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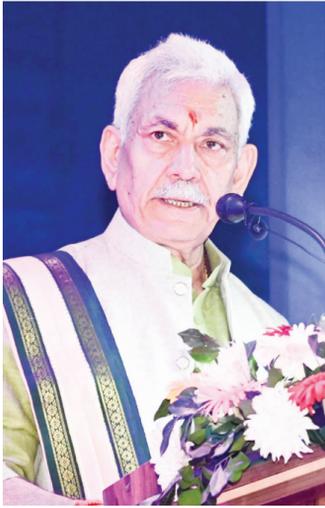
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# LG Sinha Launches ISTD Jammu Chapter, Eyes Skill-Driven Growth

Urges focus on jobs, entrepreneurship and collaboration to make J&K a training hub

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MAR 25:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday inaugurated the Jammu Chapter of the Indian Society for Training & Development, calling for a renewed push towards skill development, entrepreneurship and institutional collaboration to accelerate Jammu and Kashmir's growth.



Speaking at the inaugural ceremony at Padma Shri Padma Sachdev Government PG College for Women, Sinha said the new chapter would play a pivotal role in strengthening the Union Territory's learning and development ecosystem and help position Jammu as a regional hub for training and professional excellence.

He directed stakeholders to build a strong professional community through networking, exchange of best practices and joint training programmes, emphasising that collective effort is key to addressing today's complex and multi-dimensional challenges.

Sinha stressed that education must go beyond textbooks to equip students for real-life challenges, advocating greater focus on soft skills, research, startup culture and stronger academia-industry linkages.

Calling for targeted interventions in key sectors, he urged ISTD members to prioritise training and collaboration in industries, startups and agriculture to improve productivity and market linkages. He noted that the rapidly evolving industrial ecosystem demands continuous upskilling to sustain growth.

On agriculture, he emphasised the need to train farmers in modern technologies

## J&K Sets Deadline to Revamp Recruitment Rules Across Departments

Mission-mode exercise to boost transparency, streamline hiring and digitise processes from April 1

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MAR 25:** The Jammu and Kashmir administration has initiated a time-bound overhaul of Recruitment Rules (RRs) across departments, with Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Wednesday directing officials to fast-track the process to ensure transparency, efficiency and improved employee welfare.

Chairing a high-level meeting to review the status of the exercise, Dulloo emphasised that updated and well-structured Recruitment Rules are vital for a merit-based recruitment system and for filling vacancies in a timely manner. He asked all Administrative Secretaries to work in close coordination with the ARI and Trainings Department and complete the task within a defined timeframe.

Reiterating the government's push for administrative efficiency, the Chief Secretary instructed departments to carry out the exercise in a mission mode, removing delays and ensuring uniformity in recruitment processes.

During the meeting, Commissioner Secre-



tary, ARI and Trainings, Shabnam Shah Kamili, said the initiative marks a shift towards digital governance, with a dedicated online portal developed in collaboration with BISAG-N to streamline the updating of Recruitment Rules. She informed that from April 1, 2026, all proposals will be mandatorily routed through the portal, ending the system of offline submissions.

The portal has been made fully operational following security audits and features SMS-based communication tools, while

## Massive Shortage of PNG, LPG: Govt Mandates Shift to Piped Gas in Connected Areas

Households given three months to switch or lose LPG supply as India pushes fuel diversification amid global shortages

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, MAR 25:** In a sweeping reform aimed at bolstering energy security and accelerating gas infrastructure, the Centre has ordered discontinuation of LPG supply to households that refuse to switch to piped natural gas (PNG) in areas where such connectivity is available.



The directive, notified by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas under the Natural Gas and Petroleum Products Distribution Order, 2026, states that LPG supply to a household "shall cease after three months" from the date of communication if the consumer does not opt for PNG despite access to the network.

The move comes against the backdrop of supply disruptions triggered

## Fuel Panic Hits Srinagar as Rumours Spark Long Queues at Pumps

HT NEWS DESK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, MAR 25:** Panic buying of fuel swept across Srinagar on Wednesday after rumours of a

## No Lockdown in Kashmir, Rumours Baseless: Div. Com

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAR 25:** Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg on Wednesday dismissed speculation about a possible lockdown, terming such reports as rumours and urging people to remain calm and depend only on official sources for information.

Speaking to reporters, Garg said there has been no decision by the government regarding any lockdown and that any such move, if taken, would be formally communicated. He cautioned against panic, asserting that the administration is closely monitoring the availability and distribution of essential commodities to ensure there is no disruption.

He warned that strict action would be taken against individuals found spreading misinformation, reiterating that only verified government channels should be trusted for updates.

On the security situation, Garg said there has been no change and described it as stable, with continuous joint reviews being conducted by the district administration and police to maintain vigilance.

Referring to the ongoing tourist season,

## Over 1,800 IAS, IPS Posts Vacant, Govt Informs Parliament

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, MAR 25:** The Centre on Wednesday revealed that more than 1,800 posts in the country's premier civil services remain vacant, even as it asserted that there is no backlog in reserved categories and recruitment is being carried out on a continuous basis.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh said 1,300 posts in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and 505 in the Indian Police Service (IPS) are currently unfilled.

He said that against a sanctioned strength of

6,877 IAS posts, 5,577 officers are in position. In the IPS, 4,594 officers are in place against a sanctioned strength of 5,099.

The minister noted that recruitment to these services is conducted annually through the Civil Services Examination by the Union Public Service Commission, with around 180 candidates inducted into the IAS each year since 2012. Of these, four per cent of seats are reserved for persons with benchmark disabilities, in accordance with government norms.

Singh said vacancies are assessed regularly and all advertised posts are filled while

## Parliament Passes Transgender Rights Amendment Bill Amid Sharp Debate

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, MAR 25:** Parliament on Wednesday cleared the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, with the Rajya Sabha giving its approval a day after it was passed by the Lok Sabha, amid a spirited debate over its provisions and scope.

The bill seeks to amend the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 by introducing a more precise

definition of "transgender" while excluding "different sexual orientations and self-perceived sexual identities" from its ambit. It also proposes graded punishment based on the gravity of offences committed against transgender persons.

Replying to the discussion in the Upper House, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Virendra Kumar said the legislation is aimed at protecting those facing discrimination due to

## CS pushes for time-bound overhaul of Recruitment Rules in J&K

Assesses the status of updation of rules across departments

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MAR 25:** Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo today chaired a high-level meeting to assess the current status and expedite the updation of Recruitment Rules (RRs) across various departments of the Union Ter-



ritory, with a strong emphasis on ensuring transparency, efficiency and employee welfare in public administration.

The meeting was attended by the Commissioner Secretary, ARI & Trainings Department, along with

## LG Sinha, CM Omar, Cabinet Ministers extend greetings

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU/SRINAGAR, MAR 25:** Prominent leaders of Jammu and Kashmir, including Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and several ministers, extended heartfelt greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami.

In his message, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha conveyed his best wishes, describing the festival as a celebration of the birth of Bhagwan Shri Ram, the epitome of virtue and righteousness. He said that Lord Ram's life reflects timeless values of compassion, humility, truth, and selfless

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**CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....**

**LG Sinha.....**

and scientific practices to tackle climate change, water scarcity and soil degradation, while also improving efficiency and market access. Describing governance as the backbone of a nation, Sinha said the administrative machinery must evolve to become more transparent, accountable and citizen-centric. He underlined that trained human resources remain the most powerful driver of change, stating that a skilled and developed professional workforce would form the foundation of inclusive growth and future progress.

**J&K Sets.....**

four training sessions have already been conducted for departmental nodal officers to ensure a smooth transition. Officials said the Standing Committee constituted for the purpose has held 53 meetings since early 2024, finalising Recruitment Rules for 33 services and preparing drafts for 81 more. In addition, 12 services have been cleared through executive orders to address urgent requirements. The review also flagged structural gaps, including outdated pay scales linked to the 5th and 6th Pay Commissions and stagnation in Schedule-I posts. Departments were advised to adopt uniform model Recruitment Rules for ministerial staff and clearly define parameters such as "experience" to eliminate ambiguity in the selection process. Specific directions were issued to key departments, including Health, Education, Revenue and Agriculture, to resolve pending issues on priority and finalise their Recruitment Rules without further delay, as the administration reiterated its resolve to modernise governance and ensure timely recruitment through a robust, technology-driven framework.

**Massive.....**

by the ongoing West Asia conflict, which has strained LPG imports from key producing regions. Officials said the transition to PNG would ease pressure on cylinder supplies and enable redistribution to areas lacking pipeline infrastructure. PNG, delivered through pipelines directly to kitchens, is being promoted as a more convenient and reliable alternative to LPG cylinders, removing the need for booking refills. The order, issued under the Essential Commodities Act, also seeks to fast-track expansion of pipeline infrastructure by mandating time-bound approvals and simplifying procedures. Authorities have been directed to grant right of way permissions within stipulated timelines, failing which approvals will be deemed granted. In residential complexes, entities controlling access must approve pipeline connectivity requests within three working days, while last-mile PNG connections are to be provided within 48 hours. Applications for such connectivity cannot be rejected. The government, however, clarified that LPG supply will continue in cases where PNG connections are not technically feasible. In such instances, authorised entities may issue a no-objection certificate, allowing continued LPG use until connectivity becomes possible. To ensure smooth implementation, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board has been designated as the nodal agency to monitor approvals, compliance and rollout progress. Oil Secretary Neeraj Mittal said the reforms have turned a crisis into an opportunity, underscoring the government's push to strengthen infrastructure and promote ease of doing business in the energy sector. The order further mandates that authorised entities begin pipeline laying within four months of receiving approvals, failing which they may face penalties, including loss of exclusivity. Officials said the policy would not only promote fuel diversification but also ensure more efficient and equitable distribution of cooking gas across the country.

**Fuel Panic Hits.....**

possible shortage triggered a rush at petrol stations, with residents seen carrying cans and containers to stock up amid growing anxiety. According to visuals accessed by Kashmir News Observer (KNO), long queues of vehicles formed at multiple fuel stations across the city, including Karan Nagar, M.A. Road, Solina, Batmaloo, Ali Jan Road, Zakoora and Munawarabad. Commuters waited for hours as the sudden surge in demand strained supply at several outlets. Eyewitnesses said the rush was unprecedented, with many people not only refuelling their vehicles but also filling petrol in plastic bottles and cans out of fear of an impending shortage. "There was an unusual rush. People were stocking fuel in containers, fearing supplies might run out," a local resident said. Another commuter said panic spread rapidly once rumours began circulating on social media. "Within hours, queues became very long as people rushed to pumps," he

said. Amid the chaos, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg dismissed the rumours and assured the public that there is no shortage of fuel or essential commodities. "Stocks are adequate and are being continuously monitored. There is no need to panic. People should not believe in rumours," he said. Officials maintained that the situation arose purely due to panic behaviour and not because of any disruption in supply, adding that normal supply chains remain intact. The sudden rush comes a day after rumours of a possible lockdown circulated widely, prompting concern among residents. Despite repeated assurances from the administration denying any such move, the misinformation led to crowding at fuel stations and temporary shortages driven by heightened demand rather than any actual supply constraint.

**No Lockdown.....**

he said destinations across the Valley remain open and are witnessing a steady rise in visitors. Following the opening of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, tourist footfall is being closely monitored, he added, while appealing to tourists to visit Kashmir in large numbers during the spring and summer months.

**Over 1,800 IAS.....**

adhering to reservation guidelines. He added that there are currently no backlog vacancies in either the IAS or IPS, including in reserved categories. Providing data on recent recruitments, he said that between CSE 2020 and CSE 2024, a total of 245 candidates from Other Backward Classes (OBC), 135 from Scheduled Castes (SC), and 67 from Scheduled Tribes (ST) were appointed to the IAS. During the same period, 255 OBC, 141 SC, and 71 ST candidates were inducted into the IPS. In a separate reply, the minister said the Indian Forest Service (IfoS) is also facing shortages, with 1,029 posts vacant against a sanctioned strength of 3,193. He said filling vacancies across ministries and departments is a continuous process, undertaken in a time-bound manner based on administrative requirements, while noting that large-scale recruitment drives, including Rozgar Melas held since October 2022, have been used to accelerate appointments.

**Parliament Passes.....**

biological reasons while ensuring continued legal recognition and safeguards for transgender persons. He asserted that the government remains committed to bringing marginalized communities into the mainstream and strengthening their rights. Highlighting welfare measures, the minister said transgender welfare boards have been established in over 30 states and maintained that the amendment would bring administrative clarity and reinforce protections. Opposition members, however, expressed serious reservations. Swati Maliwal cautioned that provisions criminalising inducement to present as transgender were vague and could adversely affect families, doctors and support systems. She urged that the bill be referred to a select committee for wider consultations, warning that it could create fear instead of protection. Mahua Maji said transgender persons continue to be denied equal rights and stressed that they are equally capable if given opportunities. The Rajya Sabha passed the bill by voice vote, rejecting amendments moved by the Opposition and declining demands for further scrutiny by a select committee.

**CS pushes.....**

Administrative Secretaries of other departments. While underscoring the importance of timely finalization of Recruitment Rules, the Chief Secretary directed all Administrative Secretaries to work in close coordination with the ARI & Trainings Department to complete the process within a defined timeframe. He stressed that updated and well-structured Recruitment Rules are crucial for ensuring a transparent, merit-based and efficient recruitment framework, besides facilitating the prompt filling of vacancies across departments. Reiterating the Government's commitment towards employee welfare and administrative efficiency, the Chief Secretary issued clear instructions that the entire exercise must be pursued in a mission mode, eliminating delays and ensuring uniformity in recruitment processes across departments. During the meeting, Commissioner Secretary, ARI & Trainings, Shabnam Shah Kamili, informed that the initiative marks a significant shift towards digital governance. She apprised that a dedicated online portal has been developed in collaboration with BISAG-N for updating Recruitment Rules in a streamlined and efficient manner. She further informed that, with effect from April 1, 2026, all offline submissions of

proposals for Recruitment Rules will be discontinued, and departments will be required to mandatorily route their proposals through the online portal. The portal has already been made fully operational after successful security audits and integration of SMS-based communication features. To ensure a smooth transition, four high-level training sessions have also been conducted for departmental Nodal Officers, she added. Highlighting the progress achieved so far, it was informed that the Standing Committee constituted for the purpose has maintained a consistent pace of work, having convened 53 meetings since early 2024. Through these deliberations, Recruitment Rules for 33 services have been finalized, while preliminary drafts for 81 additional services have been prepared. Moreover, 12 services have been cleared through Executive Orders to address urgent administrative requirements. The meeting was also apprised that these concerted efforts are aimed at clearing the existing backlog and aligning departmental structures with contemporary governance requirements and best practices. Addressing structural gaps and pending issues, it was noted that internal audits have identified key areas requiring immediate attention, including the presence of outdated pay scales linked to the 5th and 6th Pay Commissions, as well as stagnation in "Schedule-I" post allocations. The departments were advised to adopt uniform model Recruitment Rules for ministerial staff to bring consistency across the system. They were also instructed to clearly define parameters such as "experience" in Recruitment Rules to remove ambiguity and ensure fairness in the selection process.

The Chief Secretary issued specific directions to major departments including Health, Education, Revenue and Agriculture to resolve pending mapping issues on priority and finalize their Recruitment Rules without any further delay. The meeting concluded with a reiteration of the Government's resolve to modernize administrative processes, enhance transparency, and ensure timely recruitment through a robust, technology-driven framework in the best interest of government employees here.

**LG Sinha, CM.....**

service, inspiring people to follow these ideals in their daily lives. He prayed for peace, joy, and prosperity for all. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also greeted the people, highlighting Lord Ram as a symbol of righteousness and exemplary conduct. He emphasized that Ram Navami is not only a religious occasion but also an opportunity to reaffirm commitment to humanity and selfless service. He prayed for peace, prosperity, and well-being across Jammu and Kashmir. Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary extended warm wishes, noting the religious and cultural importance of the festival celebrated with devotion across the region. He expressed hope that the occasion would bring peace, prosperity, and strengthen the spirit of harmony and brotherhood among the people.

