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'Jobs for Kins of Terror Victims': LG Sinha Promises 'End of Terror Ecosystem' in J&K

37 Families of Terror Victims, 29 of Deceased Employees Receive Appointments

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 23: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday handed over appointment letters to 37 next of kin (NoKs) of terrorism victims at the Convention Centre here, declaring that there will be no safe haven left for terrorists or their support networks in Jammu and Kashmir.

In the same function, appointment letters were also distributed to 29 NoKs of government employees who lost their lives in service, along with beneficiaries

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West Asia Crisis 'Worrisome', Hits Economy and Livelihoods: PM Modi

Government prioritises fuel security, safety of Indians amid prolonged conflict

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 23: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday termed the ongoing crisis in West Asia as "worrisome," warning that the prolonged conflict is having an adverse impact on the global economy and the livelihoods of people.

Addressing the Lok Sabha, the prime minister said the situation, which has persisted for over three weeks, has raised serious economic and humanitarian concerns, with the world urging an early resolution to the conflict.

He noted that disruptions in cargo movement through the Strait of Hormuz have posed challenges since the beginning of hostilities, but assured that the government is taking all necessary steps to ensure that fuel and gas supplies



remain largely unaffected.

Highlighting India's dependence on imports, Modi said nearly 60 per cent of the country's LPG requirements are met through imports, and in view of the uncertainty, the government is prioritising domestic supply while ramping

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Valley's Heart Reaches Iran: Kashmiris Rally with Aid for War-Hit Civilians

Iranian Embassy thanks people as women, youth spearhead widespread donation drive

HT NEWS DESK / KNO

SRINAGAR, MAR 23: In a powerful show of solidarity, residents across Kashmir have mobilized relief for civilians affected by the ongoing conflict in Iran, donating cash, gold jewellery, copper utensils and even livestock in a community-driven humanitarian effort.

The campaign gathered pace a day after Eid

celebrations, with youth groups fanning out across localities to conduct door-to-door collection drives. The response has been marked by participation from all sections of society, reflecting a deeply rooted culture of collective support in times of crisis.

A cleric associated with the drive told Kashmir News Trust that contributions poured in from men, women and children alike, ranging from money to household valuables. Women played a leading role, donating gold ornaments and utensils, while some families extended support by offering livestock, underscoring the scale

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Trump Announces 5-Day Pause on Iran Strikes Amid "Productive" Talks

Temporary halt seen as diplomatic opening as Middle East conflict enters fourth week

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, MAR 23: US President Donald Trump on Monday ordered a five-day suspension of planned military strikes on Iranian energy infrastructure, citing "very good and productive" discussions with Iran and raising cautious hopes for a diplomatic breakthrough.

In a statement, Trump said he had instructed the Department of War to "postpone any and all military strikes" against Iran's power plants and energy facilities for five days, subject to the outcome of ongoing



negotiations. He noted that talk between the two sides would continue through the week and described their tone as constructive.

The development comes as the conflict involving the United States and Israel against Iran enters its fourth week, with tensions continuing to rattle global energy markets and heighten fears of a broader regional escalation.

The pause follows Trump's earlier warning that Washington would target and "obliterate" Iranian power plants if

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No Blanket Farm Loan Waiver on Cards, Govt Tells Parliament

Centre cites credit schemes, income support; assures no change in disability pension tax exemption

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAR 23: The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday told Parliament that the Centre is not considering any proposal for a complete waiver of farm loans, while asserting that multiple

measures are in place to strengthen farmers' financial position.

Responding to a query in the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman said the government continues to provide timely and affordable credit to farmers through the Kisan Credit Card scheme, under which crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh are



extended at subsidised interest rates. She added that incentives are also offered to borrowers who repay loans on time.

The minister said the limit for collateral-free short-term agricultural loans has been enhanced

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Midnight Blast Near Border Village in Samba Triggers High-Level Probe

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, MAR 23: A powerful explosion outside the residence of a former sarpanch in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district in the early hours of Monday triggered panic in the area and prompted a high-level investigation by central agencies.

The blast occurred around 1:07 am outside the house of Jai Ram Sharma in Gawala Talab village in the Ghagwal sector, located nearly 10 kilometres from the International Border, officials said. The impact of the explosion damaged the main gate and a portion of the boundary wall of the house, while also shattering window panes of several

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Farooq Abdullah Firing Case: Accused Sent to Judicial Custody Till April 6

Investigation Nears Completion as Police Prepare Chargesheet; Bail Plea Likely Soon

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, MAR 23: A local court on Monday remanded Kamal Singh Jamwal, the man accused of opening fire at National Conference president Farooq Abdullah earlier this month, to judicial custody till April 6.

Jamwal was produced before the sub-judge's court following the expiry of his police remand. The city judge, who had earlier heard the matter, was on leave at the time of the hearing.

The incident occurred on March 11 in the Greater Kailash

area of Jammu, when Jamwal allegedly fired at Abdullah as he was leaving a marriage function. The former chief minister had a narrow escape in the attack. The accused was immediately overpowered by people present at the scene and was subsequently arrested, with a revolver recovered from his possession.

Police had initially secured a five-day remand of the accused on March 12, which was later extended by seven days for further interrogation. With the investigation now stated to be nearly complete, the court ordered his transfer to judicial



custody.

According to the counsel representing the accused, the investigating agency is in the final stages of the probe and is expected to file a chargesheet shortly. The family of the accused is also considering moving a bail application in the coming days.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT), headed by a senior police officer of deputy inspector general rank, is probing the case. Jamwal has been booked under charges of attempt to murder and relevant provisions of the Arms Act.

ED Attaches ₹16.86 Lakh In 'Digital Arrest' Cyber Fraud Case In Kashmir

HT NEWS NETWORK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, MAR 23: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Srinagar Zonal Office, has provisionally attached proceeds of crime worth Rs. 16,86,465 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, in connection with a "digital arrest" cyber fraud case involving impersonation and coercion.

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Srinagar Zonal Office has provisionally attached Proceeds of Crime amounting to Rs. 16,86,465/- under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The attached amount is lying in a bank account maintained in the name of M/s Jeevika Foundations with HDFC Bank, Karol Bagh, New Delhi. The said account is operated by accused Gaurav Kumar S/o Jaipal Singh, who is found to be involved in a well-organized Digital Arrest cyber fraud racket, statement reads. ED initiated investigation on the basis of FIR No. 26/2024 dated 19.10.2024 registered by Cyber Police Station, Kashmir Zone, along with a preliminary charge sheet filed before the Honorable Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Srinagar, it reads.

The investigation pertains to a cyber fraud wherein innocent citizens were deceived through impersonation of officials from law enforcement and regulatory agencies. Investigation revealed that the accused persons, namely Gaurav Kumar, Gurpreet Singh, and Ujjwal Chauhan, in conspiracy with other associates, executed a well-planned fraud by impersonating officials of agencies such as TRAI and CBI, it reads.

Statement further reads, The victim was falsely informed that he was involved in a money laundering case linked to national security and was threatened with arrest. Under fear, coercion, and psychological pressure, the victim was compelled to liquidate his fixed deposits and transfer funds.

Accordingly, an amount of Rs. 21,00,000/- was fraudulently obtained from the victim and transferred to the bank account of M/s Jeevika Foundations, which acted as the primary beneficiary and conduit account. Out of the total defrauded amount, a sum of Rs. 4,13,535/- has already been refunded to the complainant pursuant to the order dated 28.09.2024 passed by the Honorable Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Srinagar, it reads.

However, the remaining amount of Rs. 16,86,465/-, which is identifiable and traceable in the bank account of M/s Jeevika Foundations, constitutes Proceeds of Crime under the provisions of PMLA, 2002, it reads.

In furtherance, the said amount has been provisionally attached under Section 5(1) of the PMLA, 2002. Further Investigation is under progress, statement reads. (KNC)

Northern Commander Reviews Kishtwar Ops, Urges Troops to Sustain Anti-Terror Momentum

Seven JeM militants, including most-wanted Saifullah, eliminated in year-long high-altitude operation

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, MAR 23: The Army's Northern Commander, Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, on Monday visited Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir and called for sustained operational momentum to ensure lasting peace and stability in the region.

During his visit to the Kishtwar sector, Lt Gen Sharma reviewed the operational preparedness and security grid, and held detailed deliberations with commanders on the ground. He also interacted with troops deployed in challenging high-altitude areas marked by difficult terrain and inclement weather. The Northern Commander commended the soldiers for their professionalism, resilience and steadfast conduct of operations under demanding conditions. He exhorted them to maintain the tempo of ongoing operations and ensure seamless

coordination with other security agencies to consolidate gains against militancy.

The visit comes in the backdrop of a major success against Pakistan-based terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed, which suffered a significant setback in Kishtwar. Security forces eliminated seven of its highly trained militants in a year-long operation, culminating on February 22 with the killing of three ultras, including most-wanted commander Saifullah. Officials said the operation, carried out in rugged mountainous terrain, dealt a severe blow to militant networks attempting to regroup in the region, and underscored the effectiveness of sustained counter-terror efforts by the Army and allied agencies.

Reiterating the need for continued vigilance, Lt Gen Sharma stressed that maintaining pressure on terror elements and close inter-agency coordination would be key to ensuring enduring peace in the area.

Firecrackers Trigger Shop Blaze in Srinagar, Goods Worth Lakhs Damaged

HT NEWS NETWORK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, MAR 23: Electronic goods worth lakhs of rupees were damaged after a closed shop caught fire in Srinagar's Mehjoor Nagar area, allegedly due to firecrackers set off by children, locals said.

The incident occurred when firecrackers were reportedly pushed through a gap beneath the shutter of the shop late at night, triggering a blaze inside the premises.

The shop, owned by Abdul Qayoom Bagow, dealt in electronic goods and had stock valued at around Rs 10 to 12 lakh stored inside, the owner said.

The episode has drawn attention to continued violations of restrictions on firecracker use in residential areas, with locals alleging that such materials were freely available to children despite existing curbs.

According to the shop owner, the fire caused extensive damage to goods kept inside the store before it was brought under control. "Goods worth around Rs 10 to 12 lakh have been damaged. I am thankful to the local residents who helped in dousing the fire," Bagow told the news agency Kashmir News Trust.

Locals said children were seen bursting firecrackers in lanes and by-lanes across the locality, including near closed shops and residential spaces, causing distress to elderly and unwell individuals. In a separate incident reported from the same area, a sofa and a car cover were also gutted after being set ablaze by firecrackers, locals said.

There was no report of any injury in either of the incidents.

Locals have raised concerns over the unchecked sale and use of firecrackers, especially among minors, and called for stricter enforcement of existing regulations.

Authorities have previously imposed restrictions on the sale and use of firecrackers in Srinagar citing safety and public health concerns, but enforcement remains a challenge on the ground, locals said.

Notably, the Srinagar district administration imposed a blanket ban on the sale and use of firecrackers in October 2018, citing public safety and law-and-order concerns.

In subsequent years, authorities reinforced restrictions in line with environmental norms, including limiting the use of firecrackers to designated time slots and permitting only "green crackers" during certain festivals.

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

'Jobs for Kins.....

under age-relaxation provisions, under the Jammu & Kashmir Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme-2022 and SRO-43.

Paying homage to victims of terrorism, the Lieutenant Governor asserted that the administration is committed to securing dignified and honourable lives for affected families and will not rest until justice reaches each of them. He underlined that justice is not confined to punishing perpetrators but also involves healing wounds, restoring dignity, and acknowledging the pain endured by families.

Describing the present moment as a decisive turning point, Sinha said the youth of the Union Territory and terror victim families aspire for a better future, and it is a collective responsibility to create opportunities for them. He said the stories of such families, once forgotten, are now being brought back with honour and recognition.

Issuing a stern warning to the remaining elements of the terror ecosystem, the Lieutenant Governor said their era is over and that those who supported or sheltered terrorism will face strict action. He added that individuals who had infiltrated government machinery in the past would be identified, removed from service and punished as per law.

The Lieutenant Governor termed the neglect of terror victim families in previous decades as a civilisational failure, stating that the system had failed in its primary duty to protect and support them. He said the situation reflected a collapse of social morality, where victims were marginalised while those linked to terror benefitted.

Reiterating the administration's resolve, Sinha said those directly linked to terrorism are being dismissed from government service, while long-neglected victim families are being provided jobs to ensure their economic and social security. He described the initiative as not merely a policy correction but a moral declaration of a new Jammu and Kashmir where justice is delivered through action as well as intent.

Senior officials and members of civil society, along with families of terrorism victims, were present at the function.

West Asia.....

up production. The prime minister said the conflict has

thrown up unexpected challenges, including those related to the economy, humanitarian issues and national security. He underlined the strategic importance of the region for India, noting that it meets a significant share of the country's crude oil and gas needs and is home to around one crore Indians.

Calling for unity, Modi said it was essential for Parliament to speak in one voice on the issue so that a strong message reaches the international community.

He also assured that the government has remained vigilant about the safety of Indian nationals in the affected areas, adding that he has held discussions with several leaders of West Asian countries, who have assured the safety of Indians.

Modi said some Indian nationals have been injured and a few have lost their lives in the conflict, and assistance is being extended to the affected families.

Valley's Heart.....

and sincerity of the initiative. Children, too, joined the effort by contributing their savings and pocket money, making the campaign both inclusive and emotionally resonant. Participants described the response as overwhelming, driven by empathy for those affected by the conflict.

Locals involved in the drive said the humanitarian crisis in Iran had deeply moved people in the Valley, prompting swift action at the grassroots level. The collected aid is expected to be routed through official channels, including the Embassy of Iran in India, to ensure it reaches those in need.

Acknowledging the gesture, the Iranian Embassy expressed gratitude in a public message, thanking the people of Kashmir for their "humanitarian support and heartfelt solidarity," and said their kindness would be remembered.

The developments come amid continuing hostilities in West Asia, which have led to civilian casualties and displacement, drawing humanitarian concern worldwide. Kashmir, known for its community-led relief efforts, has once again demonstrated its readiness to stand with those facing hardship beyond its borders.

Trump Announces.....

Tehran failed to reopen the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz within 48 hours. The key maritime route, crucial for global oil supplies, has remained largely disrupted

amid the hostilities.

Reacting sharply, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf warned that any attack on Iran's infrastructure would trigger retaliatory strikes on energy facilities across the region, potentially driving oil prices higher for a prolonged period.

The conflict erupted on February 28 following the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in joint US-Israeli strikes. Iran responded with attacks on US and Israeli-linked targets in Gulf countries, disrupting key waterways and unsettling international trade flows.

