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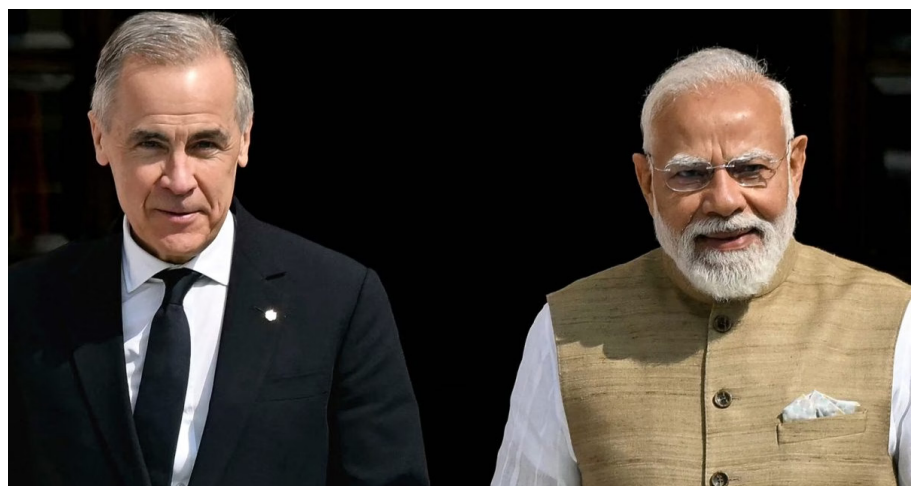
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India, Canada Strike Landmark Uranium Deal; CEPA Talks to Be Fast-Track

Modi, Carney discuss West Asia crisis, defence cooperation and joint action against terrorism



■ HT NEWS DESK/ AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 2: India and Canada on Monday sealed a landmark pact on long-term uranium supply and agreed to expedite negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), following high-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney.

The wide-ranging discussions covered civil nuclear cooperation, critical minerals, trade, defence collaboration and pressing global security concerns, including the volatile situation in West Asia.

Describing the civil nuclear pact as a

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Kashmir on High Alert as Valley Marks Day 2 of Mourning Over Khamenei Killing



Schools shut, internet curtailed; security tightened across districts as leaders urge restraint

■ HT NEWS DESK/ KNO

SRINAGAR, MAR 02: Amid sweeping precautionary measures, Kashmir on Monday observed the second consecutive day of mourning over the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a reported joint United States-Israel military strike that has heightened tensions in West Asia.

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MHA Sounds Nationwide Alert Amid Fears of Fallout from US-Israel Strikes on Iran

States asked to secure embassies, tourist hubs; cyber cells told to curb inflammatory online content

■ HT NEWS DESK/ AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 02: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued a nationwide security advisory to all states and Union Territories, warning of possible unrest in the wake of recent US and Israeli strikes

on Iran.

The alert follows protests reported in parts of the country after the assassination of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on February 28. Officials said rapidly evolving developments in West Asia could have spillover effects on India's internal secu-

rity situation.

In its communication to state governments, the MHA directed law enforcement agencies to remain on high alert and closely monitor the activities of both pro-Iran and anti-Iran groups. States have been asked to strengthen security

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Seventh Consecutive Dry Winter Leaves J&K Staring at Water Stress

Season ends 65% below normal as February logs massive 89% rainfall deficit across districts

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, MAR 02: Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed its seventh straight winter of deficient precipitation, with the December 2025 to February 2026 period closing 65 per cent below normal, deepening fears of water scarcity in the months ahead.

Data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveals that the Union Territory received only 100.6 mm of precipitation during the core winter months, against the normal average of



284.9 mm, making it one of the driest seasons in recent years.

The sharp seasonal deficit was largely driven by an exceptionally dry February, which recorded just 14.2 mm of rainfall against a normal of 130.4 mm — an alarming 89 per cent shortfall. December had already recorded a 78 per cent deficit, with only 13.0 mm precipitation against a normal of 59.4 mm. January offered limited relief with 73.4 mm rainfall against 95.1 mm, narrowing the deficit to 23 per cent due to brief western disturbance activity.

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Centre on Standby to Evacuate Indians from West Asia Amid Escalating Tensions

■ HT NEWS DESK/ AGENCIES

BENGALURU, MARCH 2: The Centre is fully prepared to evacuate Indians stranded in the Gulf region as tensions mount over the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Monday, assuring families that comprehensive measures are in place to safeguard citizens abroad.

In an official statement, Joshi said the government is in constant touch with Indian missions in the affected region and has held discussions with senior embassy officials to facilitate the safe return of those impacted by the deteriorating security situation.

"Whenever Kannadigas and other Indians face distress anywhere in the world, the Central Government has ensured their safe return. Earlier, we brought back those stranded in Ukraine. Wherever Indians are, their safety remains our first priority," he said.

The minister noted that reports have emerged of

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₹1,695 Crore Paid for J&K Ring Roads, 1,398 Land Cases Still Stuck

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, MAR 2: The government of Jammu and Kashmir has disbursed Rs. 1,695.37 crore as compensation for land acquired for the ambitious Ring Road projects in Jammu and Srinagar, even as 1,398 landowners' cases remain pending due to litigation, title disputes and fund-related issues, officials said.

The twin projects — a 58.25-km Jammu Ring Road from Raya Morh in Samba to Jagti near Nagrota, and a 60.84-km Srinagar Ring Road passing through Pulwama, Budgam, Srinagar, Ganderbal, Baramulla and Bandipora — were launched in 2018 and are now in the final phases of completion.

Officials said a total compensation of Rs. 2,106.70 crore

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Army Chief's Stern Message in Kishtwar: Stay Alert, Mission-Ready

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 2: In the wake of the recent elimination of three Pakistani terrorists affiliated with the proscribed outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad in Kishtwar, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Army's White Knight Corps, Lt Gen P K Mishra, on Monday directed troops to remain alert, proactive and mission-focused.

During his visit to the hilly district of Kishtwar, the Corps Commander reviewed the prevailing security situation and



ongoing counter-terror operations. He was accompanied by Maj Gen Ajai Singh Dabas, Gen-

eral Officer Commanding of Counter-Insurgency Force

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J&K to scan MSMEs for early risk detection and timely intervention

Chief Secy reviews MSME Health Clinic support for enterprises

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 02: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today observed that establishing a robust and responsive mechanism under the MSME Health Clinic to provide "the right advice at the right time" to local enterprises would be one of the most significant



developmental interventions ever undertaken for the MSME sector in Jammu & Kashmir.

He made these remarks while chairing a comprehensive review meeting on the performance of the MSME Health Clinic, an initiative of the Industries & Commerce

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Panchayat Roll, ULB Delimitation Meet Today

■ HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

JAMMU, MAR 2: The State Election Commissioner (SEC) has convened a high-level meeting on Tuesday to discuss the revision of the Panchayat electoral roll and review the status of delimitation of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

The SEC, Shatnamu, will chair the meeting tomorrow via videoconferencing at 2:30 PM to deliberate on the revision of the Panchayat Electoral Roll-2026 and assess the progress of delimitation of ULBs.

The meeting is expected to be attended in person by the Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj; the Deputy

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Chief Secretary inaugurates SKUAST-J industry startup outreach programme under JKCIP

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 02: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu today organized a landmark Industry-Startup Outreach Programme under the Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP) here. Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, inaugurated the event.

The programme, attended by the senior government officials, industry leaders, startups, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), academicians and students, was aimed at to strengthen the industry-academia-startup linkages in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The event was attended by Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu, Professor B.N. Tripathi, Mission Director, JKCIP/HADP, Sandeep Kumar (IFS), statutory officers of the university, representatives of different institutions including IIM Jammu, IIT Jammu, IIM Jammu, industry experts, UTLBC, J&K Bank, District Industries Centre (DIC) Jammu, startups and FPOs.

The Chief Secretary highlighted the need for FPOs to move



beyond aggregation towards enterprise-oriented models centered on processing, packaging, branding and value addition to significantly enhance farmers' incomes.

Atal Dulloo elaborated 4 Cs: culture, capacity building, commercialization and connectivity for success of startups. He reiterated the government's commitment towards improving the ease of doing business in agriculture, strengthening startup ecosystems and ensuring timely and

affordable credit through strong banking partnerships.

Appreciating the proactive initiatives of SKUAST-Jammu and the Mission Directorate JKCIP, the Chief Secretary stressed that despite J&K being a major producer of wool, trout fisheries, floriculture and medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs), processing remains limited and requires focused attention.

Atal Dulloo expressed hope that the outreach programme would evolve into a sustained

partnership model, positioning Jammu and Kashmir as a vibrant agri-entrepreneurship hub under initiatives such as JKCIP, HADP and Mission YUVA, contributing to the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Vice Chancellor Professor B.N. Tripathi detailed that holding the event outside the campus was both strategic and symbolic, reflecting the evolving role of universities as drivers of entrepreneurship and regional economic growth beyond teaching and research. He highlighted key

milestones in industry engagement, including establishment of the Bayer Learning Centre and introduction of Professors of Practice from industry to bring real-world expertise into academics.

The Vice Chancellor informed that over 120 startup ideas have been incubated in agriculture and allied sectors, with more than 32 receiving funding from the Ministry for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India. However, he emphasized that funding alone is insufficient and stressed the need for structured mentorship during scaling, compliance and commercialisation phases. He urged the industry partners to support startups through mentorship, contract research, joint product development, pilot trials, technology validation and integration into established supply chains.

Dr. S.K. Gupta, Director Research, SKUAST-Jammu, presented the vote of thanks while Dr. Sanjay Guleria, Dean, Faculty of Basic Sciences, briefed them about the programme. Meanwhile, two panel discussions were conducted during the programme, involving the representatives from different institutions.

MoE mulls AI in curriculum, J&K lacks basic facilities

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

Srinagar, Mar 02: With the Ministry of Education (MoE) mulling to introduce Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the school curriculum, Jammu and Kashmir on the contrary is lacking the basic facilities of computers in over 60 percent of schools—raising a question on future of students of the region.

According to the official documents available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), "In J&K only 39 percent of school going students have access to computers."

The figures further reveal that the access to internet connectivity was available to only 49 percent of school students across Jammu and Kashmir. The document however stated that digital infrastructure remains a focus area for the government.

Stating the access and infrastructure indicators, the official figures show steady improvement with over 98 percent students having access to schooling at all levels.

The official figures further reveal that Jammu and Kashmir has 90.84 percent of toilet facilities for the girls', 88.49 percent for boys.

It also said 75.10 percent of students have access to libraries and electricity was available in 91.44 percent of schools.

Pertinently, the MoE has said that the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is developing the framework for AI integration for all students from Class 3 onwards from the academic year 2026-27.

Earlier in the second week of February, KNO reported that with nearly 28 percent of students in Jammu and Kashmir failing to transition from secondary to higher secondary level, the retention rate post 8th standard poses a real challenge for the School Education Department in ensuring the consistency of the learners.

The official figures in this regard has revealed that the transition rates have improved significantly with 94.8 percent transition from primary to upper primary and 90.7 percent from elementary to secondary levels.

The documents further reveal that the J&K was facing a transition rate of 72.9 percent from secondary to higher secondary and Gross Access Ratio remains above 98 percent across stages.— (KNO)

DC Kulgam visits Yaripora, reviews functioning of Government Offices

Also assesses Healthcare Services in area

HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, MAR 02: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today visited Yaripora area to review the functioning of key government offices and assess healthcare services in the area.

During his inspection of the Tehsil Office, the DC examined mutation registers and Jamabandi records.

He reviewed the delivery of revenue services through Revenue Plus and the issuance of certificates under Jan-Sugam.