Minister for Health, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, in her message, said that Ram Navami symbolizes values of righteousness, compassion, truth, and devotion. She highlighted that such festivals reinforce harmony, mutual respect, and cultural unity in the region, while praying for peace and progress. Similarly, Minister Satish Sharma extended greetings, underlining the enduring relevance of Lord Ram's teachings in promoting truth, justice, compassion, and humility. He described the festival as a celebration of ethical values and emphasized the ideals of "Ram Rajya" as a model of good governance, equality, and welfare. Satish Sharma also stressed the importance of communal harmony and urged people to celebrate the festival with devotion and simplicity, maintain cleanliness, and extend support to the underprivileged, thereby sharing the spirit of the festival with all sections of society. Across Jammu and Kashmir, the occasion of Ram Navami is being observed with religious fervour, reflecting the region's rich cultural diversity and longstanding traditions of unity and brotherhood. Meanwhile, preparations for the festival have been completed across various parts of the Union Territory, with temples and religious places beautifully decorated and special arrangements made for devotees. In several towns and villages, religious processions, bhajan recitals and community gatherings are being organized, drawing participation from people of all age groups. Security and administrative arrangements have also been put in place to ensure smooth and peaceful celebrations. Authorities have emphasized maintaining law and order while facilitating devotees in observing the festival without inconvenience. Cleanliness drives and public awareness initiatives have also been undertaken in many areas to uphold the sanctity of the occasion. Religious scholars and community leaders have also echoed similar sentiments, urging

people to imbibe the teachings of Lord Rama in their daily lives. They emphasized that the message of truth, justice, compassion, and duty remains highly relevant in contemporary society, especially in fostering peace and coexistence. The collective greetings from leaders and the enthusiastic participation of the people underline the significance of Ram Navami as not just a religious festival, but a unifying force that strengthens social harmony and reinforces shared cultural values across Jammu and Kashmir. Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami. In his message, the Minister conveyed his sincere wishes for peace, prosperity and happiness, expressing hope that the festival would further strengthen the spirit of communal harmony, brother-

hood and mutual understanding across the Union Territory. Highlighting the profound spiritual and cultural significance of the occasion, he observed that Ram Navami symbolizes the triumph of righteousness and moral values, as exemplified by the life and teachings of Lord Rama. The Minister exhorted the people to follow the teachings of Lord Rama in their true spirit, observing that these timeless ideals remain highly relevant even in the present materialistic society and can help rid society of various social evils. He added that such pious occasions not only promote a sense of communal harmony, brotherhood and mutual understanding among the people but also bring joy, peace and prosperity to all. He further prayed for the well-being, good health and prosperity of all citizens and reiterated the need for unity and collective efforts in ensuring sustained peace and development in Jammu and Kashmir.

**J&K Power Demand Set to Climb Sharply, 300 MW More Needed at Peak Hours**

HT NEWS DESK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, MAR 25:** Jammu and Kashmir is bracing for a steady rise in electricity demand, with projections indicating an additional requirement of around 300 Megawatts (MW) during peak hours over the next three years, official documents reveal. According to data accessed by Kashmir News Observer, the Union Territory's peak power demand is expected to reach 3,813 MW in the financial year 2026-27. The demand is projected to further increase to 3,964 MW in 2027-28 and 4,117 MW in 2028-29, reflecting a consistent upward trend.

The overall energy requirement is also set to grow significantly. Projections show that Jammu and Kashmir will need 23,372 Million Units (MU) of electricity in 2026-27, rising to 24,559 MU in 2027-28 and 25,780 MU in 2028-29.

Officials attribute this growth to increasing consumption and economic activity, with estimates based on projections by the J&K State Load Dispatch Center. The data suggests that electricity demand in the Union Territory will grow at a Compound Annual Growth

Rate (CAGR) of around 4 percent, while peak demand is expected to rise at a faster rate of 6 percent between 2025-26 and 2035-36.

Despite the rising demand, the region is also likely to witness periods of surplus power. Documents indicate that Jammu and Kashmir may have a surplus capacity of 700-900 MW during May and June, and around 500 MW between July and September in 2028-29, largely due to renewable energy availability and fluctuations in demand. This excess power could be shared with other states and power distribution companies.

Long-term projections further suggest that Jammu and Kashmir, along with Ladakh, may depend on nearly 30 percent coal-based energy by 2030. By 2035-36, the total contracted power capacity is expected to reach around 11,001 MW, comprising a mix of coal, hydro, solar, gas, nuclear and distributed renewable energy sources, along with medium- and short-term procurement arrangements.

The projections highlight the growing pressure on the region's power infrastructure, even as authorities look to balance rising demand with diversification and sustainability in the energy sector.

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## CS reviews progress of Tawi Artificial Lake and Riverfront Development Projects

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MAR 25:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of the Tawi Artificial Lake and Riverfront Development Project in Jammu.

The review covered key components including riverfront development works, barrage construction, sewerage interception, and protection measures being executed under the Smart City initiative.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department; Commissioner Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD); Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; Commissioner Secretary, Law; Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC); Deputy Commissioner, Jammu; Chief Engineer, PWD/UEED; and other concerned officers. The Chief Secretary undertook a detailed assessment of both completed and ongoing works, including new initiatives aimed at enhancing the project's aesthetic appeal and public utility.

He also reviewed restoration works necessitated by damages caused during last year's flash floods. Stressing the importance of timely completion, he directed all concerned departments to ensure that this major city beautification project is dedicated to the public at the earliest, with all requisite amenities in place.

Reviewing the progress of the Tawi Barrage (Artificial Lake),



Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra informed that all 31 gates including 11 at Waddi Tawi and 20 at Nikki Tawi have largely been installed, with hydromechanical works nearing completion.

He detailed out that the electrical works, including transformers had seen the progress of around 70% while that of HT/LT panels has witnessed completion status of 60%. Similarly he added that the main distribution panels (80%), and SCADA systems (50%), are at advanced stages. Civil works such as piers, cement concrete blocks, toe walls, gabions, and the control room building (98% complete) are nearing completion, although some components at Nikki Tawi are still in progress.

He further informed that the remaining works required for operationalisation of barrages, including embedded components and concreting of service

gate grooves, are targeted for completion by the month end.

Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur informed that Phase-1 (Part A) of the riverfront project has been completed. This phase includes the development of a 2.7 km-long four-level promenade and 2.5 km of interceptor drains, resulting in the reclamation of approximately 440 kanals of land.

She added that retaining walls have been constructed 1.5 metres above the highest flood level recorded in 2014 and have withstood recent flood events without any distress, demonstrating the robustness of the design and execution.

Meanwhile, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Ramesh Kumar apprised the meeting that construction of a four-lane road on the right bank is progressing steadily. The project includes a 35-metre span RCC

bridge over the Ranbir Canal and Distributary-9, with 50% physical and 33% financial progress achieved so far.

He made out that the road will connect Bhagwati Nagar rotary with Bikram Chowk and is expected to significantly ease congestion along the Canal Road-Jewel Chowk corridor. Protection works, drainage, and underground utility provisions are also included in this component, he apprised the meeting.

CEO, Jammu Smart City Limited, Devansh Yadav informed that under Phase-1 (Part B), works related to end-to-end promenade flooring, landscaping, and electrical fixtures on the left bank and central island are progressing well.

He further divulged that the project has achieved 55% physical and 40% financial progress and is targeted for completion by next 2-3 months. The works include installation of decorative lighting

at two promenade levels, plantation with drip and sprinkler irrigation systems, and paving using Kota stone and paver blocks.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed protection works being executed by UEED at multiple vulnerable locations, including Christian Colony, Gujjar Nagar, Prem Nagar, and Jogi Gate, along with retaining wall and nallah diversion works near Peer Kho. The total project cost for these works is Rs. 11.96 Cr and is currently under tendering.

Regarding the interception and diversion of major nallahs, it was informed that two major packages are under execution. In Package-1, covering the Gujjar Nagar to Tawi Bridge stretch, civil works have reached 92% completion while Package-2 on the right bank has achieved 85% completion, including RCC pipeline laying and construction of a 10 MLD equalisation tank. Some works were damaged during flash floods in August 2025, and restoration is currently underway, with revised timelines extending to March.

Emphasising timely completion, the Chief Secretary directed all executing agencies to accelerate the pace of work, maintain strict quality control, and adhere to project timelines, particularly in view of the upcoming flood season. He reiterated that the project will transform Jammu into a modern riverfront city, enhancing urban mobility, flood management, environmental sustainability, and economic potential.

## Plantation Drive Held at KVK Anantnag, SKUAST-K under Bhumi Suposhan Abhiyan

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, MAR 25:** A plantation drive was successfully organized at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Anantnag, SKUAST-K in collaboration with social forestry Anantnag under the Bhumi Suposhan Abhiyan, aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and soil health conservation.

The programme was graced by the Chief Guest, Prof. Rihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-K, who emphasized the importance of tree plantation in enhancing ecological balance and improving soil fertility. She encouraged farmers, youth, and students to actively participate in such initiatives for a greener and healthier future.



The Special Guest, Ms. Gazalla Abdulla, DFO social forestry Anantnag highlighted the role of social forestry in community development and stressed the need for collective efforts in afforestation and natural resource conservation.

Dr. Ishtiyaq A Khan felicitated the distinguished guests and, in his address, briefed the gathering about KVK Anantnag, SKUAST-K's continuous efforts and commitment towards environmental conservation. He reiterated that the KVK is actively promoting plantation drives across Anantnag district as part of its mission to safeguard the environment and enhance green cover.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from children of Government School Kreeri, who actively took part in the plantation activities and learned about the importance of environmental stewardship at a young age.

The programme concluded with a pledge by all participants to protect and nurture the planted saplings and contribute towards environmental conservation.

## Kupwara Hosts Orientation Workshop for Field Investigators for FLS 2026

### DR. AB QAYOOM

**KUPWARA, MAR 25:** A one-day district-level orientation workshop for Field Investigators (FIs) was successfully conducted at DIET Kupwara on Tuesday to facilitate the implementation of the Foundation Learning Study (FLS) 2026 in the district. The workshop aimed at equipping field investigators with the necessary skills and understanding to



carry out the assessment effectively. During the session, participants were trained on various aspects of the survey, followed by detailed discussions and hands-on activities conducted by resource persons to ensure practical understanding.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara and the Chief Education Officer distributed tablets among the field investigators to support the digital conduct of the assessment. The event was attended by senior officials including the Chief Education Officer Kupwara, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Chief Planning Officer, and the Nodal Officer. The Foundation Learning Study (FLS) 2026, affiliated with CBSE and conducted by PARAKH, is designed to assess Class 3 students in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). The initiative seeks to establish baseline data, evaluate learning outcomes, and help achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy targets by 2026-27. Officials highlighted that the assessment will be conducted using digital tools, marking a significant step towards technology-driven evaluation in the education sector. In Kupwara district, 32 schools have been selected for the study across 13 educational zones. The workshop concluded with a strong emphasis on ensuring accuracy, transparency, and efficiency in conducting the assessment, marking a crucial step in strengthening foundational education in the district.

## Cultural Academy Hosts Prestigious Literary event with Eminent Scholars and Writers in Attendance

### JAMEEL ANSARI

**SRINAGAR, MAR 25:** A grand and dignified book launch ceremony of noted writer, poet, translator, short story writer, and novelist Parvez Manoos's latest novel "Ishq Jis Ne Bhi Kiya" was held at the Conference Hall of Tagore Hall under the auspices of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages.

The event witnessed the participation of a large number of distinguished personalities from literary and academic circles.

The function was presided over by eminent writer and Custodian General of Kashmir, Nawab-ud-Din Kasana, while Prof. Irfan Alam, Head of the Department of Urdu at the University of Kashmir, attended as the Chief Guest. Regional Director News, All India Radio, Tariq Ahmad Rather, was present as the Guest of Honour. The author, Parvez Manoos, also shared the dais.

The proceedings commenced with a welcome address by Mohd Saleem Salik, Editor of the Urdu wing of the Cultural Academy. He warmly welcomed the guests and participants, stating that the Academy remains committed to the promotion of literature and culture, with a special focus on encouraging quality literary works. He described the novel as a significant addition to Urdu fiction, reflecting both contemporary sensibilities and creative depth.

Young critic and academician Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Wani presented a comprehensive and insightful paper



on the novel, highlighting its artistic and intellectual dimensions. He remarked that the work is not merely a romantic narrative but a profound reflection of human emotions, social realities, and cultural values. He further appreciated the author's effective characterization and engaging narrative style.

In his presidential address, Nawab-ud-Din Kasana emphasised that Urdu literature represents a shared cultural heritage and identity, and such literary events play a vital role in its preservation and promotion. He lauded the author's creative contribution, noting that literature serves as a powerful medium for fostering positive thought and human values in society.

Chief Guest Prof. Irfan Alam observed that modern Urdu novel writing is witnessing new thematic and expressive dimensions, and described this novel as an important link in that evolving journey. He noted that the book not only entertains but also intellectually stimulates the reader.

Speaking on the occasion, Guest of Honour Tariq Ahmad Rather highlighted the complementary relation-

ship between literature and media, stating that such literary gatherings help promote constructive intellectual trends in society. He appreciated the simplicity, fluency, and impact of Manoos's writing style.

Author Parvez Manoos, in his remarks, expressed gratitude to the Academy for organising the event in such a dignified manner. He termed it an honour and shared that the novel is a reflection of his observations and experiences, aiming to explore the depth of human relationships and emotions.

Among others present at the event were Satish Vimal, Syed Himayoun Qaiser, Mushtaq Haider, Mohammad Amin Bhat, Rahim Rahabar, Nasir Mirza, Mohd Yousuf Shaheen, Javid Aazar, Ashraf Adil, Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Ganai, Dr. Nazir Mushtaq, Dr. Majeed Bhadravahi, Rashid Rahgir, Sheikh Bashir Ahmad, Dr. Kausar Rasool, Sabzar Ahmad Bhat, Meraj-ud-Din Faraz, Rehana Shajar, Dr. Shabnam Ashai, and Dr. Nikhat Nazar.

The proceedings were ably conducted by Mohammad Iqbal Lone, who efficiently anchored the event.

## Rain, Snow to Lash J&K from March 26 ; MeT Warns of Active Western Disturbance

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MAR 25:** The Meteorological Centre Srinagar on Wednesday forecast fresh spells of rain and snowfall across Jammu and Kashmir from March 26 evening, with an active weather phase expected towards the end of the month.

An official said the weather is likely to remain largely dry till the evening of March 26, after which light rain, snow, thunderstorms and gusty winds are expected at many places across the Union Territory.

The MeT office has predicted a more intense spell between March 29 and 30, with generally cloudy conditions, light to

moderate rainfall in the plains and snowfall over higher reaches at several locations. Thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds with speeds reaching 40-50 kmph are likely to persist till the forenoon of March 31.

On March 31, the region is expected to witness generally cloudy skies with brief spells

of light rain or snow at scattered places, while conditions are likely to remain partly to generally cloudy from April 1 to 4.

The weather department has also issued an advisory warning of moderate snowfall over a few higher reaches between the night of March 28 and March 30, accompanied by

thunder, lightning and strong winds.

In view of the forecast, farmers have been advised to suspend agricultural operations on March 26 and again from March 29 to 31. Travellers have been urged to follow traffic advisories and plan their movement accordingly during the same period.

## Javid Dar inaugurates State-of-the-Art Small Ruminant Hospital at Lal Mandi, vows support for livestock growth

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MARCH 25:** Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar, today inaugurated the state-of-the-art Small Ruminant Hospital Complex at Lal Mandi, Srinagar, marking a significant milestone in strengthening veterinary infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister described the facility as a major step towards modernizing the livestock sector, particularly benefiting the sheep and goat rearers across the Kashmir Valley. He emphasized that the government is committed to ensure access to advanced animal healthcare services, which are crucial for enhancing productivity, improving livelihoods and boosting the rural economy.

"The establishment of this modern hospital complex reflects our focused efforts to build robust veterinary infrastructure and provide specialized healthcare services for the small ruminant



sector. This facility will not only improve disease diagnosis and treatment but also support farmers in achieving better returns from their livestock," the Minister said.

The Minister highlighted that the hospital, equipped with a modern Operation Theatre and Digital X-ray unit, will function

as a referral centre offering advanced clinical and surgical care that was previously not readily accessible within the region.