With the Strait of Hormuz effectively shut and global concern mounting, the coming days of negotiations are being closely watched as a critical window to de-escalate tensions and restore stability to energy markets.

No Blanket.....

from Rs 1.60 lakh to Rs 2 lakh, including loans for allied activities. She noted that the Reserve Bank of India ensures adequate credit flow to agriculture and other priority sectors under its lending framework.

Highlighting welfare initiatives, Sitharaman pointed to crop insurance coverage and direct income support provided to farmers through the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, saying these interventions aim to improve farm incomes and reduce distress.

In response to another question, the minister clarified that tax exemption on disability pensions for armed forces personnel will continue under the Income-tax Act, 2025. She explained that while earlier provisions under the Income-tax Act, 1922 ceased to operate, the Finance Bill, 2026 seeks to explicitly retain the exemption, ensuring continuity of the existing benefits.

She said that as of January 31, 2026, over 1.47 lakh armed forces personnel have retired with disabilities, while nearly 90,000 personnel invalided out of service are receiving disability pensions, adding that there has been no withdrawal of the exemption.

Midnight Blast.....

neighbouring homes. No casualties were reported.

Soon after the incident, teams from the National Investigation Agency and the National Security Guard rushed to the spot

along with forensic experts and sniffer dogs to examine the site and collect evidence.

Police officials said samples have been taken to ascertain the nature of the explosion. "The residents heard a loud blast and upon stepping outside found the gate damaged," Samba Senior Superintendent of Police Virinder Singh Manhas told reporters.

Locals described the explosion as unusually intense, saying it shook the entire village. Sharma, the house owner, said they had never experienced such a

powerful blast before and urged authorities to conduct a thorough investigation to identify those responsible. He added that police recovered shrapnel and other fragments from the site, indicating the possible use of an explosive device.

An FIR has been registered and investigations are underway to determine the cause and source of the blast. Authorities are not ruling out any angle, particularly given the proximity of the area to the International Border, which has heightened concerns among residents.

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DC Srinagar presides over Mega Job Fair at Kashmir Haat

Several Youngsters shortlisted for Placement, Benefits under Government Self- Employment Schemes showcased by Mission Yuva & HADP supported Entrepreneurs

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, MAR 23: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Monday presided over a one day Mega Job Fair at Kashmir Haat (Numaish Gah) Exhibition Ground, aimed at promoting employment opportunities, entrepreneurship and enhancing self-employment opportunities among the youth of the district.

Deputy Director Employment, Srinagar, Shubi Tabasum, District Employment Officer, Career Counselling Officer (CCO), other senior Officers from the Employment Department and other concerned also attended the event.

The job fair witnessed an overwhelming response from the youth who registered online for participation in the event. Around 22 companies with adequate vacancies in diverse sectors including Tourism, Agriculture, Horticulture, Insurance, Banking, Automobile and Hospitality were part of this event offering a wide range of employment opportunities.



During the programme, the Deputy Commissioner inspected several stalls set up by government departments showcasing various self-employment schemes. These stalls provided detailed information on scheme benefits, financial assistance, and application procedures aimed at facilitating and encouraging aspiring entrepreneurs.

Addressing on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the importance of such job fairs in creating a direct interface between job providers and job seekers, thereby enabling placements, selections, and formal registration of unemployed youth with the Employment Department. He further urged youth to avail hassle-free credit facilities offered under key government initiatives such as Mission YUVA, HADP, and JKICP.

He reiterated that the District Administration is committed to extending all necessary support through the Employment Department to foster entrepreneurship across Srinagar.

District level program on Vande Mataram celebrated at Ganderbal

HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, MAR 23: In a solemn yet inspiring celebration of the 150th year of "Vande Mataram", the National Song, the District Administration Ganderbal organized a District-Level Programme at the "Conference Hall of Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal". The event also coincided with the observance of "Shaheed Diwas," adding a profound sense of patriotism and reverence to the occasion.

Students from various schools across District Ganderbal participated with great enthusiasm and dignity. They eloquently expressed their thoughts on the significance of Vande Mataram and paid heartfelt tributes to the martyrs, reflecting maturity, awareness, and deep respect for the nation's legacy. The programme proved to be a rich learning experience, providing students with an opportunity to engage, reflect, and grow in a vibrant academic and cultural environment.



The inaugural session was presided over by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Dr. Faheem Bihaki (JKAS), ACR Ganderbal Dr. S. Salah U Din (JKAS), Dy.Sp Dr. Urfan, ADC Ganderbal appreciated and felicitated the Education Department for its consistent and commendable performance. He lauded the district for emerging as a topper in the previous two phases and acknowledged the dedicated efforts of the department in achieving such milestones.

In his concluding remarks, Chief Education Officer Ganderbal, Mr. Oneel Kumar Bhat, interacted warmly with the students and appreciated the sincere efforts of the Heads of Institutions (HOIs), teachers, and the enthusiastic participation of students. He emphasized the importance of such programmes in nurturing values of patriotism, discipline, and intellectual growth among the youth.

The programme concluded on a note of inspiration and collective commitment towards fostering national pride and educational excellence.

IBC J&K Calls for Student Involvement on World Water Day

FAROOQ RATHER

SRINAGAR, MAR 23: The Indian Buildings Congress (IBC), J&K Chapter, in collaboration with Government School Yadipora, Pattan, organized a programme to mark World Water Day, stressing the importance of actively involving students in water conservation efforts.

Speaking on the occasion, Honorary Secretary of IBC J&K Chapter, Er. Irfan Shafi Parray, highlighted the increasing stress on water resources and emphasized the urgent need to adopt sustainable water management practices at both institutional and household levels.

In his message, Chairman IBC J&K Chapter, Er. Aamir Ali, underscored that water conservation must evolve into a student-led movement, especially in an ecologically sensitive region like Jammu and Kashmir. He also stressed the integration of rainwater harvesting systems and sustainable water practices in building planning and community infrastructure. Head of the Institution, Abdul Rashid Sheikh, spoke about the crucial role of schools in shaping responsible behaviour among students and raising awareness about water conservation from an early stage.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from both faculty members and students, who appreciated the initiative taken by the IBC J&K Chapter in promoting awareness and encouraging grassroots-level action on water conservation.

SSP Kulgam Reviews Security Scenario, Stresses Coordination Among Forces

FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, MAR 23: Senior Superintendent of Police Kulgam, Anayat Ali Chowdhary (IPS), on Monday chaired a high-level joint security review meeting at the District Police Office (DPO) Kulgam, bringing together senior officers from the Police, Army, and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

The meeting was attended by Commanding Officers of various CRPF battalions, including Jitendra Mohan Shilswal, Nripendra Kumar Singh, Devender Singh Pal, and Kamlesh Prasad Singh, along with Army officials Kumar Varun and Sandeep Kumar Mehta. Additional SP Kulgam Mohd Aftab Awan (JKPS) was also present.

The primary objective of the meeting was to review and assess the prevailing security situation in the district. During the deliberations, the SSP emphasized the importance of maintaining strong coordination, discipline, and professionalism among all forces while dealing with



anti-terror operations and law and order challenges.

Highlighting the need for a proactive approach, the SSP called for heightened vigilance and timely preventive measures to avert any untoward incidents. He stressed that seamless coordination between the Police, Army, and CRPF remains crucial for ensuring peace and stability.

Discussions during the meeting also focused on strengthening intelligence gathering mechanisms, conducting accurate threat assessments, enhancing emergency response pre-

paredness, and improving inter-agency coordination.

Special attention was given to the security of minority communities residing in the district. Officers reviewed existing arrangements and discussed additional measures to further enhance their safety and confidence. The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment from all participating agencies to work in close synergy, ensuring effective information sharing and joint operational readiness to maintain law and order in Kulgam.

Fresh Raids in J&K as NIA Deepens Red Fort Blast Investigation

DR. AB QAYOOM

SRINAGAR, MAR, 23: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday carried out extensive searches at multiple locations across Jammu and Kashmir in connection with its ongoing investigation into the Red Fort car bomb blast case.

According to officials, raids were conducted at nine locations spanning several districts, including Handwara in Kupwara, Rafiabad in Baramulla, as well as areas in Kulgam and Srinagar. The coordinated searches are part of the agency's efforts to dismantle the wider network linked to the deadly attack.

An NIA spokesperson confirmed that the searches were aimed at gathering further evidence and identifying individuals suspected of having links with the accused involved in the case. Officials indicated that incriminating materials and digital evidence are being examined to trace the conspiracy behind the blast. (PTI) The Red Fort blast, which occurred on November 10 last year, had sent shockwaves

across the country. At least 13 people lost their lives and several others sustained injuries when an explosive-laden vehicle detonated near the historic monument in the national capital. Investigations revealed that the attack was carried out by a suicide bomber, Umar Un Nabi, a medical doctor and assistant professor at Al Falah University in Faridabad, Haryana. He allegedly drove the explosive-filled car to the site before triggering the blast.

So far, the NIA has arrested 09 to 11 individuals in connection with the case. The agency believes that the attack was part of a larger conspiracy, possibly involving a network operating across multiple regions. The latest raids in Jammu and Kashmir are seen as a significant step in uncovering the remaining links in the terror network and ensuring that all those involved are brought to justice. Authorities have reiterated their commitment to continue the investigation with full intensity, emphasizing that strict action will be taken against anyone found aiding or abetting terrorism.



Echoes of 'Vande Mataram' Resound as Bharderwah School Honours Martyrs on Shaheed Diwas

AMIR IQBAL KHAN

BHARDARWAH, MAR 23: Paying glowing tributes to the heroes of India's freedom struggle, students and staff of PM Shri Government Higher Secondary School Bhalra solemnly observed Shaheed Diwas here on Monday.

The commemorative event, organised in collaboration with the 10 J&K Battalion NCC Bharderwah, was held under the aegis of the nationwide celebration marking "150 Years of National Pride - Vande Mataram."

The campus was steeped in patriotic fervour as NCC cadets, faculty and students gathered to remember the unparalleled courage of the nation's martyrs. A major highlight of the solemn occasion was a stirring mass rendition of the national song 'Vande Mataram', which participants noted created a powerful and emotional atmosphere of national pride.

Associate NCC Officer Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Koul briefed the gathering on the historical significance of both Shaheed Diwas and the 150-year legacy of Vande Mataram. He also outlined a week-long series of commemorative activities directed by the Doda District Administration which are scheduled to run



from March 23 to March 30.

Addressing the gathering, Principal Asha Bhalwal stressed the enduring importance of the national song and urged the youth to uphold the core values of unity, integrity and patriotism in their daily lives.

Student voices were also front and center at the event. Cadet Kush Kumar Sharma took the podium to deliver an inspiring address on the history and sacrifices of the freedom fighters calling upon his peers to embrace discipline and dedicate themselves to national service.

The programme, organized under the guidance of Dr. Koul and the supervision of Principal Bhalwal, concluded with a pledge by all participants to serve the nation with sincerity and dedication.

Full Court Reference held to bid farewell to Justice Javed Iqbal Wani



■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, MAR 23: A Full Court Reference was held in the Court Room of the Chief Justice at the Srinagar Wing of High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to bid farewell to Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, on demitting office upon attaining the age of superannuation.

The Full Court Reference was convened in accordance with the long-standing conventions and institutional traditions of the High Court.

The Reference was attended by Chief Justice Arun Palli and Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Justice Sindhu Sharma, Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Justice Sanjay Dhar, Justice Rahul Bharti, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal, Justice Rajesh Sekhri,

Justice Mohd. Yousuf Wani, Justice Sanjay Parihar, and Justice Shahzad Azeem along with the spouses of the Judges of the High Court.

The proceedings were also attended by former Chief Justices and former Judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh; senior officers of the civil administration and police, including the Secretary Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; Senior Additional Advocate General; Deputy Solicitors General of India at Jammu and Srinagar; the President, Kashmir Advocates Association, Srinagar; Senior Advocates; Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar; Judicial Officers; officers of the Registry; and family members of Justice Javed Iqbal Wani. Besides, officers and officials and Advocates of the High Court from Jammu Wing joined the proceedings through virtual mode.

The farewell address was delivered by Mohsin Qadri, Senior Additional Advocate General, who lauded the dedication, judicial acumen and steadfast commitment of Justice Wani to uphold the rule of law. He observed that the tenure of Justice Wani as a Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh was marked by judicial prudence, fairness and a deep sense of justice, with particular emphasis on ensuring access to justice for the poor and the marginalized. She described Justice Wani as a gentleman par excellence and highlighted his positive approach, institutional contributions and respectful conduct towards members of the Bar.

President, Kashmir Advocates Association, Srinagar, Advocate Waseem Gull in his farewell address, commended the distinguished judicial service rendered

by Justice Javed Iqbal Wani and highlighted his unwavering commitment to fairness, justice and constitutional values.

The Chief Justice, in his address, highlighted Justice Wani's academic excellence, professional integrity and balanced judicial temperament, noting his dedication both at the Bar and on the Bench. His tenure was marked by discipline and clarity of thought earning him respect across the legal fraternity. The Court also acknowledged the invaluable support of his family throughout his judicial journey and extended its heartfelt appreciation and best wishes for his health, happiness and fulfillment in the years ahead.

Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, in his response, expressed profound gratitude to the Chief Justice, brother and sister Judges, members of the Bar, Judicial Officers, officers of the Registry and Court

staff for their cooperation and support throughout his tenure. He emphasized that effective dispensation of justice is possible only through harmonious cooperation between the Bench and the Bar. He also appreciated the legal acumen, professional competence and commitment of the advocates of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and placed on record his appreciation for the dedication and assistance of his personal staff.

The proceedings of the Full Court Reference were conducted by M. K. Sharma, Registrar General, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

Upon conclusion of the proceedings, Justice Javed Iqbal Wani was accorded a Guard of Honor by the security personnel as a mark of respect and recognition of his distinguished and meritorious judicial service.

Handwara celebrates 150 Years of "Vande Mataram" with Patriotic Fervour

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA, MAR 23: On the directions of District Administration Kupwara, a special commemorative event marking 150 years of India's iconic national song, Vande Mataram, was celebrated with great enthusiasm and patriotic spirit in Handwara today.

The programme witnessed active participation from officers, officials, students, and members of civil society, who gathered to pay tribute to the timeless legacy of the song that inspired generations during India's freedom struggle and continues to evoke national pride.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner, (ADC), Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi, highlighted the historical significance of Vande Mataram, emphasizing its vital role in uniting people and fostering a strong sense of patriotism and national identity.