Emphasizing efficiency and accountability, he directed officials to ensure timely disposal of pending cases and seamless public service delivery.

Later, the DC visited Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Yaripora, where he evaluated the range and quality of medical services being provided to the public.

He stressed the importance of maintaining proper sanitation standards and instructed that the public washroom constructed by the Municipal Committee be made operational without delay.

While inspecting the hospital premises, he noted vacant spaces and an unutilized residential building and directed the Block Medical Officer (BMO) to prepare a comprehensive proposal for the optimal utilization of available infrastructure to enhance healthcare facilities.

Assistant Commissioner Revenue and the Chief Medical Officer accompanied the DC during the visit.

DC Ganderbal reviews progress under District CAPEX Budget 2025-26

HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, MAR 02: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today chaired a meeting to review the progress of works being executed under the District CAPEX Budget 2025-26 in the district.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed the progress of key sectors including I&FC, Jal Shakti, PW (R&B), KPDCL, Health, Education, etc. emphasizing the urgent need to complete all ongoing projects as the financial year draws to a close.

The DC took a detailed review of both physical and financial achievements under the approved works and stressed the need for timely completion of all projects within the stipulated timeframe.

Threadbare discussions were also held with the concerned officers regarding the status of ongoing works being implemented under different programmes including Area Development Plan (DDC Grants, BDC Grants, and PRI Grants) besides Aspirational Block Development Programme and Aspirational Panchayat Development



Programme.

Officers were directed to expedite progress on all ongoing projects, ensure proper utilisation of funds and maintain quality standards.

The DC emphasised close monitoring of works and called for improved coordination among departments to avoid delays.

Later, the DC reviewed the progress on identification of suitable land and construction of assets including DEWATS, Segregation Sheds and Soakage Pits under the Rural Development Department (RDD) across the district.

The DC directed concerned BDOs

to expedite construction of developmental works on the already identified suitable land in different blocks.

He stressed the need for timely compliance and concerted efforts by all stakeholders to strengthen rural infrastructure across the district.

Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, Executive Engineers of KPDCL, I&FC, PW (R&B), Jal Shakti, besides other officers and officials attended the meeting.

Deputy Chief Minister conducts surprise inspection of Chief Engineer PWD Office, Jammu

Emphasizes timely project completion, prompt service delivery to public

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 2: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today conducted a surprise inspection of the office of Chief Engineer, Public Works Department (R&B) Jammu to assess its functioning and progress in both physical and financial areas.

During the inspection, the Deputy Chief Minister reviewed the overall working of the office and called for prompt, efficient and citizen-centric service delivery. He took stock of both the physical and financial progress of ongoing projects and emphasised the need for achieving the targets within stipulated timelines.

Stressing on accountability and efficiency, he directed the officers



to ensure seamless coordination between the Chief Engineer's office and allied wings for timely completion of developmental works. He underscored that any

delay, negligence or compromise in quality would not be tolerated and instructed the officials to maintain strict monitoring mechanisms. "Quality work and trans-

parency in execution are top priorities for this government," he stated.

The Deputy Chief Minister further highlighted the govern-

ment's commitment towards ensuring robust and balanced development across all districts of Jammu and Kashmir, with a special focus on improving road connectivity and extending better infrastructure to every habitation across J&K.

Earlier, the Deputy Chief Minister met various public and individual delegations from different districts, including Padder area and listened patiently to their demands and grievances.

Reiterating the government's resolve for transparent and public-centric governance, he assured them of time-bound and result-oriented action to address their genuine concerns.

Chief Engineer and senior officers of engineering wing were present on the occasion.

Tribal Affairs Minister emphasizes evidence-based policy, cultural preservation for G&B welfare

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 02: In a move towards intensifying tribal welfare initiatives, Minister for Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today discussed with the trustees of Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust (GDCT) the ongoing efforts aimed at the welfare and upliftment of Gurjar-Bakerwal tribe.

The meeting featured in-depth deliberations on the preservation and promotion of Gorkh culture, art and language. Besides, discussion was held on the Trust's expanding initiatives in education, tribal welfare and community development.

Emphasizing the importance of safeguarding indigenous identity, the Minister underlined that cultural preservation must go hand in hand with socio-economic empowerment.

During the consultation, the Minister also highlighted key interventions undertaken by the Tribal Affairs Department to accelerate the socio-economic advancement of tribal communities across J&K.

Emphasising the need for synergy between civil society and government institutions, Rana stressed that coordinated efforts are essential to achieving inclusive and sustainable development. He urged the Trust to strengthen its collaboration with the Tribal Research Institute to undertake high-quality, evidence-based research on various dimensions of tribal life including traditions, language, cultural practices and contemporary socio-economic challenges.

"Policy must be rooted in credible data and field-based research," the Minister observed, adding that evidence-driven insights would enable the government to design the targeted interventions and formulate responsive policies that genuinely address the needs of tribal communities.

Chairman of the Trust, Arshad Choudhary briefed the Minister on the Trust's ongoing programs and future roadmap, particularly initiatives focused on educational outreach, youth empowerment and cultural documentation.

The meeting was attended by Mohammad Mumtaz Ali, Director Tribal Affairs and Dr. Abdul Khabir, Director, Tribal Research Institute, J&K besides trustees of GDCT including Dr. Showkat Choudhary, General Secretary Sadiq Azad and Advocate Zulkarnain Choudhary.

IIMC Jammu's 6-day capacity building Programme for DIPR staff concludes

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 02: The six-day Capacity Building and Skill Enhancement Training Programme for officers and officials of Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) concluded at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) here today.

The training programme was attended by around 50 staff members of DIPR, who received intensive training in Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications and contemporary media practices.

Addressing the valedictory session of the programme, Regional Director, IIMC Jammu, Dr. Dilip Kumar congratulated the participants for successfully completing the training and encouraged them to apply the newly acquired skills in their professional responsibilities. He appreciated their enthusiasm in learning AI Fundamentals and Applications, Advanced AI & Practical Applications, Print Media Basics and Advanced Practices, as well as Electronic Media Basics and Advanced Practices.

Speaking on the occasion, Joint Director (Hqr) DIPR, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina congratulated the participants and expressed confidence that they would implement their learning in a professional and effective manner within the department.

Prof. Anil Saumitra and Information Officer DIPR, Alka Misra were also present at the valedictory session and extended their



best wishes to the participants.

During the session, Course Coordinator of the training programme, Dr. Vinit Kumar Jha Utpal presented the comprehensive training report.

The participants also received certificates during the valedictory session of the training programme.

Pertinently, the programme commenced on 23rd February, 2026 and was designed to strengthen the institutional communication capacity of DIPR personnel by equipping them with modern media skills aligned with evolving public information needs and governance requirements.

The training programme was structured into three batches.

The first batch underwent training in AI Fundamentals and Applications and Advanced AI & Practical Applications. The second batch focused on 'Print Media Basics and Advanced Practices' while as the third batch received training in "Electronic Media Basics and Advanced Practices" between February 27 and March 2, 2026.

On the first day, Dr. Vinit Kumar Jha Utpal spoke about the changing patterns of government communication. Shri Bhawani Singh conducted sessions on fact-checking, digital verification tools, and AI-based multilingual drafting and speechwriting. Shri Rajeev Kumar delivered a session on AI-enhanced multimedia and visual public relations.

On the second day, Dr. Rajendra P. Misra delivered a lecture on government communication in an AI-driven digital media ecology. Shri Divyavasu Sharma trained participants in AI-powered crisis communication and guided them in developing AI-based projects. Dr. Dilip Kumar concluded the day with a session on AI ethics and cyber safety in government organizations.

The third day focused on content creation and print media practices. Shri Divyavasu Sharma conducted a session on content creation and linguistic design using AI tools. Shri Vishav conducted practical classes on print media basics, layout principles, and QuarkXPress. Shri Gulshan Kumar trained participants in

graphics and image editing basics.

On the fourth day, Prof. Anil Saumitra delivered a lecture on press release writing with AI integration. Dr. Ravinder Singh discussed the basics of feature writing and success stories. Dr. Vinit Kumar Jha Utpal trained participants in print production using MS Word, while Bhawani Singh conducted a session on fact-checking and verification in print media.

The fifth day was dedicated to electronic media. Ramesh Kumar Raina, former officer of Doordarshan Jammu, and Vinod Cheervi delivered sessions on the introduction to electronic media and camera basics. Dr. Vinit Kumar Jha Utpal trained participants in AI-assisted news packaging and editing. Bhawani Singh conducted a session on AI applications for social media reels and short videos.

On the sixth day, Dr. Rajendra P. Misra trained participants in government communication within an AI-driven digital media ecology, along with scripting, packaging, and voice-over techniques for electronic media. Divyavasu Sharma conducted sessions on fact-checking, deep-fake detection, and emerging trends such as live AI streaming and digital archiving.

The initiative reflects IIMC Jammu's continued commitment to enhancing professional competencies in government communication through structured, technology-driven training programmes.

Women's Week campaign commences in Kathua with grand inauguration

Extensive calendar of events to focus on empowerment, safety and inclusive development

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, MAR 02: The District Administration Kathua today formally launched the Women's Week Campaign with a grand inaugural ceremony held at Government Degree College (GDC) Women, marking the beginning of a week-long series of activities dedicated to promote the empowerment of women in the district.

The Campaign centers on the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao theme, underscoring the collective resolve to protect, educate and empower the girl child.

The event was attended by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma as the Chief Guest, besides ADDC Surinder Mohan Sharma; District Programme Officer ICDS Mohammad Syed Khan; ADC Vishavjeet Singh; CPO Ranjeet Thakur; DSWO Varun Chaudhary and other senior officers. Faculty members, students of the Women's College and officials from the Social Welfare Department were also present in large numbers.

The ceremony commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp and Saraswati Vandana, followed by a thought-provoking Nukkad Natak focusing on women safety and the measures required to ensure a secure environment for girls.



Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the pivotal role of women in nation-building and emphasized the need to ensure equal opportunities, safety, quality education and economic independence for them. Highlighting the significance of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, he reiterated the administration's commitment to strengthening women-centric schemes, promoting skill development, health awareness and inclusive growth. "It is for the first time, Women's Week is being celebrated on such a scale in the district" he noted. College Faculty, Prof. Rachna stressed the importance of maintaining gender balance in society and called for sustained efforts to make women self-reliant and financially independent.

Mementoes were presented to Prof. Rachna and the students who performed Saraswati Vandana and Nukkad Natak in recognition of their commendable performances.

Earlier, the District Social Welfare Officer highlighted the objectives of observing Women's Week. He lauded the increasing participation of women in diverse fields and reiterated the department's commitment towards their welfare and empowerment.

Meanwhile, similar inaugural functions were organized simultaneously across all sub-divisions of the district.

DDC Reasi reviews functioning of Labour and Employment Department

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

REASI, MAR 02: District Development Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today chaired a review meeting to assess the functioning of the Labour and Employment Department.

The meeting reviewed in detail the implementation of key initiatives including Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PMSYM), E-Shram registration, delivery of online services and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.

The DDC directed the department to widen the implementation of labour welfare schemes across the district. He laid special emphasis on enforcement of the Child Labour (Prohibition and



Regulation) Act and the Juvenile Justice Act, for which a dedicated task force has already been constituted in the district.

While reviewing the performance of the Employment and Counselling Centre, the DDC took stock of achievements under Tejaswini, Mumkin and other Mission Yuva schemes. He instructed the concerned officers to ensure wide publicity of Mission Yuva, particularly highlighting opportunities under MSME and nano projects based on local requirements.

Further, field functionaries were directed to intensify their outreach efforts and provide end-to-end handholding to beneficiaries — from initial loan application to submission of final completion reports — to ensure effective implementation and maximum benefit to the youth of the district.