He extolled that this is the second such advanced facility established by the Sheep Husbandry Department Kashmir following the successful operationalization

of a similar hospital at Chijhama, Baramulla. He reiterated the government's vision to expand such facilities across all districts to ensure equitable access to quality veterinary care.

Referring to the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), the Minister underscored the importance of

innovation and scientific interventions in the livestock sector. He said that under Project-24 of HADP, the introduction of Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) is a transformative step towards genetic upgradation of livestock, which will significantly enhance the productivity and breed quality in the coming years.

The Minister also appreciated the efforts of the Sheep Husbandry Department and its officers for their dedication in implementing progressive schemes and strengthening the livestock ecosystem in the Union Territory.

On the occasion, a Sheep Calendar was also released as part of the department's awareness and outreach initiatives aimed at educating the farmers and stakeholders.

Among others, MLA Lal Chowk Constituency, Financial Commissioner, Agriculture Production Department, Director Sheep Husbandry Department Kashmir, senior officers and stakeholders from the livestock sector were present during the inaugural ceremony.

## J&K Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2026

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MARCH 25:** The JK-Round of the Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament (VBYP) 2026, a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, was held at the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today with participation of young leaders to shape the nation's future.

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, attended the programme as the chief guest and underscored the importance of youth engagement in democratic processes.



He said Youth Parliament programme will inculcate and nurture leadership, enhance civic awareness and promote informed policy engagement among the youth. It provides a structured platform for individuals aged 18-25 years to deliberate on pressing national issues, articulate their perspectives and contribute meaningfully to the nation's development journey, he added.

The VBYP 2026 is being conducted in a three-tier format, District, State/UT and National level, allowing the participants to progress through competitive stages.

The JK-Round featured top performers from across districts, who demonstrated their critical thinking, oratory skills and leadership abilities through insightful deliberations.

The theme for this round, "Union Budget 2026: Strengthening the Indian Youth's Path Towards Viksit Bharat 2047," guided brainstorming discussions and presentations.

At the Youth Parliament, the participants engaged in a thought provoking discussion on the Union Budget 2026, weighing its potential to fuel youth empowerment, innovation and inclusive growth. The exchange of ideas highlighted the budget's impact on shaping a sustainable future for the nation.

It was informed that the top three winners from this round will advance to represent J&K at the National Level Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament Programme.

Among those present were MLA Dr. Devinder Kumar Maniyal, Director Nisar Bhat and jury members Sunaina Mehta, Prof. Mushtaq Wani and Simarjeet Singh besides other senior officers and dignitaries.

## Poster making competition organized at GDC Kakryal

HT NEWS NETWORK

**REASI, MARCH 25:** A Poster making competition was organized at Government Degree College, Kakryal Katra to celebrate and promote awareness about



constitutional values among students.

The programme was organised under the guidance of Principal Dr. Rajni Bhagat. The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of different semesters, who showcased their creativity and artistic skills through meaningful and thought-provoking posters.

The participants beautifully illustrated themes such as fundamental rights and duties, secularism, democracy and the rule of law, highlighting the relevance of constitutional ideals in contemporary society.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Amreen and Dr. Bindu Rajput, who encouraged students to actively engage with the spirit of the Constitution. The judges for the event, Dr. Usha Sharma and Ms. Somalya Dogra, evaluated the posters based on creativity, clarity of message, originality and overall presentation. Sneha and Nisha from sem VI bagged first position, Tania Sem II secured second position and Nanika from Sem II secured third position.

The Principal of the college appreciated the efforts of the organizing committee and lauded the students for their active participation and innovative expression. The event served as an effective platform for students to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as citizens of the nation.

The faculty members who were present during the event included Dr. Manisha, Prof. Shikha Bhasin and Dr. Ishfaq.

## Kathua admin hosts 'Anubhavon Ki Shaam' for senior citizens

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KATHUA, MARCH 25:** District Administration Kathua, in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department, organised a dedicated cultural evening for senior citizens titled "Anubhavon Ki Shaam", the other day.

The programme featured a vibrant Bhajan Sandhya along with a series of cultural performances including skits, ghazals, devotional Karka presentations and local folklores, creating an atmosphere of joy and nostalgia for the senior citizens present on the occasion.

The highlight of the event was the performance by Awaaz Punjab Di winner Vibha Bharti, who mesmerised the audience with her soulful renditions of devotional, Dogri, Hindi, Punjabi and Sufi songs.

Other local artists including Kapil Thappa and Abhinandan Khajuria also presented devotional performances. Jatin and Sorab captivated the audience with traditional devotional Karka performances, while Ajit and his group



enthralled the gathering with skits and musical presentations. A ghazal performance by Shakti Arya further added to the cultural fervour of the evening.

MLA Jasrota Rajiv Jasrotia; Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma; Director Social Welfare Jammu Ranjeet Singh; GM DIC Mushtaq Chaudhary; PO ICDS Mohammed Syed; ADC Vishavjeet Singh; DSWO Varun Chaudhary; DIO Rajinder Digna and other district and sectoral officers were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the

Deputy Commissioner said that the idea behind organising such an event was to provide a dedicated platform of entertainment for senior citizens, enabling them to enjoy an evening of cultural programmes in a relaxed and joyful environment. He stated that the programme is an effort to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of senior citizens to society and to offer them moments of happiness and recreation through such initiatives.

Blankets were also distributed among the senior citizens as a gesture of care by the District Administration.

## Boost to Fisheries Sector: DDC provides ice boxes to fishermen at Kishtwar

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KISHTWAR, MARCH 25:** District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma today inaugurated the distribution of ice boxes among fishermen and fish farmers at a function held here at New DC Office. The ice boxes, procured by the Fisheries Department have been provided under the Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP), an IFAD-supported initiative aimed at strengthening agriculture and allied sectors. Beneficiaries from five blocks of Mugalmaidan, Palmar, Thakrai, Kishtwar and Nagseni received the ice boxes as part of the programme. The initiative focuses on improving post-harvest management by minimizing



spoilage and ensuring hygienic handling of fish during storage and transportation. Notably, the District Level Committee (DLC)

approved 79 applications under the scheme, surpassing the initial target of 74 allotted to the Fisheries Department for the district. This

reflects strong community participation and effective outreach among local fishers. Speaking on the occasion, the DDC highlighted

that the intervention aims to strengthen direct market linkages for traditional fishing communities.

He emphasized that providing essential infrastructure like ice boxes will enhance shelf life, reduce post-harvest losses and enable fishers to secure better prices for their produce. The initiative aligns with JKCI's broader objective of empowering vulnerable and traditional occupational groups, including fishermen and fish farmers, through climate-resilient and market-oriented support mechanisms. The event was attended by ADDC Vinod Kumar Behnal; ACR Idrees lone; AD Fisheries Lal Hussain; CHO Sajid Mustafa; DNO Ayush Dr. Vikram Singh Jamwal; Inspector Fisheries Bashir Ahmed besides other staff from Fisheries and other concerned departments.

## Community Radio Station 88.8 FM "Suno Dil Se" inaugurated at Doda

DDC inspects facility, interacts with team

HT NEWS NETWORK

**DODA, MARCH 25:** Community Radio Station 88.8 FM "Suno Dil Se" has started broadcasting at Doda, after it was inaugurated the other day by District Development Commissioner (DDC) Krishan Lal in the presence of officers from 10 Rashtriya Rifles (RR), Radio Station staff and civil society representatives. The DDC conducted a detailed inspection of the radio station facilities and reviewed its operational setup. He also interacted with the station team, appreciating their efforts in establishing a platform dedicated to community service and local outreach. The DDC highlighted the significance of community radio in promoting education, cultural preservation, community engagement and entertainment. He emphasized that the station will serve as



an effective medium for spreading awareness about government schemes, sharing local stories and providing a voice to the people of the region. He expressed confidence that 88.8 FM "Suno Dil Se" will play a vital role in bridging communication gaps and empowering the local population.

## DC Srinagar hands over Nikshay Mitra cheque to DTO for financial assistance to TB Patients

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR MARCH 25:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, who is also Chairman District Red Cross Society today handed over a cheque amounting to Rs. 2.5 lakh to District Tuberculosis Officer for providing additional nutritional support to Tuberculosis (TB) patients (Nikshay Mitras) under the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan of district Srinagar.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed, Chief Medical Officer, Dr Tahir Sajad, District TB Officer, Dr Abdul Rouf, Block Medical Officer Hazratbal, Dr Abdul Majid, District Nodal Officer, Dr Mudasar and others concerned were present on the



occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the importance of nutritional support as a critical component

of TB treatment and recovery. He stated that the initiative reflects the District Administration's commitment to providing holistic care to all affected individuals and

urged all concerned officials to work with dedication and coordination to strengthen TB care services and improve treatment outcomes across Srinagar district.

The District Tuberculosis Officer expressed his gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner, highlighting the District Administration's continued commitment. He further stated that Rs. 2.31 lakh was provided last year, followed by Rs. 2.5 lakh this year, which will significantly contribute towards achieving better treatment success rates and strengthening TB care in District Srinagar.

This assistance is in addition to Rs. 1,000 per month provided to TB patients during the TB treatment by the Central TB Division.

# Mission SKILL to reshape J&K's skilling landscape, propel economic empowerment: Deputy Chief Minister

Affirms focus on skilled, future-ready workforce for sustainable job opportunities

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MARCH 25:** Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary spearheaded a crucial stakeholders' workshop, "Mission SKILL - Transforming the Skilling Ecosystem," at Jammu's Convention Centre, marking a significant stride towards revolutionizing J&K's skill development landscape.

The high-level event, organized by the Directorate of Skill Development, was aimed to chart a transformative roadmap for the region's skilling ecosystem.

The Deputy Chief Minister, who was the chief guest on the occasion, described Mission SKILL as a transformative and future-oriented initiative aimed at building a unified, demand-driven skilling ecosystem in J&K.

Addressing a gathering of senior officials, industry leaders, academicians and trainees, he highlighted the importance of the mission and emphasized that J&K possesses a significant demographic advantage with over 70 percent of its population in the working-age group.

"Our efforts are to harness this potential effectively through a structured, inclusive and outcome-oriented skilling framework," he said.



He further underlined that Mission SKILL adopts a lifecycle approach to skilling, beginning from school-level exposure to vocational education and extending to technical training, career guidance and lifelong learning opportunities.

"It will help bridge the gap between education and employment by aligning training programmes closely with industry demands," he added.

Speaking in detail about the initiative, the Deputy Chief Minister noted that Mission SKILL aims to benefit lakhs of youth across J&K,

including students, job seekers and the existing workforce.

"Focused attention is being given to integration of vocational education in schools, strengthening career guidance systems, modernization of it is and Polytechnics and promotion of future-ready skills in sectors such as IT, renewable energy, tourism, and modern services," he said.

Emphasizing inclusivity, he reiterated the government's commitment to ensure equal access to opportunities for women, rural youth and marginalized

communities, thereby fostering broad-based economic participation.

The Deputy Chief Minister also stressed the adoption of a digital-first approach with an integrated platform for skill mapping, monitoring, certification and placement, ensuring transparency and real-time tracking of outcomes.

Expressing confidence in the initiative, the Deputy Chief Minister said that Mission SKILL will serve as a cornerstone for youth empowerment and inclusive economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir. He reaffirmed the

government's commitment to build a skilled, capable and future-ready workforce.

Calling for collective action, he urged strong collaboration between the government, industry and educational institutions, stating that such partnerships are essential for building a robust and sustainable skilling ecosystem.

Earlier, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, Secretary, Skill Development Department, highlighted the need for convergence across the departments to ensure optimal utilization of resources.

Among others Owais Ahmed, Director, Skill Development Department; Arun Manhas, Director, Industries and Commerce, Jammu; Arun Gupta, President, Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Rahul Sahai, Chairman, Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) J&K; Harvinder Singh, Director Employment & MD YUVA and Leena Padha, Mission Director, J&K Skill Development Mission besides other industry representatives and academic leaders also shared their perspectives.

The workshop witnessed participation from over 200 stakeholders and 250 trainees, who contributed valuable insights on bridging skill gaps and improving training outcomes.

## Delegations raise development issues with Javed Rana

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, MARCH 25:** Several public delegations from different parts of Jammu today called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana and apprised him of a range of developmental concerns and local demands.



A delegation from R.S. Pura, led by Naresh Choudhary, raised issues related to basic infrastructure and the delivery of essential public services in the area.

Another delegation from Udhampur, led by Abdul Ghani Teli and Shamim Begum also met the Minister and highlighted several local issues with particular focus on inadequate water supply in Qasim Nagar, Rajiv Nagar and adjoining localities. In addition, they brought attention to certain forest-related matters and concerns regarding road connectivity in the region.

Similarly, a delegation from Kathua, led by Talib Choudhary, urged the Minister to strengthen flood protection measures to safeguard the vulnerable areas.

A separate delegation from the Samba-Mansar belt, led by Haji Fareed, highlighted the need to harness the eco-tourism potential of the scenic Mansar region, stressing its importance for local economic development.

The Minister assured the delegations that their genuine concerns would be addressed on priority.

## Secretary Transport inspects ICC Samba; pushes for infrastructure upgrade

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SAMBA, MARCH 25:** Secretary Transport, Avny Lavasa, today conducted an extensive inspection of the Inspection and Certification Centre (ICC), Samba, to review its functioning, infrastructure and availability of basic facilities at the centre.

Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan and Transport Commissioner Vishesh Pal Mahajan accompanied her during the visit.

The Secretary conducted a thorough examination of the building structure and machinery installed at the centre.

She assessed the status of equipment to verify its operational status and compliance with the prescribed technical standards, ensuring that the vehicle fitness testing process is carried out efficiently and in a transparent manner.

Emphasising the importance of adequate public amenities, she directed the concerned officials to ensure that properly functional washrooms and drinking water facilities are made available for the visiting drivers and vehicle owners.

She also instructed the concerned officials to install separate and clearly visible boards for Light Motor Vehicles (LMV) and Heavy Motor Vehicles (HMV) to facilitate smooth functioning and avoid inconvenience to the public.

The Secretary highlighted that the establishment and proper functioning of Inspection & Certification Centres will significantly enhance transparency in the vehicle fitness certification process, thereby increasing public trust and ensuring satisfaction among the vehicle owners.

The visit concluded with firm directions to all the concerned departments to ensure timely redress of the identified issues and maintain high standards of service delivery at the centre.

## DC Kulgam reviews Traffic Decongestion Measures in district

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM, MARCH 25:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, along with SSP Kulgam Anayat Ali Choudhary, today chaired a meeting of officers to review measures for easing traffic congestion in Kulgam town.

During the meeting, the DC took a comprehensive review of traffic management strategies, including identification of congestion-prone stretches and bottlenecks, regulation of roadside parking, removal of encroachments, streamlining of public transport stops/stands,

diversion plans, and regulation of loading and unloading timings for commercial vehicles.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for coordinated efforts among the concerned departments to ensure smooth traffic movement, particularly in busy market areas and major junctions of the town.

He directed the officers to take immediate steps to remove encroachments from footpaths so that pedestrians can move safely and conveniently.

The DC further instructed the concerned departments to intensify enforcement drives against illegal parking and



unauthorized occupation of public spaces that contribute to traffic bottlenecks.

He also emphasized the proper utilization of designated parking areas and asked officers to ensure strict adherence to traffic regulations.

During the meeting, a review of route permits and rationalization of traffic flow in Kulgam town was also carried out to improve the overall traffic management system.

The meeting was attended by the Assistant Regional Transport Officer, DySP Traffic, Tehsildar Kulgam and other concerned officers.

## DIPR Shopian conducts Photo Exhibition at Shopian

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, MARCH 25:** Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR) Shopian today conducted a photo exhibition here at Mini-Secretariat Shopian highlighting the developmental achievements of departments of the district during the year 2025-26.

Additional Deputy commissioner (ADC) Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz inaugurated the Exhibition in presence of Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Shakoor Ahmed Dar, CEO, Bashir Ahmad Shah, CAO, Mohd Rafiq, DIO Shopian, Showkat Hussain and other officers, officials and public.

