tehran had not committed to refraining from developing nuclear weapons.

Stating that Iran has already developed missiles that can threaten Europe and US bases overseas, Trump claimed Tehran was working to "build missiles that will soon reach the United States of America."

He spoke of 'Operation Midnight Hammer', the US airstrikes



last year against Iran's nuclear facilities during a 12-day war between Israel and Iran. "After

Midnight Hammer, they were warned to make no future attempts to rebuild their weapons

programme, yet they continue and are, at this moment, again pursuing their sinister nuclear ambitions," Trump said.

The US President said Iran wants to make a deal to avoid further US strikes but has yet to commit to never developing a nuclear weapon. "We haven't heard those secret words: 'We will never have a nuclear weapon,'" Trump said, adding that Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. "Can't let that happen," he said.

"My preference is to solve this problem through diplomacy, but one thing is certain: I will never allow the world's number one sponsor of terror, which they are by far, to have a nuclear weapon," he said.

## Telangana to roll out Ease of Doing Business 2.0 Soon: Sridhar Babu

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, FEB 25:** Telangana will soon introduce Ease of Doing Business 2.0 as part of its strategy to position the State as a preferred global investment destination, IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu said here on Tuesday.

Speaking after inaugurating the Growth X2026 conference organised by the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) here, Sridhar Babu said the new policy would be formulated through stakeholder consultations to accelerate industrial growth,

strengthen investor confidence, and provide greater assurance to investors.

He said the government has prepared Telangana Vision 2047 to guide long-term economic expansion, adding that the State, currently a \$200-billion economy, aims to grow to \$1 trillion by 2034 and \$3 trillion by 2047.

To ensure balanced regional development, the government has adopted a three-pronged strategy — CURE, PURE and RARE — to bring all regions, from urban centres to rural areas, onto the growth path, the Minister said..

Highlighting emerging trends, Sridhar Babu said artificial intelligence and Industry 5.0 are reshaping business and work culture, and stressed that future competitiveness would depend on strong ecosystems.

He added that the government intends to function as a collaborative partner with industry rather than merely a regulatory authority.

BJP State president Ramchander Rao, FTCCI president R. Ravi Kumar, D. Nageshwar Reddy, representatives of Skyroot Aerospace, and Growth X2026 convener Pankaj Diwan were among those present. UNI

## Financially strong, digitally smart DISCOMs key to power 'Viksit Bharat 2047': Shripad Naik

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, FEB 25:** Minister of State for Power Shripad Yesso Naik on Tuesday said that financially strong and digitally intelligent DISCOMs are central to achieving the nation's energy vision. Addressing the 4th DISCOM Conclave 2026 here, Naik highlighted India's power sector transformation — from universal electrification to the target of 500 GW renewable energy capacity.

Referring to the installation of 5.5 crore smart meters under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), he said the

integration of artificial intelligence in demand forecasting, grid management and operational efficiency will define the next phase of reforms.

He called upon industry, innovators and financial institutions to collaborate in building next-generation DISCOMs aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. Chairperson of the Central Electricity Authority, Ghanashyam Prasad, said building next-generation utilities demands excellence in both technical reliability and digital intelligence.

He emphasised that DISCOMs must progressively achieve N-1 reliability standards to ensure

uninterrupted and quality power supply. Digital transformation, he added, must move beyond smart metering to establish integrated digital architectures with interoperable systems and strong cybersecurity frameworks.

Leveraging granular consumption data, he said, can significantly enhance demand forecasting, peak load prediction and dynamic resource planning.

Alok Kumar, Director General of the All India Discoms Association, noted that Indian DISCOMs have recorded a turnaround in FY25 with reduced aggregate losses and improved profitability. With Aggregate

Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses at around 15 per cent, he said there is scope to close the gap with the global benchmark of 7.5 per cent.

He stressed the need to improve billing efficiency to 92-93 per cent, ensure 100 per cent collection efficiency, guaranteed timely state subsidy payments and enable realistic tariff revisions by State Electricity Regulatory Commissions.

Addressing timely subsidies and tariff reforms, he observed, could resolve a significant portion of the sector's financial stress, especially as electricity demand is projected to grow four to five

times by 2047.