ADDC Sukhdev Singh Samyal, CPO Narinder Kumar, ALC Reasi and other officers were present in the meeting.

Amit Sharma chairs Meeting on Seva Sankalp Resolution; Re-affirms Commitment to Viksit Bharat 2047

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 02: A meeting to deliberate upon the "Seva Sankalp Resolution" adopted by the Union Cabinet recently, was held today at the Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The meeting was chaired by Amit Sharma, IAS, Director MHA, Census Operations, J&K and Ladakh, along with Arun Kumar, Joint Director and Manmeet Singh Loomba, Deputy Director and all other Assistant Directors and officers present alongside, both physically and through virtual mode.

At the outset, DCO Amit Sharma directed the team to read out the Office Memorandum issued by the Cabinet Secretariat and the enclosed Seva Sankalp Resolution and a threadbare brain-storming session was held to deliberate upon the vision of Union Cabinet of making our Bharat Viksit by 2047 and figure amongst

top three global leaders.

Amit emphasized that the Resolution reflects a renewed commitment towards public-centric governance rooted in constitutional values, transparency, accountability and service to citizens and the upcoming Census 2027 shall be a true reflection of same, being the first-ever paperless census which is to be conducted in a digital manner and shall help best in reaching out to the last citizen of the nation to be covered through it.

Highlighting the national vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047", Amit Sharma stated that the Directorate of Census Operations has a crucial role in strengthening evidence-based governance through clean, transparent and accurate data collection. He underscored that Census 2027, being the first fully digital and paperless Census, will serve as a foundational pillar for policy planning and proper decision-making across sectors.

Director Amit Sharma further observed that Census 2027 holds the key to reaching the last citizen of the nation and ensuring inclusive development. He stressed that initiatives such as "Census as a Service (CaaS)" and digital enumeration align with the broader governance reforms aimed at efficient, transparent and citizen-centric administration.

Officers present in the meeting reiterated their collective commitment to contribute towards the national objective of making India a developed nation and among the top three global economies by 2047.

The meeting concluded with a resolve to implement the spirit of the Seva Sankalp Resolution in letter and spirit with the assurance to Director Census Amit Sharma that all officers and officials of Directorate, based out of Jammu, Srinagar and Leh offices, shall keep working relentlessly towards realisation of the vision of Union Cabinet as per the decided timelines.

Central Nodal Officer for PM Shri Schools inspects Educational institutions in Rajouri District

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI, MAR 02: Anice Joseph Chandran, Joint Secretary, NCCF, Government of India and Central Nodal Officer of PM SHRI Schools for District Rajouri visited different schools in the border district today. She was accompanied by State Coordinator PM SHRI Schools, Fayaz Ahmed Fayaz.

Chief Education Officer, Mohammad Hafiz also accompanied the team during the visit.

During the visit, the Central Nodal Officer conducted a comprehensive review of the functioning and implementation of the PM SHRI scheme in the district. She inspected Government Higher Secondary School Bajabain, Government Higher Secondary School Bhawani, Government Higher Secondary School Dhangri and Government Higher Second-

ary School Langer, assessing infrastructural development, academic performance and innovative initiatives undertaken under the PM Shri School scheme.

Expressing satisfaction over the overall performance of the institutions, she stressed on effectively translating the vision of the Prime Minister under the PM SHRI initiative into reality. She appreciated the visible improvements in infrastructure, quality of teaching-learning processes and the adoption of innovative and student-centric practices. While interacting with students and staff members, she emphasized that the benefits under the PM SHRI scheme must reach every eligible student. She further stressed the importance of organizing guest lectures by professionals from diverse fields to provide students with practical exposure, career guidance and



real-world insights.

Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma also met the visiting officer at Government Higher Secondary School Dhangri and held detailed discussions on the

effective implementation of the PM SHRI scheme in the district. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the inclusion of Financial learning in schools to promote financial literacy among students

from an early stage, enabling them to understand savings, investments and responsible financial management. The Central Nodal Officer also highlighted the importance of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Coding into the school curriculum to prepare students for future technological advancements. She underlined that early exposure to emerging technologies would empower students to compete confidently in the rapidly evolving digital era.

State Coordinator PM SHRI Schools, Fayaz Ahmed Fayaz, briefed the visiting officer on the achievements and progress of PM SHRI Schools in the district, while Chief Education Officer Mohammad Hafiz presented a detailed overview of infrastructural upgrades, academic milestones and innovative practices implemented across PM SHRI institutions in Rajouri.

Jammu: JKAACL releases two books for children

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 02: Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) Jammu today organised a grand book release function here at K.L. Saigal Hall.

The two publications released are the Punjabi book "Tehakde Phull" authored by Balwinder Singh and "Rhymes for Kids" by Ms. Alka Sharma.

Principal Government College for Women Gandhi Nagar, Dr. Kulvinder Kour graced the event as the chief guest, while eminent writer and artist S. Jang Singh Verman presided over the function.

Among others present included Additional Secretary Arun Sunali Gupta; Additional Secretary Lal Chand; authors Balwinder Singh and Alka Sharma and Senior Editor, Sheeraza Punjabi, Popinder Singh Paras.

Welcoming the august gathering, the Additional Secretary Arun Sunali Gupta extended a warm welcome to the chief guest and other distinguished guests and complimented the authors for their commendable literary con-



tributions.

In her address, Dr. Kulvinder Kour lauded the authors for their valuable contribution to children's literature in Punjabi and English. She appreciated the proactive role of the Academy in organising literary and cultural programmes to inspire the younger generation. She also expressed her willingness to extend the collaboration of Gov-

ernment College for Women, Gandhi Nagar to the Academy for organising joint programmes in the future.

Additional Secretary, Lal Chand highlighted the significance of the twin books and appreciated the authors for enriching children's literature, saying that the Academy is committed to preserve and promote the Art, Literature and culture.

Dr. Kusam presented a detailed paper on the Punjabi book "Tehakde Phull" authored by Balwinder Singh, while Popinder Singh Paras presented a comprehensive review of "Rhymes for Kids" by Ms. Alka Sharma.

Senior Writer and Journalist Jang Singh Verman applauded the Academy's consistent efforts in promoting language and literature.

Prof. Raj Kumar, Rattan Singh Kanwal and Suraj Singh Suraj hailed the publications noting that the books by such dedicated authors are the need of the hour and deserve due recognition and honour.

The proceedings of the programme were conducted by S. Popinder Singh Paras, while the vote of thanks was presented by Chief Editor, Gojri, Dr. Javaid Rahi.

Two Tippers Seized in Illegal Mining Crackdown in Kulgam; FIR Registered

■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, MAR 02: Continuing its sustained campaign against illegal mining, the Kulgam Police on Sunday seized two tippers involved in the unauthorized extraction and transportation of minerals in the Khudwani-Qaimoh area of the district.

According to official sources, a police party from Police Station Qaimoh was conducting routine naka checking when they intercepted two tippers found transporting mining material without valid royalty documents. Upon verification, the vehicles were found to be engaged in illegal mining-related activities.

In this connection, FIR No. 19/2026 under relevant provisions of law has been registered at Police Station Qaimoh, and further investigation has been initiated to ascertain the involvement of other persons, if any, in the illegal operation.

Kulgam Police reiterated its firm commitment to



safeguarding the district's natural resources and taking strict legal action against those involved in unlawful mining activities. The police emphasized that such drives will continue in the future to curb the menace of illegal extraction and transportation of minerals.

The general public has been urged to cooperate with the police by reporting any instances of illegal mining in their areas. Authorities assured that the identity of informants will be kept strictly confidential, and stringent action will be taken against violators in accordance with the law.

National Lok Adalat on March 14

DLSA Rajouri invites public to avail mediation process

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI, MAR 02: District Legal Services Authority, Rajouri and all Tehsil Legal Services Committees of District Rajouri have invited the general public and litigants to avail National Lok Adalat scheduled on March 14, 2026 for dispute resolution through mediation.

"The interested Parties/Litigants, Lawyers and the general public are hereby called upon to physically approach the Office of the District Legal Services Authority Rajouri and all Tehsil Legal Services Committees of District Rajouri for any advice/assistance with respect to their case or matter, or may call on the contact No. PLVS 9858424128, 9596626010, DLSA Contact No 01962-264200 during working days from 10 am to 4 pm. DLSA Rajouri would welcome your response. Partie(s) can directly approach the concerned courts as well with an application for listing matters/cases in National Lok Adalat for amicable settlement. No matter with respect to pending Electricity Bills and Water Bills will be taken up in this National Lok Adalat," a handout issued today reads.

FPO-Bank interaction programme held at Block Chassana under JKCIP

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

REASI, MAR 02: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu organized a one-day FPO Bank/Insurance Interaction programme here today at Chassana. The prominent persons among those present were the members of FPO Konsarnag Farmers Producers Cooperative Ltd.

The programme was organized under the framework of the Jammu and Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIP) with the objective of strengthening financial inclusion, enhancing credit linkage and creating awareness among Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and individual farmers of the region.

Representatives from J&K Bank Ranjeet Singh Manhas, Crop Insurance Dalip Singh and others engaged directly with FPO members and individual farmers. They provided detailed information on credit-linked schemes, institutional finance, working capital support and loan products specifically designed for FPOs under JKCIP and



Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) to enhance agricultural productivity, value addition and market competitiveness in the region. Farmers actively participated in discussions on access to finance, collateral requirements, interest subvention, repayment mechanisms and the role of banks in supporting agribusiness and allied activities. The programme was coordinated by the FPO Development Officer, Rakesh Kundal.

Officers from Horticulture Planning & Marketing department shared their field-level experience, challenges and imparted the awareness about the projects under JKCIP, HADP and PMFME. The FPO Secretary Jeet Singh acquainted the participants regarding different schemes.

57 Samba Women attend Mushroom Cultivation Training at SKUAST Jammu

Deputy Commissioner flags off trainees

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA, MAR 02: A group of 57 women farmers and members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) engaged in mushroom cultivation attended a one-day training programme at the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST), Jammu.

The exposure visit was organized under the HADP project - "Promotion of Mushroom Cultivation" and the group was flagged off from the DC Office Complex by District Development Commissioner Ayushi Sudan, in the presence of Chief Agriculture Officer, District Agriculture Officer and officers from DCTS Rakh Dahisar. The



women farmers were acquainted with the latest innovations, scientific techniques and technological interventions in the field of mushroom cultivation. Earlier, the District Development

Commissioner encouraged the participants to make optimum use of the exposure visit and adopt the advanced methods and best practices demonstrated during the training.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban 2.0

DC reviews progress across 3 Municipal towns in Udhampur district

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR, MAR 02: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa today chaired a meeting of officers from the Urban Local Bodies to review the progress of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban scheme in the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Jugal Kishore; Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Umesh Shan and other concerned officers.

The DC conducted a detailed review of the scheme's implementation across one Municipal



Council and two Municipal Committees in the district. The review covered the status of PMAY-U 2.0, District Capex Budget works for 2025-26, progress of mega proj-

ects undertaken by the Municipal Council, construction of multi-storey parking facilities, installation and maintenance of street lights, garbage collection and

disposal mechanisms, night illumination in all three towns, identification of garbage dumping points, non-commenced works under PMAY-U and construction

of the Town Hall building.

The DC directed the Tehsildars to clear all pending revenue papers of PMAY-U beneficiaries within a week. He further instructed initiation of recovery proceedings against beneficiaries who have failed to commence construction despite availing benefits and called for expediting the overall pace of progress.

Emphasizing effective sanitation and urban infrastructure management, the DC directed the MCs to identify garbage dumping points, ensure timely collection and proper disposal of waste in all three towns and maintain adequate night illumination.