The exhibition displayed a wide range of photographs depicting development achievements of the departments under various schemes, government welfare programmes and employment interventions,



artistic and cultural traditions, conduct of festivals, events and other important public awareness campaigns and initiatives organised during the year 2025-26.

Officials and public visited the exhibition with keen interest and termed the exhibition informative and inspiring.

## Three-Day Census Training Programme for Phase-I concluded at Town Hall Kupwara

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA, MARCH 25:** Three-day census training programme for Phase-I was today successfully concluded in district Kupwara. The programme was launched by the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara (Principal Census Officer), Shrikant Suse at Town Hall Kupwara. The training sessions were aimed to prepare Charge Officers-Tehsildars, Executive Officers and Census Clerks for the first phase of the Census, namely Household Listing Operations, scheduled for June 2027. The training was led by Joint Director-Census Directorate, Arun Kumar supported by Nodal Officer, Shafi Mir and District Coordinator, Mayur Kumar.

Participants received detailed guidance on training enumerators and supervisors,



creating and managing Household Listing Blocks on the CMMS Portal and preparing Village and Town Directories. The training programme was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner (District Nodal Officer for Census 2027) Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan, ADC Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi, CPO Kupwara (Additional District Census Officer), Parvaiz Ahmad; SDM Lolab, Mudassar Ahmad; Tehsildars/EOs and other concerned officers across the district.

## Bandipora witnesses widespread participation in Vande Mataram Celebrations

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, MARCH 25:** As part of the ongoing celebrations marking 150 years of Vande Mataram, a series of vibrant and patriotic activities were conducted across various institutions in Bandipora district, reflecting widespread public participation and youthful enthusiasm.

On the occasion, Youth Services & Sports (YS&S) Office Bandipora organized a district-wide cycling initiative under the banner of "Vande Mataram," which witnessed active participation from students, staff, and sports lovers across all zones of the district.

The cycling drive aimed to promote physical fitness, environmental awareness, and a strong sense of national pride among the youth. Participants pedaled through different routes, turning

the event into a powerful display of unity, discipline, and patriotic spirit.

In continuation of the celebrations, Government Degree College Hajin organized a Signature Campaign, where students and faculty members enthusiastically participated and pledged their commitment towards national unity and values.

Similarly, NSS Units of HKM Degree College Bandipora organized an awareness rally to highlight the historical significance of Vande Mataram.

The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation of students, NSS volunteers, and faculty members. Carrying placards and raising patriotic slogans, participants spread messages of unity, national pride, and cultural heritage in nearby areas.

Meanwhile, several schools across

the district organized creative and engaging activities to mark the occasion. A cycling event was also held at Higher Secondary School Shahgund under the Vande Mataram programme.

Government Boys High School Ganastan conducted a "Selfie with Lyrics" activity, where students expressed their patriotism through creative participation.

Similar activities were carried out at HSS Izmarg, HSS Gadakhud, GHS Kaloosa, GHSS Aragam, and BMS Nai Basti Chorwan, where students actively participated in selfie campaigns during the singing of Vande Mataram, showcasing enthusiasm and national spirit.

These activities collectively transformed the district into a vibrant hub of patriotic fervour, with students and youth taking a lead in promoting the message of unity, fitness, and national pride.

## Forest Department conducts Plantation Drive at DPL Shopian

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, MARCH 25:** A plantation drive was conducted today at District Police Lines (DPL) Shopian under the flagship initiative "Green J&K Drive 2026" by the Forest Department in collaboration with District Police Shopian. The drive was formally kick-started by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmad Chowdhary, in the presence of Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Shopian, Qamar Rashid Khan, DySP (DAR) Shopian, Mohammad Ashraf along with other senior officers and officials.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from police personnel and forest department staff, who collectively planted a significant number of conifer saplings within the premises of District Police Lines Shopian.

Speaking on the occasion, SSP Shopian emphasized the importance of environmental protection and highlighted the role of such initiatives in combating climate change, improving



air quality, and enhancing the overall ecological balance of the region.

He appreciated the joint efforts of the Police Department and the Forest Department in organizing the drive and encouraged continued participation in such green initiatives. Divisional Forest Officer Shopian in his address, reiterated that such plantation drives will continue in the future as part of sustained efforts to increase green cover across the district. He further

informed that the Forest Department will also undertake free distribution of plant saplings among the general public to encourage community participation in afforestation and environmental conservation activities.

The plantation drive concluded with a pledge by all participants to protect and nurture the planted saplings and to actively contribute towards building a greener and healthier environment for future generations.

HT EDITORIAL

Resurfacing of fresh TB cases in J&K a cause of worry

March 24 is observed as world tuberculosis (TB) day and on this day different functions, awareness programmes, seminars and workshops are held. Like the previous years this year too many such programmes were held in the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir. People were made aware about this disease and they were also sensitized about the precautions that need to be taken in this regard.

It would be in place to mention here that the TB cases have started resurfacing in Jammu & Kashmir over the past few years. For years together Jammu & Kashmir had the distinction of being TB free with no fresh case being reported for many years. However, the situation has changed and thousands of TB cases have come to the fore in the recent past. As on date there are more than 12,500 TB cases in the union territory with more than 7,500 receiving the treatment from the doctors.

Even though districts like Anantnag, Kulgam, Budgam, Pulwama and Shopian in Kashmir have been declared as TB free, the other districts have reported fresh TB cases. Around 12,000 fresh cases of TB were reported during 2025 in Jammu & Kashmir. The resurfacing of the TB cases has somewhat sent shivers down the spine of the masses especially those at the helm of the affairs in the health department. Not long ago the people were ecstatic that Jammu & Kashmir has become TB free, but the joy was short lived.

It seems complacency has crept among the ranks of the people managing the show in the health department and it is due to this reason that fresh TB cases have come up across Jammu & Kashmir. There is a full-fledged tuberculosis cell in the health department and in such a scenario the resurfacing of TB cases is a cause of worry. As the mandate of the tuberculosis cell is to delve into this branch of human health the people running the cell need to be more serious in their working.

It is imperative that a probe is carried out and reasons are found as to how fresh TB cases have come up in different districts of the union territory. Once reasons are ascertained then corrective steps can be taken with people feeling relieved at the end of the day. The TB cell needs to be made more robust and active and clear-cut directions should be issued to the concerned officers.

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Forests: The Green Blanket of the Earth

Forests are the Oxygen Oceans of Our Planet



SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Forests are the oxygen oceans of our planet. Deforestation is not merely the cutting down of trees it is an act of murder, the murder of life itself. Anyone who destroys forests commits a crime against nature, and such acts must be dealt with under strict laws.

The Almighty has blessed us with countless gifts, each serving the welfare of humankind. Yet humans have become selfish and destructive, turning into the very culprits who damage the Earth's natural assets. Forests are not just clusters of trees; they are the lifeline of existence. They provide timber and fodder and act as shields against natural disasters such as flash floods, landslides, and soil erosion.

Deforestation the large scale cutting of trees leads to soil erosion, flash floods, and climate imbalance. It decreases oxygen levels while increasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, accelerating global warming. Forests maintain the essential balance of gases that sustains life a balance that no human innovation can replace.

Every academic subject has its own importance, but when it comes to solving environmental challenges, science holds the key. Through scientific understanding, we can analyze, preserve, and protect the planet's ecosystems effectively.

Unfortunately, some selfish individuals exploit forest resources for personal profit. Forests are not lifeless timberlands they are golden assets of our nation. Our government and forest departments must step beyond office walls to educate citizens through public campaigns, counseling sessions, and awareness drives.

In recent years, I have personally visited forest regions across Budgam, Gulmarg, and Pahalgam. It is heartbreaking to see large scale destruction where once dense greenery thrived all sacrificed to greed.

Forests have long inspired poets, artists, and filmmakers. The lush green leaves, the majestic pines, and the gentle hum of insects reflect nature's unmatched beauty. Forests beautify our Mother



Earth, offer recreation, and refresh the human spirit.

According to recent data, about 7,12,249 sq. km of land in India is under forest cover, including 20,230 sq. km in Jammu and Kashmir. The Pir Panjal range of the Lesser Himalayas, stretching from Himachal Pradesh to Azad Kashmir, is home to diverse flora and fauna, acting as a guardian of biodiversity and ecological wealth.

**Forests for Recreation and Research**  
For centuries, forests have provided spaces for recreation trekking, camping, and mountaineering. They also serve as living laboratories for researchers studying rare herbs, shrubs, and unique ecological patterns.

**Uses and Benefits of Forests**  
Forests maintain ecological balance through food chains and food webs. They provide shelter for wildlife, grazing lands for nomads, and medicinal plants for humans. Communities living near forests depend on them for their livelihood, which must be sustained responsibly.

**Causes of Deforestation**

The major causes of deforestation include smuggling, construction, urbanization, and the demand for timber in various industries. Human interference and negligence remain the primary reasons for ecological imbalance.

**Solutions and Way Forward**

Afforestation planting trees in deforested areas is the most effective solution to deforestation. However, since forests take decades to grow, awareness, strict monitoring, and public participation are essential. The government must conduct regular awareness drives, ensure forest protection through patrolling, and promote community involvement.

**Conclusion**

Deforestation is a crime against life—against air, water, wildlife, and humanity itself. Forests are living treasures, the golden lungs of our Earth. Let us pledge to protect them for the sake of today and future generations.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

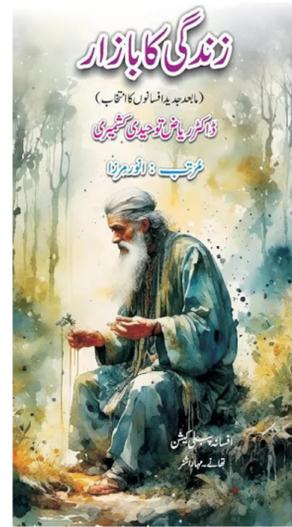
Zindagi Ka Bazar by Dr Riyaz Tawhidi Kashmiri



RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

Among the writers from Kashmir valley who have rendered selfless services to literature earning not only recognition for themselves but also carving a distinct identity in the world of Urdu literature the name of Dr. Riyaz Tawhidi deserves to be written in golden letters. Born in Wadi Pora, Handwara, in the border district of Kupwara, this literary son of the soil has so far presented several short story collections to Urdu literature, notable among them Kalay Pedon Ka Jangal (The Forest of Black Trees) and Kalay Divon Ka Saaya (The Shadow of Black Demons). Recently, his latest short story collection, Zindagi Ka Bazaar (The Marketplace of Life), has come into public view. This collection has been compiled by Anwar Mirza and published by Educational Publishing House, New Delhi. Comprising 220 pages, the book has an attractive and well-designed cover. Dr. Tawhidi has dedicated this collection to the new generation of Urdu readers. Izhar Khizr, hailing from Patna, Bihar, has written a brief yet comprehensive note on this collection. According to him, Dr. Riyaz Tawhidi is not only a fine critic of fiction but also a capable and successful creative writer of Urdu short stories. Prof Qudus Javed has contributed a long and detailed article on Dr. Tawhidi's short story writing and his critical abilities. In his view, Dr. Tawhidi's stories are not confined merely to local themes, rather, the canvas of many of his stories extends to global issues as well. In this article, Prof Qudus Javed has presented a detailed review of dozens of Dr. Tawhidi's short stories. Expressing his happiness, Dr. Riyaz Tawhidi himself states that the stories included in this collection are select-

ed pieces from his first two published collections as well as from a third collection that is currently under compilation. This collection contains a total of forty-one short stories. The Secret of White Light is the opening story of the book. It is based on a philosophical dialogue and successfully attempts to explain the clear distinctions between light, illumination, the original, and the copy, and how a philosopher can make the most complex ideas understandable to an ordinary person. David Planet is a science-fiction story included in this collection. It revolves around David, a twenty-year-old young scientist. He succeeds in creating a man-made world established on a distant planet far away from Earth, where life is comfortable and equipped with every luxury. They even defeat death and establish a realm of eternal life. However, just when they are engrossed in celebrating their success, the entire system collapses in an instant. Cosmic rays spread everywhere and robots begin to melt. Through this fiction, the negative consequences of unnatural human interference in the natural system are presented as a powerful reaction. Global Lie is a resistance story that narrates, in a complete and forceful manner, the misdeeds of powerful beasts of the present age who, in the name of democracy, are strangling weak and helpless nations. Stone-Pelter portrays what violence truly means and how countless people continue to suffer oppression and brutality for years because of it. The story becomes even more shocking when innocent and blameless individuals are subjected to cruelty and torture under the cover of lies. The Lost Capital is one of the most painful and heart-rending stories of the collection. It deals with the insensitivity and disobedience of children toward their parents in the contemporary era. Ghafar Khan lies alone in a hospital and is abandoned even in his final moments of life, despite the fact that his son whom he had raised with great care and affection had become a renowned surgeon abroad. Yet, in spite



of all this, the son chose to remain indifferent to his father. Depression exposes the animalistic traits of a driver and a conductor who, for decades, have subjected passengers traveling in a dilapidated and rusted bus to cruelty and violence, even sending many of them into eternal sleep. Homeland vividly depicts the situation in valley when, during the 1990s, circumstances took a drastic turn. The once pleasant and joyful atmosphere was poisoned, and the age-old heritage of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity was uprooted. The story also gives voice to astonishing revelations based on truth and ground realities. Thorns of the Babool Tree is a story that powerfully reflects flawed political attitudes and the misuse of authority by political leaders. Often, despite everything being fair and transparent, influential individuals subject honest and sincere people to various forms of torment. This bitter reality emerges prominently in the story. Never Say Goodbye is a romantic tale, and any amount of praise for it would be insufficient. Written in a simple and lucid language, the story leaves a deep impact on the

reader by showing how undue parental interference separates a couple forever, and how, later in life, their inability to adjust leaves them in perpetual sorrow. The Forest of Black Trees, the title story of Dr. Riyaz Tawhidi's first collection, depicts how the forest of black trees made human lives unbearable. As evening fell, anyone who thought of stepping outside would hesitate a thousand times, because for decades the settlement had been subjected to night raids of fire and destruction. This suffering was portrayed as a punishment for no crime but old age. The Lost Graveyard is crafted in such a way that it brings before the reader's eyes that era of valley when, due to violence, youths, elderly people, children, and even women were targeted and put to eternal sleep. As a result, thousands of women were widowed and millions of children were forced to live lives of orphanhood. Flowers of Mercy is another poignant story that highlights an important social issue. Often, people today feel unhappy at the birth of daughters, yet later it is daughters who, more than sons, bring joy to their parents' hearts through their achievements a reality beautifully portrayed in this story. The Throat-Cutter reflects how cursing honest and simple traders and the inhuman selfishness of doctors have become a norm in today's society. The story deeply affects the reader by portraying how the butcher respected doctors, and how, in return, the doctors treated him revealing a heart-shaking tale. Dr. Riyaz Tawhidi is richly endowed with creative abilities, and he presents his ideas in his stories with maturity and refined expression. His style is unique and graceful, something that readers can clearly experience through his narratives. May God grant him the strength to continue serving Urdu literature further. I humbly request readers to read this short story collection and honor the author with their valuable and golden opinions.

Writer is a columnist based in Qazigund Kashmir

# Ali Shaida's The Echoes of New Dawn: Sahitya Akademi Award 2025



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

The Sahitya Akademi Award elevates Kashmiri literature to national visibility, affirming its place alongside India's diverse linguistic traditions. His success encourages younger Kashmiri poets to pursue their craft with confidence, knowing their voices can achieve recognition. Ali Shaida's *The Echoes of New Dawn* is not escapist poetry but a grounded reflection of lived realities. It functions simultaneously as a mirror—capturing the struggles of Kashmiri life—and a lamp—illuminating paths of hope and renewal. The interplay of past and future, memory and aspiration, sorrow and resilience, makes the collection a profound contribution to Kashmiri literature. Its recognition by the Sahitya Akademi underscores the importance of regional voices in shaping India's literary landscape. In essence, *Najdavaneky Pot Aalav* is a poetic testament to the endurance of hope, the preservation of cultural identity, and the transformative power of literature. It resonates not only with Kashmiri readers but with anyone who has experienced struggle and longs for renewal.