The event featured vibrant cultural performances by students, including patriotic songs and recitations, adding color and energy to the celebration.



The programme also aimed to sensitize the younger generation about the rich cultural and historical heritage associated with the national song, while reinforcing the values of unity, integrity, and love for the nation.

On the occasion, a blood donation drive was also organized, in which Tehsildar Handwara, Zeeshan Khan, members of the media fraternity, and other participants voluntarily donated blood, reflecting a spirit of service and humanitarian commitment alongside the patriotic celebrations.

Officers reiterated the importance of organizing such commemorative events to nurture a spirit of nationalism and collective pride among the masses.

The celebration concluded with a collective rendition of Vande Mataram, reflecting deep respect and homage to the nation.

Among those present were the Deputy Chief Education Officer Kupwara (HQ Handwara), Zonal Education Officers, Tehsildar Handwara, senior police officers members of the media fraternity, and officers from various line departments at the sub-divisional level, showcasing strong community participation and support.

DC Kulgam visits GDC Frisal, reviews progress of College building Construction

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, MAR 23: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today visited Government Degree College Frisal to take stock of the progress made on the construction of the college building.

During the visit, the DC inspected various components of the ongoing construction works and reviewed the pace and quality of development at the site.



He was briefed by the concerned about the current status of the project, timelines, and remaining works. The DC directed the executing agency and concerned departments to expedite the pace of work and ensure that the project is completed within the stipulated timeframe.

He emphasized maintaining quality standards while accelerating the construction process so that the facility can be made available to students at the earliest. He also stressed the importance of developing adequate educational infrastructure in the district to facilitate better learning opportunities for students.

District Admin Kupwara launches week long campaign to commemorate 150 years of National Song "Vande Mataram"

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA, MAR 23: District Administration Kupwara today launched a week-long campaign to commemorate 150 years of the national song "Vande Mataram," celebrating its enduring legacy and significance in India's freedom movement and cultural heritage.

The main event was held at Town Hall Kupwara which was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse. The event marked the beginning of a series of activities planned across the district to honor the spirit of patriotism and unity embodied in "Vande Mataram."

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the historical importance of the song and emphasized the need to instill its values among the younger generation. He encouraged active participation from educational institutions, civil society, and the general public throughout the week-long celebrations.

The campaign will feature a variety of programs, including cultural performances, awareness drives, school activities, and community engagements aimed at fostering a sense of national pride and collective responsibility.

On the occasion, District Information Centre Kupwara held exhibition



highlighting the role freedom fighters in Independence of the Country. Besides, short film on the history of Vande Mataram song was also presented.

The event was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad; Chief Planning Officer, Parvaiz Ahmad; Chief Education Officer, Manzoor Ahmad; besides, other officers from police and line departments and large number of employees.

Similarly, a "Vande Mataram" event was also held at Town Hall Handwara, which was presided over by ADC Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi in presence of officers and large number of employees. On the occasion, painting competitions, exhibition and blood donation camp were held to commemorate the special event.

Events of similar nature were also held in Lolab and Karnah sub divisions, Tehsil/Block Headquarters and Educational Institutions commemorating the 150 years of the national song.

DC Budgam reviews arrangements for Special Phase of Vande Mataram @150 years celebrations

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, MAR 23: In connection with the Commemoration of 150 years of the National Song Vande Mataram (Special Phase) and the observance of Shaheedi Diwas, District Administration Budgam today held a meeting under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan.

At the outset, it was informed that a series of activities will be held across the district from 23rd to 30th March 2026 as part of the Special Phase celebrations, aimed at commemorating the historic legacy of Vande Mataram and paying rich tributes to the martyrs of the nation on Shaheedi Diwas.

During the meeting, threadbare deliberations were held on ensuring the smooth and successful conduct of all scheduled programmes.

The DC highlighted the historic significance of the 150-year commemoration of Vande Mataram, describing it as a powerful symbol of India's freedom movement and national identity.

Stressing the importance of effective implementation, the DC directed all departments to ensure seamless coordination, proactive planning, and enthusiastic participation at all levels. He instructed officers to organize a wide range of activities including cultural programmes, patriotic events, awareness drives, student engagement initiatives, and com-



munity outreach programmes in all blocks and panchayats.

The DC further underscored the need to actively involve youth, educational institutions and civil society, so that the spirit of patriotism and national pride is carried to the grassroots. He reiterated that the celebrations should be inclusive, vibrant, and reflective of the collective aspirations of the people.

Reviewing the logistical arrangements, the DC directed the concerned departments to ensure adequate infrastructure, proper publicity, and smooth execution of all events. He also stressed maintaining discipline and coordination to ensure that all programmes are conducted in a befitting manner.

On the Occasion, the DC said that such initiatives serve as a reminder of the country's rich heritage, the sacrifices of freedom fighters, and the enduring values of unity and integrity.

He urged all stakeholders to work with dedication and commitment to make the Special Phase celebrations a grand success.

Meanwhile, Shaheedi Diwas

was also observed by District officers in the conference hall of DC office complex along with its observance in all educational institutions, offices, MCs, of the District with utmost zeal and enthusiasm.

The DC emphasised that the observance of Shaheedi Diwas holds profound importance as it commemorates the supreme sacrifices of great freedom fighters, and called upon all departments to ensure that the day is observed with utmost respect, dignity, and patriotic zeal across the district.

Besides, ADC Budgam, POICDS, all SDMs, ACD, ACP, DIO, District informatics Officer, CHO, and other district and sectoral officers were present in the meeting.

DC Kulgam reviews Power Sector

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, MAR 23: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam today chaired a meeting to review the functioning of the power sector in the district and assess the progress of works being carried out under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS).

During the meeting, the DC took a detailed review of the status of ongoing projects, infrastructure upgrades, and other initiatives aimed at strengthening the power distribution network in the district. He was apprised by the concerned officials about the progress achieved under the scheme, including installation of smart meters, augmentation of distribution infrastructure, and measures



being taken to reduce power losses.

The DC emphasized the need for effective implementation of the scheme to ensure reliable and quality power supply to consumers. He directed the concerned departments to expedite the ongoing works under RDSS and ensure that all targets are achieved within the stipulated timelines.

He also stressed the importance of close coordination among departments and called for prompt redressal of public grievances related to electricity supply.

He instructed officials to regularly monitor field-level progress and ensure that the benefits of the scheme reach the people in a timely manner. The meeting was attended by Joint Director Planning, Malik Suhail, SE, KPDCI, Executive Engineer and other officers.

Div Com inaugurates Gyan Bharatam Workshop & National Survey of Manuscripts in Srinagar

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, MAR 23: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg today inaugurated a three-day Gyan Bharatam Workshop & National Survey of Manuscripts at Indian IIM, Sanat Nagar, Srinagar.

The workshop is being organized by the Department of Archives, Archaeology & Museums, J&K to promote identification, preservation, conservation, and digitization of centuries-old manuscripts across Jammu & Kashmir.

Addressing the participants, the Divisional Commissioner underscored the importance of public participation in safeguarding manuscript heritage. He emphasized that the mission adopts a "Har Ghar Dastak" approach to reach custodians and ensure documentation of valuable manuscripts.

Highlighting the significance of the initiative, he said the Gyan Bharatam Mission aligns with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to preserve and document



India's rich intellectual and cultural legacy. The Director, Kuldeep Krishan

Sidha stated that the workshop aims to sensitize and train District Level Committees in manuscript

identification and provide practical training on the use of the Gyan Bharatam Mission mobile appli-

cation for field surveys.

The programme also focuses on creating awareness about the importance of manuscript preservation and digitization as part of the broader knowledge ecosystem. The Gyan Bharatam App, launched by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is being used to monitor progress, with regular review at the PMO level.

Sidha informed that manuscripts will remain with their custodians, while experts will assist in assessing their nature, category, and physical condition. "The department will undertake digitization free of cost", he said and appealed private collectors to actively participate in the mission. Dr. Jahangir Iqbal, HoD and Cluster Centre Head, Gyan Bharatam Mission, Department of Persian, Kashmir University, is the nodal officer for Kashmir.

The workshop is being attended by experts from Indra Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, District Level Committee officers, private manuscript collectors, and officials of the department.

Special 'Vande Mataram' Phase kicks off in Anantnag

DC leads District-wide commemoration of Shaheedi Diwas

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, MAR 23: As a glorifying tribute to India's freedom fighters and in accordance with the National Level Calendar, the District Administration Anantnag today started the week long special phase of "National Song, Vande Mataram" 150 Years Commemoration Campaign.

In this regard, the main function was held at Town Hall Anantnag, where Deputy Commissioner (DC), Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat presided as the Chief Guest. ADC, ACR, ACD, DyDEO, CMO, CAO, CAHO, DEPO, ARTO, DSEO, DMO, AD FCS&CA and other officers/officials also attended the event.

The function coincided with the solemn observance of Shaheedi Diwas, honoring the supreme sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev.

Notably, the special phase of the campaign is scheduled to be organised from March 23 to March 30 across the district.

The ceremony featured the mass singing of the



National Song, Vande Mataram, which resonated through the hall. This was followed by screening of short films and slideshows of classical documents which highlighted the bravery and revolutionary efforts of our freedom fighters and national martyrs.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC emphasized the significance of creating mass awareness about India's freedom struggle. "Today, as we observe Shaheedi Diwas, we are reminded that our freedom was won through the selfless blood and toil of heroes like Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, and Rajguru. This is an apt opportunity to respect the great leaders and revolutionaries who made supreme sacrifices for freedom of the nation. It is also an occasion to honour their indomitable spirit and unwavering commitment to serve the motherland", the DC remarked.

Paying rich tributes to the freedom fighters, the DC said that it is the result of their courage and sacrifices that we are living in a free and democratic country with a vibrant constitutional set up. He said the officers and volunteers should create grassroot awareness about the National Song which motivated masses across length and breadth of the country during the long and arduous freedom struggle.

The DC further urged the youth to draw inspiration from the National Song and these selfless icons of freedom and contribute to the nation's progress.

Dr. Bilal also called for displaying adequate IEC material highlighting the wisdom, courage and struggle of the freedom fighters and mass leaders, at prominent public places.

On the occasion, the DC briefed about various activities, including mass singing at government offices and educational institutions, playing documentaries, holding cultural and youth engagement activities depicting freedom struggle and role of freedom icons besides letter writing to freedom fighters which will be organised as part of the Special Phase Campaign in the district.

He enjoined upon the officers and concerned departments to ensure the planned activities are conducted with enthusiasm and patriotic fervour.

Similar events were held at all Subdivisions of the district where the respective SDMs and Tehsildars led the events, propagating the message of Shaheedi Diwas and the legacy of martyrs.

District Admin Bandipora launches Special Phase of Vande Mataram Campaign

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, MAR 23: District Administration Bandipora today launched the Special Phase of the Vande Mataram campaign across the district to commemorate 150 years of the National Song.

The programmes was conducted in various educational institutions and public places across Bandipora, where students, teachers, and officials participated enthusiastically. Mass singing of Vande Mataram was held, while several institutions organized tribute events remembering the sacrifices of freedom fighters.

As part of the campaign, activities such as exhibitions on freedom fighters, student engagement programmes, cultural performances, and awareness sessions were conducted.

The Special Phase of the Vande Mataram campaign will continue till March 30, with a series of activities planned across the district.

District Admin Baramulla launches Week-long Campaign to Commemorate 150 Years of Vande Mataram

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA, MAR 23: District Administration Baramulla today launched a special week-long campaign to commemorate 150 years of Vande Mataram at Sherwani Hall, Baramulla.

The programme was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Syed Fakhruddin Hamid.

On the occasion, a short documentary on the historical background and significance of Vande Mataram was screened for the participants.

Speaking during the event, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the historical importance of Vande Mataram in our Nation's freedom movement and its continuing relevance in promoting awareness of the country's historical and cultural heritage among the younger generation.

He noted that the composition by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay Ji occupies an important place in the history of the national movement and has remained associated with the



spirit of public awakening during and patriotism.

An exhibition was also organised at the venue featuring photographs, biographical sketches, and brief accounts from the lives of prominent freedom fighters.

The Deputy Commissioner and other participants also paid tributes

to Shaheed Mohammad Maqbool Sherwani, recalling his contribution and sacrifice.

The week-long campaign will include a series of activities across educational institutions and public spaces, aimed at enhancing public awareness about the historical and cultural significance of Vande Mataram.

District administration Shopian commemorates 150 Years of 'Vande Mataram'

Inaugural programme held at GDC Shopian, Week-long Campaign to continue till March 30, 2026

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN, MAR 23: In connection with the commemoration of 150 years of the national song "Vande Mataram", a week-long series of programmes began today in District Shopian under the Special Phase scheduled from 23rd to 30th March 2026.

The inaugural programme was held at GDC Shopian and was presided over by the ADC Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Education Officer Shopian, Bashir Ahmed Shah, highlighted the profound historical significance of Vande Mataram, stating that the national song has served as a powerful source of inspiration for generations of freedom fighters and patriots.

He emphasized that the song embodies the spirit of sacrifice, unity, and national pride, and continues to instill a sense of responsibility and patriotism

among the youth. Earlier, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council Shopian, Suhail Ahmed, in his inaugural address, underscored the importance of such initiatives in fostering civic responsibility and national consciousness among citizens.

He remarked that commemorative programmes like these not only celebrate the nation's rich heritage but also strengthen the collective resolve towards unity, harmony, and progress.

The programme featured vibrant cultural performances presented by students from various educational institutions including New Green Land Higher Secondary School, JNV Aglar, and Gujjar & Bakerwal Hostel Shopian.

The performances, comprising patriotic songs and singing of national song beautifully reflected the spirit of nationalism and unity, captivating the audience.

On the conclusion of the

programme, certificates were distributed among the participating students in recognition of their commendable performances and valuable contribution to the successful conduct of the event.

Among others, Principal GDC Shopian, Prof. Tariq Ahmed, District Information Officer, Shopian Showkat Hussain Ganie, officials from the Education Department, and a large number of students, were present on the occasion.

Ganderbal marks 150 years of National Song with launch of 'Vande Mataram Week'

Shaheed Diwas also observed by paying tributes to sacrifices of India's freedom fighters

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, MAR 23: District Administration Ganderbal today launched a special week-long campaign, 'Vande Mataram Week', to commemorate 150 years of the National Song and pay tribute to the sacrifices of India's freedom fighters.

The campaign, scheduled from March 23 to March 30, 2026, began with observance of Shaheed Diwas (Martyrs' Day), remembering the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

The inaugural programmes were held at Mini Secretariat Ganderbal and Sub-Division Kangan with active participation of various departments.