P R Kumar, MD & CEO of Noida Power Company Limited, said AT&C losses have declined from over 25 per cent in FY14 to nearly 15 per cent in FY25, while the ACS-ARR gap has narrowed sharply.

However, he cautioned that financial vulnerability persists, with a majority of DISCOMs continuing to face weak debt service coverage ratios.

Strengthening financial resilience, he said, requires sustained loss reduction, optimisation of power purchase costs and implementation of cost-reflective tariffs. UNI

## SCR to launch First-of-Its-Kind 'Rail Parcel App'

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, FEB 25:** Aiming at facilitating door to door service of parcel booking and delivery to the Rail users, the South Central Railway (SCR) thr launch First-of-Its-Kind 'Rail Parcel App' during the conclave on 'Rail Parcel Logistics' to be held here on Feb 25.

Hyderabad Division, will be the first on Indian Railways to implement this Pilot Project, SCR Chief Public Relations Officer A. Sridhar said in a release here on Monday.

SCR General Manager Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, will grace the occasion as Chief Guest and will launch the App, a first of its kind initiative on Indian Railways aimed at providing seamless door to door parcel booking and delivery service for customers opting to transport parcels through trains.

On this occasion, SCR will also sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore for undertaking study on Freight Logistics Market on SCR.

The App is a comprehensive digital platform which integrates First Mile (pickup), Mid Mile (transportation by Railways), and Last Mile (delivery) services into a unified platform, making parcel movement simpler, faster, and more transparent for customers.

The next gen Rail Parcel App will serve as a one-stop platform for booking, tracking, and managing parcel consignments.

It is designed to bring together industry, individuals, businesses, and logistics partners under a single digital ecosystem that ensures end-to-end transport and convenience.

Features and benefits of App: Online booking and digital payments (online banking, debit/credit cards, UPI); Real time parcel tracking; Seamless end-to-end service from doorstep pickup to doorstep delivery and Automated push messages will be delivered to mobile number of customers at each stage of parcel handling. UNI

# Du Plessis: Real Test Awaits Motie, Hosein vs SA & India

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**KOLKATA:** If you score 254 in a T20 game, even if it's at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, you can go into the break feeling fairly confident. But West Indies still needed to bowl their overs and bowl them well against a spirited Zimbabwe side in their T20 World Cup game on Monday night, and found Akeal Hosein and Gudakesh Motie, their spin frontmen, in just the right kind of form.

Hosein, as expected, bowled in the powerplay, and had 3-1-21-2 by the end of it. The maiden, the third over of the Zimbabwe innings, included the wickets of Brian Bennett and Ryan Burl, and two dots to Sikandar Raza. He finished with 3 for 28. Motie came on after the powerplay, got the wicket of Dion Myers in his first over, bowled his quota of overs on the trot, and finished with 4 for 28, having added the wickets of Raza and Tashinga Musekiwa off back-to-back balls in the 11th over and that of Tony Munyonga in the 13th, also a maiden.

"I think tactically they were smart. Akeal Hosein, throwing the ball to him for someone like Bennett, not having seen him before, and that was an absolute beauty," Fa du Plessis said on ESPNcricinfo's TimeOut programme after the game. The delivery to Bennett was indeed a ripper. Flighted up from around the wicket by the left-arm spinner, it landed on middle stump and spun (and bounced) right past Bennett's attempted hoick to the leg side to hit the top of off stump. "You normally don't associate him beating the bat on the outside. He normally beats you on the inside quite often," du Plessis elaborated. "So when a ball spins and bounces like that, it shows you it's a quality ball. The way he started the innings... they are two very different spinners. One is a powerplay... almost like a [Samuel] Badree, brilliant in the powerplay, and Motie comes in after six and he just shuts the game down."