Ali Mohammad Reshi, popularly known as Ali Shaida, from Nipora in Anantnag, has emerged as one of the most significant voices in contemporary Kashmiri literature, and his recognition with the Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 for his poetry collection *Najdavaneky Pot Aalav* (*The Echoes of New Dawn*) is not only a personal triumph but also a cultural milestone for Kashmiri poetry. To understand the magnitude of this achievement, one must first appreciate the role of poetry in Kashmiri society, where verse has long been a medium of resistance, identity, and spiritual reflection. Kashmiri poets, from Lal Ded to Habba Khatoon, have historically used poetry to articulate the collective consciousness of their people, blending mysticism, philosophy, and lived experience into lyrical expression. Ali Shaida's work continues this tradition while simultaneously pushing it into new directions, reflecting the anxieties, aspirations, and resilience of a generation navigating the complexities of modern Kashmir. His collection *Najdavaneky Pot Aalav* is not merely a set of poems but a testament to the endurance of hope in

times of uncertainty, a reminder that even amidst turbulence, the human spirit seeks renewal and dawn. The award-winning collection, published in 2022, is his sixth book in Kashmiri. The book features a mix of ghazals, nazms, and prose poetry—which he says is gaining global popularity—as well as rubaiyat and other forms, including newer genres such as Satri According to Ali Shaida, the work introduces new themes and seeks to give Kashmiri poetry a modern direction. "This book carries new themes and here he tried to give a new direction to Kashmiri poetry so that it can compete with other languages. The poetic collection experiments with new metaphors, vocabulary, and techniques while also retaining elements of poetic heritage. Nazm. The recognition comes after years of sustained effort of a Kashmiri author. Obviously it brings great happiness not only for the writer but for all Kashmiri readers who those across all states of India. The book takes years of his hard work and dedication.

Ali Shaida's journey from Nipora, a village in Anantnag, to national recognition is emblematic of the power of literature to transcend geographical and political boundaries. Growing up in a region often marked by conflict, he absorbed the rhythms of Kashmiri life, the beauty of its landscapes, and the struggles of its people, all of which permeate his poetry. His verses are deeply rooted in the Kashmiri language, which itself carries centuries of cultural memory, and by writing in Kashmiri he reinforces the vitality of a language that has often been marginalized in broader literary discourse. The Sahitya Akademi Award, one of India's most prestigious literary honors, validates not only his individual talent but also the importance of Kashmiri literature in the national imagination. It signals recognition of a voice that speaks from the periphery yet resonates universally, reminding readers across India and beyond that the Kashmiri experience is integral to the mosaic of Indian culture.

The title of his award-winning collection, *Najdavaneky Pot Aalav* or *The Echoes of New Dawn*, encapsulates the thematic essence of his poetry. Dawn, in literary symbolism, often represents renewal, hope, and the promise of change, while echoes suggest continuity, memory, and reverberation of past voices. Together, they create a dialectic between past and future, between memory and aspiration, which is central to the Kashmiri condition. His poems are not escapist fantasies but grounded reflections that acknowledge pain while insisting on the possibility of transformation. They echo the voices of those who came before

him, yet they also announce a new dawn, a new sensibility that seeks to reconcile tradition with modernity, despair with resilience. In this way, Ali Shaida's poetry becomes both a mirror and a lamp: it reflects the realities of his society while illuminating paths toward hope.

The Sahitya Akademi Award is significant because it is conferred by India's National Academy of Letters, an institution dedicated to promoting and recognizing literary excellence across the country's diverse languages. For Kashmiri literature, which has often struggled for visibility in the national literary landscape, this award is a moment of affirmation. It places Kashmiri poetry alongside works in Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Urdu, and other languages, asserting its rightful place in the multilingual fabric of Indian literature. For Ali Shaida personally, the award is a recognition of years of dedication to his craft, of his ability to articulate the ineffable emotions of his people, and of his courage to write in a language that carries both beauty and burden. It is also a reminder that literature can serve as a bridge, connecting communities through shared human experiences even when political realities threaten division.

Ali Shaida's poetry is characterized by its lyrical intensity, its rootedness in Kashmiri culture, and its openness to universal themes. He writes of love, loss, longing, and resilience, but always with a sensitivity to the particularities of Kashmiri life. His imagery often draws from the natural beauty of the valley—the rivers, mountains, and gardens that have inspired poets for centuries—but he juxtaposes this beauty with the harsh realities of conflict, displacement, and uncertainty. In doing so, he creates a tension that is both aesthetic and ethical, compelling readers to confront the contradictions of life in Kashmir. His language is rich yet accessible, weaving together traditional Kashmiri idioms with contemporary sensibilities, making his work resonate with both older and younger generations. This ability to speak across generational divides is one of the hallmarks of his success, as it ensures that his poetry is not confined to academic circles but lives in the hearts of ordinary readers.

The recognition of Ali Shaida also highlights the resilience of Kashmiri literary culture. Despite political turmoil, censorship, and marginalization, Kashmiri writers have continued to produce works of profound beauty and significance. The Sahitya Akademi Award serves as a reminder that literature from conflict zones is not merely about documenting suffering but also about asserting identity, preserving language, and imagining futures. Ali Shaida's *Najdavaneky Pot Aalav* is a prime

example of this, as it does not reduce Kashmir to a site of tragedy but elevates it as a source of creativity, wisdom, and hope. His poetry insists that even in the darkest of times, dawn is possible, and that echoes of resilience can reverberate across generations.

The impact of Ali Shaida's recognition extends beyond literature. It inspires young Kashmiri writers to pursue their craft with confidence, knowing that their voices can be heard and valued at the national level. It encourages readers across India to engage with Kashmiri literature, fostering empathy and understanding. It also challenges policymakers and cultural institutions to support regional languages and literatures, recognizing that diversity is the strength of India's cultural heritage. In this sense, the award is not just a personal accolade but a collective victory for Kashmiri culture and for the idea of India as a pluralistic society. Ali Shaida's achievement also invites reflection on the role of poetry in contemporary society. In an age dominated by digital media, instant communication, and political polarization, poetry may seem marginal, yet it continues to offer a space for reflection, empathy, and imagination. His work demonstrates that poetry can still move hearts, challenge minds, and inspire change. It reminds us that literature is not a luxury but a necessity, a way of making sense of the world and of ourselves. By winning the Sahitya Akademi Award, Ali Shaida has reaffirmed the relevance of poetry in the twenty-first century, showing that even in times of noise and distraction, the quiet power of verse can resonate deeply.

The story of Ali Shaida is also a story of perseverance. Coming from a small village, writing in a language often overlooked, and addressing themes that are politically sensitive, he faced numerous challenges. Yet he remained committed to his art, believing in the power of words to heal, to connect, and to inspire. His success is a testament to the fact that true literature does not depend on market trends or political approval but on authenticity, courage, and resonance. It is a reminder to all aspiring writers that sincerity of expression and dedication to craft can eventually find recognition, even against odds. In conclusion, the awarding of the Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 to Ali Mohammad Reshi, popularly known as Ali Shaida, for his poetry collection *Najdavaneky Pot Aalav* (*The Echoes of New Dawn*) is a landmark moment in Kashmiri literature and Indian literary culture at large. It celebrates the voice of a poet who has captured the essence of his people's struggles and

hopes, who has woven the beauty of his land with the complexities of its history, and who has insisted on the possibility of renewal amidst adversity.

Ali Shaida's *The Echoes of New Dawn* (*Najdavaneky Pot Aalav*) is a deeply symbolic Kashmiri poetry collection that blends themes of resilience, memory, and hope, earning him the Sahitya Akademi Award 2025. It stands out for its lyrical exploration of Kashmir's cultural identity while envisioning renewal amidst conflict and uncertainty. The metaphor of "dawn" represents the possibility of transformation, suggesting that even after prolonged darkness, light and renewal are inevitable. The "echoes" signify continuity, the reverberation of past voices, and the persistence of cultural identity despite challenges. His verses acknowledge the pain of Kashmir's socio-political realities but refuse to reduce the region to despair, instead emphasizing endurance and the human spirit's ability to rise. Shaida draws heavily on Kashmiri landscapes—rivers, mountains, gardens—as metaphors for both beauty and fragility, juxtaposing natural serenity with human turmoil. Written in Kashmiri, the collection reinforces the vitality of a language often marginalized in mainstream Indian literature. Rich, layered imagery connects personal emotions with collective experiences, making the poems resonate across generations. A balance of lament and optimism, where sorrow is acknowledged but never allowed to eclipse the possibility of dawn. By writing in Kashmiri, Shaida strengthens cultural continuity and asserts the language's relevance in modern literary discourse.

His poetry is both deeply Kashmiri and profoundly human, reminding us that literature transcends boundaries and speaks to universal emotions. The award is not only a recognition of his talent but also an affirmation of the importance of Kashmiri language and culture in the broader narrative of India. As readers engage with his work, they will find themselves not only moved by his words but also inspired to reflect on their own lives, their own dawns, and their own echoes. In this way, Ali Shaida's achievement is not just a personal triumph but a gift to all who believe in the power of poetry to illuminate the human condition.

**International Dickens Medal Awardee writer and poet is an International Visiting Professor and Retd Head Post Graduate Dept of English Dum Dum Motijheel College . He may be mailed at profratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com**

## My Favourite Game - Football



■ SYEDA AZKA QAZI

In this world, there are many games like cricket, hockey, basketball, and kho-kho, but my favourite game is football.

Football is a game played between two teams. In this game, there are 11 players on each team. Football is an outdoor game.

The winning team is the one that scores more goals. In football, there are many spectators who watch the match.

I love football so much because it is a fun and exciting game. In football, players kick the ball to score goals. The game is played on a big ground called a field. Football makes us strong and healthy. Many children love to play football. Football is one of the most popular games in the world. In my village Delina famous

football players have been Qazi Mushtaq, Mohammad Rajab and Mohammad Ashraf etc. My favorite footballer is Cristiano Ronaldo because he is a good footballer. My brother Qazi Saheem is a good footballer he taught me football.

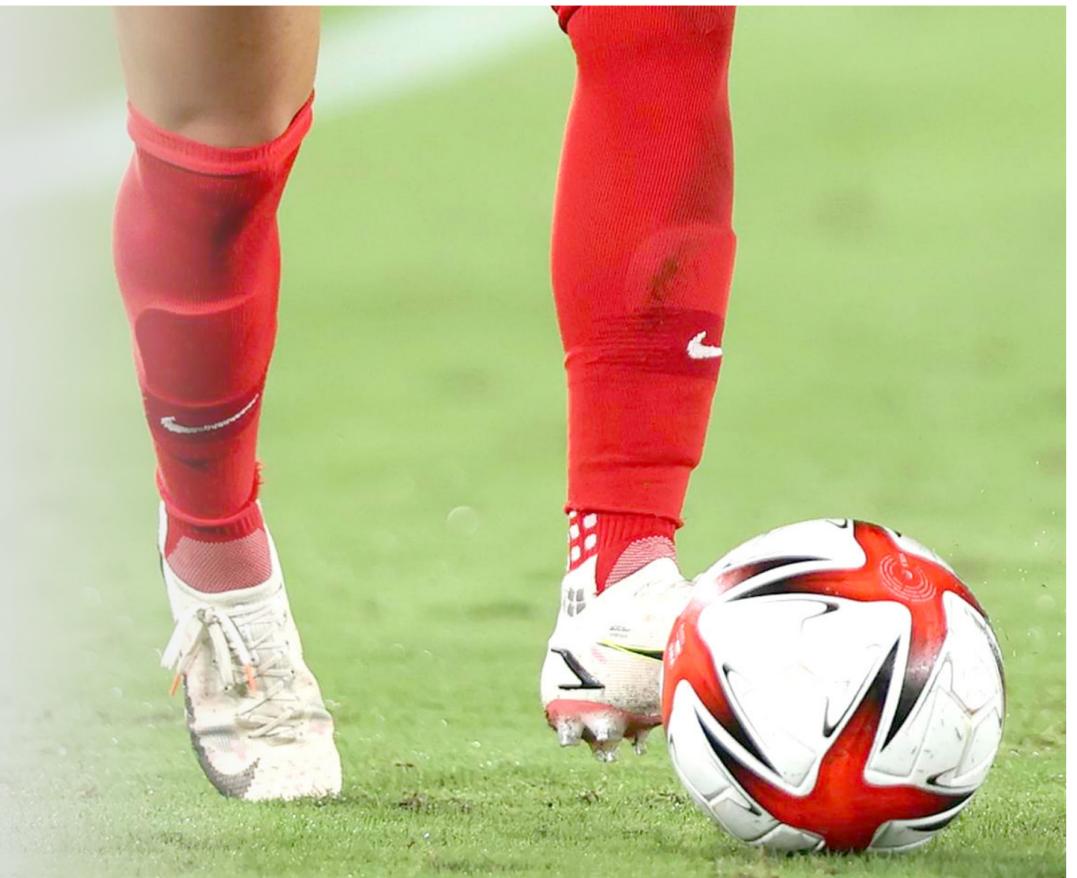
My hobby is to play football. I want to play at the national level because it is a good sport.

### Top 10 football plays in world are :

- Cristiano Ronaldo
- Lionel Messi
- Neymar Jr.
- Vinicius Jr.
- Karim Benzema
- Kevin De Bruyne
- Jude Bellingham
- Mohamed Salah
- Erling Haaland
- Kylian Mbappé.

I hope there is a football academy in my village so that I can learn this game in a better way.

**The author study in Class 3rd in Saint Joseph's Hr Sec School Baramulla**



# Lightweight Face Cream for Summer



■ SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

The skincare landscape has evolved significantly over the past decade, with consumers increasingly seeking formulations without the heaviness of traditional moisturisers, especially during the summer season, to keep their skin happy, hydrated and protected.

Lightweight, water-based, or gel-based face creams are ideal for hot and humid weather as they hydrate without clogging pores, offer a non-greasy feel, and manage excessive sebum in high heat.

Lightweight face creams represent this shift toward balanced, efficacious skincare that delivers results without compromising comfort or skin health.

Lightweight face cream has become a staple for those who want hydrated, comfortable skin, especially for oily or combination skin.

Lightweight face creams provide non-greasy, fast-absorbing hydration, making them ideal for daily use during the summer season when the heat and humidity can leave you sweaty and shiny.

These weightless creams are designed to sink into your skin quickly while providing substantial nourishment.

Besides nourishment, these also work well with make-up to prevent pilling



and caking.

These are suitable across multiple skin types that deliver results without sitting on the surface, unlike their heavier counterparts.

These formulations contain Hyaluronic acid, ceramides, and plant extracts that absorb quickly without leaving you greasy and work well under makeup.

While choosing a lightweight face

cream, opt for fast-absorbing, non-comedogenic formulas that suit your skin type, such as gel-based for oily skin or light lotions for dry skin. Look for ingredients like hyaluronic acid, glycerin, and ceramides. Opt for oil-free, alcohol-free options, especially for sensitive skin.

Most moisturisers consist of an emollient, a humectant, and an occlusive.

Emollients help repair the skin's natural barrier, humectants absorb water into the skin, and occlusive agents help form a layer on the surface of our skin.

Since lightweight moisturisers are quick-absorbing, they can be easily layered with other skincare products/makeup without interfering with their performance.

In the summer, when the warmer

temperature makes your skin produce more oil, watery lotions and gels are perfect to counteract oily skin.

Homemade skincare creams always work because they don't contain any chemicals or harsh additives. It will be far better than a store-bought face cream, and you shall not have to struggle with any side effects. Here are a few tips to make Homemade Light Face Creams using natural ingredients.

Combine 1 tbsp shea butter, 2 tbsp aloe vera gel, and a few drops of jojoba oil. Whip it to make a paste of natural consistency and store it in the refrigerator.

Mix the lemon juice and yoghurt. Add 1 tablespoon of lemon juice and 1 cup of plain, organic yoghurt to a glass jar. Add a few drops of rose water, stir well and refrigerate it. Apply the cream in the evening.

Take 1 tbsp Aloe Vera Gel, 1/2 tsp Coconut Oil, 1/2 tsp Jojoba Oil and 2-3 drops Tea Tree oil.

Melt the coconut oil on low flame in double boiler. Add Aloe vera gel and stir well to make a creamy light texture.