DC Udhampur reviews performance of ICDS Emphasises full saturation of Poshan targets

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR, MAR 02: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa today convened a comprehensive review meeting to assess the functioning of the ICDS Project in the district. At the outset, Programme Officer Poshan Subash Dogra delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation outlining the overall performance and key activities of the ICDS Project in the District.

The DC conducted a detailed block-wise review covering the functioning of AWCs, construction of AWCs proposed for the year 2025-26, status of registered beneficiaries, implementation of the Poshan Tracker application, growth monitoring, Aadhaar enrolment, progress under PMMVY 2025-26 and infrastructural requirements.

The DC impressed upon the officers and field functionaries to work with enhanced dedication and coordination to ensure saturation of all targets



under the Poshan schemes. He stressed the need to expedite Aadhaar enrolment and achieve full coverage of eligible beneficiaries.

He further directed the officers to mobilize field staff to intensify door-to-door surveys and ensure inclusion of all pending beneficiaries. CDPOs were instructed to identify suitable

land for the construction of new Anganwadi Centres.

Emphasizing inclusive development, the DC underscored the need to prioritize the welfare of impoverished and marginalized sections residing in remote areas of the district and ensure that government benefits reach every eligible household.

Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Station coming up in Bhaderwah

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BHADERWAH, MAR 02: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sunil Kumar Bhutyal today laid the foundation stone for the construction of an Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Station at the premises of Divisional Forest Office Bhaderwah. The station is being established by the Divisional Office of the Jammu & Kashmir Pollution Control Committee under the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAAQMP).

The monitoring station will analyze the concentration levels of key air pollutants including PM10, PM2.5, Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) and Sulphur Dioxide (SO2) to assess the ambient air quality in Bhaderwah and its surrounding areas.

Divisional Officer JKPC, Gurpreet Singh informed that the monitoring station shall help generate accurate scientific data regarding air pollution levels. He stated that regular monitoring will enable the authorities to take timely and effective measures for environmental protection and pollution control. The ADC appreciated the initiative of JKPC and emphasized the importance of maintaining clean air for public health and sustainable development.

Range Officer Sameer Ahmed Rishu and all the staff members of the Forest Department were also present during the foundation laying ceremony.

HT EDITORIAL

Make Srinagar airport as international airport in real sense

The union cabinet last week gave its nod to the expansion of the Srinagar International Airport and an amount of Rs. 1771 crores would be spent on the ambitious project. The announcement of the expansion project has been welcomed by one and all and people as a whole have hailed the Government of India for taking up this project. It would take some time for the project to be completed.

Once the expansion project is completed it would add a new dimension to the Srinagar airport. Although the Srinagar airport has been designated as an international airport but as on date it is more of a domestic airport. The airport witnesses unprecedented rush during the summer season especially once tourists start arriving here. On an average 100 flights operate at the airport with thousands either arriving or leaving the valley. The rush is more in the afternoon than in the mornings and evenings.

It is imperative that the arrival or departure of the flights from the Srinagar airport is regulated so that there is no unnecessary rush at a particular period of time. For this it is important that the frequency of morning and evening flights is increased. More and more people would be buoyed to come or leave Kashmir in the mornings or evenings once many flights are available to them. As on date the focus is more on operation of afternoon flights rather than morning or evening flights.

Once multiple flights arrive or leave at a single time there is at times chaos at the Srinagar airport. Once the flight timings are somewhat staggered there is more breathing space for the people coming to or leaving the Kashmir valley. The union aviation ministry needs to look into this so that there are minimal problems for the flyers. At the same time the ministry should make the Srinagar international airport as an international airport in the real sense. Foreign flights need to be operated from this airport so that there is relief for such flyers.

Since a lot of people travel from Kashmir to the Gulf it would be wonderful if direct flights between Srinagar and capitals of different gulf countries. Once such a thing is successful then there are chances of more success. With the passage of time flights can be operated to different Asian as well as European countries from the Srinagar airport.

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Back to School



SAHIL MANZOOR

The Kashmir Valley is going to witness the reopening of schools after a long winter break from December to 28th March. Schools are the places where great future world leaders are nourished and bloom. A school is the safest zone for our lovely and beloved children. A school is the best package for the future journey. A school is great protection from all evils. A school is the best garden where thousands of flowers grow together and spread their aroma to the whole world. A school is an astonishing home where every combination suits each other and sets exemplary goals for the world.

It is the moment to meet again what you left in the chilling cold of December. It is the moment to enjoy; it is the moment to get back to school. It is the time to meet again what you left behind in the cold of December. It is the time to stick to the walls of the school. It is the time to make every missing friend joyful. It is the time to hear the bell ring and move out of the classes for the morning assembly. Every moment is different and joyful. Be ready for school.

Monday, 2nd March 2026, is going to be a memorable day when thousands of students will be seen on the roads and inside and outside the schools.

Reopening of Schools in the Kashmir Valley

Schools are places where the foundation of a nation is laid. A school is a garden where we find all kinds of flowers with pleasant aromas. A school is a land where every blooming bud is nourished with love and care. A school is a home where every member enjoys and takes care of each other. A school is an orchard where fruits are grown with no expiration date. A school is a kitchen where a single dish is prepared for all colours, castes, and genders. A school is a place where no blooming bud has any fear or threat. A school is like a tape recorder where the music is heart-touching and soothing to everyone. A school is a cafeteria where every child enjoys the coffee of success and happiness.

"School" is one of the most common words throughout the world. Every individual has affection



for school, is aware of their basic schooling, and remembers the events that occurred during their school days. Every country emphasizes upgrading school buildings, infrastructure, and staff, and ensuring that a full-fledged school has all necessary facilities. Today, every individual knows the importance of education. For me, there is no alternative to education. Education has changed the fate of nations. Where there is higher literacy, there are more powerful and great personalities.

Actually, our mind is like a cotton ball, where every microscopic part has the potential to carry a gallery of information. By getting educated, we know our potential and our value. We understand each other's standards and learn what is right and wrong.

In this article, I have shared some interesting thoughts about our schools in the valley and discussed important points regarding the resumption of school after winter vacation. As we know, the Kashmir Valley lies in the extreme northern part, so we experience cold and harsh winters here. However, I like all the seasons in the Kashmir Valley throughout the year.

With the arrival of autumn every year, the face of Kashmir changes due to the falling leaves from the trees. With the arrival of December, the outlook of homes and people changes because of the cold wave. Every individual wants to cover themselves from head to toe to avoid the cold wave and common colds, fevers, and coughs. With each passing day since December,

we observe the addition of heating appliances in homes, offices, and other places.

It has always been a concern for the authorities to safeguard school-going children from the cold wave. They have to leave their homes early in the morning to go to school, and many schools do not have proper heating arrangements. In some areas of the Kashmir Valley, heating appliances are not sufficient due to the extremely chilly weather. Every parent, teacher, and government authority is concerned about the blooming buds and ensures all possible measures to tackle such situations.

Winter vacation in the Kashmir Valley remains from December to March for middle-level classes, and educational institutions close their classwork phase-wise. One interesting thing is that the government administration is taking impressive steps toward the education sector. Schools are opening on 4th March 2026. Every student looks joyful while meeting friends again, with excitement on their faces.

The school administration has made all necessary arrangements prior to the reopening of schools, such as snow clearance, cleaning the school surroundings and classrooms, decorating the school, and keeping everything ready to welcome the children with charming smiles.

I welcome all the students back to their schools and salute the entire teaching fraternity for their efforts.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

Kashmir: Jewel In India's Crown



MOOL RAJ

Nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, Kashmir continues to captivate the world with its breathtaking beauty, earning its timeless moniker as "heaven on earth." From snow-capped peaks to serene valleys, shimmering lakes to vibrant meadows, the region's unparalleled natural splendour reaffirms its status as a paradise that enchants visitors and residents alike.

The Kashmir Valley, often described as a jewel in India's crown, is a symphony of landscapes that shift with the seasons. In spring, the almond blossoms of Badamwari paint the region in delicate hues of pink and white, while summer brings the lush greenery of Gulmarg's rolling hills and the cool breezes of Pahalgam's pine forests. Autumn drapes the Chinar trees in fiery shades of red and gold, and winter transforms the valley into a pristine wonderland, with Dal Lake's houseboats framed against a backdrop of snow-laden mountains.

"Every corner of Kashmir feels like a painting come to life," said Aisha Mir, a local artisan from Srinagar. "The beauty here is not just in the scenery but in the peace it brings to your soul." This sentiment echoes across the valley, where the harmony of nature and culture creates an experience that is both tranquil and profound.

Tourism, the lifeblood of Kashmir's economy, thrives on this divine allure. In 2024 alone, the region welcomed over 2 million visitors, drawn by iconic destinations like the Mughal Gardens, Shankaracharya Hill, and the ski slopes of Gulmarg, often hailed as one of Asia's finest winter sports hubs. The recent restoration of peace



and improved infrastructure have further bolstered Kashmir's appeal, making it more accessible than ever. New roads, enhanced connectivity, and a focus on sustainable tourism have opened up lesser-known gems like Yusmarg and Doodhpathri, revealing the valley's endless treasures.

Beyond its landscapes, Kashmir's rich heritage adds depth to its heavenly charm. The intricate woodwork of its mosques, the soulful strains of Sufi music, and the aromatic wafts of Wazwan cuisine weave a cultural tapestry that is as captivating as the scenery. "Kashmir is not just a place; it's a feeling," said travel blogger Priya Sharma, who recently documented her journey through the valley. "The hospitality of the people here matches the grandeur of the mountains."

Yet, Kashmir's paradise is not with-

"Every corner of Kashmir feels like a painting come to life," said Aisha Mir, a local artisan from Srinagar.

"The beauty here is not just in the scenery but in the peace it brings to your soul." This sentiment echoes across the valley, where the harmony of nature and culture creates an experience that is both tranquil and profound.

out its challenges. Decades of conflict have tested its resilience, but the region's spirit remains unbroken. Today, as peace takes root, Kashmir is reclaiming its narrative—one of beauty, hope, and renewal. Initiatives like the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme and the expansion of digital connectivity are empowering locals, ensuring that this heaven on earth thrives for generations to come.

As the sun sets over the Jhelum River, casting a golden glow on the houseboats and reflecting off the distant peaks, it's clear why poets and travelers have long called Kashmir a slice of paradise. In every season, through every vista, Kashmir proves that it is, indeed, truly heaven on earth.

**THE AUTHOR IS A
REGULAR COLUMNIST AND
FREELANCE WRITER**



■ DR. SURINDERPAL SINGH

Human beings have always wondered about the future. From ancient philosophies to modern neuroscience, the question remains the same: Is our destiny predetermined, or do our choices shape it? While science does not define destiny as a fixed supernatural script, it recognizes that biology, environment, psychology and decision-making interact continuously to shape the direction of our lives. In this sense, destiny may be understood as the unfolding outcome of genetics, circumstances, habits, emotions and conscious choices.

In classical philosophy, destiny was often linked to fate and divine planning. Thinkers such as Aristotle emphasized cause and effect in shaping life outcomes, suggesting that every action leads to a consequence. Later psychological theories explored how unconscious drives influence human behaviour, proposing that unseen mental processes guide many of our decisions. Modern science, however, reframes destiny through measurable determinants. Genetics influences temperament, intelligence, emotional sensitivity and vulnerability to diseases. Environment, including family, culture, education, nutrition and social exposure, shapes behaviour and personality. At the same time, the concept of neuroplasticity demonstrates that the brain has the ability to reorganize itself throughout life, allowing learning, adaptation and change. The brain is not fixed; experiences, habits and thoughts can physically modify neural pathways. Destiny, therefore, is not entirely rigid but evolves with lived experience.