At the main function held at Mini Secretariat Ganderbal, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Syed Fahim Bihaqi presided over the event. The programme was attended by Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Chief Education Officer, DySP Ganderbal, Zonal Education Officer Tulamulla and other officers and officials.

Addressing the gathering, the ADC threw light on the sacrifices of the martyrs who laid down their precious lives for freedom struggle. He appreciated the coordinated efforts of all departments and police for successfully organising the programme. He said such initiatives reflect the district's commitment



towards promoting national values and participation in important national campaigns.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Education Officer, Oneel Kumar Bhat said that today, as we observe Shaheed Diwas, we honor the profound sacrifices of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev, who gave their lives for our nation's sovereignty.

Addressing the students, he said youth are the architects of our future, adding "It is your responsibility to cherish the freedom we have inherited and to serve as the pillars upon which a stronger, more vibrant nation is built. Let us ensure that the legacy of our martyrs continues to inspire every step

we take toward progress."

Students from various educational institutions, including Misha Model School and Crescent Public School, participated in the programme and delivered speeches on the theme, highlighting the importance of the National Song and the sacrifices made during the freedom struggle.

Meanwhile, a series of activities will be organised throughout the week across district, tehsil and institutional levels. These include cultural programmes, awareness activities aimed at promoting the historical significance of the National Song and fostering a spirit of patriotism among the people, especially the youth.

HT EDITORIAL

Make health sector as priority sector in real sense

Health sector is one of the important sectors of human life and people should be entitled to all the modern health facilities. It is the responsibility of the government to provide up to date health facilities to the people so that they don't feel deprived of the same. Putting in place the requisite manpower at the health institutions is the primary responsibility of the government and there should not be any holding back in this respect.

Jammu & Kashmir is facing a huge manpower deficit when it comes to the health sector and the same is affecting the health care across the union territory. Hundreds of posts are lying vacant in the health department and health & medical education department. These figures were dished out by the government in the ongoing budget session of the legislative assembly. These posts are vacant in the different categories and serious steps need to be taken to fill the same.

The union territory government has been maintaining that the health sector is one of their priority sectors and focus would be laid on proper development of the same. Keeping the posts of doctors, pharmacists and other staff of the health department vacant somewhat contradicts the government's claim that it is concerned about this all important sector of human life. People want early filling of these posts so that they are not at the receiving end once they visit any health institute.

At the same time all the facilities should be in place at the health institutions so that the patients are not forced to visit the private health centres in this regard. There is no doubt that the facilities have improved a lot in the government hospitals but still then a lot more needs to be done in this regard. The concerned minister along with the senior officers of the department should make an inventory in this regard and it should be ensured that all the health facilities are available to the people.

Principles of justice and fairness need to be applied in this regard and it must be kept in mind that there should not be any discrimination. All the people are entitled to modern health facilities and there should not be any bias on the basis of region or area. Welfare measures need to be taken at the earliest so that the people don't feel deprived on the health front.

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RNI No: Jkeng/2011/39231
dailyheadlinestoday@gmail.com
headlinestoday2024@gmail.com

Perseverance and dedication always leads you to success



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Great people contribute to humanity without any personal gain. Education means becoming civilized and achieving life goals for a better standard of living. Education does not mean getting a government job and earning illegal assets. Education is a class apart, and it truly opens the doors of vision to the blind. Education always offers a helping hand to helpless people.

It is unfortunate that we have developed the mindset that education only means getting government jobs, earning illegal assets, and living a comfortable life without dedication or sacrifice for the nation. In developed countries, people willingly engage in research with the sole aim of uplifting the entire world.

Who are visionary people? Visionary scholars are never selfish; they dedicate their great work to the benefit of humanity. An educationally qualified person is one who devotes his or her research to humanity and has no intention of personal gain.

We have exemplary personalities who have given their best to the world without any personal benefit. Their names are written in golden letters, and people remember them for their great contributions to humanity.

The education system should be based on curiosity. The greater the curiosity towards educational goals, the more support should be provided, including full-fledged scholarships. Education should offer fair opportunities to apply for and appear in entrance examinations. Proper counselling at different levels should be provided so that we can identify those who are more curious and inclined towards research. Such follow-up with researchers can make the nation proud by producing great scholars.

Today's era demands extraordinary talent to lead the nation forward in technology. Technology plays an immense role in uplifting the country and generating employment.

Every country in the world is emphasizing the strengthening of its education sector. Where education is well-developed, other sectors grow automatically. Sensible people always give their hundred



percent effort to any task assigned to them by their seniors. Achieving success in a short span of time is never possible unless we have educated and well-trained staff.

Today, we are witnessing a world that seems to be completely run by machines. Machines are made of materials like iron, plastic, and other elements. All types of machines are created by well-educated youth, and ultimately, machines are controlled by humans.

There are many tasks we perform daily, such as using photocopiers, smartphones, and vehicles, all of which are human inventions. The Almighty has blessed us with a powerful brain that has potential beyond imagination. Only a few people utilize their brains to a certain extent and bring revolutions to the world by inventing things beyond our thinking. According to some studies, scientists utilize only about 30 percent of their brain power and still make great inventions. Therefore, we can say that a normal individual may use only 8 to 10 percent of his or her brain throughout life, while the rest remains unused.

Some people aim to become good teachers. We should always support the interests of learners and never force them against their will. Every individual has immense potential in different ways. Some are interested in the medical field and should never be pushed into other fields unwillingly. Today, the government has initiated various schemes so that everyone can achieve their dreams.

Some individuals are interested in the engineering field. Support their interests, and they will become great engineers, develop the nation, and contribute to the economy.

The world is full of opportunities. If you believe in yourself, your talent will never go in vain. You can change the world and become an influencer. Every individual has different skills, abilities, and talents, and each talent has great scope worldwide. Today, we are connected through social media. Never remain idle, as idleness rusts abilities. Always engage yourself productively and try to understand your strengths. The day you recognize your talent is the day you achieve real success in life.

Today, we have great opportunities to become what we want to be, but we need patience, perseverance, consistency, and hard work. In the past, learning resources were limited, but today everything is at our fingertips. We have unlimited resources to learn, stay updated, and acquire knowledge in various fields.

In this article, I will now explore how we can score good marks in examinations.

Handwriting
Handwriting plays an important role in examinations. Always keep your handwriting neat and legible, and avoid cutting and overwriting. First, attempt the questions you are confident about. Prepare yourself from the very first day of a new class. "Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today." Procrastination makes tasks difficult and creates problems.

Always write to the point and avoid unnecessary or irrelevant details. Use a ruler and leave proper space between answers to keep your answer sheet neat. Write your roll number and other required particulars carefully before submitting the answer sheet.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

The Dilemma of First Standard Admissions



■ MOOL RAJ

I am not a think tank, nor do I claim to be a policy expert sitting in the ivory towers of academia. I am simply a person—a concerned citizen and a parent—who wishes to express a view that is currently keeping thousands of families in Jammu and Kashmir awake at night. This concerns the future of our children, specifically the innocent toddlers standing at the threshold of their formal education: the entrants to the 1st Standard in the schools of Jammu and Kashmir. While the world discusses geopolitical shifts and macroeconomic policies, a quiet but profound crisis is brewing in our homes regarding the admission criteria for our youngest learners. It is a crisis of confusion, a clash between the noble intent of policy and the harsh reality of its implementation.

To understand the anxiety gripping the parents of the Union Territory, one must first look at the science, for I do not dismiss the rationale behind the age limits. It is widely accepted that age limits are not arbitrary numbers drawn from a hat; they are guardrails for literacy development, social interaction, and independence. After a detailed comparative, analytical, and experimental study of the education systems in India and specifically in Jammu and Kashmir, one cannot ignore the pedagogical consensus. Normally, children are ready for admission into the 1st Standard within the age bracket of 5 to 6 years. However, under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the

Government of India recommends that a child be six years old as of March 31st of the admission year. This "6+ rule" is grounded in developmental psychology. Age six is generally considered the threshold where a child is physically and intellectually mature enough to transition from the play-based environment of a nursery to the structured learning of a primary classroom.

At this age, children are better able to develop cognitive learning as well as fine and gross motor skills. These skills are not merely academic jargon; they are the difference between a child who struggles to hold a pencil and one who writes with confidence. Fine motor skills control the small movements of the hands and fingers, essential for writing, while gross motor skills allow a child to sit upright at a desk for extended periods without physical fatigue. Furthermore, the emotional readiness of a six-year-old is vastly different from that of a five-year-old. By age six, children have developed a higher degree of emotional intelligence and social adjustment capabilities. They can navigate the complex social hierarchy of a classroom, handle separation from parents with greater resilience, and develop empathy and cooperation—skills that are foundational for collaborative learning. The curriculum of Class 1 is designed with this maturity in mind. If we enroll children before they are ready, we risk hampering their ability to develop physically and mentally, potentially turning the "joy of learning" envisioned by the NEP into a "fear of school."

However, pedagogy does not exist in a vacuum. In Jammu and Kashmir, it exists amidst a unique administrative turbulence that sets us apart from the rest of India. We are currently witnessing a discrepancy regarding admission norms between the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the J&K Board of

School Education (JKBOSE) that is baffling parents. Why are the admission criteria applied so differently across boards within the same region? Why is the same NEP-2020 being interpreted with flexibility in some states and with rigidity in ours? The architects of the NEP-2020 were Indian educationists, not foreign overlords. Their intent was to standardize and uplift, not to exclude. Yet, the current rigid implementation of the age cutoff in J&K feels reminiscent of a darker era. It recalls the actions of Lord Lytton, who infamously reduced the age limit for the Indian Civil Service (ICS) exam from 21 to 19 years to prevent Indian aspirants from entering the decision-making process. While the context is different, the sentiment of exclusion feels eerily similar. We must ask: are we inadvertently creating a system that prunes our children's potential before it even has a chance to bloom?

The crux of the issue lies in the recent shifting of the academic session. For decades, Kashmir followed a November-December academic cycle, suited to our harsh geography and climate. In 2022, this was shifted to a March session to align with the rest of India. Now, recognizing the logistical nightmares of a March session in a snowbound region, the government—led by the elected representatives—has rightfully restored the November-December session for the winter zones. While this restoration is a welcome relief, it has created a "transition trap" for admissions. We are in a unique situation where the academic calendar is moving backward while the age criteria are moving forward.

The School Education Department recently issued an order announcing a "one-time relaxation" for the 2025-26 academic session, stating that the minimum age of six years will be reckoned as of September 30, 2025, rather than March 31. From the 2026-27 ses-

sion onwards, the age will be reckoned strictly as of March 31. The government views this as a relief. However, for parents, this feels like a sleight of hand. Thousands of children born between October and December—who would have been eligible under the old norms or a more flexible interpretation—are now left in limbo. They are being told they are "too young" by a matter of weeks or days, forced to repeat a year of Kindergarten despite being developmentally ready. This is not true relaxation; it is a bureaucratic compromise that fails to account for the human cost of the "lost year."

I urge the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to look at how other states are handling this transition. We are not the only ones grappling with the NEP mandate, but we seem to be the most rigid. Look at Karnataka. When parents there faced a similar crisis for the 2026-27 admission cycle, they did not stay silent, and the government did not turn a deaf ear. Parents petitioned the Department of Public Instruction requesting a 90-day relaxation in the age criteria. They argued that a rigid June 1st cutoff left out thousands of children born between June and August, causing them to lose a year. The parents highlighted that in the previous year, the department had allowed a six-month relaxation. They argued that excluding these children went against the spirit of inclusiveness that education policy should uphold. The result? The state offered flexibility to ensure fairness between consecutive batches. Similarly, in New Delhi, the Directorate of Education has adopted a phased implementation for the minimum age criteria, ensuring that the reform aligns with the NEP without causing immediate disruption to families already in the pre-primary system.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER

World Water Day: A Lucid Exegesis Rather Preservation of Earth's Most Vital Resource



JAWAID IQBAL

Every year, on the 22nd of March, humanity is reminded—through the global observance of World Water Day—of an elemental truth that is both deceptively simple and profoundly consequential: water is life. Yet, paradoxically, in an epoch characterized by unprecedented scientific advancement and technological ingenuity, the equitable accessibility and sustainable management of this indispensable resource remain alarmingly elusive. The day is not merely commemorative; it is admonitory—a clarion call to governments, institutions, and individuals alike to confront the burgeoning crisis of water scarcity, degradation, and inequitable distribution.

Water, in its most primordial essence, constitutes approximately 71 percent of the Earth's surface, yet only a minuscule fraction—less than 1 percent—is readily accessible and potable for human consumption. This stark asymmetry underscores a fundamental paradox: abundance does not necessarily translate into availability. The hydrological cycle, though perpetual, is increasingly perturbed by anthropogenic activities, thereby engendering eco-

logical disequilibria that manifest in the form of droughts, floods, and erratic precipitation patterns. Consequently, the sanctity of freshwater resources is imperiled, necessitating urgent and concerted remedial interventions.

The exigency of water conservation is further accentuated by demographic proliferation. The global population, now exceeding eight billion, exerts an unprecedented strain on freshwater reserves. Urbanization, industrialization, and agricultural expansion have collectively exacerbated water consumption, often in a profligate and unsustainable manner. Agriculture alone accounts for nearly 70 percent of global freshwater withdrawals, frequently characterized by inefficient irrigation practices and the cultivation of water-intensive crops in arid regions. This misalignment between resource availability and utilization epitomizes the inefficiencies that pervade contemporary water governance frameworks.

Moreover, the specter of water pollution looms ominously over both developed and developing nations. Industrial effluents, laden with toxic chemicals, are routinely discharged into rivers and lakes with minimal treatment, thereby contaminating vital water bodies. Simultaneously, the indiscriminate use of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture contributes to eutrophication, rendering water sources unfit for human consumption and deleterious to aquatic ecosystems. In many regions, untreated sewage continues to be a principal pollutant, exacerbating public health crises and undermining socio-economic development.

Climate change further compounds these challenges, acting as a threat multiplier. The intensification of global warming has precipitated the accelerated melting of glaciers, which serve as critical freshwater reservoirs for millions of people. The resultant alterations in river flow patterns have profound implications for water security, particularly in regions dependent on glacial meltwater. Additionally, the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events disrupt water infrastructure, displacing communities and precipitating humanitarian crises. Thus, the interrelationship between climate dynamics and water availability necessitates a holistic and integrative approach to environmental stewardship.