Stir in the liquid oil and optional essential oils. Store in a refrigerator and use it within two weeks for best results.

Add 1 cup Olive Oil, 1/4 cup Cocoa Butter, 3tbsp. Beeswax, 2tbsp pomegranate seed oil, 2 tsp Vitamin E oil, 1/2 cup Rosewater and 15 drops tea tree oil in a medium glass jar and blend them to make a cream of thick consistency. Place the jar in the refrigerator and use it daily.

**The author is international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India.**

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JOIN FACEBOOK LIVE  
WITH Dr.SUMIT , Mr.TURAB, Former Sr. Audiologist at Max Hospital Saket ,Delhi  
@ Kifayatkifi  
🕒 8:00PM On January 18<sup>th</sup> , Sunday

# PUF, Civil Society Lead Peaceful Demonstration in Kupwara; Meet DC with Memorandum



DR. AB QAYOOM

**KUPWARA, MAR 25:** A large number of pensioners from across District Kupwara, accompanied by senior members of civil society, assembled at the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) Office complex on Wednesday morning to stage a peaceful protest highlighting their long-pending demands. The gathering commenced at around 10:00 AM, with participants holding a silent and disciplined protest within the premises of the DC office. The protest was organized under the banner of Pensioners United Front (PUF) Kupwara in coordination with Jammu & Kashmir Civil Society Forum (JKCSF). On the occasion, office

bearers of JKLPUF and JKCSF Kupwara, in the presence of several state and provincial-level leaders, submitted a detailed memorandum addressed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India through the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara. The memorandum outlined key concerns of pensioners and urged the government to safeguard their rights and welfare. The protesting pensioners primarily demanded enhancement of medical allowances, implementation of the 8th Pay Commission benefits, and other welfare measures aimed at improving the living standards of senior citizens. Following the submission of the memorandum, the protest concluded peacefully. The core com-

mittee members appreciated the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara for his receptive approach and positive response towards the issues faced by senior citizens in the district. The protest was led by senior district leadership, including Provincial President Mir Fayaz, District President PUF Abdul Ahad Bhat, District President CSF Ghulam Hassan Malik, Press Secretary Syed Maharaj-ud-Din Geelani, Naib Sadar CSF Bashir Ahmad Shah, Senior Naib Sadar PUF Ghulam Rasool Bhat, Convenor Ajaz Ahmad Mir, Accountant Haji Abdul Bhat, Organiser Shaikh Hussain, Syed Manzoor Geelani, Syed Meraj Shah, Firdous Ahmad Wani, Ishfaq Ahmad Lone, Syed Nazim-ud-Din, and several others. The protest remained entirely peaceful and orderly, reflecting the disciplined approach of the pensioners in voicing their genuine concerns.

## Public Notice

I, Meema Begum, hereby inform the general public that I am applying for the issuance of a birth certificate of my child, whose details are as follows:  
Name: Rehab Manzoor  
Father's Name: Manzoor Tahir Qadri  
Date of Birth: 04-03-2014  
Address: Bubernagh Kupwara  
Claimant: Meema Begum (Mother of Rehab Manzoor)  
If any person has any objection regarding the issuance of the said birth certificate, he/she may report to the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

## Public Notice

I have changed my name from Tawheed Hassan Bhat to Tawheed Hasan Bhat. Henceforth, I shall be known as Tawheed Hasan Bhat for all purposes.  
If anyone has any objection to this name change, he/she may contact the Passport Office Srinagar within 7 days from the publication of this notice. After the expiry of 7 days, no objection shall be entertained.

## Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Naib Tehsildar, Achabal Anantnag

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that Imtiaz Ahmad Bhat, son of Ali Mohammad Bhat, resident of Kawari Gam, District Anantnag, Jammu & Kashmir, has applied for issuance of an RBA (Resident of Backward Area) Certificate.

If anybody has any objection regarding the issuance of the said certificate, he/she may file the objection in writing before this office within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, the case shall be processed as per rules.

Naib Tehsildar Achabal, Anantnag

## Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Naib Tehsildar, Achabal Anantnag

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that Mahki Javed, Tabassum Javed and Misba Javed, daughters of Javed Ahmad Bhat, residents of Kawari Gam, District Anantnag, Jammu & Kashmir, have applied for issuance of RBA (Resident of Backward Area) Certificates.

If anybody has any objection regarding the issuance of the said certificates, he/she may file the objection in writing before this office within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, the case shall be processed as per rules.

Naib Tehsildar Achabal, Anantnag

## Public Notice

I, Syed Zubair Ellahi Shah, resident of House No. 7, Lane D, Habib Colony, Baghaat, Srinagar, Kashmir, hereby declare that the name of my ward previously recorded as Syed Ibrahim Shah in the school records of class LKG Blue in Kashmir Valley School, Humhama, is hereby changed to Syed Hasaf Shah, S/o Syed Zubair Ellahi Shah. Henceforth, he shall be known and recognized by the name Syed Hasaf Shah for all purposes including school and official records. If any person has any objection to the above change of name, he/she may approach the office of the Principal of Kashmir Valley School, Humhama within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

## Public Notice

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

## Voter List Of Jammu And Kashmir Swimming Association (Regd.)

### PRESS RELEASE

It is information for all that General Body Elections of JAMMU AND KASHMIR SWIMMING ASSOCIATION (Regd.) is scheduled to be held in the month of April 2026 under the proper monitoring and supervision of J&K Sports Council and Swimming federation of India. The voter list for nomination of office bearers of JAMMU AND KASHMIR SWIMMING ASSOCIATION (Regd.) has been framed accordingly which are as under. (List of 66 members has been attached with it).

If anybody having any objection for the above framed voter list shall submit his/her objections within 7 days from the date of this notice published in newspaper on the below mentioned address. The objections submitted after the due date shall not be entertained. Address: Mrs. Anshuja Tak, Advocate Returning Officer / Election Incharge JAMMU AND KASHMIR SWIMMING ASSOCIATION (Regd.) office: above J&K Bank ATM, Near D.C. office, wazarat Road Jammu 180001 ph: 9419195331 email: anshuja@yahoo.com

S. No.	Name	Parentage	Address	Name of District	Profession
1.	Sh. Bharat Kumar Sharma (Sports Person)	S/o Shiv Kumar Sharma	H.No. 601-A, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Govt. Servant
2.	Sh. Parkash Singh Jasrotia (Sports Person)	S/o Thakar Lal Singh	H.No. 10, Sec-D, Sainik Colony Chowadhi, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Govt. Servant
3.	Mrs. Babita Rani (Sports Women)	W/o Deep Singh	H.No. 161, Mohalla Jindrahia Pacca Danga, Jammu-180001	Jammu	Swimming Coach
4.	Sh. Ram Rattan Sharma (Sports Person)	S/o Shiv Kumar Sharma	Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Govt. Officer
5.	S. Jagbir Singh Soodan (Sports Person)	S/o Lehna Singh	H.No. 10, Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Business
6.	Sh. Shanker Singh Kotwal	S/o Sunder Lal Kotwal	H.No. 25A, Lane No 6, Karan Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Govt. Officer
7.	S. Amarjeet Singh (Sports person)	S/o Harbans Singh	H.No. 80, Exchange Road, Jammu-180001	Jammu	Business
8.	Sh. Darshan Singh (Sports person)	S/o Gian Chand	H.No. 66/4, Nanak Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Business
9.	Sh. Rajinder Mattoo	S/o Janki Nath Mattoo	H.No. 28-B, Bhagwati Nagar, Vinayak Bazar, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Govt. Servant
10.	Peer Rafiq Ahmed	S/o Pir Abdul Gani	Taj House Gagribal Road, Bachpora, Dalgate, Srinagar	Srinagar	Retd. Govt. Servant
11.	S. Navneet Singh	S/o Kulwant Singh	236, Shastri Nagar	Jammu	Business
12.	Peer Mohd. Amin (Sports Person)	S/o Abdul Aziz Peer	153, Ghat No 9 Dal Lake Srinagar	Srinagar	Voluntary Retirement (Govt. Servant)
13.	Sh. Shashi Bhushan Sharma (Sports Person)	S/o Bishambar Lal	158, Ward No. 4, Kamakhan Poonch - 185101	Poonch	Business
14.	Sh. Vikas Mahajan	S/o Vijay Kumar	H.No. 229, Krishna Nagar, Canal Road	Jammu	Business
15.	Sh. Govind Singh (Sports Person)	S/o Rajinder Singh	Mandi Thalora, Samba-184121	Samba	Retd. Servant
16.	Sh. Rohit Attri (Sports Person)	S/o Om Parkash Attri	Mansar, Mandi, Samba - 184121	Samba	Business
17.	Sh. Sham Singh (Sports Person)	S/o Rashpal Singh	Mandi Thalora, Samba	Samba	Sports Coach
18.	Sh. Ajay Kumar (Sports Person)	S/o Anant Ram	Ward No 10, Budhwari Samba-184121	Samba	Business
19.	Jb. Mukhtar Ahmed Wani	S/o Ghulam Ahmad	Haft Yarbal Safakadal SR Road Gunj, Srinagar-190002	Srinagar	Business
20.	Sdr. Hardeep Kour (Sports Women)	W/o Mohinder Singh	H.No. 9, Canal Road, Jammu	Jammu	Housewife
21.	Mrs. Parul Gupta (Sports Women)	W/o Anshu Gupta	Natika Lane, Talab Tillo, Jammu	Jammu	Housewife
22.	Ms. Shivalki Bhagat (Sports Women)	D/o Pritam Singh	Rahi Duga, Rahi Chanichinta Doda-182222	Doda	Sports Women
23.	Sh. Kapil Dev Talwar	S/o Kamal Gupta	23-A, Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Business
24.	Sh. Sunny Chib	S/o Vijay Chib	H.No. 83, Ashok Nagar, Vinayak Bazar, Jammu-180016	Jammu	Business
25.	Sh. Atul Verma	S/o Suresh Verma	S-C Green Belt Gandhi Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Business
26.	S. Iqbal Singh	S/o Harpal Singh	H.No. ww3200, Residency Road, Jammu	Jammu	Business
27.	S. Jamroth Singh (Sports Person)	S/o Ranbir Singh	Flat No 102, Aeropera Airport, Sec-1, A, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Officer
28.	Sh. Sachin Gupta	S/o Yash Pal Gupta	H.No. 123 Near B.N Hospital Gardeb Avenue, Talab Tillo, Jammu	Jammu	Business
29.	S. Ramandeep Singh Soodan	S/o Jagbir Singh	10, Bhagwati Nagar, Canal road, Jammu	Jammu	Business
30.	Sh. Balbir Singh Charak (Sports Person)	S/o Bachter Singh	H.No. 719, Sec-C, Sainik Colony, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Bank Manager
31.	Sh. Jangvir Singh (Sports Person)	S/o Gurjant Singh	Mandi Tholoran Samba	Samba	Sports Person
32.	Sh. Lakhvinder Manhas	S/o Suram Singh Manhas	H.No. 139, Vikram Chowk, Jammu	Jammu	Business
33.	Ms. Mannat Verma (Sports Women)	D/o Anil Verma	Bharat Nagar Rehari Colony, Jammu	Jammu	Sports Women
34.	Abdul Quayam (Sports Person)	S/o Gh. Hassan Pir	12, Ward No. 6, Upper Ashpore Sopore	Sopore	Retd. Officer
35.	Kashmir Parihar	S/o Faqir Chand Parihar	F-326 Shakti Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Retd. Officer
36.	Kuldeep Singh (Sports Person)	S/o Ranjeet Singh	Nandihalora Samba-184121	Samba	Business
37.	Suresh Singh (Sports Person)	S/o Jaimal Singh	Mandi Thalora, Samba-184121	Samba	Sports Coach
38.	Bandana Jasrotia (Sports Women)	W/o Arjun Singh	Ward No. 10, Shiv Nagar, Kathua-184101	Kathua	Sports Women
39.	Jatinder Singh Rainu (Sports Person)	S/o Waryam Singh	H.No. 11, 1st Floor, New Mohinder Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Business
40.	Raman Gupta	S/o Ravinder Gupta	H.No. 224, Shastri Nagar, Jammu	Jammu	Business
41.	Abhivandan Tilk	S/o T.R Gupta	H.No. 516, Sec-4, Channi Himmat, Jammu	Jammu	Business
42.	Rajinder Kumar Bakshi	S/o Kashi Ram Bakshi	121-B, Lane No. 3, Janki Vihar, Old Janipur, Janipur	Jammu	Retd. Servant
43.	Vikas Thaper (Sports Person)	S/o Suresh Thaper	H.No. 124, Shopping Centre, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu-180001	Jammu	Business
44.	Anchal Singh	S/o K. Tara Mani	Draj Kotranka, Draj, Rajouri	Rajouri	Business
45.	Inderjeet Sharma	S/o Ved Parkash	H.No. 2-Swari, Rajouri-185132	Rajouri	Business
46.	Vikram Singh	S/o Parkash Singh	Rampur Resort, Vikram Chowk, Jammu	Jammu	Business
47.	Arun Singh Manhas	S/o Faqir Singh	H.No. 260, Vikram Chowk, Jammu	Jammu	Business
48.	Harish Sambyal	S/o Surjeet Singh	Nandi Thalora, Samba-184121	Samba	Business
49.	Hilal Ahmed Tantray	S/o Bashir Ahmed Tantray	Duder Mama Ganderbal New Golden Rose, Srinagar	Srinagar	Business
50.	Gurcharan Singh	S/o Kehar Singh	Ward No 2, H.No. 272, Kamsar, Poonch-185101	Poonch	Business
51.	Ranjit Singh	S/o Mohinder Singh	Karalian Ajot Poonch	Poonch	Business
52.	Hardeep Singh	S/o Mehboob Singh	Ward No 9, Kathua Near Foot Bridge-184101	Kathua	Business
53.	Kiran Jamwal (Sports Women)	W/o Krishan Singh	Ward No. 16, Basohli, Mohalla Kathua	Kathua	Sports Coach
54.	Sumit Kumar	S/o Prem Lal	Near Govt. Primary School, Jangral, Kathua	Kathua	Business
55.	Bhushan Ragwanshi (Sports Person)	S/o Sh. Sukhdev	Near primary School Kathua-184151	Kathua	Sports Person
56.	Ms. Arifa Jan (Sports Women)	W/o Farooq Ahmed	Manasbal	Srinagar	Housewife
57.	Bilal Ahmed Malla	S/o Mohd. Akbar	Gulambagh, Patter Mohalla, Manasbal	Srinagar	Business
58.	Mazid Bashir Malik	S/o Bashir Ahmed Malik	Tellyam Sopore-193201	Sopore	Business
59.	Irfan Ali	S/o Ali Mohammad	Karan Nagar, Srinagar	Srinagar	Business
60.	Nazeem Ahmed Peer	S/o Nazir Ahmed Peer	H.No. 153 A/B Karpura Gath N o. 9, Near Park Hotel Dal Lake, Srinagar	Srinagar	Business
61.	Faizan Shameem Bhat	S/o Shameem Ahmed Bhat	Fatehpura, Baramulla- 193101	Baramulla	Business
62.	Khazir Mohammed Ganie	Abdul Samad Ganai	Rafiabad, Baramulla-193101	Baramulla	Business
63.	Feroz Ahmad Tantray	Abdul Jabbar Tantray	Kralpora, Mantrigam, Bandipora	Bandipora	Business
64.	Malik Anaytullah	Bashir Ahmed Malik	Pazalpora, Bandipora	Bandipora	Business
65.	Mohd. Ibrahim Bhat	Abdul Ahad Bhat	Chammohalla, Teki Pora, Kupwara-193223	Kupwara	Business
66.	Wasim Raja Bhat	Wali Mohammad Bhat	Hari Pora, Langet, PO Langate, Distt. Kupwara-193302	Kupwara	Business

Sd/- General Secretary  
J&K Swimming Association, Jammu

## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PW(R&B) MECHANICAL DIVISION SOUTH KASHMIR (NOTICE INVITING TENDERS)

**E-NIT NO: 46 OF R&B/MDSK/2025-26 | DATED: 23 / 03 /2026**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited in two-cover system (Technical and Financial) on Percentage basis from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) / Experienced firms / Authorized dealers of OEMs/ eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the below mentioned work:

S.No	Name of Work	T.D Cost (Rs)	E/M (Rs)	Time
1	(A). Construction of Lift Shafts at Transit Accommodation for Kashmiri Migrant Employees at Shangus Anantnag And (B). Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 20 No's (G+3) 05-Passenger Customized MRL lifts at Transit Accommodation Shangus Anantnag.	8500/-	1484000/-	06 Months

**Estimated Cost (Rs.): Advertised cost=₹742 lacs (Amount without GST=628.81 lacs, GST Amount=113.1 9 lacs) A(Civil): 264.25 lacs**

**Tender Opening Authority: The Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Department South Kashmir**  
Position of Funds: Available with intending department Position of AAA: 1). Authorization conveyed vide no. DMRRR-Plan/47/2023, Dated:09/08/2024 by the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Affairs.

