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Our Goal Is A Safe, Seamless And Spiritually Fulfilling Pilgrimage For Every Devotee: LG Sinha

Reviews Preparations For Annual Pilgrimage; Directs Timely Completion Of Infrastructure

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday directed all departments and agencies involved in the annual pilgrimage to ensure the timely completion of infrastructure and essential services, emphasizing that the administration's foremost objective is to provide a safe, seamless and spiritually fulfilling experience for every pilgrim.

Chairing a high-level review meeting to assess preparedness for the pilgrimage, the Lieutenant Governor said the journey will commence on July 3 and conclude on August 28. He stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to ensure smooth conduct of one of the country's largest religious events.

Describing the pilgrimage as a national event, Sinha called for seamless coordination, proactive planning and strict monitoring of all arrangements. He instructed departments to maintain the highest standards of efficiency and safety while delivering services



to pilgrims.

Officials informed the meeting that registrations have witnessed a strong response and that the number of pilgrims this year is expected to exceed recent years. In view of the anticipated increase in footfall, the Lieutenant Governor

directed departments to adopt a whole-of-government approach and strengthen inter-agency coordination.

Reviewing infrastructure works, he was informed that tracks along both the Baltal

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Over 3 Lakh Pilgrims Visit Vaishno Devi Shrine in First Week of June

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, JUNE 10: More than three lakh pilgrims visited the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine during the first week of June, marking a significant surge in pilgrim arrivals as the

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LG Addresses IMMUNOCON-2026 in Srinagar

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha on Wednesday attended the inaugural session of the Annual Conference of the Indian Immunology Society

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People Have Understood The Importance Of Political Stability : PM Modi

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JUNE 10: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that the people of India have come to appreciate the value of political stability and the decisive governance that a stable government can provide, as he became the country's longest continuously serving elected prime minister.

Addressing a National Democratic Alliance (NDA) conclave in the national capital, Modi credited the people of the country for giving him the opportunity to serve for such an extended period



and described their continued support as a reflection of their faith in stable governance.

"People of the country have understood the importance of political stability at the national level," the Prime Minister said, noting that the years before 2014 were marked by instability and political uncertainty. He added that citizens are now witnessing the benefits of a government capable of taking timely and decisive decisions.

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Enhance Rail Services During Airport Closure : Omar Abdullah

CM seeks increased train frequency and Vande Bharat halt at Anantnag

HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, JUNE 10: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday urged the Union Government to enhance railway services to Jammu and Kashmir during the scheduled closure of Srinagar Airport in October, stressing that

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ENSURE QUALITY, TIMELY EXECUTION OF PROJECTS: DY CM

HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, JUNE 10: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary today conducted an extensive tour of Bandipora district to inspect and review the progress of several key developmental projects being executed in the district.

The Deputy Chief Minister was accompanied by MLA Bandipora, Nizam-ud-Din Bhat and MLA Sonawari, Hilal Akbar Lone.

During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister emphasized the need for timely and speedy

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Committee To Fix Responsibility For Any Negligence In Gulmarg Gondola Breakdown

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has constituted a five-member inquiry committee to investigate the technical malfunction of the Gulmarg Gondola service that left more than 300 tourists stranded mid-air last month, directing the panel to identify any negligence or procedural lapses and submit its report within 10 days.

An order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) said the committee, headed by Managing Director of Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited Mahmood Shah, has been tasked with establishing the complete sequence of events that led to the incident and determining whether any operational

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CS Shapes Rehab Framework for Drug Victims



HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: In a major step towards strengthening the fight against substance abuse and ensuring long-term recovery of affected individuals, the Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo gave shape to a comprehensive Rehabilitation and Socio-Economic Reintegration Framework

for victims of drug abuse, aimed at facilitating their successful reintegration into society through a structured rehabilitation cycle.