The socio-political dimensions of water scarcity are equally disquieting. Water, ostensibly a universal human right, is increasingly becoming a source of contention and conflict. Transboundary water disputes, wherein rivers traverse multiple national jurisdictions, often engender diplomatic tensions and geopolitical rivalries. The absence of robust and equitable water-sharing agreements exacerbates these conflicts, underscoring the imperative for cooperative governance mechanisms. At the local level, disparities in access to clean water perpetuate cycles of poverty and inequality, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities.

In this context, the role of governance and policy intervention assumes paramount significance. Governments must transcend rhetorical commitments and enact substantive measures to ensure sustainable water management. This

entails the formulation and implementation of integrated water resource management (IWRM) strategies that harmonize ecological, economic, and social considerations. Investments in water infrastructure—such as reservoirs, treatment plants, and distribution networks—are indispensable, yet they must be complemented by stringent regulatory frameworks to mitigate pollution and wastage.

Technological innovation offers a panoply of solutions to contemporary water challenges. Advancements in desalination, wastewater recycling, and precision irrigation hold considerable promise in augmenting water availability and efficiency. However, the deployment of such technologies must be context-specific, economically viable, and environmentally sustainable. Equally important is the dissemination of knowledge and the cultivation of water literacy among the populace. Behavioral change, undergirded by awareness and education, is a sine qua non for the success of any conservation initiative.

At the individual level, the ethos of water conservation must be internalized and actualized through quotidian practices. Simple measures—such as minimizing water wastage, repairing leaks, and adopting water-efficient appliances—can collectively engender significant reductions in consumption. The adage “every drop counts” is not merely rhetorical; it encapsulates a pragmatic philosophy that underscores the cumulative impact of individual actions. Educational institutions, civil society organizations, and media platforms have a pivotal role to play in fostering this consciousness and galvanizing collective

action. Furthermore, the ethical dimension of water stewardship cannot be overlooked. Water, as a life-sustaining resource, transcends commodification and must be perceived as a shared heritage of humanity. The moral imperative to ensure equitable access to clean water is inextricably linked to the broader quest for social justice and human dignity. In this regard, World Water Day serves as a poignant reminder of our collective responsibility to safeguard this invaluable resource for present and future generations.

In conclusion, the observance of World Water Day must transcend ceremonial tokenism and evolve into a sustained movement for transformative change. The challenges associated with water scarcity, pollution, and inequitable distribution are multifaceted and interdependent, necessitating a comprehensive and collaborative response. Governments, institutions, and individuals must coalesce around a shared vision of sustainable water management, underpinned by innovation, equity, and environmental integrity. Only through such concerted efforts can we hope to avert the impending water crisis and ensure that the elixir of life remains accessible to all.

The future of humanity is inextricably intertwined with the fate of water. To neglect its preservation is to imperil our own existence; to protect it is to secure the foundation of life itself. World Water Day, therefore, is not merely a date on the calendar—it is a solemn reminder of a responsibility that we must uphold with unwavering commitment and resolute determination.

Sunny Spring Cannot Be Far Behind in Kashmir



DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

Finally the sunny days in Kashmir are back. The sun in snowy Kashmir is a sight that lingers in memory long after one has left the valley. As winter descends upon this land, the mountains and meadows are blanketed in white, the rivers slow under sheets of ice, and the villages nestle quietly beneath heavy roofs of snow. In this silence, the sun rises, casting its golden light across the frozen landscape. It is not merely a source of warmth but a symbol of resilience, a reminder that even in the harshest season, light finds a way to reach the earth. The rays of the sun fall gently on the snow, turning it into a shimmering carpet that sparkles like countless diamonds. The mist that hangs in the valleys disperses slowly, unveiling pine forests laden with snow and rooftops that glisten under the morning glow. For the people of Kashmir, this sunlight is more than a natural phenomenon; it is a blessing, a rare comfort during the long and unforgiving winter.

Life in Kashmir during the coldest period, known as Chilla-e-Kalaan, is marked by struggle and endurance. Roads are blocked, water freezes in pipes, and the air is heavy with frost. Yet, when the sun appears, even for a few hours, it transforms the mood of the valley. Children rush outside with sleds, elders sit in courtyards wrapped in woolen shawls, and families gather to sip steaming cups of noon chai while basking in the warmth. The sun becomes a communal companion, a force that brings people together. Farmers look to its light as a signal of the coming spring, while artisans use its glow to dry and polish their crafts. Photographers and poets find inspiration in the interplay of golden rays and icy blues, capturing moments that speak of beauty and endurance. The sun in snowy Kashmir is not just seen; it is felt deeply, in the bones and in the spirit.

Yet, this winter sun carries its own complexities. The snow reflects nearly eighty percent of ultraviolet rays, making exposure both invigorating and risky. Eyes can suffer from snow blindness, and skin can burn even in freezing temperatures. Doctors advise caution, urging the use of sunglasses and protective creams, but the allure of the sun is irresistible. Its warmth is fleeting, and people seize it with gratitude, knowing that cloudy days may return

without warning. The balance between beauty and danger is part of the valley's rhythm, a reminder of nature's duality. The sun melts snow gradually, feeding rivers and preparing fields for spring sowing, but sudden bursts of warmth can trigger avalanches in the mountains. Thus, the sun is both a giver and a challenger, shaping the lives of those who dwell in its path.

Winter in Kashmir is not merely a season; it is an experience that settles deep into the bones of its people and landscape alike. The long months of snowfall, while ethereal in their beauty, impose a quiet stillness upon life. Villages remain wrapped in silence, roads become uncertain threads beneath layers of white, and the famed chinars stand like contemplative sentinels, their branches bare against a pale sky. Inside homes, life turns inward. Families gather around the warmth of the kangri, sharing stories, sipping noon chai, and waiting—always waiting—for the sun to return in its full glory. The winter, in this sense, is both a pause and a preparation, a deep breath before the valley exhales into life again.

When the snow begins to melt, it does so not abruptly but with a gentle insistence, as though the land is waking from a long, restorative sleep. Tiny rivulets of water start to trickle down the slopes, carrying with them the memory of ice. The roofs shed their heavy burden, and the pathways slowly emerge from beneath the frozen silence. There is a distinct fragrance in the air at this time—a mingling of damp earth, fresh grass, and distant blossoms—that signals the rebirth of Kashmir. The sunlight, softer yet more hopeful, bathes the valley in a golden hue, and the people, who had retreated into their homes, begin to step outside with renewed vigor. Spring in Kashmir is often described as a paradise regained, and rightly so. The transformation is nothing short of miraculous. Fields that lay dormant under blankets of snow now shimmer with hues of green. Almond blossoms bloom in delicate pinks and whites, painting the landscape like a living canvas. Gardens awaken with tulips, daffodils, and irises, each flower a testament to resilience and renewal. The famous Mughal gardens, once subdued by winter's grip, burst into vibrant life, drawing both locals and visitors into their embrace. It is as if the valley, after months of introspection, is ready to celebrate its own existence.

For the people of Kashmir, this seasonal transition is deeply intertwined with their daily lives and cultural rhythms. During winter, passivity is not a choice but a necessity. The harsh conditions limit movement, economic activities slow down, and even the simplest tasks require effort. But as the sun reclaims its place, life begins to accelerate. Farmers return to their fields,

preparing the soil for sowing. The sound of ploughs cutting through the earth replaces the silence of snowbound days. Orchards demand attention, as the promise of apples, cherries, and apricots begins with the first blossoms of spring.

The markets, too, reflect this renewed energy. Shops that had remained closed or sparsely stocked during the winter months now display an abundance of fresh produce and goods. The floating markets of Dal Lake come alive once more, with vendors navigating their shikaras laden with vegetables, flowers, and handcrafted items. The lake itself, partially frozen during the coldest days, now glistens under the sun, its waters reflecting the vibrant life that surrounds it. The iconic shikara rides, which had slowed down during winter, regain their charm as tourists and locals alike seek to immerse themselves in the beauty of the season. Education and social interactions, often disrupted during heavy snowfall, resume with enthusiasm. Schools reopen, children return to classrooms with stories of winter adventures, and the laughter that had been confined within homes now spills into open spaces. Community gatherings, weddings, and festivals find their way back into the social fabric, strengthening bonds that had quietly endured the isolation of winter. The sense of togetherness becomes more visible, more expressive, as if the people themselves mirror the blossoming landscape.

The psychological impact of this seasonal renewal cannot be understated. Winter, despite its beauty, carries with it a certain heaviness. The limited sunlight, restricted mobility, and prolonged indoor living can create a sense of stagnation. Spring, on the other hand, brings with it a palpable sense of hope and possibility. The longer days and warmer temperatures encourage outdoor activities, fostering both physical well-being and mental rejuvenation. People walk more, talk more, and engage more with their surroundings. There is a collective lifting of spirits, a shared acknowledgment that life, in all its vibrancy, has returned. Art and literature in Kashmir have long been inspired by this cyclical transformation. Poets have written of the valley as a paradise not just for its scenic beauty but for its ability to embody the essence of renewal. The contrast between the starkness of winter and the exuberance of spring provides a rich canvas for creative expression. Songs, stories, and paintings capture the fleeting yet profound moments of transition, reminding us that beauty often lies in change itself.

Tourism, a vital aspect of Kashmir's economy, also witnesses a significant revival during this period. Visitors from across the country and beyond are drawn

to the valley's springtime charm. The sight of tulip gardens in full bloom, the serene waters of Dal Lake under a clear sky, and the snow-capped mountains framing the lush greenery create an irresistible allure. This influx of tourists not only boosts the local economy but also reinforces the valley's identity as a destination of unparalleled natural beauty.

Yet, beyond the economic and aesthetic dimensions, there is a deeper, almost philosophical significance to this seasonal cycle. The long winter teaches patience, resilience, and introspection. It reminds the people of Kashmir of the importance of community, warmth, and shared experiences. The subsequent arrival of spring, with its abundance and vitality, reinforces the idea that life is inherently cyclical, that periods of stillness are often necessary for growth and renewal. In many ways, the rejuvenation of Kashmir after snowfall mirrors the broader human experience. Just as the valley endures months of quietude before bursting into life, individuals too go through phases of introspection and outward expression. The lessons embedded in this natural rhythm are universal: that hope persists even in the coldest of times, that beauty can emerge from stillness, and that life, despite its challenges, has an innate tendency to renew itself.

The daily routines of people adapt seamlessly to this change. Early mornings, once dominated by the task of clearing snow and maintaining warmth, now begin with the chirping of birds and the gentle warmth of sunlight. Women step out to tend to gardens, children play in open fields, and elders sit outside, soaking in the sun while engaging in conversations that had been postponed during winter. The simple act of stepping outdoors becomes a celebration, a reaffirmation of life's continuity. Food, too, reflects this transition. While winter diets are rich and warming, designed to combat the cold, spring brings lighter, fresher meals. The availability of green vegetables and herbs adds variety and vibrancy to the cuisine. Traditional dishes incorporate seasonal ingredients, connecting the people to their land in a tangible way. The act of sharing meals, always central to Kashmiri culture, takes on a renewed significance as families and communities come together in the open air.

As the days progress, the valley continues to transform, each moment adding a new layer to its beauty. The interplay of light and shadow, the gradual thickening of foliage, and the increasing activity of both humans and animals create a dynamic, ever-evolving landscape. The memory of winter lingers, but it no longer dominates. Instead, it becomes a backdrop against which the brilliance of spring shines even

brighter. In conclusion, sunny Kashmir after a long winter is indeed paradisaical, not merely for its visual splendor but for the profound sense of renewal it embodies. The transition from snowbound passivity to vibrant activity is a testament to the resilience of both nature and the human spirit. It is a reminder that even in the face of prolonged stillness, life continues to prepare for its next expression. As the valley awakens under the gentle embrace of the sun, it offers a timeless lesson: that every ending carries within it the promise of a new beginning, and that paradise is not just a place, but a moment of harmony between nature, people, and the rhythm of life itself.

Culturally and spiritually, the sun holds a cherished place in Kashmiri life. It is woven into folklore, where it is seen as a divine presence piercing through hardship. Poets have long compared its rays to threads of hope, weaving light into the fabric of winter. On sunny days, families prepare traditional dishes like harissa, celebrating warmth and togetherness. Tourists who visit Kashmir in winter are often captivated by this interplay of sun and snow. In Gulmarg, the slopes glisten under sunlight, inviting skiers to carve paths through powdery snow. In Pahalgam and Sonamarg, frozen rivers reflect the sky, creating scenes of ethereal beauty. Photographers wait patiently for the golden hour, when the sun dips low and paints the valley in hues of amber and rose. For travelers, the sun in snowy Kashmir is not just a backdrop but an experience, a moment that defines their journey. It is the warmth on their faces, the sparkle in the snow, and the serenity in the silence of the mountains.

As Kashmir moves toward modernity, the relationship with the sun is evolving. Solar panels are being installed on rooftops, harnessing the winter sunlight to power homes and schools. Eco-lodges promote sustainable tourism, using solar heating to reduce reliance on wood and kerosene. This shift reflects a deeper understanding of the sun's role—not only as a source of beauty but also as a resource for survival and progress. In this way, the sun continues to shape the valley, guiding it toward a future where tradition and innovation coexist.

International Dickens Medal Winner poet and multilingual writer of fiction Dr.Ratan Bhattacharjee is a former Affiliate Faculty Virginia Commonwealth University and Retd.Head Post Graduate Dept of English Dum Dum Motijheel College .He may be mailed at profdratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com

THE AUTOIMMUNE ATTACK

(Understanding the Body's Misguided Defense System)



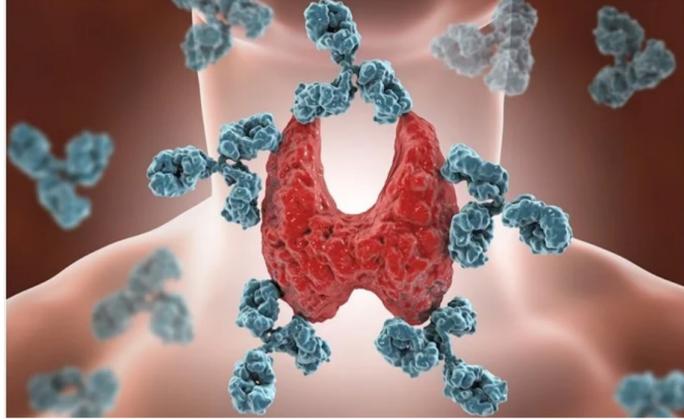
■ DR. SURINDERPAL SINGH

The human immune system is designed to protect the body from harmful invaders such as bacteria, viruses, fungi and toxins. Under normal conditions, this defense mechanism is remarkably precise, distinguishing clearly between foreign substances and the body's own healthy cells. However, there are instances when this system becomes confused and begins to attack the very tissues it is meant to protect. This condition is known as an autoimmune attack, and it can lead to a wide range of chronic diseases affecting different organs of the body. In recent years, autoimmune disorders have emerged as a significant global health concern, making it increasingly important to understand their causes, symptoms, prevention strategies and treatment options.