2). Minutes of meeting held under the Chairmanship of chief secretary, J&K on 13-11-2025 ( Thursday ) at 05:00 pm in the meeting hall on the 2nd Floor, Civil Secretariat, Jammu to discuss the issues of employees appointed under Hon'ble PM Package. Vide No. DMRRR-MR/35/2025. Dated: 09-12-2025

Position of TS: (A) Accorded by Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Department South Kashmir Vide Order No: CE(R&B)SK/TS/338 of 2025-26 Dated: - 06-03/2026. (B) Accorded by Chief Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Engineering Department, Kashmir vide order no. MHED/K/TS/186. Dated: - 18-03-2026.

S.No	Particulars	Date
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	23/03/2026
2	Period of Downloading of bidder Documents	From 23/03/2026 (15:30 hrs) To 06/04/2026 (12:00 hrs)
3	Bid Submission Start Date	From 23/03/2026 (15:30 hrs) To 06/04/2026 (12:00 hrs)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 06/04/2026 (12:00 Hrs)
5	Pre-Bid Meeting	30/03/2026 (12:00 hrs) In the office of The Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Department South Kashmir.
6	Date and time of opening of technical bid (online)	07/04/2026 at/after 12:00 hrs in the office of The Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Department South Kashmir.
7	Date and time of opening of financial bid (online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.
8	Tender document Fee Submission (Between the start and end date of bid submission)	By uploading a scanned copy of Treasury Challan/Receipt in favour of the Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Mechanical Division South Kashmir Anantnag to be deposited in Major Head MH-0059
9	Earnest Money Deposit	Earnest money deposit @2% amounting to Rs.1484000/- of the estimated cost, in shape of CDR/FDR/BG from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank pledged to The Chief Accounts Officer PW (R&B) Department South Kashmir. The bidders must upload documentary proof (scanned copies) of the CDR/FDR/BG. In case of unsuccessful bidder(s), the EMD shall be released immediately after placement of the work order in favour of the lowest bidder and in case of the successful bidder the same shall be released after submission of Performance Security @5% of Allotted cost in shape of CDR/FDR /BG within 15 days after intimation by tender inviting authority. EMD shall be valid for a period of 45 days after bid validity

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per below schedule.

Note: 1. The bidder must get registered on JKPWDOMS, as no payments shall be made unless the bill is processed on JKPWDOMS in view of circular issued by Finance Department of JK UT. No payment shall be released until and unless bill is processed through JKPWDOMS application and routed through JKPaysys. However, for those bidders who are not yet registered on JKPWDOMS shall submit and undertaking that JKPWDOMS registration will be done well on time before release of payment.

2. In case of any technical clarifications, suggestions, comments set forth in the tender documents, the tenderers shall address The Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Department South Kashmir or Executive Engineer Mechanical South Kashmir in writing at least six days before the last date fixed for submission of tenders. The queries/clarifications can be mailed to xen.rnbdmsk@jk.gov.in or cepwdrnsouthkashmir@gmail.com

No: (R&B)MDSK/ 3296-3304 | Dated: 23-03-2026

Sd/- Executive Engineer R&B  
Mechanical Division South Kashmir

DIPK: 12125/25 | Dated: 25-03-2026

# DC Srinagar reviews progress of agricultural projects under HADP, JKCIIP

Stresses swift completion & facilitation to ensure every eligible farmer is benefited

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MARCH 25:** To review the progress achieved under key Agriculture and allied sector schemes including HADP, JKCIIP, and KKGs in the district, a meeting of line Department Officers was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, here today.

Besides, Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat Aftab Qureshi and Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, the meeting was attended by Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Assistant Director Fisheries, District Sheep Husbandry Officer, District Sericulture Officer, District Programme Officer NRLM and other concerned.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner conducted a comprehensive sector-wise review

of achievements and ongoing interventions under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and Jammu and Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIIP) aimed at enhancing productivity, strengthening value chains, and improving income of the farmers.

He also reviewed Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and functioning of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) aimed to ensure that the intended benefits reach farmers at the grassroots level.

On the occasion, the DC stressed that all eligible farmers in the District must be covered under these schemes and instructed officers to further intensify outreach efforts to cover left out beneficiaries of district in a time bound manner. He also emphasized on increasing farmer enrolment under PMFBY to provide insurance coverage against crop losses.

Reviewing the functioning of KKGs, the DC called for further



strengthening of these centers to ensure efficient and seamless delivery of services to the farming community.

The Officers of Agriculture and allied departments were also directed to fast-track pending cases, ensure timely disbursement of benefits and facilitate improved access to institutional credit.

The DC underscored the importance of coordinated efforts among departments to clear pendency, if any and enhance overall implementation efficiency. He further instructed officers to expedite the processing of cases in accordance with the laid-down guidelines to ensure that benefits are extended to farmers within the stipulated timelines.

During the meeting, the DC acknowledged the line departments for their continued progress and urged them to sustain and further intensify their efforts to ensure comprehensive coverage, so that no eligible farmer in the district is deprived of the benefits.

## DLSA Budgam conducts Awareness Programme on NALSA Scheme 2024 and Digital Frauds

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, MARCH 25:** District Legal Services Authority, Budgam (DLSA Budgam), under the aegis of the J&K Legal Services Authority and under the chairmanship of O. P. Bhagat, Chairman, DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge), Budgam, successfully conducted an awareness programme on the NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024, along with awareness on digital frauds and online scams at Al-Asama Educational Institute, Budgam.

The programme was organized with the objective of creating awareness among students and staff regarding the legal rights and entitlements of persons with mental illness and intellectual disabilities, as well as sensitizing them about the increasing risks of digital frauds and the preventive measures to safeguard themselves in the online space.



Tajher Bashir, System Officer, e-Courts Budgam, highlighted various aspects of cybercrimes, including online fraud, hacking, and data breaches. He elaborated on different forms of digital fraud and online scams such as phishing, OTP frauds, and identity theft. He also shared practical measures to ensure safety in the digital environment. Furthermore, he educated the participants about the legal consequences of cybercrimes and provided guidance on how individuals can protect themselves from becoming victims of such offenses.

During the programme, the resource person, highlighted the key provisions of the NALSA Scheme, 2024, emphasizing access to free legal aid, protection of rights, and the role of legal services institutions in supporting vulnerable sections of society. During the lecture, the participants were sensitized about the challenges faced by persons suffering from mental illness and intellectual disabilities within the legal system, as well as the importance of providing them with effective legal representation and support.

The participants were also informed about the objectives of the LSUM Scheme, 2024, including the availability of free legal aid, protection of rights, and the role of legal services authorities in ensuring fair and equitable treatment of persons with mental illness and intellectual disabilities. The session further emphasized how mental illness can affect a person's ability to understand legal proceedings and highlighted the need for specialized legal assistance in such cases.

## Director Agriculture Kashmir inaugurates 5th phase of Vegetable Seedling Distribution Drive

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MARCH 25:** Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, today inaugurated the fifth phase of the Vegetable Seedling Distribution Drive at the Kitchen Garden Premises, Lalmandi, Srinagar.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Agriculture Kashmir appreciated the dedicated efforts of the officers and officials of the Kitchen Garden and Hi-Tech Poly House sections for ensuring the availability of quality vegetable seedlings to the farming community round the year.

He stated that the department has been largely successful in achieving this objective and affirmed that this endeavour will continue with full momentum until all set targets are met. 8.5 lakh seedlings are expected to be distributed on 5th cycle across division.



Highlighting the immense potential and importance of vegetable cultivation in the Kashmir region, Sartaj Ahmad Shah urged educated youth to come forward and adopt vegetable cultivation as a viable and promising career option.

He emphasized that in the present scenario of climate change and global economic challenges, strengthening vegetable cultivation can play a major role in ensuring economic security for the farming community.

"Our climatic conditions are among the best in the country for the cultivation of both traditional and exotic vegetables. To fully channelize this potential, a collaborative approach is needed where both the farming community and the Agriculture Department work hand in hand," he added.

Seed production Officer Kashmir, Mir Ajaz Hassan, a large number of farmers, kitchen garden enthusiasts, and backyard growers from across the Kashmir Valley were present on the occasion.

## Awareness Camp organized by KVIB Budgam at ITI Chrari Sharief

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, MARCH 25:** Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB) Budgam successfully organized an awareness camp cum interaction program today at Auditorium I.T.I Chrari Sharief Budgam to sensitize the general public, educated unemployed youth and passing out students of the institution about the various government schemes being implemented by the Board.

The program was attended by representative from Director RSETI, Principal I.T.I Chrari Sharief College, representatives from line Departments, Branch Heads of various banks, senior officers from LDM office Budgam and other dignitaries.

The event witnessed an enthusiastic response from the local community, entrepreneurs, aspiring persons, NGOs, and students from the institution.

The camp aimed to educate participants about the wide range of opportunities available under the flagship programs of KVIB, including the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and J&K Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP) designed to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship in urban as well as

rural areas.

Addressing the gathering, District Officer KVIB Budgam emphasized the importance of utilizing these schemes to boost local industries and empower urban/rural communities.

He urged the youth to get involved themselves with the schemes being implemented by the J&K KVIB for their upliftment to get the benefits of the schemes to establish their income generating ventures/units and create employment without wandering after the jobs.

He requested them to engage and involve the young youth of the area in the employment generation by establishing their self-income generation units sponsored under PMEGP/JKREGP under different trades from each of the family so that the standard of living in the area will better and will contribute towards the economical growth of the UT of J&K.

The session included detailed briefing about the financial assistance, subsidies, and technical support provided under these schemes to facilitate the establishment of small and medium enterprises and the training programmes offered by the JK RSETI.

Special emphasis was laid on the production of eco-friendly products

and leveraging traditional crafts to enhance economic sustainability. Participants were also guided on the application process, eligibility criteria, and necessary documentation required to avail of these benefits.

The event featured interactive sessions, where queries were addressed and provided personalized consultations to attendees. Success stories of beneficiaries who have established thriving businesses under KVIB schemes were also shared to inspire and motivate others.

During the programme, it was informed that, KVIB is committed for creating awareness about these schemes and ensuring that the benefits reach the grassroots level.

It was also informed that during the current financial year 2025-26, KVIB Budgam has established 321 units providing M.M. (subsidy) to the tune of Rs 645.78 lakh under PMEGP and established 15 units involving M.M. (subsidy) to the tune of Rs 45.15 lakh under JKREGP.

The camp concluded with the distribution of informational booklets and registration forms to interested participants. KVIB assured that similar awareness programs would be conducted in other regions to extend the reach of their initiatives.

## SWD Srinagar organized Vocational Training Programmes under SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, MARCH 25:** Social Welfare Department (SWD), under SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women (Mission Shakti), Srinagar, successfully conducted Vocational Training Programmes at GGHSS Chanpora and GGHSS Rawalpura.

The initiative aimed to equip students with practical skills and promote self-employment opportunities.

The programmes witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, reflecting a strong interest in skill-based learning and career-oriented training. Experts, including the Industrial Promotion

Officer from the District Industries Centre Srinagar and a Resource Person from Government Polytechnic for Women Srinagar, shared valuable insights on the importance of vocational education, entrepreneurship, and skill development in today's dynamic job market.

The speakers highlighted various government schemes and support systems available for aspiring entrepreneurs and encouraged students to explore business opportunities. Emphasis was laid on innovation, self-reliance, and the need for youth to take initiative in shaping their careers.

The Resource Person from



Government Polytechnic for Women Srinagar particularly stressed the significance of technical education and hands-on training, especially for young girls, to help them achieve financial independence and build confidence in their chosen fields.

independence and build confidence in their chosen fields.

Students were motivated to actively participate in such programmes and make optimal use of available resources for skill enhancement and career growth. The school authorities appreciated the efforts of the Social Welfare Department in organizing such impactful initiatives, noting their importance in empowering students and preparing them for future challenges.

The session concluded with an interactive segment, where students engaged with the resource persons and sought guidance on various vocational and career-related opportunities.

## MLA Ramban inaugurates Sanasar Tulip Garden

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAMBAN, MARCH 25:** Member Legislative Assembly Ramban, Arjun Singh Raju today inaugurated the Tulip Garden at the picturesque Sanasar, throwing open the much-awaited tourist attraction for the season. The MLA was accompanied by Director Floriculture Jammu, Vivek Modi; Joint Director Floriculture, Vikrant Sharma and Assistant Floriculture Officer Udhampur, Pawan Kumar. The MLA and team of officers took a round of the garden and reviewed the



arrangements and infrastructure put in place for visitors. The MLA interacted with the officers and sought details regarding the development, maintenance and future expansion plans of the garden. He also engaged with tourists present at the site and gathered feedback about their experience.

Interacting with the visitors, the MLA noted that the tourist footfall has been steadily increasing in Sanasar after the establishment of the Tulip Garden. He expressed optimism that a large number of visitors would throng the destination this year too, boosting the local economy and providing livelihood opportunities to the local population.

The Director Floriculture informed that the garden, spread over 35 kanal, features a centrally located fountain and showcases more than 2 lakh tulips of 25 different varieties, making it a major attraction

for nature lovers and tourists alike.

As the garden was declared open, enthusiastic visitors rushed in to witness the vibrant bloom and scenic beauty of the tulips. Among them, a tourist from Barcelona, Montserrat Hernandez Garcia, expressed immense joy at seeing such a wide variety of tulips and termed the experience as memorable, noting that such gardens are not found in her hometown. The MLA invited people from across the nation and beyond to visit Sanasar and enjoy the mesmerizing beauty of the Tulip Garden.

## Vande Mataram Week: Series of events held across Ramban to honour martyrs

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAMBAN, MARCH 25:** On the third day of Vande Mataram Week, the District Administration Ramban, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan, organized a series of events across the district to pay rich tributes to the national heroes Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru, who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the nation.

The Deputy Commissioner presided over a Vande Mataram event at Government Model Higher Secondary School Ramban.

As part of the campaign, a district-wide Vande Mataram Signature Campaign was conducted in schools, colleges, government offices and other institutions. Special Signature Walls were set up to encourage participation and foster a spirit of patriotism and collective remembrance. Officers, teachers, staff members and students enthusiastically participated by signing the walls as a mark of respect and gratitude towards the martyrs. Participants also took selfies with their signatures under the Vande Mataram 150 celebrations, capturing their involvement in the nationwide initiative.

# Hindustan Power secures PGE block in MP, enters critical minerals sector

# Stock market rebounds, Sensex up nearly 1400 points

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 25:** Hindustan Power Group has secured a Letter of Intent (LoI) for exploration of the Padhar Platinum Group Elements (PGE) block in Madhya Pradesh, marking its entry into India's critical minerals sector, the company announced on Tuesday.

The LoI was awarded following a forward e-auction conducted by the union Ministry of Mines, in which a group firm emerged as the preferred bidder. The Padhar block, spread over nearly 200 square kilometres, has been identified as a prospective zone for platinum group elements and also contains zinc deposits.

Chairman Ratul Puri said the acquisition of the block is a significant step towards strengthening India's resource resilience. He noted that platinum group elements are vital for next-generation technologies such as clean hydrogen production, fuel cells, electronics and catalytic systems, and added that the exploration would help build a reliable domestic resource base while



supporting supply chain security and energy leadership.

He further said the move reflects the company's strategic diversification beyond its core energy business into emerging sectors that will shape the future industrial landscape, including clean energy, advanced mobility and high-value manufacturing.