The proposed framework was discussed in detail during a high-level meeting attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Principal Secretary, Home; Commissioner Secretary, Social Wel-

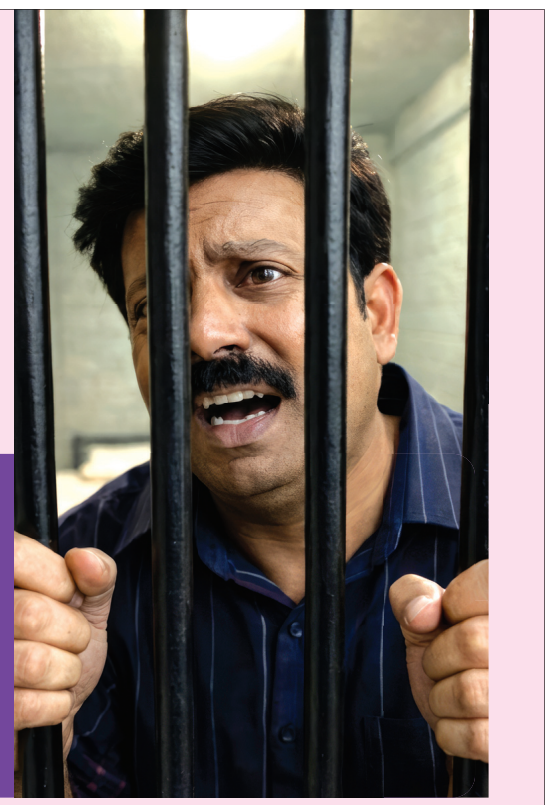
fare Department; Commissioner Secretary, School Education Department; Secretary, Skill Development Department; Director Colleges; Head of IMHANS Srinagar; SIO, NIC and other concerned officers.

The proposed framework seeks to move beyond conventional detoxification and

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Our Goal Is.....

and Pahalgam routes have been widened to approximately 12 feet to facilitate safer movement. Sinha directed the concerned agencies, including the Border Roads Organisation, to complete all remaining works and ensure both routes are fully operational by June 25. He also ordered the installation of crash barriers and hand railings at vulnerable locations leading to the base camps.

The meeting reviewed arrangements related to road connectivity, sanitation, drinking water supply, electricity, health-care facilities, transportation, accommodation centres, disaster management and telecommunications. The Lieutenant Governor directed authorities to increase holding capacities at key locations, enhance the number of toilets and ambulances and ensure comprehensive disaster preparedness.

He also instructed district administrations to identify slippery stretches and areas vulnerable to falling rocks, install adequate warning signs and undertake regular inspections of the routes to enhance pilgrim safety.

Sinha further directed that only high-quality tents be permitted at camps and that all pilgrims and service providers possess valid registration and RFID cards while using the pilgrimage routes. He also called for proper fencing of pony stands, preparation of a comprehensive emergency evacuation plan and uninterrupted telecommunications services throughout the pilgrimage corridor.

All departments have been directed to establish their camps and operational centres by June 20 to ensure readiness well before the commencement of the pilgrimage.

Earlier, officials presented a detailed status report on works being undertaken by various departments and agencies to facilitate the smooth and successful conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

Over 3 Lakh.....

summer holiday season gathers momentum across the country.

Officials said the shrine has been witnessing a steady increase in footfall since the beginning of the month, with thousands of devotees arriving daily at Katra, the base camp for the pilgrimage in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.

According to official data, 37,100 devotees visited the shrine on June 1, followed by 40,200 on June 2, 40,300 on June 3, 40,000 on June 4, 42,500 on June 5, 47,500 on June 6, 48,300 on June 7 and 48,500 on June 8. The cumulative number of visitors crossed the three lakh mark during the period.

Officials attributed the surge to the onset of summer vacations in schools and colleges, which traditionally results in increased pilgrimage and tourism activity.

The unprecedented rush has also put pressure on registration facilities, forcing the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board to close registration counters ahead of schedule on several occasions. On June 6, registrations were suspended two hours before the designated closing time, while all registration centres were shut around 7 p.m. on June 8 due to overwhelming demand.

Authorities said the decision was taken in compliance with guidelines issued by the National Green Tribunal, which restrict the number of pilgrims undertaking the journey to 50,000 per day as part of environmental and crowd-management measures.

The heavy inflow has led to near-full occupancy in hotels and accommodation facilities, while advance bookings for helicopter services, battery-operated vehicles and ropeway facilities have also witnessed exceptionally high demand.

To facilitate smoother movement of pilgrims and reduce waiting time, the Shrine Board has opened all three cave routes for darshan.

The surge in pilgrim arrivals has provided a major boost to Katra's economy, bringing renewed business activity for hoteliers, transport operators, shopkeepers and other stakeholders dependent on pilgrimage tourism.

Local business owners described the current season as one of the busiest in recent years, expressing optimism that the sustained influx of visitors will help strengthen the region's tourism sector and support livelihoods linked to the annual pilgrimage.