An autoimmune attack occurs when the immune system mistakenly identifies healthy cells, tissues or organs as harmful and launches an immune response against them. This abnormal reaction results in inflammation, tissue damage and disruption of normal bodily functions. Various organs may be affected, including the joints, skin, thyroid gland, pancreas, nerves and digestive system. Such attacks are responsible for several well-known conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, lupus, multiple sclerosis and thyroid disorders, each involving the immune system targeting different parts of the body.

The exact cause of autoimmune diseases remains unclear, but scientific research suggests that multiple factors may work together to trigger such responses. Genetic predisposition plays an important role, as individuals with a family history of autoimmune disorders may have a higher risk. Environmental triggers such as infections, toxins, pollutants, excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation and certain medications can also contribute to abnormal immune activation. Hormonal influences are another significant factor, with autoimmune diseases being more common in women, possibly due to the effects of hormones like estrogen on immune function. Chronic stress further complicates the picture by disrupting immune regulation and increasing inflammation in the body. Additionally, an unhealthy lifestyle characterized by poor diet, lack of physical activity, smoking and inadequate sleep weakens immune balance. Another emerging factor is the imbalance of gut microbiota, as the digestive system hosts trillions of beneficial microorganisms that play a crucial role in regulating immunity.

The symptoms of autoimmune attacks vary depending on the organ involved, which often makes diagnosis challenging. However, some common signs include persistent fatigue, joint pain and swelling, skin rashes, muscle weakness, digestive disturbances, fever and difficulty concentrating. These symptoms can develop gradually and may overlap with other conditions, leading to delays in accurate diagnosis. Although autoimmune diseases cannot always be completely prevented, adopting certain lifestyle practices can help reduce the risk and improve overall health. A balanced diet rich in natural and nutrient-dense foods supports immune stability. Consuming fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds



and anti-inflammatory ingredients such as turmeric and ginger can be beneficial. Regular physical activity plays a key role in improving circulation, reducing inflammation and strengthening immune regulation. Managing stress through techniques like meditation, breathing exercises and relaxation is equally important, as mental wellbeing is closely linked to immune function. Adequate sleep is essential for the repair and proper functioning of the immune system, while avoiding harmful substances such as tobacco, excessive alcohol and environmental toxins further supports overall health.

Natural approaches can also help manage autoimmune conditions and reduce inflammation. An anti-inflammatory diet that includes green leafy vegetables, omega-3 fatty acids from sources like flaxseed and fish, and antioxidant-rich fruits may support the body's healing processes. Certain traditional herbal remedies, when used responsibly under professional guidance, may aid in immune regulation. These

include herbs such as ashwagandha, gilyo and turmeric. Improving gut health through probiotics, fermented foods and dietary fiber can further enhance immune balance. Mind-body practices like yoga, meditation and controlled breathing have been shown to reduce stress hormones and support overall wellbeing.

Medical treatment for autoimmune diseases primarily focuses on controlling inflammation and regulating immune activity. Doctors may prescribe anti-inflammatory medications, immune-suppressing drugs, hormone therapy in specific cases and advanced biological therapies that target particular immune cells. Early diagnosis and continuous medical supervision are crucial in preventing long-term damage to organs and improving quality of life.

Advancements in medical science are opening new avenues in the understanding and treatment of autoimmune disorders. Precision medicine aims to develop

treatments tailored to an individual's genetic and immune profile, offering more personalized care. Targeted biological therapies are being designed to block harmful immune pathways without compromising overall immunity. Experimental approaches such as stem cell therapy hold promise for rebuilding a properly functioning immune system. At the same time, research into the gut microbiome is providing insights into how restoring microbial balance could help manage autoimmune conditions more effectively.

An important emerging area of research highlights the role of mental health in immune regulation. Practices such as meditation, yoga, mindfulness and breathing exercises are increasingly being recognized for their ability to reduce chronic inflammation, regulate stress hormones and support immune balance. Future healthcare strategies are likely to combine modern medical treatments with holistic approaches to achieve better outcomes.

Autoimmune attacks represent a complex and evolving medical challenge in which the body's defense system mistakenly turns against itself. While many aspects of these conditions are still being studied, it is clear that genetics, environmental influences, lifestyle choices and immune imbalances all play significant roles. By adopting healthier habits, maintaining a balanced lifestyle and seeking timely medical care, individuals can manage these conditions more effectively. With ongoing research and innovations in biotechnology and personalized medicine, there is hope for more effective treatments and an improved quality of life for those affected by autoimmune diseases.

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

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VC SKUAST-J chairs 14th SAC meeting of KVK Rajouri

HT NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI, MAR 23: Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Rajouri of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technologies of Jammu, organised 14th Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting today in the Conference Hall of KVK Rajouri under the chairmanship of Dr BN Tripathi, Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-J in hybrid mode.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Amrish Vaid Director Extension, Dr. S.K Gupta Director, Dr. Vijay Sharma, ADE, Dr. Vikas Sharma, CS Incharge, RARS of SKUAST-Jammu, District officers, representatives from line departments of Rajouri and progressive farmers and farm women. Deans of Faculties of Agriculture, Veterinary, Dairy Technology and Horticulture Forestry also joined the meeting through online mode.

Vice Chancellor SKUAST Jammu and Chairman of the SAC, Prof. BN Tripathi, amalgamated the meeting through the virtual mode and called for making sincere efforts in transferring the technologies to farmer's field. He also stressed for periodic assess-



ment of impact of KVK programmes permeated through various Front Line Extension activities.

He emphasised on widening the KVK outreach to remote and far-off areas so that the University technologies are made available to each and every farmer of these areas. He also called for involvement of experts from all the faculties in planning and conducting adaptive research, demonstrations and field extension activities. HVC also directed the

KVK scientists to work in unison with the allied departments for formulating the action plan suited to the common problems of the district.

Dr Amrish Vaid, Director Extension, highlighted the contribution of SAC in refining, fine-tuning and strengthening KVK activities for the welfare of the farming community.

He called for tailoring the capacity building programmes of the KVK in line with the emerging challenges in the agriculture

and laid special emphasis for trainings on mushroom cultivation and bee keeping. He called for inclusion of the University varieties, especially oilseeds, in the FLDs and focus on the eco-friendly technologies for the management of pests and diseases in crops due to growing concern towards organic and sustainable practices.

Dr Sushil Kumar Gupta, Director Research emphasized on popularizing the released varieties of SKUAST-Jammu among

farmers. He advised the KVK to propose trainings on cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic plants. Dr M.S. Badwal, Dean F.V.Sc. emphasised on popularization of area specific mineral mixtures for cattle. Dr Vikas Tandon, Dean Horticulture and Forestry, Dr. Arvind Kumar Ishar, Chief Scientist & Head, KVK Rajouri, presented the Action Taken Report of the previous SAC meeting, achievements of the KVK and the proposed Action Plan of KVK-Rajouri for the year 2026-27.

Later, the members of the committee suggested various additions in the action plan and requested for inclusion of more income generating technologies and trainings for the farmers.

Rajesh Verma, Chief Agriculture Officer, Rajouri, Bodh Raj, AD Fisheries, DL SMS, Horticulture Rajouri, Dr. Sheryar, VO, Animal Husbandry and other representatives of allied departments also gave their suggestions during the meeting. Dr. Suraj Parkash, Dr. Vikas Gupta, Dr. Rohit Sharma and Dr. Parul Gupta Scientists of KVK and RARS were also present and coordinated in organizing the said meeting.

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Public Notice

This is to notify the general public that the name recorded in the Aadhaar database is incorrect. Name shown in Aadhaar: Ahnan Ishfaq, Correct name: Hanan Ishfaq Ganie, Father's Ishfaq Ahmad Ganie, Address: Udipora Langate Handwara Kupwara Jammu and Kashmir 193302. The above mentioned person (Annan Ishfaq) hereby declares that the name printed on the Aadhaar is incorrect and that her correct and legal name is Hanan Ishfaq Ganie. 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.

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of SANIA JAN S/O MANZOOR AHMAD LONE R/O. THINDIMA KREERI Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 05/05/2006 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

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

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

Special Phase event at Mini Secretariat Kulgam Marks 150 Years of Vande Mataram

Martyrs honoured on Shaheedi Divas

HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, MAR 23: On Shaheedi Diwas under Special phase of Vande Mataram celebrating 150 years of the iconic national song Vande Mataram, a mega function was organized today at the Mini Secretariat in district Kulgam as part of the nationwide celebrations.

Shaheedi Diwas, observed to honour the brave hearts who laid down their lives for the nation. The programme aimed to pay tribute to the immense sacrifices made for the love of the motherland and to reconnect citizens with the enduring legacy and spirit of Vande Mataram.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers, officials and other participants who joined together in a mass singing of Vande Mataram, reflecting a strong sense of patriotism and unity.

On the occasion, a signature campaign was also conducted to encourage citizens to reaffirm their commitment towards the nation and its values. In addition, a plantation drive was launched to promote environmental responsibility and sustainable practices.

Widows of heroes who attained martyrdom for the country also participated in the programme and were honoured as a mark of respect for the



supreme sacrifices made by the martyrs.

The celebrations form part of a nationwide initiative led by the Ministry of Culture to commemorate 150 years of Vande Mataram, originally composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, which played a significant role in inspiring the Indian freedom move-

ment. As part of the celebrations, citizens across the country are encouraged to participate in various activities including filmmaking competitions, sing-along events and other public engagement initiatives to celebrate the spirit of patriotism and national pride.

Vande Mataram Special Phase Celebrations: Pulwama Admin organises Mega Commemoration Event at Lethpora

HT NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA, MAR 23: District Administration Pulwama today organised an inaugural function at the Martyrs' Memorial of 185 Battalion CRPF Camp, Lethpora, on the occasion of Shaheedi Diwas, marking the commencement of the special phase of celebrations commemorating 150 years of the National Song "Vande Mataram".

The event commenced with the singing of the National Anthem, followed by a soulful rendition of "Vande Mataram" and a pledge-taking ceremony, reflecting a collective commitment towards the values of unity, integrity, and

nation-building. On the occasion, officials and attendees offered floral tributes and heartfelt homage to the brave soldiers who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

The programme was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Awantipora, Commandant CRPF 185 Battalion, and witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers of Police, CRPF, civil administration, and members of the public.

Furthermore, as part of the commemorative activities, mass singing of "Vande Mataram" was held across educational institutions, sub-divisional headquarters, tehsil headquar-

ters, BDO offices, and panchayat halqas across the district. Following the successful culmination of the first two phases of the celebrations, the District Administration has chalked out a comprehensive schedule for the special phase,

comprising a series of activities to be organised across the district. These initiatives aim to honour the sacrifices of the brave hearts of India's freedom struggle and highlight the rich historical legacy associated with the National Song.

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Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that Mr. Zubair Manzoor, S/o: Manzoor ahmad dar resident of Sundoo, Anantnag, intends to apply for the grant of license for dealing in Fertilizers, Pesticides, and Seeds under the relevant provisions of the Agriculture Department.

The proposed business establishment will be located at Sundoo, Anantnag (near Government School Sundoo), Jammu & Kashmir.

Any person having objection regarding the issuance of the said license may submit their objections, if any, in writing to the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

No objection received after the stipulated period shall be entertained.

Applicant:
Zubair Manzoor
Sundoo, Anantnag
Contact: [9596028509]
Date: _____
Place: Sundoo Anantnag

Public Notice

It is hereby notified that I Aadil Sultan Lone S/O Mohd Sultan Lone has applied for the birth certificate of my Daughter's namely Madiha Mehtab DOB 22/10/2022 D/O Aadil Sultan Lone r/o Check Sodal Tehsil Handwara now I have applied for his Birth certificate. Born at sub district hospital Kreeri if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection at Block Development office Wagoora within a period of 07 days after that no objection will be accepted.

Name: Madiha Mehtab DOB 22/10/2022
D/O Aadil Sultan Lone
R/O : Check Sodal 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: Suhaib Javid, Correct name: Sohail Javed, Father's Javed Ahmad Shah Address: Kralgund Handwara Kupwara Jammu and Kashmir 193302.

The above mentioned person (Suhaib Javid) hereby declares that the name printed on the Aadhaar is incorrect and that his correct and legal name is Sohail Javed. Any objection to this correction should be brought to the attention of the UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra, Office Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the necessary correction procedures may be undertaken.

Public Notice

I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM (OLD NAME) MUSHTAQ AHMAD KABOO TO (NEW NAME) MUSHTAQ AHMAD KABOO IN FUTURE I WILL BE KNOWN AS (NEW NAME) MUSHTAQ AHMAD KABOO. IF ANYBODY IS HAVING ANY OBJECTION HE/SHE MAY CONTACT PASSPORT OFFICE, SRINAGAR WITHIN 7 DAYS. AFTER 7 DAYS NO OBJECTION WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Public Notice

I have lost my 8Th Pass certificate. Now I am applying for its Duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact Headmaster Govt Middle School Frasthar Zone Nehalpora within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

MOIEN ASHIQ DHOBI S/O S/O ASHIQ HUSSAIN
DHOBI. R/O FRASTHAR KREERI

Public Notice

I have lost my 10 pass marks card at some where bearing Registration No ..04NKM308988 Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file his /her objection in the office of JKBOSE Srinagar /Govt Higher Secondary School KREERI within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name....MOHD ASHRAF MIR
S/O ...GH MOHD MIR
R/ o..KREERI

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of NASEER AHMAD PARRAY S/O TARIQ AHMAD PARRAY R/O. HAIL JAGR Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 24/03/1994 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

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

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given that I, NAZIR AHMAD MIR , intending to apply for a Pesticides Licence name under style "MS MIR TRADERS KACHWA MUQAM" situated at Kachwa Muqam, Wagoora, Baramulla. The application will be submitted to the Office of the Plant Protection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar, Any person having any objection in this regard he/she may file their objections in writing to the Office of the Plant Protection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar, within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. Objections received after this period will not be entertained.