Human nature is deeply affected by the idea of destiny. Psychological research identifies two major belief patterns: the fixed mindset and the growth mindset. Individuals with a fixed mindset believe that life outcomes are predetermined and largely beyond personal control. In contrast, those with a

growth mindset believe that effort, persistence and learning shape the future. Studies show that individuals with a growth mindset perform better academically and emotionally because they see challenges as opportunities rather than as unavoidable fate. When destiny is viewed as fixed and unchangeable, it may reduce motivation, increase helplessness and contribute to anxiety and depression. When it is seen as evolving and dynamic, it encourages responsibility, strengthens resilience and promotes emotional balance. Human nature responds not only to events but also to beliefs about those events.

Destiny is closely linked to emotional health because emotions are tied to expectations about the future. Fear, hope, anxiety and excitement arise from anticipation. The limbic system of the brain, particularly the amygdala, processes fear and uncertainty. Chronic uncertainty can trigger prolonged stress responses, activating cortisol release from the adrenal glands. Over time, long-term stress may lead to hypertension, weakened immunity, sleep disturbances and anxiety disorders. Psychiatry has demonstrated that negative beliefs about the future are central to depression. Individuals who perceive their future as hopeless experience deeper emotional suffering. In contrast, optimism about destiny is associated with lower inflammation markers, improved cardiovascular health and better coping strategies. Thus, the way destiny is perceived direct-

Destiny is closely linked to emotional health because emotions are tied to expectations about the future. Fear, hope, anxiety and excitement arise from anticipation.

The limbic system of the brain, particularly the amygdala, processes fear and uncertainty. Chronic uncertainty can trigger prolonged stress responses, activating cortisol release from the adrenal glands

ly influences both emotional and physical well-being. Meditation offers a scientific example of how internal change can influence life outcomes. Meditation does not magically alter external events, but

it reshapes the brain and emotional responses. Neuroscientific research shows that regular meditation reduces amygdala reactivity, strengthens the prefrontal cortex responsible for decision-making, improves emotional regulation and enhances attention and clarity. A calm and aware mind tends to make healthier decisions, build stronger relationships and maintain better physical health. Since daily decisions accumulate into long-term consequences, meditation indirectly shapes what we call destiny. It refines the mind that responds to life's circumstances.

Hope itself has biological foundations. Positive future thinking activates dopamine pathways in the brain's reward system, enhancing motivation and goal-directed behaviour. People with strong hope and purpose often experience lower stress levels, recover faster from illness and maintain stronger social bonds. A hopeful perception of destiny can therefore biologically protect health.

Modern neuroscience suggests that while certain predispositions exist, human behaviour is not entirely predetermined. Genetics may provide potential, but environment and choices determine expression. Epigenetics demonstrates that lifestyle factors such as diet, stress management, exercise and meditation can influence gene expression without altering DNA structure. Even inherited risks can be modified. Destiny, in scientific terms, may therefore be understood as potential shaped by action.

The future is not a fixed script written in stone. It is a dynamic process shaped by biology, environment, beliefs, emotions and daily decisions. A rigid belief in fate may weaken resilience, while a balanced belief in growth strengthens it. Meditation, emotional regulation, positive cognition and conscious living influence how destiny unfolds. Science suggests that while we may not control every event, we can control our responses—and those responses shape outcomes.

In essence, the future holds possibility. Destiny unfolds through awareness. And the human mind remains one of the most powerful forces in shaping both.

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

Dr. Tasaduk honored at the House of Commons, British Parliament, United Kingdom

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

Dr. Tasaduk Hussain Itoo, an eminent J & K doctor, medical writer and public health fellow has been awarded the prestigious Certificate of Excellence by the World Book of Records, London. The honour was conferred at the historic House of Commons, British Parliament, United Kingdom, in recognition of his exemplary contributions to healthcare delivery, health education, and community empowerment. The award acknowledges Dr. Itoo's sustained commitment to advancing public health initiatives, promoting preventive medicine, and also contributing to global health through active engagement with international professional bodies.

Dr. Itoo is a Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health (UK) and Fellow of the International Diabetes Federation (Belgium), and maintains professional affiliations with leading global medical organizations including the American College of Physicians (USA) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (USA).

On receiving the honour, Dr. Itoo expressed gratitude for the recognition, stating that the award serves as motivation to further strengthen efforts in patient care, medical education, and public health advancement. This international recognition marks another significant milestone in Dr. Itoo's professional journey and underscores the growing global acknowledgment of healthcare leadership emerging from Jammu & Kashmir.



MS. JAASINDAH MIR

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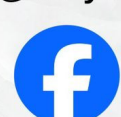
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DC reviews progress of RDD sector works in Udhampur

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR, MAR 02: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa, today convened a comprehensive review meeting of officers and field functionaries of Rural Development Department (RDD) to assess the physical and financial progress under the different schemes being implemented in the district.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Jugal Kishore; Probationer Seerat Baji; Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Ashwani Hansa; all Block Development Officers and other concerned officials.

At the outset, ACD Om Parkash delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation outlining the



scheme-wise and block-wise initiatives. The DC conducted an in-depth review of the physical and financial achievements under

the ADP, status of new and ongoing works under the UT Sector, constituency-wise progress under CDF and payment mechanisms being followed. He also examined the category-wise issuance of job cards under MGNREGA, block-wise implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Gramin, progress under Swachh Bharat Mission and the status of the construction of compost pits, soak pits, DEWATS, FSTPs and Gobardhan projects.

The DC also reviewed the block-wise status of Panchayat Ghars and the construction of new Panchayat Ghars under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan. He exhorted officers to maintain transparency and accountability in all works undertaken by the RDD in the district.

DC Kathua visits Parisha, One Stop Centre; reviews women-centric Services

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, MAR 02: As part of the ongoing Women Week campaign, the Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today visited Parisha and the One Stop Centre to assess the functioning of the twin centers and review the services being extended to women.

During his visit to Parisha, the Deputy Commissioner took stock of the facilities available and the support services being provided to the women beneficiaries. He interacted with the staff and reviewed the mechanism in place for addressing the concerns of women, particularly those in distress. The DC stressed the need for prompt response, confidentiality and a compassionate approach in handling cases related to women welfare.

Inspecting the One Stop Centre, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the assistance and intervention being



provided under various women-centric schemes. He examined the record of cases handled, counselling services, legal aid support, medical assistance and referral mechanisms being extended to affected women.

The DC directed the concerned officers to ensure maximum outreach and awareness about the services available at these centres so that more women can benefit from the support system.

Chief Planning Officer Ranjeet Thakur and District Social Welfare Officer Varun Chaudhary accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the visits.

DC inspects civic facilities, development works in Ramban town

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN, MAR 02: Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan today conducted an extensive visit of Ramban town to review the progress of ongoing developmental works and assess the developmental and basic infrastructure needs of the area. Senior Superintendent of Police, Arun Gupta; Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak, officers from the line departments and civil society representatives accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the visit.

The Deputy Commissioner inspected the progress of upcoming infrastructure projects at Cafeteria Morh, Bus Stand, Main Market and Masjid Market, including construction of park, road improvement works, lane and drainage works, sanitation measures and other public utility services being executed by different departments. He took stock of the pace and quality of works and directed the concerned officers to ensure their timely completion while maintaining prescribed standards.

Interacting with local residents in different wards of the town, the Deputy Commissioner listened to their grievances and suggestions regarding civic amenities, traffic management, cleanliness and augmentation of basic facilities. He assured them that the district administration is already taking necessary measures to address genuine issues in a phased and systematic manner.

The Deputy Commissioner also passed on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers to resolve all legitimate grievances of the locals.

DC Doda convenes introductory meeting with DC Office staff

Stresses timely resolution of public-centric issues

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, MAR 02: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Doda, Krishan Lal, today convened an introductory meeting with officers and officials of the Deputy Commissioner's Office here in the Conference Hall.

The officers and staff members introduced themselves and apprised the Deputy Commissioner of their respective roles, responsibilities and ongoing administrative assignments being handled by different sections of the office.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized adopting a people-centric approach in governance and high-



lighted the importance of timely and effective redressal of public grievances. Krishan Lal stressed the need for dedication, coordination and teamwork among all officials to ensure efficient, transparent and

citizen-friendly service delivery.

The meeting was attended by the Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Accounts Officer DC Office, Assistant Director Planning, Election Naib Tehsildar and others.

“League of Classics” concludes at Doda

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, MAR 02: The District Youth Services & Sports (DYSS), Doda successfully concluded the prestigious “League of Classics” held amid vibrant participation of the youth from across the district.

The mega sporting championship witnessed thrilling competitions in Cricket, Volleyball and Football, showcasing exceptional talent, electrifying performances and exemplary sportsmanship by participating teams. The event turned into a grand celebration of youth engagement and sporting excellence, with players displaying remarkable teamwork, discipline and competitive spirit throughout the tournament. The energetic atmosphere across all venues reflected the growing passion for organized sports among the youth of District Doda.

The championship was organized under the guidance of the Director General, Youth Services & Sports J&K, Anuradha Gupta, Joint Director Jammu, Vinakshi



Koul and Deputy Director Activities, Megha Baogia.

The competitions were conducted under the overall supervision of District Youth Services & Sports Officer (DYSSO) Doda, Jaffar H. Sheikh, along with all concerned Zonal Physical Education Officers (ZPEOs), ensuring smooth coordination and maintenance of high standards throughout the event.

Heartiest congratulations were extended to all winners, runners-up and participants for contributing to the grand success of this prestigious sporting event. Special appreciation was also conveyed to the dedicated organizing team of DYSS Doda for their commendable efforts in promoting sports, fitness and a healthy sporting culture among the youth.

The initiative provided an important platform for budding players to showcase their talent while encouraging discipline, teamwork and healthy lifestyles.

Enthusiastic participation at all venues highlighted the positive impact of such grassroots-level competitions in nurturing sportsmanship and strengthening youth engagement through sports.

Public Notice

I am applying for fresh Pesticide and Fertilizer License under the title of Malik Agrotech, deals in Pesticides, Fertilizers and other related items. situated at KHISIPORA, Kreeri, Baramulla. In this regard if anybody is having any objection may file the same to Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla and PPO Lal Mandi Srinagar within the time period of 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

AIJAZ AHMAD MALIK
S/o: GH RASOOL MALIK R/o . KHISIPORA, Kreeri)
Cell No: +91 8493894820

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

Subject: Application of NASREENA BEGUM W/O ISHFAQ AH DEADER for the issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar and Bakerwal)in favour of self

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and GOJER DEADER community, having annual income is 150000 the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1...MOHD ASLAM DEADER Father in Law 59 years Labour
- 2.... KHATOON BEGUM Mother in Law 58 years H/W
- 3...ISHFAQ AHMAD Husband 27 years Labour
- 4...NASREENA BEGUM self 25 years care giver in school
- 5...OSMAN ISHFAQ son 19 years infant
- 6...ISHEN ISHFAQ son 02 years infant
- 7...ARSHID ASLAM Brother in Law 04 years student

The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

NAIB TEHSILDAR KALANTRA

Public Notice

My name has been wrongly written as IMRAN AHMAD TANTRAY R/O NAGBAL in my Aadhar card while my correct name is MOHAMMAD IMRAN TANTRAY R/O .NAGBAL Tehsil...kreeri which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file his /her objection in office of concerned aadhar authorities with in seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name: MOHAMMAD IMRAN TANTRAY
R/O ...NAGBAL

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application of FAHMEEDA BANO S/O BILAL AHMAD WANI R/O WARIPORA BALA 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 BILAL AHMAD WANI S/O AB AHAD WANI R/O WARIPORE Bala Tehsil kreeri has passed away on 04/12/2025

Moreover family structure of the applicant is as under

- 1... FAHMEEDA BANO wife 38 years H/W widow
- 2..ABRAR BILAL WANI son 15 years student unmarried
- 3...MUZZAFAR BILAL son 09 years student minor

The applicant has applied for Issuance of Dependent certificate in favour of FAHMEEDA BANO 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.