Officials expect the rush to continue in the coming weeks as the peak summer travel season progresses, with daily pilgrim numbers remaining close to the prescribed limit.

LG Addresses.....

'IMMUNOCON-2026', at Srinagar. The prestigious event, organized by the Advanced Centre for Human Genetics SKIMS, is themed "Beneath the Grandeur of Chinar: Illuminating Mysteries from Fundamentals to Translational Frontiers in

Health".

In his keynote address, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the evolving role of immunology in biomedical innovation and healthcare.

The Lieutenant Governor hailed the human immune system as one of nature's most extraordinary living architectures, that defends the body with remarkable precision.

He emphasised on translating the scientific knowledge into public health action and putting dedicated focus on immunological research to further strengthen the ability to combat infectious diseases, improve vaccine effectiveness and enhance healthcare delivery.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that the continuous immunological innovation remains a moral obligation to prepare for future global health threats.

"I consider 'Precision Medicine' to be a major revolution in the healthcare sector today. Scientists, experts and researchers from various disciplines and institutions participating in this conference must collaborate and deliberate on this aspect and focus on inventing solutions capable of transforming medical science," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the scientists and stakeholders to foster deeper collaborations and work on three key areas: "First, there is a need to develop 'Immuno-AI Fusion' systems using Artificial Intelligence tools to help create immune profiles across different age groups in states.

Second, scientists, given the changing environment, must work on 'climate immunity' and prepare for the challenges and potential threats including pandemics.

Third, stakeholders in "Translational Medicine" must reduce the time gap between laboratory discoveries and practical patient care, ensuring that the public healthcare system gains access to new diagnostic tools, medical devices, and therapies".

The Lieutenant Governor expressed his gratitude to the global immunology community for their lifelong dedication to safeguarding human life.

He also stated that organising the annual conference of the Indian Immunology Society in Jammu Kashmir aligns with the region's ancient legacy as a historic hub of knowledge and scientific discovery.

Prof. G P Talwar, Founder Director, National Institute of Immunology; Prof. M. Ashraf Ganie, Director SKIMS; Prof. Amit Awasthi, President, Indian Immunology Society; Prof. Anil Kaul, Vice Chancellor Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth; Dr. Bashir A Fomda, Dean Medical Faculty SKIMS; Prof. Dil Afroz, Head, Advanced Centre for Human Genetics SKIMS; scientists, researchers, policymakers, industry partners, and senior officials were present.

People Have.....

Modi also said that the vision of a developed India has evolved into a national mission embraced by citizens across the country, transcending political affiliations. Emphasising the importance of public trust, he said the confidence reposed in the government has strengthened over the years through its commitment to governance and development.

The Prime Minister described the NDA's twelve years in office as a period of transformation and renewed public confidence, asserting that the alliance had fulfilled the hopes placed in it by the electorate.

The occasion was marked by congratulatory messages from world leaders, a standing ovation at a Union Cabinet meeting, and celebrations by Bharatiya Janata Party leaders and workers across the country.

With this milestone, Modi surpassed the tenure of Jawaharlal Nehru as the longest continuously serving elected prime minister of India. He crossed the record of 4,398 consecutive days in office, setting a new benchmark in the nation's democratic history.

The achievement marks a significant chapter in Indian politics and underscores Modi's enduring position at the centre of the country's governance landscape.

Enhance Rail.....

stronger rail connectivity would be crucial for sustaining tourism, pilgrimage travel and economic activity in the Valley.

During a meeting with Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav in New Delhi, the Chief Minister discussed a range of measures aimed at expanding rail services and improving passenger convenience in the Union Territory.

Omar Abdullah appreciated the performance of the Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat Express, describing it as a major milestone in strengthening connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and the rest of the country. He praised the service for its passenger comfort, reliability and punctuality.

Highlighting growing public demand for improved accessibility, the Chief Minister

requested the Railway Ministry to consider a halt for the Vande Bharat Express at Anantnag. He said the move would significantly benefit residents of South Kashmir and surrounding areas by providing easier access to the premium rail service.

The Chief Minister also drew attention to the scheduled closure of Srinagar Airport from October 1 to October 15 for runway maintenance and resurfacing works. He noted that the temporary shutdown coincides with one of the busiest tourist seasons in Kashmir and could affect the movement of visitors, pilgrims and local residents.