NAZIR AHMAD MIR
Son of HABIBULLAH Mir Resident Of Kachwa
Muqam ,Wgoora Baramulla.

Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that I am intending to applying for the registration of a fertilizer license under the name MS MIR TRADERS KACHWA MUQAM, located at Kachwa Muqam, Tehsil Wagoora, District Baramulla, at the Chief Agriculture Office, Baramulla. If anyone has any objections regarding this matter, they may file their objection at the office of the Chief Agriculture Office, Baramulla, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After this period, no objections will be entertained.

NAZIR AHMAD MIR
S/O HABIBULLAH MIR
R/O KACHWA MUQAM, WAGOORA, Baramulla

Mega Aadhaar MBU drive 2.0 launched across J&K

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 23: The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), in association with the Information Technology Department, J&K and Project Samagra Shiksha, School Education Department, J&K has launched Mega Aadhaar Mandatory Biometric Update (MBU) drive 2.0 across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The drive has commenced from March 23, 2026 in winter zone schools while for schools in summer zones, it will begin from April 1, 2026 onwards. This large-scale initiative aims to cover 2,382 identified schools and provide Aadhaar biometric update services to over 2 lakh students of Jammu & Kashmir within school premises. This initiative builds upon the success of the earlier MBU drive conducted from September to 31st December 2025, during which approximate-



ly 1.5 lakh students successfully updated their biometrics. Despite this progress, around 3.5 lakh children still require mandatory biometric updates, necessitating the continuation of the mission mode

approach.

Earlier, UIDAI had rolled out the mission mode MBU drive for school children in September 2025 following a successful technological integration with the Uni-

fied District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) application of the Union Department of School Education and Literacy. This integration enabled real-time visibility of the biometric update

status of students at the school level, facilitating identification of children due for updates and enabling targeted camps within school premises.

Updating biometric details in children's Aadhaar is crucial to ensure seamless authentication while availing benefits under various government schemes, scholarships and services. It also plays an important role in enabling hassle-free registration for competitive and university entrance examinations such as NEET, JEE, and CUET.

UIDAI and Information Technology Department J&K has urged the parents and guardians to remain in close coordination with the school authorities to stay informed about the scheduled dates of Aadhaar update camps in their respective schools. They are also advised to ensure that the details in school records and Aadhaar are exactly matched to avoid any discrepancies while carrying out authentication.

Inter-Zone Level Painting Competition Successfully Conducted by NILM NGO

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 23: The National Incredible Literacy Mission Jammu at project centre Ganga Nagar Bantalab Jammu, successfully conducted Phase-I of the Inter-Zone Level Painting Competition, witnessing enthusiastic participation from students across various schools.

Students from Crescent Public School, Govt. High School Pindi, Navdeep Public School, New Public High School, and Nav Jyoti School actively participated in the event, showcasing exceptional creativity, imagination, and artistic expression through their vibrant artworks.

Speaking on the occasion, Kavita Bali highlighted the importance of such initiatives, stating that these platforms play a crucial role in nurturing young talent and encouraging creative thinking among students.

The competition served as an effective platform for budding artists to express their ideas in a constructive and competitive environment. The event concluded with the distribution of prizes to deserving participants in recognition of their outstanding performances.

During the event, officials of NILM including Kavita Bali, Tania Dogra, Priyanka Sharma, and Sakshi Thakur were present.

GDC Nowshera observed Shaheedi Diwas with Patriotic Fervour

HT NEWS NETWORK

NOWSHERA, MAR 23: GDC Nowshera solemnly observed Shaheedi Diwas on 23rd March 2026, to pay heartfelt tribute to the martyrs who laid down their lives for the freedom and integrity of the nation under the guidance and supervision of our worthy Principal, Dr. Farooq Ahmed. The occasion served as a reminder of the unparalleled courage, sacrifice, and dedication of the great freedom fighters whose legacy continues to inspire generations. A special lecture on the Significance of Shaheedi Diwas and the Spirit of Vande Mataram was delivered by Prof. Deepika Bali, HOD History



who eloquently highlighted the historical importance of the day. She emphasized how the sacrifices of the martyrs are deeply rooted in the spirit of patriotism embodied in Vande Mataram, a slogan that ignited the freedom movement and united the nation. Prof. Bali urged the students to imbibe the values of courage, unity, and selfless service, stressing that true homage to the martyrs lies in responsible citizenship and dedication towards nation-building.

The programme was efficiently coordinated by Dr. Sunil Dutt Sharma, HOD Dogri and Dr. Tarun Gupta, Assistant Professor in Sociology who ensured the smooth conduct of the event. The session witnessed active participation from students and faculty members, making it both informative and inspiring.

The event concluded with a renewed pledge to uphold the ideals of the nation and to honour the sacrifices of the martyrs in both thought and action.

Bharat Priye leads Shaheedi Diwas observance at Nagri, calls for upholding Martyrs' ideals

Tribute ceremony stresses unity, sacrifice and national responsibility

HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, MAR 23: Bharat Priye, Chairman of JKPCSS Kissan Department, on Sunday led the observance of Shaheedi Diwas at Nagri in Kathua district, paying heartfelt tributes to the great martyrs Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru. The programme was organized in the presence of the District President Kissan Congress Kathua along with several senior leaders and party workers.

Among those present on the occasion were Ajay Pal, Dr. Satish Sharma, Sanjeevan Singh Saini, Bhag Singh and former Chairman Kulbhushan Kumar, besides a large number of local residents and youth who gathered to honour the unparalleled sacrifices of the martyrs.

The event began with floral tributes and a solemn remembrance ceremony, where participants paid homage to the revolutionaries who laid down their lives for the country's independence. Speakers high-



lighted the immense courage, patriotism and unwavering commitment of the martyrs, whose sacrifices continue to inspire generations across the nation.

Addressing the gathering, Bharat Priye emphasized the

profound significance of Shaheedi Diwas, stating that it is not merely a day of remembrance but a moment of reflection for every Indian. He said the supreme sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru serves as a

constant reminder of the responsibilities that come with freedom. "Their courage and dedication inspire us to remain united, work for justice and contribute towards nation-building," he added.

He further stressed that in

today's times, when society faces numerous challenges, the ideals of sacrifice, equality and national unity upheld by the martyrs are more relevant than ever. He called upon the youth, particularly those associated with the farming community, to draw inspiration from these ideals and work towards strengthening the social and economic fabric of the nation.

Other speakers also echoed similar sentiments, underlining the importance of preserving the legacy of the freedom struggle. They urged people to remain committed to the values of democracy, harmony and collective progress, which the martyrs envisioned for the country. The observance of Shaheedi Diwas at Nagri not only paid tribute to the heroes of the freedom movement but also reinforced a sense of national pride and responsibility among the participants. The programme concluded with a collective pledge to uphold the ideals of the martyrs and work towards a united, progressive and self-reliant India.

JMC Felicitates Winners of Online Poetry Competition on Shaheedi Diwas

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, MAR 23: To commemorate the supreme sacrifice of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev, a grand felicitation ceremony was held today at the Town Hall, Jammu Municipal Corporation. The event was organized to honor the winners of the recently conducted online poetry competition, where the citizens of Jammu showcased their patriotic fervor and creative talent



through heartfelt verses dedicated to the martyrs of March 23rd.

The ceremony was graced by a distinguished panel of officials, led by Dr. Devansh Yadav, IAS, Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation and Mis-

sion Director, Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban). Joining him in recognizing the young talents were Subha Mehta, Joint Commissioner (R&E), JMC and Dr. Priyanka Malhotra (VAS), JMC. The competition was evaluated by an esteemed

panel of judges, including Dr. Poonam Sharma, Mrs. Promila Manhas, and Mrs. Alka, who were instrumental in selecting the top performers based on their poetic depth and delivery.

The online competition saw enthusiastic participation across three age-specific categories. In the Balveer Group, Manraj Kour secured the first position followed by Manya Sharma in second place. Within the Yuva Josh Group, Pankhuri Malhotra claimed the top spot while Vaishnavi earned the second position. In the Rashtriya Prerna Group, the first prize was awarded to Ankush Sharma and the second prize to Akash Katoch. In recognition of their poetic excellence, the first-place winners in each category were awarded a cash prize of ₹5000, while the second-place winners received ₹3000.

Padyatra Organized at Border Village Abtal to Commemorate Martyrs' Day

HT NEWS NETWORK

RAMGARH, MAR 23: A padyatra was organized under the banner of "My Bharat, My Responsibility" by the Nations Development Association (NDA) in collaboration with MY Bharat Jammu, under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, to mark Shaheed Diwas (Martyrs' Day) and pay homage to the supreme sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru.

The padyatra commenced from National Public School, Abtal, a village located near the Indo-Pak International Border, and concluded at the historic Bamuchak Temple, Abtal. The initiative, one of the first of its kind in a border area, aimed at instilling patriotism, awareness, and a sense of national responsibility among the youth.

Students and local residents participated with great enthusiasm, raising patriotic slogans such as "Veer

Jawan Amar Rahe," "Bhagat Singh Zindabad," and "Bharat Mata Ki Jai," along with singing patriotic songs throughout the march. Refreshments were distributed among the participants, especially children.

Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, MLA Ramgarh and Former Minister graced the occasion and actively participated in the padyatra. While addressing the gathering, he paid rich tributes to the martyrs and stated that their unparalleled sacrifice con-



tinues to inspire generations. He emphasized the importance of patriotism, unity, and dedication towards the nation, urging the youth to follow the ideals of the great freedom fighters.

He further appreciated the initiative of organizing such a meaningful program in a border village and highlighted that such activities play a crucial role in strengthening national spirit among the youth. He also assured his support for similar initiatives in the future.

The event was organized under the leadership of Sushil Singh Charak, Chief Functionary, Nations Development Association (NDA), a NITI Aayog-registered organization affiliated with MY Bharat, with a growing presence at national and international levels.

Prominent among those present were Devinder Bhatti, Principal, National Public School, Abtal, Harvind Singh, Bhupinder Singh, Sakshi Verma and other respected members of the community.

West Asia conflict may strain Indian economy; oil, rupee and capital flows under pressure: SBI report

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MARCH 23 : The ongoing West Asia conflict could pose significant challenges to the Indian economy, with risks emerging from rising crude oil prices, currency depreciation, and capital outflows, according to a report by State Bank of India.

The report highlighted that disruptions in global oil supply chains, particularly due to tensions in key transit routes like the Strait of Hormuz, have triggered one of the largest shocks to global energy markets, with supply expected to fall sharply.

This has pushed crude prices higher and is likely to keep India's oil import bill elevated.

As per estimates, the Indian crude basket is expected to remain high in the coming months, with prices potentially ranging between USD 125 and USD 137 per barrel if hostilities continue. In case of easing tensions, prices may stabilise between USD 109 and USD 112 per barrel in the medium term.

The report warned that prolonged conflict could increase stagflation risks globally, impacting growth,



jobs, and corporate earnings.

For India, the ripple effects are already visible in the currency market, with the rupee breaching the 93 mark against the US dollar for the first time and showing signs of further weakness.

It noted that the rupee has depreciated sharply in a short period and may face additional pressure if the conflict persists.

In a prolonged war scenario, the currency could cross the 96 mark per dollar, while a quick resolution may stabilise it within a narrower range.

The report also flagged significant

foreign capital outflows, with foreign institutional investors pulling out large sums. March 2026 could witness one of the highest monthly outflows on record, reflecting global risk aversion and shifting investment patterns.

India's net foreign direct investment has also turned negative for the fifth consecutive month, as repatriation and outward investments outpaced fresh inflows, indicating stress in capital flows.

On the external front, the current account deficit is projected to rise to 1.3-1.5 per cent of GDP in FY27, while the balance of payments is

expected to remain in deficit, largely due to higher import costs and volatile capital flows.

Despite these challenges, the report underlined that India remains relatively resilient, supported by strong domestic demand, adequate foreign exchange reserves, and policy measures aimed at stabilising the economy.

The banking sector is expected to remain largely unaffected, with rupee depreciation potentially having a positive impact on profitability through foreign operations. Remittances, a key support for the economy, are also projected to remain strong, likely reaching USD 140 billion in FY26.

However, several sectors including fertilizers, FMCG, textiles, logistics, and aviation may face cost pressures and supply disruptions if the crisis deepens, potentially impacting corporate profitability.

The report emphasised that maintaining robust domestic demand, boosting exports, and enhancing supply chain resilience through policy support and digital efficiency will be crucial for India to navigate the ongoing global uncertainties. UNI

InterGlobe Aviation appoints Alope Singh as Chief Strategy Officer

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, MAR 23 : InterGlobe Aviation, which operates IndiGo, on Monday appointed aviation veteran Alope Singh as Chief Strategy Officer, signalling a sharpened focus on long-term growth, operational efficiency, and global expansion.

The appointment, approved by the company's Board, comes at a time when IndiGo is scaling up its international ambitions and strengthening its competitive positioning in an evolving aviation market.

In his new role, Singh will lead strategic planning and enterprise-wide transformation initiatives aimed at accelerating growth, enhancing operational efficiency, and improving customer experience, the airlines said in a release.

He will work closely with the leadership team on cross-functional priorities to drive sustainable shareholder value.

Singh brings over three decades of experience in the aviation sector across strategy, operations, and commercial functions. Most recently, he served as Managing Director and CEO of Air India Express, where he led operational improvements and expansion initiatives.

Welcoming the appointment, IndiGo Managing Director Rahul Bhatia said Singh's strategic vision and operational expertise would be critical in building a more agile and future-ready organisation as the airline



enters its next phase of growth.

Industry observers view the move as part of IndiGo's broader strategy to transition from a dominant domestic carrier to a stronger global player, leveraging its scale, cost leadership, and expanding international network.

Commenting on his new role, Singh said IndiGo is at a pivotal stage in its journey, having reshaped India's domestic aviation market and now aiming to expand its global footprint.

IndiGo, India's largest airline, operates a fleet of over 400 aircraft and runs more than 2,200 daily flights connecting over 95 domestic and 40 international destinations.

The airline carried around 124 million passengers in calendar year 2025 and continues to rank among the fastest-growing carriers globally. UNI

AI platform Cognavi enables global placements for Indian engineers with Rs 42 lakh average package

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MAR 23 : Cognavi India Pvt. Ltd. has facilitated international placements for 13 engineering students from premier Indian institutes, with an average annual compensation of Rs 42.15 lakh, highlighting the growing role of artificial intelligence in global talent hiring, according to a company statement on Monday.