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

Public Notice

IT is hereby notified that I am applying for Birth certificate in Block Development office handwara of my child namely Ayesha Binte Firdous DOB 28/09/2022 prantage Firdous Ahmad Tantray ,R/o Chogal Tehsil Handwara District:kupwara. if anybody having any objection in this regards he/she may file his /her objection in the office of the Block Development Office handwara within 07 days .After that no objection shall be entertained.

AYESHA BINTE FIRDOUS
DOB,28/09/2022

PRANTAGE FIRDOUS AHMAD TANTRAY
R/O CHOGAL TEHSIL HANDWARA DISTRICT KUPWARA

Public Notice

I, Wali Mohd Peerzada, S/o Abdul Rehman Peerzada R/o Khonu Babagund, Langate, Kupwara, Jammu and Kashmir 193302, hereby declare that I am the father of Masrat Jan, Date of Birth: 03/03/1999. This is to inform the general public and concerned authorities that I am applying for the issuance/registration of Date of Birth certificate of my daughter Masrat Jan from the Block Office Langate.If any person has any objection regarding the above-mentioned particulars, he/she may submit the same before the concerned Block Office Langate within the stipulated period. Otherwise, no objection shall be entertained later.

Public Notice

I, Mahjabeenah Akhter, D/o Ghulam Ahmad Lone, R/o Kultura, Langate, hereby state that there is a discrepancy in my Date of Birth recorded in my Aadhaar Card.My Date of Birth in Aadhaar Card is incorrectly mentioned as 10/06/1996, whereas my correct Date of Birth as per my School Records is 06/03/1996.I am now applying for issuance of my Birth Certificate at the BDO Office, Langate, with my correct Date of Birth as 06/03/1996.If anybody has any objection regarding this correction, they may submit their objection in writing to the BDO Office, Langate within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no claim or objection shall be entertained.

Public Notice

I, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, S/o Lala Dar R/o Kuhru, Langate, Kupwara, Jammu and Kashmir 193302, hereby declare that I am the father of Safoora Fayaz, Date of Birth: 11/11/2011.This is to inform the general public and concerned authorities that I am applying for the issuance/registration of Date of Birth certificate of my daughter Safoora Fayaz from the Block Office Langate.If any person has any objection regarding the above-mentioned particulars, he/she may submit the same before the concerned Block Office Langate within the stipulated period. Otherwise, no objection shall be entertained later.

Public Notice

It is hereby notified that my Name has been wrongly mentioned in adhar regards bearing aadhar no 3467 5368 2054 Sarif Ahmad Mir instead of Sarif Farooq S/O Farooq Ahmad Mir as for School regards now I have applying for it's correction of the same if any person have any objection in this regards may file the same to the office adhar seva/concerned authority within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice After that no objection shall be entertained.

SARIF FAROOQ
S/O FAROOQ AHMAD MIR
R/O,BATPORA MAGAM TEHSIL HANDWARA DISTRICT KUPWARA

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.

LG Kavinder reviews arrangements for holy exposition of sacred Buddha relics in UT Ladakh

HT NEWS NETWORK

LEH, MAR 2: The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, today chaired a comprehensive preparatory meeting at Lok Niwas to review arrangements for the holy exposition of the sacred Buddha relics in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Shri Ashish Kundra and revered spiritual leaders including H.E. Thiksay Rinpoche, H.E. Drukpa Thuksey, H.E. Bakula Rangdol Nima Rinpoche, H.E. Drubwang Rinpoche, H.E. Khenchen Rangdol Rinpoche, H.E. Urgyan Rinpoche, H.E. Palga Rinpoche, H.E. Khantul Rinpoche, H.E. Likte Khamtak Rinpoche, H.E. Thiksay Khamtak Rinpoche, and H.E. Tsamtrul Rinpoche.

At the outset, Chief Secretary Shri Ashish Kundra briefed the meeting about the historic initiative undertaken by the Hon'ble Lt Governor to bring the sacred Buddha relics to Ladakh for the blessings of its people. He informed that, following the Lt Governor's ap-

plication to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India—highlighting Ladakh as a land of profound Buddhist heritage—the proposal was accepted. He informed that the sacred relics are expected to arrive in Leh on April 28–29, with a grand ceremonial reception planned on May 1. The Chief Secretary informed that the sacred relics will be placed at Jivestral for public display for approximately 15 days, enabling devotees from across Ladakh to seek blessings. He further informed that a review meeting of the constituted committee for planning and coordination would be held shortly, and assured that arrangements—including transportation facilities—would be made to ensure maximum participation from all districts.

The venerable Rinpoches expressed gratitude to the UT Administration for the initiative and offered valuable suggestions. These included robust security arrangements, effective crowd management systems, constitution of smaller task-oriented committees, adoption of best practices from



international events such as the Global Peace Prayer in Bhutan, mass chanting by different Buddhist sects, a grand reception at Kushok Bakula Rinpoche Airport, multilingual information dissemination for devotees and tourists, screening of films on Buddha, and inviting ambas-

sadors from Southeast Asian nations and representatives of Buddhist learning centres.

In his address, the Lt Governor described the exposition of the sacred relics as a historic and spiritually significant occasion for the people of Ladakh. He shared that the idea was

inspired following his meeting with the Hon'ble Prime Minister and his visit to view the sacred Piprahwa Buddha relics in New Delhi. Recognising Ladakh's deep-rooted Buddhist traditions and the large number of devotees in the region, he felt it was imperative that the people be

given an opportunity to seek blessings locally.

Emphasising that only two months remain for preparations, the Lt Governor called for meticulous planning, seamless coordination and time-bound execution of responsibilities. He stressed the importance of forming dedicated sub-committees to ensure accountability and efficiency in every aspect of the event, including logistics, security, medical facilities, sanitation, and volunteer management.

Highlighting the spiritual dimension, he underscored the need for mass prayers, mantra chanting and an interfaith seminar, particularly in today's volatile global environment, to send a powerful message of peace, unity and harmony from Ladakh to the world. He emphasised that the teachings of Lord Buddha must serve as a guiding light for the younger generation, fostering unity, compassion and mutual respect.

The Lt Governor also noted that a large number of tourists are expected to visit Ladakh in May and directed the concerned

departments and local stakeholders to disseminate knowledge about the sacred relics and their historical and spiritual significance among visitors. He assured that the UT Administration would make all coordinated efforts, in collaboration with religious authorities and security agencies, to ensure smooth crowd management and a spiritually enriching, secure, and memorable experience for all devotees.

The Lt Governor sought the continued guidance and cooperation of all revered Rinpoches and stakeholders to make the holy exposition a grand success and a defining spiritual milestone for Ladakh. He also appealed to the people of Ladakh to extend their wholehearted support and active participation in making the holy exposition a truly historic and spiritually elevating occasion. Urging citizens to uphold the values of discipline, hospitality and harmony, he called upon volunteers, civil society organisations, youth groups and religious institutions to work in close coordination with the Administration.

Deputation from five villages call Sat Sharma, seek overbridge on Railways Track

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MARCH 2: A deputation comprising of prominent from villages Chan Matloni, Tappal, Chhan Samotra, Raghu Chak and Malani called upon Sat Sharma CA, President of Bharatiya Janata Party (J&K) and Member of Rajya Sabha, to present long-pending demand for the construction of an overbridge on the railway track connecting Pathankot and Jammu.

J&K BJP Vice Presidents Bharat Bhushan, Priya Sethi, Rekha Mahajan, and Rashpal Verma, along with General Secretaries Sanjita Dogra and Baldev



Singh Billawaria, were present during the meeting. The deputation was led by Rashpal Verma and highlighted the severe hardships being faced by the residents due to the non-availability of an overbridge to cross the railway track. They informed that a large portion of agricultural land is located on the other side of the track, and farmers are unable to access their fields easily. The situation worsens when goods trains halt at the starting point of the railway station for prolonged periods, sometimes for 15–20 days, completely blocking movement.

The deputation further apprised Sat Sharma that students and teachers face immense difficulty and risk while crossing the track, as the Government Middle School is situated on the opposite side. Due to frequent and extended stoppages of goods trains, safe passage becomes nearly impossible, disrupting education and daily life.

They also brought to his notice that, as per revenue records, an old bandobasti lane existed for public movement, and urged that the same be revived to facilitate safe access across the railway line. The villagers stated that they have been facing this issue for the past 54 years and have previously taken up the matter with Deputy Commissioners of Samba and senior officials of Northern Railways, but without a permanent solution.

Sat Sharma gave a patient hearing to the deputation and assured them that he would take up the matter with the concerned authorities in the interest of public safety and convenience, ensuring relief to farmers, students, and residents of the affected villages.

Arvind Gupta launches Harley-Davidson X440 at Hero Premia Showroom in Jammu

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 2: The new Harley-Davidson X440 T has been officially launched in Jammu at the Hero Premia showroom, located opposite Top Sherkhania on Akhnour Road. The motorcycle, starting at Rs 2,79,500 (ex-showroom), is expected to attract biking enthusiasts across the region with its upgraded features and premium styling.

The launch ceremony was graced by MLA West Arvind Gupta as the Chief Guest. Among other distinguished attendees were Vivek Shekhar, SP City, and Vikas Hans, SHO Nowabad. Managing Partner and CEO Ashish Gupta and B.R. Jandiyal were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Arvind Gupta congratulated the dealership and welcomed the launch of the new model



in Jammu. He said, "The introduction of the Harley-Davidson X440 T in Jammu reflects the growing aspirations and pur-

chasing power of our youth. Such premium launches not only boost the local automobile market but also strengthen

Jammu's position as a developing commercial hub." He further expressed confidence that the motorcycle would receive an

encouraging response from biking enthusiasts in the region.

The X440T features enhanced design elements, improved seating comfort, and upgraded suspension, making it suitable for both city rides and long highway touring. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from local riders and automobile lovers who explored the bike's specifications and styling.

The Hero Premia showroom also showcased a range of Harley-Davidson accessories and official merchandise. Customers were informed about available service facilities and test ride options, ensuring a comprehensive ownership experience.

The launch highlighted Harley-Davidson's commitment to expanding its footprint in Jammu and catering to riders seeking a blend of performance, comfort, and iconic design.

National Interest Must Remain Supreme Amid Global Conflicts: Pawan Sharma

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 2: Amid the reactions, rhetoric, and visible ideological polarization witnessed within certain sections of society during tensions and war-like situations between nations such as Iran and the United States, Pawan Sharma, State Secretary BJP Jammu & Kashmir, has emphasized that India's priorities must always be guided by her own national interest, not by emotional alignment with external conflicts.

India is a sovereign and self-confident civilization-state with a proud legacy of independent decision-making. Our foreign policy has historically been shaped by strategic autonomy, balance, and a clear understanding of long-term national objectives. From the era of non-alignment to today's multi-aligned engagement, India has demonstrated maturity and prudence in navigating global complexities.

Reiterating his stand, Pawan Sharma stated that international conflicts must not become a trigger for ideological divisions within India. "Creating camps within the country—either for or against foreign powers—does not strengthen Bharat. It dilutes our internal cohesion and distracts us from our national priorities," he remarked.

India's strength lies in her diversity, constitutional framework, and civilizational wisdom. Every global development must be assessed through the lens of India's security, economic



stability, energy interests, diaspora welfare, and regional peace—not through emotional or ideological impulses.