Seeking measures to address the anticipated travel disruption, Omar Abdullah urged the Railway Ministry to increase the frequency of Vande Bharat and other train services during the airport closure period. He said enhanced rail connectivity would provide a dependable alternative to air travel and help ensure uninterrupted movement of passengers.

The Chief Minister emphasized that additional train services would be particularly beneficial during the festive holiday season and would support both tourism and local travel requirements.

The meeting reviewed the growing role of rail transport in the region following the launch of the Vande Bharat service between Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra and Srinagar, which established the first direct rail connection between Jammu and the Kashmir Valley.

Ensure quality.....

execution of works while maintaining quality standards to ensure that the projects are completed within stipulated timelines and dedicated to the people at the earliest.

The Deputy Chief Minister inspected the ongoing construction work on the 1x20-metre double-lane composite bridge at Naninara, Sumbal and reviewed the pace of progress on the ground. He directed the executing agencies to ensure strict adherence to the set quality parameters and expedite work for its timely completion.

During the tour, he also visited the Sumbal Foot Bridge near the Shrine of Ahmad Sahib Naninara. He assured the local residents that the long-pending project would be taken up on priority in view of its importance for the public convenience and connectivity.

At Garoora Bridge, the Deputy Chief Minister assessed the status of ongoing works. He instructed the concerned officials to accelerate construction activities while maintaining the quality standards so that the project is completed within the stipulated timeframe.

Reviewing the progress of the car parking facility at Gulshan Chowk, Main Market Bandipora, he observed that the project would significantly help in easing traffic congestion and improving parking management in the busy market area, benefiting the traders and visitors alike.

The Deputy Chief Minister also inspected the Girls Hostel and Composite Building at Nadim Memorial Higher Secondary School, Kaloosa. He stressed the importance of creating quality educational infrastructure to provide students with a conducive learning environment.

While inspecting the Sopore-Bandipora Road, he reviewed the condition of the stretch and directed officials to expedite the ongoing works to improve road connectivity, commuter safety and overall travel convenience.

Addressing a public gathering at a Stone Quarry site at Gund Saderkote, Surinder Choudhary assured the people that all their genuine demands and grievances would be taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate action. He reiterated the government's commitment to safeguarding public interests while ensuring balanced and sustainable development.

The Deputy Chief Minister also met a deputation at Kaloosa Bridge, patiently listened to their concerns and developmental demands. He assured them that all their genuine issues would be pursued with the concerned departments for prompt redress.

During the inspection, the Deputy Chief Minister issued directions for construction of new Bridge on Bandipora-Sopore road and released funds of Rs 1.2 crore for the project.

"All executing agencies and concerned departments should ensure speedy work execution, maintain quality standards and complete the projects in a time-bound manner so that their benefits reach the people without delay," he said.

Senior Officers from the district administration Bandipora, Engineering Wings and other departments accompanied the Deputy Chief Minister.

Committee To.....

failure contributed to the breakdown. The malfunction occurred on May 25 when the cable car system developed a technical snag, halting operations and leaving hundreds of tourists and local guides

suspended in cabins. A large-scale rescue operation involving the Army, Police, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) was launched, and all stranded passengers were safely evacuated.

According to the government order, the committee will undertake a comprehensive technical examination of the cable car system to determine the nature, cause, and extent of the failure. It will scrutinize operational procedures, maintenance schedules, inspection mechanisms, and safety protocols to assess whether established standards were followed at the time of the incident.

The panel has also been mandated to examine if any act of negligence, procedural violation, or operational lapse directly or indirectly contributed to the malfunction. It will identify responsibility wherever shortcomings are found among individuals or agencies associated with the operation and maintenance of the cable car system.

Besides determining accountability, the committee will recommend immediate measures required for the safe restoration and operation of the Gondola service. It will also suggest long-term technical, administrative, and safety reforms aimed at preventing similar incidents in the future.

The government's decision to order a detailed probe underscores the importance of ensuring passenger safety and maintaining public confidence in one of Jammu and Kashmir's most visited tourist attractions. The findings of the committee are expected to guide future safety and operational improvements for the cable car system.

CS Shapes.....

treatment by adopting a holistic approach that combines medical care, psychosocial support, education, skill development, employment opportunities and sustained monitoring to prevent relapse and promote social stability.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary outlined the comprehensive strategy envisioned by the Government to address the growing challenge of substance abuse through a coordinated, treatment-to-reintegration approach based upon the Individual Reintegration Plans (IRPs) for each of the victim as per his customized requirements.