The placements were enabled through the company's proprietary AI-based "Skill Tree" technology, which maps candidates' technical capabilities directly to global employer requirements, moving beyond traditional résumé-based screening.

Among the top offers, the highest package stood at Rs 56.27 lakh for a data scientist role, while two students from the Indian Institutes of Technology secured pre-placement offers of Rs 46.78



lakh in technical and product development roles.

The selected candidates have been placed across a wide range of high-value roles, including data science, system engineering, electrical development, application engineering, product development, and design engineering.

These opportunities span sectors such as technology,

electronics, and advanced manufacturing, reflecting strong global demand for skilled Indian engineers.

Out of the 13 candidates, 11 are from institutions ranked among the top 100 in India under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), while the remaining two are from IITs.

The hiring organizations have

not been disclosed due to confidentiality agreements, but are said to be leading global enterprises.

Managing Director and CTO Varun Modgill said the global engineering talent shortage is more about matching skills with demand rather than lack of talent, adding that AI is helping bridge this gap at scale.

The company noted that AI-driven recruitment focuses on real-world technical competencies rather than academic scores or institutional pedigree, improving hiring efficiency and long-term outcomes.

Cognavi, which has a presence across more than 300 engineering colleges in India, is also working closely with institutions to build a strong pipeline for cross-border recruitment.

The platform aims to expand opportunities beyond traditional IT roles and connect Indian engineers with global careers in core engineering and emerging technologies.

Industry experts believe that AI-led hiring platforms are gaining traction among multinational companies, especially in sectors requiring niche engineering expertise, and are likely to play a key role in shaping the future of global recruitment. UNI

RBI, NABARD measures strengthen governance of cooperative banks: Govt

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MARCH 23 : Regulatory safeguards introduced by the Reserve Bank of India and NABARD have significantly improved the governance and functioning of cooperative banks across the country, the Lok Sabha was informed on Monday.

Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary informed that a series of reforms and supervisory measures have been implemented to enhance transparency, accountability, and financial stability



in the cooperative banking sector.

The Reserve Bank of India has strengthened its regulatory oversight by introducing stricter norms, improved risk-based supervision, and tighter compliance mechanisms to ensure better financial discipline among cooperative banks.

At the same time, NABARD continues to play a crucial role in conducting inspections, supporting capacity building, and providing guidance to rural cooperative institutions, thereby improving their operational efficiency.

The government said these combined efforts have led to better governance standards, stronger internal controls, and timely corrective actions in cases of financial irregularities.

Focus has also been placed on professionalising management, strengthening audit frameworks, and enhancing the resilience of cooperative banks to protect depositors' interests.

The measures are part of the government's broader push to reinforce trust in the cooperative banking system, which remains a vital source of credit for rural and semi-urban economies.

The government reiterated its commitment to further strengthening the regulatory framework to ensure sustained growth and stability in the cooperative banking sector. UNI

Stock Market witnesses bloodbath; Sensex down nearly 1,900pts, Nifty below 22,500

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MARCH 23 : The Indian Stock Market on Monday came under renewed pressure with Nifty falling below 22,500, intraday, for the first time since April 9, 2025.

At close, the Sensex was down 1,836.57 points or 2.46 percent at 72,696.39, and the Nifty was down 601.85 points or 2.60 percent at 22,512.65.

Nifty Mid and small cap indices also slipped nearly 4pc each. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies fell to Rs 414.75 lakh crore against Friday's Rs 429.11 lakh crore.

Among the sectors, all the indices ended in the red. Sectors like realty, capital goods, consumer durables, metal, telecom, PSU Bank lost 4 to 5pc, while auto, energy, media, private bank, oil & gas down 3pc each.

On Nifty, the key losers were Shriram Finance, Trent, UltraTech Cement, Titan Company, Jio Financial. On the gaining side were HCL Technologies, ONGC, Power Grid Corp, Infosys.

Over 1000 stocks touched their 52-week low on the BSE. These included IDBI Bank, Petronet LNG, Aditya Birla Fashion, Relaxo Footwear, Sterling Wilson, New India Assurance, Inox Wind, PCBL Chemical, Gujarat State Petro, Gravita India, Lodha Developers, Network 18, BLS International, InterGlobe Aviation, HPCL, Gujarat Gas, Wockhardt, REC, among others.

Indian Rupee also fell 33 paise to fresh all-time low of 93.86 against US dollar.

Among the banking stocks, HDFC Bank remained the key loser as the stock fell about 2.5pc. Shares of State Bank of India (SBI) also fell 3% after the lender got a Rs 6,337-crore tax demand from the Income Tax Department for the assessment year 2024.

Reliance Power shares came under renewed selling pressure, falling 7.3% while Paytm shares cracked 6pc.

In the Asian market, Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 dropped 3.5pc to finish at 51,515.49 while in Taiwan, the Taiex shed 2.5pc to 32,722.50. UNI

EKA Mobility, GreenCell Win LOA for 915 E-Buses in Hyderabad under PM E-DRIVE

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, MARCH 23 : EKA Mobility, a leading electric vehicle and technology company, in consortium with GreenCell Mobility, on Monday said it has secured a Letter of Award (LOA) for the supply and deployment of 915 electric buses in Hyderabad under the Government of India's PM E-DRIVE scheme.

The project, to be implemented under the CESL-led PM E-DRIVE (Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement), involves rollout of 100 nine-metre

and 815 twelve-metre standard-floor non-AC electric buses aimed at strengthening urban public transport.

In a release, the companies said the buses are fully electric and zero-emission, designed to deliver efficient, reliable and commuter-friendly services across the city.

The latest LOA builds on earlier contracts secured by EKA Mobility under CESL's PM E-Bus Seva initiative for deployment of electric buses in multiple states, including Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Puducherry and Meghalaya.

Commenting on the

development, Rohit Srivastava, Business Head and Chief Growth Officer of EKA Mobility, said the award reflects the company's technological strength and execution capability.

He added that the project will support Hyderabad's transition towards cleaner and smarter mobility in line with the national electric vehicle push.

The PM E-DRIVE scheme is a flagship initiative of the Government of India aimed at accelerating EV adoption, boosting domestic manufacturing and reducing urban pollution.

Bosch and Tata AutoComp Systems in JV for eAxle systems, electric motors

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

CHENNAI, MARCH 23 : Bosch Limited, a leading supplier of technology and services, and Tata AutoComp Systems Limited (TACO), India's leading automotive components conglomerate, announced an equal joint venture for engineering, manufacturing and sales of eAxle systems and electric motors in India.

The partners plan to hold equal shares in the joint venture, which aims to start its operations by mid-2026, subject to receiving all regulatory approvals.

"At Bosch, we strongly believe that Battery Electric technology is the definitive path to achieving low emissions in passenger cars and select commercial vehicle segments. Our joint venture with Tata AutoComp is designed to



BOSCH



TATA AUTOCOMP

accelerate the adoption of these technologies by delivering efficient, state-of-the-art e-Mobility solutions to our customers," said Guruprasad Mudlapur, President of the Bosch Group in India, and Managing Director, Bosch Limited.

With a registered office in Pune,

this joint venture aims to accelerate the adoption of sustainable and forward-looking technologies, thereby expanding the regional footprint for both companies in the e-mobility space.

"Mobility market worldwide is going through a transformation and India is no different. E-mobility

is a strategic field for us and is evolving rapidly. Our customers are asking for cutting-edge global solutions to be made locally in India.

This is exactly what the joint venture aims to do," said Sandeep Nelamangala, Joint Managing Director, Bosch Limited, and

President, Bosch Mobility India. Bosch has invested over 6 billion euros globally in e-mobility. This partnership enables the company to bring these advanced eAxle systems and electric motor solutions to India's growing e-mobility market, reinstating their ongoing commitment to the region.

"India being world's third largest automotive market, Bosch aims to leverage stronger opportunities for its business in India.

This planned partnership with TACO further cements our presence in e-mobility, enabling us to deliver cutting-edge global solutions locally in India including engineering and manufacturing expertise," said Karsten Müller, Executive Vice President, Manufacturing and Quality, Electrified Motion, Robert Bosch GmbH. UNI

All-Round Ace: Krunal Pandya Shines for RCB

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Fresh off the most successful season of his Indian Premier League career, Krunal Pandya stands at a defining moment. After playing a pivotal role in Royal Challengers Bengaluru's historic maiden IPL title win in 2025, the all-rounder believes the best is yet to come. "The next five years of cricket will be a golden period for me," he says with quiet confidence.

Krunal's journey to this point has been marked by resilience and reinvention. Released by Mumbai Indians ahead of the 2022 auction, he had declared himself a "match-winner" in waiting. Three years later, that statement has come full circle. In IPL 2025, he delivered consistently, finishing as the tournament's most effective finger spinner while also contributing in crucial moments with the bat.

Reflecting on the title-winning campaign, Krunal remains grounded. "After 17 years of drought, RCB winning in the 18th season and me being part of it—it's special. But I still feel this is just the beginning," he says.

One of the most striking aspects of his evolution has been his transformation as a bowler. Tradition-

ally known as a classical left-arm spinner, Krunal has expanded his arsenal to include variations more commonly associated with seamers—bouncers, wide yorkers, and sharp pace changes. This tactical shift reflects his deep understanding of modern T20 cricket, where unpredictability is key.

A standout moment came early in the 2025 season when he surprised Venkatesh Iyer with a bouncer. "It wasn't random. I had planned to use it as a weapon," Krunal explains. "Batters today are so advanced that you have to stay one step ahead. If they start guessing, you've already won half the battle."

This calculated aggression was evident throughout the season. Against Mumbai Indians, he dismissed Will Jacks with a cleverly disguised short ball, while in the final he deceived Prabhsimran Singh with a slower delivery—demonstrating his ability to switch gears seamlessly.

Krunal credits much of this evolution to RCB's spin-bowling coach Malolan Rangarajan, who encouraged him to trust his instincts. "He gave me the freedom to experiment. That backing made a huge difference," Krunal says.

Despite these innovations,

Krunal insists that his foundation remains rooted in classical spin. "Most of my deliveries are still traditional left-arm spin. The variations are there to create doubt," he notes. His emphasis on subtle changes in pace—ranging from the mid-80s to over 110 km/h—proved crucial in unsettling batters across conditions.

Another key improvement has been in his action. By becoming more upright at the point of release, he has generated extra bounce and zip off the surface. "It's not just about adding new skills; your body has to support it. Fitness plays a massive role," he explains.

Krunal's tactical intelligence also stands out. In a memorable over against Rishabh Pant, he employed an unconventional field setup typically used by fast bowlers and mixed his deliveries unpredictably. "I'm not afraid to try something different if the situation demands it," he says.

Even in an era dominated by match-ups, Krunal believes clarity and courage can override conventional wisdom. His dismissals of left-handers like Rinku Singh underline his point that skill and intent matter more than textbook strategies.



Ronaldo signals recovery, boosts 2026 World Cup hopes

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

LISBON, MAR 23: Cristiano Ronaldo, the Portuguese football legend, has given fans renewed hope about his chances of playing in the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The 41-year-old Al-Nassr forward shared a brief yet uplifting message on social media on Monday, stating he is "getting better every day," signaling steady progress in his recovery from a recent muscle injury.

Ronaldo's injury had kept him out of both club matches and Portugal's pre-World Cup friendlies in North America, raising questions about his readiness



for the tournament. His latest update, however, has reassured fans and analysts that he is working hard to regain full fitness ahead of what could be his final World Cup campaign.

In his social media post, Ronaldo shared glimpses of rehabilitation exercises and light training sessions, reflecting his determination to return stronger. The tweet quickly went viral, attracting thousands of likes and comments, and highlighting his status as one of football's most influential figures.

Portugal's national team officials remain optimistic about his participation. "If he continues his recovery as he is, we are hopeful he will be fit in time for the World Cup," a team source said, underscoring Ronaldo's pivotal role in Portugal's plans for the tournament.

The viral update also reflects Ronaldo's renowned work ethic and resilience, traits that have defined his career at clubs including Sporting Lisbon, Manchester United, Real Madrid, Juventus, and Al-Nassr. Analysts noted that even a short message from him can dominate global sports discussions, given his legendary status.

Shanaka chooses IPL over PSL; replaces Curran in Rajasthan Royals' squad

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Sri Lanka T20I captain Dasun Shanaka has withdrawn from the Pakistan Super League to participate in the upcoming season of the Indian Premier League after being signed by Rajasthan Royals as a replacement for injured England all-rounder Sam Curran.

Shanaka, who had initially been picked by Lahore Qalandars in the PSL, has joined the Royals for 2 crore. The Sri Lankan all-rounder becomes the second high-profile player after Zimbabwe fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani to pull out of the PSL in favour of an IPL opportunity.

Muzarabani had originally been signed by Islamabad United but later switched to the IPL after

being approached by Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) as a replacement for Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman. The three-time IPL title holders had to release Mustafizur following directions from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) amid geopolitical tensions between India and Bangladesh.

PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi has promised to take legal action against players who have left the PSL for the IPL at the last minute, with the two leagues clashing for the second year in a row. "We will take action against those players according to the rules," Naqvi had said on Sunday.

Meanwhile, Shanaka, who had previously featured in the IPL during the 2023 season with Gujarat Titans, where he played



three matches, returns to the tournament in explosive batting form. Fresh from leading Sri Lanka in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, Shanaka brings experience and composure to Rajasthan's lower middle order, having been a consistent performer for Sri Lanka in T20 Internationals.

He heads into the IPL in good form after smashing a 20-ball 50 against Oman and an unbeaten 76 off 31 balls against Pakistan.

"We are disappointed to lose a player of Sam's calibre so close to the start of the season. Sam brings immense value with both bat and ball," said Kumar Sangakkara, director of cricket and head coach of the Royals.

"However, we are pleased to have found an ideal replacement in Dasun Shanaka, a finisher with

the bat and a quality all-rounder who helps maintain the balance of our side," Sangakkara added.

Curran had joined the Royals as part of a pre-auction trade with Chennai Super Kings that also saw Sanju Samson move to CSK while Ravindra Jadeja headed to Rajasthan. However, the England all-rounder has now been ruled out of the IPL due to a groin injury.

At Rajasthan, Shanaka joins a strong group of overseas players that includes Shimron Hetmyer, Luan-dre Pretorius, Donovan Ferreira, Jofra Archer, Nandre Burger, Kwena Maphaka and Adam Milne. The Rryan Parag-led Royals, who finished second from bottom last season, will begin their IPL 2026 campaign against Chennai Super Kings at the ACA Stadium on March 30.

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