According to Pawan Sharma, India's foreign policy reflects strategic autonomy and sovereign judgment. "India is not a satellite of any power bloc. Our decisions are rooted in our own Constitution, our own civilization, and our own national interests," he asserted.

He further appealed to citizens, intellectuals, and opinion leaders to

maintain balance and responsibility in public discourse. Healthy debate is the essence of democracy, but emotional polarization over external geopolitical conflicts is a matter of concern.

Concluding his statement, Pawan Sharma said, "The nation is supreme. National interest must remain our ultimate criterion. India is not a replica of anyone. Bharat stands tall on its own strength, and our unity at home reinforces our credibility abroad."

IGNOU extends last date of admission and re-registration till 15th March, 2026

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 2: The University has extended the last date for fresh admission as well as re-registration for the January 2026 session till 15th March, 2026. However, the extension in the last date is not applicable to certificate programmes, merit based, and semester-based programmes. For the six-month duration certificate programmes and semester-based programmes, the admission stands closed. The extension in the last date of re-registration will carry a late fee component of Rs.200/- for all programmes except the semester-based programmes.

To enroll in the next year or semester, learners need to register on the Portal and click "New Registration" button to proceed and provide the correct mobile number and e-mail ID so that the University is able to send confirmation and other important updates only if the correct mobile number and e-mail ID are entered. In case the learners face difficulty in registering on the portal (not getting OTP/ forgot Username/Password or any other difficulty), they need to approach Regional Centre Jammu for re-setting of their account/updating email ID or mobile number at rcjammu@ignou.ac.in. They can apply for IGNOU re-registration January 2026 by visiting the official website of the IGNOU www.ignou.ac.in. The direct link for online re-registration is https://online.ignou.ac.in/ which can be accessed under the dropdown menu option "Register Online" on IGNOU website. For filling the admission form online, candidates need to create a User ID and Password on the SAMARTH portal and be ready with a Mobile No., Email ID, properly scanned academic documents, photograph and Bank Debit/Credit/Net Banking for payment of fee. Applicants can access the IGNOU admission portal 2026 at IGNOU website www.ignou.ac.in or by directly following the link https://ignouadmission.samarth.edu.in. The UGC mandates every student enrolling into online and distance education courses to register for DEB ID. Students who are planning to apply for any of the IGNOU programmes are now required to create a DEB ID at the time of admission.



Mahindra & Mahindra Launches New Heavy-Duty Rotavator Series in Telangana

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, MAR 02: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., India's largest tractor manufacturer by volume, on Friday announced the launching of its new Mahindra Rotavator series in Telangana, strengthening its presence in the high-growth farm mechanisation segment.

The newly introduced rotavator range, positioned in the heavy-duty category under the Mahavator and Mahavator HD brands, spans 4 to 9 feet and features a redesigned wider mast and enhanced structural build, the company said in a release here

The company said the upgraded design improves durability, stability and performance in heavy tillage operations, particularly on uneven and demanding farm terrain.

The product refresh follows market research and farmer feedback, as part of Mahindra's strategy to expand its farm machinery portfolio

beyond tractors and drive higher value realisation in the agri-implements segment.

Dr. Anusha Kothandaraman, Vice President & Head – International Operations and Business Head – Farm Machinery, Mahindra Farm Equipment Business, said the new range aligns with the evolving needs

of progressive farmers seeking performance as well as premium visual appeal. The rollout will be phased across Mahindra's dealer network in Telangana..

While the new series will gradually replace existing rotavator models, the company will continue to offer its current

portfolio to cater to varied operational requirements.

In a branding-led move, Mahindra has also introduced limited-edition rotavators in tricolour-inspired shades – Metallic Orange, Everest White and Metallic Green – across select variants including Mahavator HD, Supervisor and Gyrovator ZLX

The company is also promoting its patented 'Tez-e' Intelligent Rotavator, integrated with Bluetooth technology that transmits real-time operational data to a mobile application, reflecting its push towards precision farming and smart mechanisation.

Mahindra is among the largest rotavator manufacturers in India, with dedicated production facilities in Nabha, Punjab and Zaheerabad, Telangana.

The company continues to expand its farm machinery footprint, supported by its broader agri-equipment ecosystem and global technology centres.



CGA launches digital tools to boost transparency in public fund management

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MAR 02: In a major push to strengthen oversight and efficiency in government banking operations, the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) has launched two key initiatives: the 'Government Bank Dashboard' and the 'Government Bank Manual' aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability and real-time monitoring of public funds handled by banks.

The initiatives were unveiled by CGA TCA Kalyani, marking a significant step toward modernising the framework through which government transactions are processed and supervised.

The newly introduced Government Bank Dashboard is designed as a real-time digital monitoring platform that tracks critical banking parameters linked to government business.

These include transaction timelines, remittance efficiency, reconciliation status and compliance with service-level agreements.

The dashboard is expected to enable proactive supervision by identifying delays or discrepancies early, thereby reducing operational risks and improving service delivery standards.

Complementing this digital tool is the



Government Bank Manual, which lays down a comprehensive and standardised set of operating procedures for banks undertaking government transactions.

The manual clearly outlines roles, responsibilities, reporting timelines and reconciliation protocols, ensuring uniform practices across institutions handling public funds.

The launch reflects the government's broader focus on leveraging technology to enhance financial governance.

By shifting from traditional, periodic reporting systems to continuous digital oversight, authorities aim to ensure faster issue resolution, improved compliance and better safeguarding of public money.

With these initiatives, the CGA has signalled a decisive move toward data-driven governance in public financial management, reinforcing efficiency and transparency at the core of government banking operations. UNI

Singareni Collieries may explore 19 Bn Cubic Meters of Coal Bed Methane in Telangana

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, MAR 02: Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCL) is likely to participate in the exploration of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) resources in the Singareni region, following advice from senior officials of the union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Officials from the Ministry met SCL Chairman and Managing Director Dr. Buddhaprakash Jyoti at Singareni Bhavan on Friday evening and suggested that the company take part in the upcoming auction of three major CBM blocks identified in the region.

According to officials, several CBM blocks have been identified across various states, including in the Pranahita-Godavari Valley region.

The Ministry is expected to conduct auctions shortly to facilitate exploration activities.

In the Singareni region, three major blocks spanning six districts have been identified.

These include a block covering Mancherla, Peddapalli and Komaram Bheem districts with an estimated resource of 5 Billion Cubic Metres (BCM); a block in Bhadrachalam district with around 2 BCM; and a combined block covering Bhadrachalam and Mulugu districts with approximately 12 BCM.

Preliminary assessments estimate the total methane gas availability in these three blocks at around 19 Billion Cubic Metres.

Officials described the move as part of efforts to strengthen energy security and advance the "Viksit Bharat – 2047" vision aimed at achieving self-reliance in the oil and energy sectors.

Dr. Buddhaprakash Jyoti said the proposal would be examined and a decision taken accordingly. Additional Director General of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Sachiv Kumar and other officials were present at the meeting. UNI

Sri Lanka targets Indian weddings, film shooting markets for its tourism growth

■ BY ROHIT MITRA

NEW DELHI, MAR 02: As fat Indian weddings and big budget Indian productions gain global attention, destination promoters and tourism boards are eyeing a fair share of these markets through dedicated campaigns and promotions.

Participating in the South Asia Travel & Tourism Exchange 2026 (SATTE 2026), an annual travel and tourism fair by Informa Markets, at Yashobhoomi, Delhi, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau tried to focus its energy in communicating the unique selling propositions of the 'emerald isle of the Indian Ocean' to charm Indian weddings and film production customers in a big way.

DM Niroshana, Managing Director, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, in an interaction

with UNI said, "As far as the Indian market is concerned, we are focusing on wedding tourism and film tourism. India has very rich and very big film industry. We have exotic locations and the stories. We want Indians to come and shoot in Sri Lanka."

"Wedding tourism is another segment which has huge demand in India. Wedding parties come in big numbers, they stay for some days and also spend a substantial amount at the destination. We want them to come Sri Lanka. For Indian tourists Sri Lanka is a specialized destination, it is foreign yet quiet similar to India. So our Indian visitors can feel at home there."

Niroshana added that the tourism bureau is trying to get concessions from airline companies for bulk wedding tourist parties from India.

"We are working towards



getting air travel concessions and also want tax cuts on some merchandise so that we become an attractive shopping destination," he explained.

He explained that Sri Lanka offers a world of varied experiences within a very short span of time.

"In Sri Lanka, within a span of 1-2 hours you can reach a totally different climate and environment,"

he said.

Galle is a beach destination, but within a few hours you can reach Ella, which is a mountainous and forest destination, he informed.

Similarly, Nuwara Eliya which is very cold is right next to that. Anuradhapura is an ancient city while Colombo which is just around 4 hours away is totally different. Jafna offers authentic Tamil culture

and houses a lot of Hindu temples, he added, explaining the sheer diversity that the island nation presents to visitors.

"All places are just a few hours from one another, so you get several varied experiences in Sri Lanka within a short span of time."

He said that Sri Lanka is constantly looking to provide better tourism experiences to the visitors.

"Last year tourism contributed 3.2 per cent of the GDP, we want the proportion to rise. We are encouraging the private sector to invest in tourism. We are also focusing on improving the quality of tourism and in ensuring the utmost safety of the tourists. Already various reputed observances like Lonely Planet, BBC, CNN, Condé Nast have identified SL as an excellent destination, we want to further build on that positive reputation," Niroshana said. UNI

AP: Blue Jet Healthcare to invest ₹2,300 Cr in Pharma unit at Rambilli SEZ in Anakapalli Dist.

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

VISAKHAPATNAM, MAR 02: In a significant industrial development for north Andhra, Blue Jet Healthcare Limited (BJHL) will set up a pharmaceutical manufacturing facility at Rambilli Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Anakapalli district with an investment of Rs. 2,300 crore.

The foundation stone for the project will be laid by Andhra Pradesh Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh

on Saturday.

The State government has allotted 102.48 acres of land in the SEZ at Seethapalem village in Rambilli mandal for the project at Rs. 40 lakh per acre, along with additional incentives.

The Mumbai-headquartered company, known for its science-led speciality pharmaceutical and healthcare ingredients business, will establish a pharmaceutical intermediates and contract development

and manufacturing (CDMO) unit at the site.

The project will be implemented in phases and is expected to commence operations by the 2028-29 financial year.

The proposed unit is likely to generate around 1,750 direct jobs.

The project comes amid the State government's efforts to attract large-scale investments to north Andhra and accelerate industrial growth in the region. UNI

Stock market ends lower amid broad-based selling; Nifty closes below 25,200 mark

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MAR 02: Indian stock market ended lower on Friday amid broad-based selling across most of the sectors, Nifty closing below the 25,200 mark. At close, the Sensex was down 961.42 points or 1.17% at 81,287.19, and the Nifty was down 317.90 points or 1.25% at 25,178.65.

Nifty Midcap and smallcap indices also down 1% each. The overall market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms dropped to around Rs 463 lakh crore from Rs 468.5 lakh crore in the previous session.



Among the sectors, Nifty Realty was the top laggard falling 2.27%. Nifty Auto, Nifty FMCG, and Nifty Metal all sank over 1.5%. Nifty Media closed up 0.65%. Nifty Chemicals rose 0.11% while the Nifty IT largely remained unchanged. On Nifty, the top gainers were Trent, HCL Tech, Infosys, Apollo Hospitals. While on the losing side were Dr Reddy's Labs, Bharti Airtel, M&M, HDFC Life, Sun Pharma.