That flight is something one does associate with Motie, who is a bit more classical than Hosein, a very powerplay kind of bowler. It was that, du Plessis said, and the pace at which the two bowled - slightly slower than usual - that did the trick for them on a red-soil pitch where the ball gripped a little bit. Motie's own moment to remember came against Raza. Flat and on a length from around the wicket, the left-arm spinner got the ball to grip and turn viciously from middle stump to hit off stump, beating Raza's outside edge and leaving him imbalanced. "I am not sure the wicket changed much from the first to the second innings. But just looking at the pace that Akeal Hosein was bowling at, and Motie, there was a little bit of... just above the eyeline for the ball to have time to spin, and you look at someone like Sikandar Raza, he bowled very, very quickly, trying to bowl defensive," du Plessis said. Hosein and Motie combined for 7 for 56 from their eight overs. Raza returned 3-0-52-0. That, to be fair, is also a reflection of the batting power of the two line-ups - Shimron Hetmyer smashed 85 in 34 balls, Rovman Powell 59 in 35 balls, and Sherfane Rutherford 31 not out in 13. Graeme Cremer, a more pedigreed spinner than Raza, was Zimbabwe's only bowler to go at under ten runs an over, returning 1 for 38 from his four. But bowling against Zimbabwe, despite their success at the T20 World Cup so far, especially after burying them under 254, could be vastly different to bowling against South Africa and India, who West Indies play next in the Super Eight.

"I saw them in South Africa. And I have played a lot of cricket with and against both of them. Amazing spinners. If there's a little bit of something in the wicket, both of them [will exploit it]," du Plessis said. "But the test will come now when they play against a lot of lefties in India, how're they going to respond to that, and South Africa played both of them really well in South Africa [in the T20I series in January this year]."



## The making of Jacob Duffy, a cricketer and an inspiration

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**CHENNAI:** Last year, which Jacob Duffy finished with 81 wickets across international formats, he set a New Zealand record and the man he threw off the top spot slipped into his DMS.

"So we obviously dispersed post the [Mount Maunganui] Test match [against West Indies] and he just sent me a message as I was flying home. I had to think about it, because he didn't sign-off 'Sir Richard Hadlee'. He signed off 'Richard'. Who's Richard? I've got a cousin, Richard. I sort of might have thought it was from him."

Duffy was born in Lumsden, a town of 530 people. He went to school in Invercargill, home to 51,200. He is the first Southlander to play for New Zealand since 1993. At last count, there were just over 100,000 in the region. Sometimes it really

**Duffy dominates the Windies**  
Most wickets in a men's Test series in New Zealand

25	24	24	23	21
WASIM AKRAM vs NZ 1994	ERAPALLI PRASANNA vs NZ 1988	RYAN SIDEBOTTOM vs NZ 2008	JACOB DUFFY vs WI 2025	VERNON PHILANDER vs NZ 2012

hits him, how far he's been able to come. New Zealand don't exactly have a team based out of where he's from. So they stuck him with the closest approximation, Otago, which wouldn't be so much of a problem if it wasn't for a rivalry dating back ages. "Southland's sort of the little brother, it often gets forgotten," Duffy said. He has been part of a campaign working to remedy this situation, and last December they got something special under their tree. Otago's teams in the Super Smash dropped the Otago bit from their name. They are simply the Volts (men) and the Sparks (women) now in recognition of the fact they represent communities across a much wider area with supporters in four different districts.

## Harmanpreet stays off the field after picking up knee injury

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI:** Harmanpreet Kaur has picked up an injury and couldn't go out to field during India's defence of their 214 against Australia in the first ODI at Brisbane's Allan Border Field on Tuesday.

A BCCI media statement after India's innings, where Harmanpreet scored a half-century, said she had "sustaining an injury to her left knee while batting" and the medical team "is monitoring her progress". Vice-captain Smriti Mandhana led India in Harmanpreet's absence.

It was not clear when Harmanpreet picked up the injury, but she did receive some on-field treatment at the end of the 38th



over of India's innings, when she was on 40 from 67 balls. She continued till the 44th over before falling for 53 off 84 balls, having put up a 53-run stand in 61 balls with Kashvee Gautam,

who scored 43 in 44 balls before becoming the last batter out.

Harmanpreet hit three fours in her innings, which was almost entirely about rebuilding after India had collapsed to 140 for 6 in the 34th over despite Mandhana's 58 off 68 balls from the top. Australia, who lost the preceding T20I series 2-1, are without two key players for the entire ODI series: Ellyse Perry and Kim Garth both picked up quad injuries in the last T20I and are now in a race to be fit for the one-off Test match that will be played after the ODIs. Megan Schutt, who was not part of the original ODI squad, came into the XI and played her part in restricting India to a low total, returning 2 for 42 from her nine overs.

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