He emphasized that the framework should be adopted forthwith on a pilot basis through IMHANS Srinagar and one additional district to identify operational challenges and fine-tune the model before its large-scale implementation across the Union Territory.

Elaborating on the proposed mechanism, the Chief Secretary observed that each Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) should function through a collaborative support system comprising trained Counsellors and Psychiatrists from the Health Department an ASHA Worker, and a Social Worker designated by the Social Welfare Department.

He stated that the ASHA Worker would play a vital role in ensuring adherence to treatment protocols by assisting beneficiaries in taking prescribed medicines regularly and facilitating timely follow-up consultations making home visits.

The Chief Secretary further stressed that the Social Worker would serve as the critical link between treatment and rehabilitation by motivating recovering individuals towards stabilization, rehabilitation and their eventual reintegration into the socio-economic mainstream.

He noted that beneficiaries could be linked with self-employment initiatives, livelihood-generation programmes and various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, besides being encouraged to resume their education for those who had left these midway, thereby ensuring long-term recovery and self-reliance under continuous monitoring and support.

Highlighting the need for community participation, the Chief Secretary also advocated the creation of an additional support network comprising trained counsellors drawn from Self Help Groups (SHGs), educational institutions and health centres to strengthen outreach, counselling and follow-up mechanisms and transform the initiative into a sustainable and successful model of rehabilitation.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, assured full support from the Finance Department for successful implementation of the initiative.

He advised the Social Welfare Department to further refine the framework to make it more realistic, outcome-oriented and beneficial for the affected individuals, ensuring tangible socio-economic gains for those undergoing rehabilitation.

The scheme as elaborated by the Principal Secretary, Home, Chandraker Bharti is designed around six key objectives, including institutionalizing a structured rehabilitation cycle, ensuring seamless transition from detoxification to socio-economic stabilization, reducing relapse rates through continuous care and monitoring, establishing mentor-led hand-holding for beneficiaries, promoting interdepartmental convergence and preventing premature exit before certified stabilization.

Elaborating it further the Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Sarmad Hafeez revealed that under the framework, rehabilitation shall be undertaken through three distinct phases spanning over a period of time.

He divulged that the first phase, Treatment and Stabilization focuses on centralized intake, assessment, detoxification, clinical evaluation and risk categorization of beneficiaries. Cases referred from government-recognized de-addiction centres will undergo comprehensive assessment by authorized psychiatric professionals.

Additionally based on risk levels, beneficiaries will receive appropriate supervision and support. The Department shall prepare preliminary Individual Reintegration Plans (IRPs) covering educational, social and economic rehabilitation needs. The District Task Force will review these plans and assign dedicated mentors to each beneficiary.

The second phase, as elucidated includes Reintegration and Livelihood Activation, which focuses on socio-economic activation and implementation of approved Individual Reintegration Plans. Beneficiaries will be connected with education, skill development programmes, apprenticeships, employment opportunities and livelihood interventions.

The third phase, Sustained Monitoring and Social Inclusion, will concentrate on long-term retention, community acceptance and sustained socio-economic stability. Beneficiaries will continue receiving support to maintain educational pursuits, employment, entrepreneurship initiatives, family relationships and mental well-being.

A key feature of the proposed framework is the institution of mentor-led handholding, whereby each beneficiary will be assigned a dedicated mentor responsible for continuous guidance, coordination with departments, monitoring of progress and facilitating access to opportunities and support systems.

Moreover these designated mentors will conduct periodic physical, telephonic and digital follow-ups to verify progress and provide continued guidance.

The framework also emphasizes strong interdepartmental convergence, bringing together multiple departments and stakeholders to ensure seamless delivery of services and benefits required for the rehabilitation process.

During the meeting, Head, IMHANS Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Arshid Hussain, presented the proposed treatment and rehabilitation framework, highlighting evidence-based protocols and best practices required for ensuring the success of the initiative. He elaborated on the institution's three-tier "Circle of Care" model, detailing the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders involved in the rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration process as per the IRP model.

Prof. Hussain also outlined a comprehensive capacity-building roadmap for the personnel associated with the programme and informed the meeting about the series of training programmes proposed to be conducted by IMHANS Srinagar.

These trainings, he noted, would equip the concerned functionaries with the requisite skills and knowledge for effective implementation of the framework and facilitate the timely operationalization of all components of the strategy.