Around 100 stocks touched their 52-week high while more than 330 stocks slid to their 52-week low on the BSE. Those hitting high included Sai Life Sciences, Schaeffler Industries, Apar Industries, Graphite India, JK Bank, SAIL, Hitachi Energy, IOC, Polycab, Bharat Forge, Bank of Maharashtra, Lupin, Bank of India, Data Patterns, Eicher Motors, among others.

While on the lows were Just Dial, Inox Wind, Firstsource Solutions, Suzlon Energy, Reliance Power, Afcons Infra, IRCTC, Cello World, Syngene International, Poly Medicure, Vedant Fashions, Emami, C. E. Info Systems, ACC, IRFC, BASF, Page Industries, Relaxo Footwear, Bajaj Housing, among others.

In terms of some of the notable names, L&T was a top laggard, falling 5.32%, PB Fintech shed 3.2%, while extending its losing streak to the third straight day, LIC shares dropped another 2.5%. UNI

Oppo Pad 5's early yet restrained Android tablet bet, lands well enough

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MAR 02: There is, increasingly so, a case for Android tablets. As entertainment hubs. As secondary work machines. Now even as primary work machines, though this holds true if your workflow fits within perceived boundaries of capabilities (it's still a subjective hit or miss). The OPPO Pad 5 seems to be on absolutely the right track from the outset, which includes an affordable price positioning, an ecosystem play, and the promise that artificial intelligence (AI) will play a useful enough role in your work. While I wouldn't recommend buying any device based on perceived AI promises, you should base your decision on the Oppo Pad 5's hardware foundation, which is mostly on point.

For starters, Oppo gained the first mover's advantage in the early 2026 Android tablet battles, with the Xiaomi Pad 8 following soon after. Secondly, things have been kept simple yet versatile, with the Wi-Fi and 5G versions available (that's something the otherwise impressive Xiaomi Pad 7 misses out). I'd recommend the 5G variant if the budget allows it, for you'll realise the benefits of this



convenience, inevitably when you start travelling more with the tablet. Prices start at ₹26,999 for the 8GB memory and 128GB storage variant with Wi-Fi only, while the 5G spec that also bumps up storage to 256GB will cost ₹32,999. One could disagree with the choice of 128GB as the base storage spec (it should have been 256GB ideally), but thanks to the AI slop filling our social media feeds, memory and storage prices are through the roof.

Two key specifications really work in the Oppo Pad 5's favour. The 12.1-inch display real estate is ideal for two windows side by side as you get some work done, working on spreadsheets, and finally once done for the day, it is immersive enough for catching up on TV shows or some sports

highlights. This is a bright and vivid screen with 12-bit colour depth, and you'd appreciate the 7:5 aspect ratio which is a bit squarer than the typical 16:9, making it fit windows with PDF documents or books better. Brightness changes are flicker free, at least to the eyes as you use the tablet, and this screen simply works across usage scenarios.

The other is the fact that the OPPO Pad 5 has a large 10,050mAh battery, which lasts close to 18 hours on a single charge. Considering this may not often be used as a primary laptop-replacement device for 9 hours a day straight, you will need to deploy the 33-watt charger only once every few days to juice this up completely. There are absolutely no complaints about this, especially considering the

price point for the 5G option.

The choice of the MediaTek Dimensity 7300-Ultra is not entirely surprising, but there is some curiosity. This chip is a couple of steps behind the Xiaomi Pad 7's Qualcomm Snapdragon 7 Plus Gen 3 in terms of raw performance, and will certainly fall a further step behind the Snapdragon 8s Gen 4 that'll power the upcoming Xiaomi Pad 8. This is not a good look in the face of direct competition, and this leads me to believe that you'll soon start seeing significant market price corrections to tweak the perceived value. For specific workflows, this may struggle somewhat if your intended usage includes a fair bit of time on serious video editing apps, but the likes of Adobe Lightroom and Express should be fine on this.

Of course any tablet being sold in this day and age must claim a number of AI insertions within the interface and the apps, with the OPPO Pad 5 being no different. Some stand out ones include an AI Writer, a translator, a voice recorder with transcription and of course, Google's Gemini integrations. Oppo has integrated something called Circle to Note, which requires the Oppo Pencil 2R (that's a separate accessory;

2,999) – highlight or mark any text on a web page, document or file and drag it into the notes app. This negates the need for cluttering the gallery with umpteen screenshots (often, one forgets particular relevance or context). Speaking of the gallery, that too has AI based clarity enhancer, unblur and reflection removal options, though mileage will vary depending on complexity of a photo.

If you are buying an Android tablet in 2026 and want one that'll competently handle documents, video calls, video streaming, reading and entertainment needs for frequent travel without introducing too many compromises, the Oppo Pad 5 deserves to be high on the shortlist. It does not win the raw-power argument, and serious creators may outgrow it sooner than they'd like. But the combination of a very good 12.1-inch display, dependable battery life and the availability of a 5G variant at this price gives it a real-world advantage that matters to a much larger demographic of potential buyers. Just that you may want to weigh the Xiaomi Pad 8 and how the Xiaomi Pad 7 pricing shapes up, before making a definitive decision.



Brian Bennett: 'I surprised myself as well'

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CHENNAI: Zimbabwe's young opener Brian Bennett has emerged as one of the stories of the 2026 T20 World Cup, surprising not only fans but even himself with a record-breaking run that has placed him among the tournament's leading scorers. In his first senior World Cup, Bennett has been dismissed only once in five innings, helping Zimbabwe reach the Super Eight for the first time in their history. Reflecting on his journey, he admits the experience has been "pretty amazing" and says he is proud not just of his own milestones, but of what the team has achieved together.

Bennett's rapid adaptation to global cricket has been striking. Though he had prior exposure to subcontinental conditions through tours to Sri Lanka, he did not expect to sail through his first three innings unbeaten. "I surprised myself as well," he said, explaining that his approach has been simple: survive the powerplay, rotate the strike in the middle overs, and preserve wickets for a late surge. His maturity at the crease has stood out, especially in high-pressure chases.

Against India, despite Zimbabwe falling short of a daunting 250-run target, Bennett produced his finest knock of the tournament. While talk

swirled around a potential century, he insisted personal milestones were never his focus. Only in the final overs did the thought briefly cross his mind. Instead, he encouraged teammates to play freely, emphasizing that there would always be another opportunity for a hundred. At just 22, he believes time is firmly on his side.

Facing world-class bowlers has been another learning curve. Bennett described the challenge of taking on Jasprit Bumrah as particularly tough, calling it a valuable experience. Yet he maintains that international cricket offers no easy contests, and each match is an opportunity to absorb lessons.

His rise, however, did not happen overnight. Growing up with two brothers, including his twin David, Bennett was immersed in sport from a young age. Though he played hockey, squash, tennis, and even dabbled in rugby, cricket remained his primary passion. Coaching sessions with former Zimbabwe star Brendan Taylor accelerated his development, and within six months of returning from school cricket, Bennett found himself in the national side.

His fearless approach against pace has become a defining trait. Unafraid of the short ball, he embraces aggressive stroke play, though he acknowledges it can sometimes be a double-edged

sword. Even being concussed by South Africa's Kwena Maphaka in a Test match has not dampened his appetite for fast bowling. Training alongside towering quicks like Blessing Muzarabani and Richard Ngarava has further sharpened his reflexes.

One of the tournament's unforgettable moments came when Zimbabwe stunned Australia. Bennett played a measured anchoring role, adjusting to a tricky surface and guiding the innings before the bowlers sealed a dream victory. The win, he said, was the stuff of childhood imagination.

Despite comparisons with senior players and admiration for global icons like Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers, Bennett remains grounded. He credits Zimbabwe's supportive coaching staff for encouraging proactive batting without fear of failure.

Looking ahead, Bennett is cautious about long-term planning. With Zimbabwe set to co-host the ODI World Cup and already qualified for the 2028 T20 edition, he sees ample opportunity to grow. Yet, when asked about his career highlight so far, he points to his Test century at Trent Bridge in England as his proudest moment. The past three weeks may have brought global attention, but for Brian Bennett, the journey has only just begun — and even he is discovering how far he can go.



Sanath Jayasuriya to step down as Sri Lanka coach

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SHARJAH: Sanath Jayasuriya has decided to step down as Sri Lanka men's head coach. He hadn't told the SLC that he would be leaving the role.

At the post-match press conference, after Sri Lanka ended their T20 World Cup campaign with a narrow loss to Pakistan, Jayasuriya said his original contract was till June 2026. It is possible that he remains in charge for their bilateral T20I and ODI series against Afghanistan which starts on March 13 in Sharjah.

Jayasuriya took over as Sri Lanka head coach soon after the 2024 T20 World Cup. Many of his better accomplishments came in his first few months. Sri Lanka recorded their first ODI bilateral series win against India in 27 years in August 2024, before going on to win a Test at The Oval in September (they'd lost that series already how-



ever) that year, and beating New Zealand 2-0 at home, also in Tests.

The last year of Jayasuriya's tenure has been characterised by failures, Sri Lanka's four consecutive losses to crash out of a home T20 World Cup chief among them. Sri Lanka had also been modest in the Asia Cup in 2025, and had underwhelmed in the T20I tri-series in Pakistan last year. Before this T20 World Cup, England had also swept Sri Lanka 3-0 in T20Is.

Jayasuriya had previously served as chief selector in two separate stints.

Ten Doeschate: You want to go towards pressure

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

LONDON: India, as modern giants of the game, are used to dealing with high expectations and the pressure that comes along with it. The Asia Cup final was about not losing to their biggest historic rivals. The last T20 World Cup final was about ending an ICC trophy drought for the team and in particular its legends. Both times, on the back of some individual brilliance and by holding their nerves better than their opponents, they came good. But this time, there's a different kind of pressure.

A premature exit for the defending champions in the Super

Eight stage of a home World Cup would be looked at like disaster.

India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate made it clear that India's approach against West Indies on Sunday would be to avoid overplaying the stakes. He also said that feeling the pressure is not a negative and he wouldn't be insulating his players from it. He framed it like a privilege more than a burden.

"I think the important thing is to focus on ourselves, focus on what has got this group to this point, how well they've done," ten Doeschate said. "It's about big players standing up, experienced players standing up and just remaining calm and staying true to the way we've

played leading up to this match. I don't think you ever want to mask the pressure. I think you want to go towards pressure. And that's been the message throughout, not just the World Cup, but certainly all the bilateral series.

"All our preparation has been towards embracing pressure when it comes. We're continually telling the guys what a privilege it is to play for your country, what a privilege it is to walk out at Eden Gardens and play for a match to stay in the tournament."

Across the square, Daren Sammy, who was coaching his team in the afternoon, looked at the contest through a differ-

ent lens. If India have risen to being the benchmark, Sammy is comfortable feeling like challengers. He also joked about now going from the neutral Kolkata fans' favourite across the group stage to suddenly feeling like potential villains.

"Well, I would say history could repeat itself, although it was a different venue," Sammy said, bringing up West Indies' win over India in the 2016 semi-final in Mumbai. "In order for you to win this tournament, you have to go through India at some point. Tomorrow is that day for us."

"And I'm pretty sure they'll have, what, 80,000 [67,000] here tomorrow and then another 1.4 billion supporting India. You

know, so it will still feel as, you know, a David and Goliath showdown. But like I said in 2016, David did beat Goliath. So that's what I'm going to tell my boys tomorrow. All my soldiers, they're ready for battle tomorrow."

"To be fair to you, the fans have been nice. They still say best of luck, but I ask them, 'do you mean it?' But, yeah, I'm not surprised. Obviously, we are most people's second-favorite team, but, you know, we are playing against, you know, their favorites."

India, minus Rinku Singh - who is set to join the squad late on Saturday - arrived to the usual buzz outside the stadium, youngsters lining the barricades and calling out names.

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