Platinum group elements, including platinum, palladium and rhodium, are widely used in hydrogen fuel cells, emission control systems and electrolyzers for green hydrogen production. Zinc, also present in the block, plays a key role in galvanisation, battery technologies and corrosion protection for renewable energy infrastructure.

India has identified these minerals as critical for reducing import dependence and strengthening domestic manufacturing capabilities, particularly in clean energy supply chains.

Apart from this development, Hindustan Power is also working on two high-grade coal mines in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, expanding its presence in conventional mining.

On the renewable energy front, the company is accelerating its portfolio with several solar and storage projects, including a recently secured 435 MWp solar project in Uttar Pradesh and multiple grid-scale solar and battery storage developments.

The company said its expansion into critical minerals, alongside conventional and renewable energy initiatives, reflects its evolving role in India's energy sector and aligns with national priorities of building self-reliant supply chains and advancing the clean energy transition. UNI

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 25:** The Indian stock market on Tuesday rebounded sharply to end with solid gains in a volatile session.

At close, the Sensex was up 1,372.06 points or 1.89 percent at 74,068.45, and the Nifty was up 399.75 points or 1.78 percent at 22,912.40. Broader indices outperformed the main indices with Nifty mid and smallcap indices rising 2.6pc each.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies jumped to Rs 423.16 lakh crore against Monday's Rs 415.21 lakh crore.

Among the sectors, all the indices ended in the green. Auto, IT, metal, media, bank, consumer durables, PSU Bank, Private bank, infra, consumer durables were up 2pc each.

On Nifty, the key gainers were L&T, Interglobe Aviation, Asian Paints, Eternal and Bajaj Finance while the losers were Coal India, Adani Enterprises, Sun Pharma, Cipla and Power Grid Corp.

Over 500 stocks touched their 52-week low on the BSE. This included Castrol, Bajaj Housing, IDBI Bank, Gujarat Gas, New India Assurance, Lodha Developers, Zensar Technologies, Nuvoco Vistas, IGL, Gujarat State Petro, ITC, Balkrishna Industries, Deepak Nitrite, Blue Dart, IRCTC, PCBL Chemicals, ACC, among others

Indian Stock Market tracked the geopolitical developments after the US



President Donald Trump announced a temporary pause on strikes targeting Iran's power infrastructure.

Oil Marketing Companies (OMC) shares saw renewed buying interest. HPCL, BPCL, and IOC gained 5.53pc, 4pc and 0.43pc respectively. Coal India shares also came under selling pressure slipping nearly 3pc.

Shares of InterGlobe Aviation, parent of IndiGo Airlines jumped 5.2pc snapping a three-day losing streak.

Bank Nifty snapped its three-day losing streak rising more than 2pc. HDFC Bank snapped its four-session losing run to settle 3pc higher.

In terms of global performances, the Asian market also rebounded with South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225, Shanghai's SSE Composite and Hong Kong's Hang Seng traded higher. UNI

## India's private sector growth slows to 3.5-year low in March amid demand weakness, cost pressures

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 25:** India's private sector activity expanded at its slowest pace in nearly three-and-a-half years in March, as easing domestic demand and rising input costs weighed on overall economic momentum.

According to preliminary data released by S&P Global, the HSBC Flash India Composite PMI Output Index fell to 56.5 in March from 58.9 in February.

This marks the weakest rate of expansion since October 2022, although the index remained above the 50-mark that separates growth from contraction.

The deceleration was led by the manufacturing sector, where output growth slowed sharply amid global uncertainties and persistent inflationary pressures.

The manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) declined to 53.8 in March from 56.9 in the previous month—its lowest level in four-and-a-half years. The manufacturing output index also eased to 55.1, indicating softer production activity.

The services sector, while still relatively resilient, also showed signs of moderation.

The business activity index slipped to 57.2 from 58.1 in February, registering its slowest pace of growth since January 2025.

Businesses cited weaker domestic demand, heightened market volatility, and elevated input costs as key factors behind the slowdown. Ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia also contributed to the cautious business environment.

New order growth weakened across both sectors, with overall demand expanding at the slowest rate since November 2022.

However, external demand remained a bright spot, as export orders rose at the fastest pace on record, supported by strong demand from Asia, Europe, United States and West Asia.

Meanwhile, inflationary pressures intensified significantly during the month. Firms reported the steepest increase in input costs in nearly four years, driven by rising prices of energy, metals, chemicals, and food items.

The data suggests that while India's private sector continues to grow, the pace of expansion is losing momentum amid a challenging global and domestic economic backdrop. UNI

# Cheap chinese imports leave 57pc of India's uPVC capacity idle; industry urges urgent anti-dumping action

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**CHENNAI, MARCH 25:** Nearly 57pc of the India's Unplasticized Polyvinyl Chloride (uPVC) profile/frames production capacity remaining idle the Indian government should act fast to curb the dumping from China, urged a top official of All India uPVC Manufacturers Association (AIUPMA).

"The Indian government should take multi-pronged steps like levying anti-dumping duty, making BIS norms mandatory for domestic sales, harmonising the duty structure and others," said Eniyam Shivam, President.

The imported cheap uPVC profiles from China have captured nearly 51pc of the Indian Rs18,000 crore market and if this is allowed to continue then there will be no Make-in-India but only Sale-in-

India in this sector, Shivam said.

Out of total industry's installed production capacity of 28,985 ton per month, domestic production is only about 12,500 ton.

This in turn means a whopping 57pc of the domestic production capacity has gone idle.

"Some of my production lines are not running now," declared V. Senthil Murugan, CEO, INTACT uPVC SYSTEMS.

According to the uPVC industry players, their raw material cost is the landed cost of Chinese finished product and majority of them come under the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) category.

Not only the financial viability of about 340 units and their employees are at risk but the public trust in the product is also in danger, said Shivam.

According to him, the Chinese construction industry has moved



to aluminium window frames owing to the poor durability of uPVC frames and turning yellow soon.

As a result several units in China shut down and the remaining are flooding the Indian and other markets with sub-standard quality uPVC profiles.

"If the Indian consumers also start moving away then the Indian industry will go the Chinese way. Already in the eyes of architects the uPVC makers have come down in their esteem owing to the poor Chinese frames.

If this situation continues, then people will turn to aluminium and

others," remarked Shivam.

The Indian government should take immediate corrective action by initiating an anti-dumping duty investigation, implementing safeguard measures on finished uPVC profile imports and strengthening quality enforcement at ports to ensure fair competition and protect legitimate domestic industry, Shivam remarked.

Industry officials also said there is anti-dumping duty levied on imports of raw materials making their production costs higher while the imports of finished goods are charged normal duty rates.

With their unique cost structure and export incentives, the Chinese manufacturers are able to sell their end product at a rate that is equal or even cheaper than the raw material costs of Indian players. UNI

## Market rebounds with Sensex and Nifty up by 1pc in early trade session

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 25:** Indian equity markets witnessed a strong upward movement on Tuesday, with benchmark indices BSE Sensex and Nifty 50 trading firmly in the green during the morning session.

The Sensex climbed to 73,528.26, registering a robust gain of 831.87 points (1.14pc).

The index opened on a strong note at 74,212.47 and maintained positive momentum, reflecting renewed investor confidence. Despite some intraday fluctuations, it stayed well above its previous close of 72,696.39. Similarly, the Nifty 50 advanced



to 22,757.35, up 247.20 points (1.09pc).

The index touched a high of 22,899.60 during early trading, signaling bullish sentiment across sectors. It remained comfortably above its previous closing level of 22,512.65.

Market analysts attribute the rally to positive global cues, steady domestic economic indicators, and buying interest in heavyweight stocks.

The upward trend suggests optimism among investors, even as markets continue to monitor global developments and policy signals.

With both indices showing resilience and upward traction, today's session reflects a positive start for the week in India's financial markets. UNI

## InterGlobe Aviation appoints Alope Singh as Chief Strategy Officer

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**HYDERABAD, MAR 25:** 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

## Centre signs MoU with leading air conditioning company to boost manufacturing

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, MARCH 25:** In order to give a boost to India's manufacturing and innovation ecosystem, the union Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a leading air conditioning company to support startups, innovators, and entrepreneurs.

The MoU signed by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) with the leading companies aims to foster the growth of product startups working in areas such as HVAC technologies, digital solutions, advanced manufacturing processes and supply chain innovation.

It seeks to enable startups to develop scalable and industry-relevant solutions through



structured industry engagement, Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a statement.

Under the initiative, the startups will be provided access to mentorship from industry experts,

infrastructure support including R&D laboratories and testing facilities, pilot opportunities, and market linkages. The partnership will also facilitate startups in achieving key milestones such as product validation, Proof-of-Concept (PoC) development, and integration into industry value chains, it said.

The collaboration will also enable startups to access testing facilities, R&D infrastructure, and technical support, along with structured mentorship programmes and periodic engagement sessions to align innovations with industry requirements.

Joint Secretary, DPIIT, Sanjiv said the collaboration represents an important step towards fostering industry-driven innovation in the manufacturing sector, and noted that such

partnerships enable startups to engage with real-world problem statements and scale solutions with tangible outcomes.

DPIIT will work with Blue Star Limited to explore the organisation of innovation challenges under the Bharat Startup Grand Challenge, along with targeted hackathons focused on HVAC, digital technologies, and manufacturing domains.

Startups will have opportunities to participate in structured PoC programmes, with selected entities being considered for pilot deployment and further engagement.

Notably, last year, DPIIT had allowed QCO exemption on AC compressors of two tonnes and above till February 10, 2026 and the remaining models till April 17, 2026. UNI

# Jitesh Sharma: The Power of Saying Yes in IPL Success

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**AHMEDABAD:** Jitesh Sharma loves being the "yes" guy. Will you open the batting for us, Jitesh? Yes. Will you bat in the middle order and play the finisher's role? Yes. Will you captain the side? Yes. Will you become the team's 360 player? Yes.

It's this inclination to put his hand up and his desire to upskill himself and expand his repertoire that has turned Jitesh from being just another wicketkeeper-batter to one of Royal Challengers Bengaluru's most reliable finishers.

When he grew up in Amravati in northern Maharashtra, cricket wasn't Jitesh's first love. He wanted to become an Indian Air Force pilot, to the point that he even prepared for his defence exams, but slowly, the sport took over.

Good things take time and that's particularly true in Jitesh's case. He made his T20 and List A debuts at the age of 20, for Vidarbha in 2014, but it took him another eight years to play his first IPL game, for Punjab Kings.

In between, he moved around in the batting order, and it was only when his Vidarbha coach, Pritam Gandhe, asked him to become a

finisher that he found a second wind. He was picked up by PBKS ahead of the 2022 IPL, and his finishing prowess and reliable wicketkeeping immediately caught the attention of other franchises and fans.

"The thing that has been very good in me is curiosity," Jitesh says. "That has brought me to where I am now. And the 'yes, yes, yes' attitude. I have opened, batted in the middle order. Sometimes I opened in the Ranji Trophy. Sometimes the coaches told me to bat in the middle order. Every time I said yes, because I don't run away from a challenge."

"And the other thing is that I used to be curious and experiment a lot. What if I bat in this manner, what will happen? What will happen if I change my grip? I would constantly ask myself questions and that never let me get demotivated. I would constantly try out different things. Until 2022, I played the same way, but now in these last three years, people are seeing those innovative shots; they are seeing that I am reading the game better. The curiosity has kept me alive."

After eight years of the grind, Jitesh's fortunes have turned around in the last four. He had three successful sea-



sons at PBKS, made his India debut in between, and switched domestic teams from Vidarbha to Baroda. But it was his move to RCB, who procured his services for a whopping Rs 11 crore (about US\$ 1.31 million) last season, that brought Jitesh into the spotlight. In his first season there, the team ended their 17-year wait for a maiden IPL title.

What makes RCB so special? "Unhone 11 crore diye hain na, isliye special hain" [They gave me Rs 11 crore, that's why they are special] Jitesh jokes before moving to a more serious answer. "RCB treats every person - it doesn't matter if they are ball boys or net bowlers - with respect and equality."

"Mo Bobat, Andy Flower, Dinesh Karthik... when all good people get together as a unit, then the team automatically becomes great, and that's what has happened at RCB. That's why this team is very special to me. I am able to find out my real potential because of this management. In RCB, there is an extra responsibility. It's a big name, a big brand. Whatever you do here, you do it after putting in a lot of thought."

At PBKS, Jitesh was a finisher, but at RCB, he went to the next level, by becoming their 360-degree batter. He had a sensational 2025 IPL in that role, scoring 261 runs in 11 innings at 37.28 and a strike rate of 176.35, which rose to 188.52 in the death overs (17-20). Jitesh credits mentor Karthik - or Dinesh Anna as he calls him - for recognising that he had these shots in his armoury and helping in nurturing them. "I still feel that I am not hitting sixes that cleanly. Dinesh Anna and I practise on how we can be 2% better than last year."

"He [Karthik] felt I always had those shots but I didn't know how to use them. I told him that I have never played these shots, but if you teach me, I will learn. The same thing which I said, 'yes attitude'. I told him, yes, I will learn. Sometimes you become stubborn: I will only hit straight, I have played in the IPL this way and succeeded. But I said yes to him."

"I worked with him a lot, discussing the different shots, what are the areas I can target, the things that can be useful, the key points to execute the shots. I think those things helped me learn and understand these new shots."

Were there any challenges and second thoughts? "Whenever you learn something new, there are challenges," Jitesh says. "Sometimes you get hit on the ribs, sometimes you get beaten, sometimes you don't understand the shots you are playing."

## India pick Kashvee Gautam, Anushka Sharma for SA T20I tour

UNITED NEWS NETWORK

**BRISBANE:** Seam-bowling allrounder Kashvee Gautam is in line for a T20I debut after being included in India's squad for the five-match T20I series in South Africa in April. Gautam has played one Test and six ODIs, and was in action in both longer formats during the recent tour of Australia, but she has not yet played a T20I.

Anushka Sharma has also received her maiden India call up. The 22-year-old offspin-bowling allrounder had impressed for Gujarat Giants in her first season of the WPL in 2025, scoring 177 runs, with 124 of them coming in boundaries. Anushka was then brought onto the India A team for the Rising Stars Asia Cup last month and is now on course to make her first appearance at senior level in international cricket. India's selectors have also included Uma Chetry in the squad, ostensibly as back-up to regular keeper Richa Ghosh.

Chetry has replaced the 17-year-old G Kamalini, who has not played an international game since her T20I debut in the home series against Sri Lanka in December. She was part of the T20I squad that recently toured Australia, but did not feature in the series that India won 2-1.

Left-arm spinner Vaishnavi Sharma, who played all five T20Is against Sri Lanka but remained on the



bench through the Australia T20Is, has also been left out. Allrounder Amanjot Kaur, who endured a tough time in Australia, scoring 3 and 1 in her two T20I appearances and conceding 30 runs in three overs, is also out of the squad. Gautam is one of four seam options in India's squad alongside Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh and Kranti Gaud. Deepti Sharma, Shree Charani and Shreyanka Patil make up the spin attack with Vaishnavi out. The South Africa tour will kick off in Durban, which hosts the first two T20Is on April 17 and 19, before proceeding to Johannesburg for the third and fourth T20Is on April 22 and 25. Benoni will host the series finale on April 27.

## Affarwat-XI Clinch Thrilling 2-Run Victory Over Sahil-XI Palpora in Ramzan T10 Tournament Andergam

HT SPORTS DESK

**BARAMULLA, MAR 25:** Affarwat-XI Sports Club registered a nail-biting 2-run victory against Sahil-XI Palpora in an exciting encounter of the Ramzan T10 Cricket Tournament at Andergam.

After winning the toss, Affarwat-XI opted to bat first and posted a total of 60 runs for the loss of 6 wickets in their allotted 10 overs. Skipper Shahid Mir led from the front with a crucial knock of 23 runs, while Ubaid



Khan contributed an important 16 runs to strengthen the innings.

In response, Sahil-XI Palpora fought hard but fell just short, managing 58 runs for 6 wickets in their 10 overs. Shahid Khan stood firm at the crease and played a valiant knock of 29 runs, but lacked support from the other end.

Shahid Mir was adjudged Player of the Match for his outstanding all-round performance, playing a key role in securing victory for his side.



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