By integrating treatment, livelihood generation, social inclusion and continuous monitoring into a single structured framework, the Government aims to significantly reduce relapse rates, enhance recovery outcomes and empower recovering individuals to lead productive, dignified and self-reliant lives.



Sakeena Itoo visits several areas in D.H. Pora, holds public outreach programme at Ahmadabad, Kulgam

HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, JUNE 10: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, today visited Ahmadabad and several other villages in D.H. Pora, where she held an extensive public outreach programme to hear the grievances, issues and demands of the local residents.

A large number of people from Ahmadabad and adjoining areas participated in the event and apprised the Minister of various developmental needs and public welfare concerns.

Sakeena Itoo gave a patient



hearing to the issues raised and assured the people that all their genuine demands would be

addressed in a phased and time-bound manner. Addressing the gathering on

the occasion, she highlighted various initiatives and people-centric measures undertaken by

the present government to ensure equitable development and improve the quality of life across Jammu and Kashmir. She said the government is committed to strengthen the public infrastructure, enhance service delivery and create new opportunities for youth and women. She added that the Government is resolved to work with transparency, accountability and a focus on inclusive growth.

The Minister also directed the concerned officers to take prompt action on the issues raised during the public outreach programme and ensure effective follow-up for their early resolution.

We Will Continue To Take Firm Action Against Those Involved In Drug Trafficking: Ladakh LG Saxena

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

LEH, JUNE 10: The Ladakh Administration has intensified its battle against drug abuse and trafficking after a major anti-narcotics crackdown revealed the alarming involvement of local youths, including juveniles and underage girls, in both drug consumption and peddling.

The development emerged within days of the



formation of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF), which was constituted on the directions of Vinai Kumar Saxena. Officials said the task force has apprehended several drug consumers and peddlers and seized 1.5 kilograms of charas during its first week of operations.

Investigations have uncovered a troubling pattern in which young drug users are increasingly engaging in drug trafficking to finance their addiction. Authorities described the involvement of juveniles and young women in narcotics-related activities as a matter of serious concern, underscoring the growing social challenge posed by substance abuse in the Union Territory.

The crackdown comes against the backdrop of 298 newly reported cases of drug abuse in Ladakh in recent months. Officials said targeted operations have exposed the extent of youth involvement in the drug trade and highlighted the urgent need for stronger awareness campaigns, preventive measures and community participation.

Authorities have also detected inter-state connections in the narcotics supply chain, indicating that drug trafficking networks operating in Ladakh extend beyond the region. Investigators further reported instances of intravenous drug use, raising concerns about potential public health risks and the spread of communicable diseases.

Officials said the swift action by the newly constituted ANTF reflects the administration's commitment to combating drug abuse through focused enforcement, intelligence-based operations and public cooperation.

Reiterating the administration's zero-tolerance approach, Saxena said that drug abuse poses a serious threat to the social fabric of society and affirmed that authorities would continue taking stringent action against those involved in narcotics trafficking while strengthening efforts related to awareness, prevention and rehabilitation.

The Lieutenant Governor also appealed to parents, educational institutions, religious leaders, civil society organisations and citizens to support ongoing anti-drug initiatives by sharing information, promoting awareness and helping vulnerable youth stay away from narcotic substances.

The latest crackdown is being viewed as a significant step in Ladakh's efforts to dismantle drug networks and safeguard young people from the growing menace of narcotics.

FC/ACS Tourism Visits Verinag and Kokernag, Assures Swift Resolution of Tourism-Related Issues

HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, JUNE 10: Financial Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Tourism Department, Ashish Chandra Verma (IAS), paid an extensive visit to the renowned tourist destinations of Verinag and Kokernag, where he interacted with officials, employees, stakeholders, and local contractors, assuring them that their genuine concerns would be addressed on priority. The senior officer was accorded a warm welcome at Verinag Garden by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Verinag Development Authority (VDA) Mohammad Rouf Rehman (JKAS), along with the authority's officers and staff members. During his visit, the ACS Tourism held a detailed interaction with the CEO and officials of the VDA and patiently listened to various develop-



mental and administrative issues concerning Verinag and its tourism infrastructure.

Officials apprised him of several challenges requiring immediate attention, including matters related to tourism development, infrastructure enhancement, and operational issues. Responding positively, Ashish Chandra Verma assured the officials that all genuine concerns would be examined and resolved at the earliest.

Later in the afternoon, at around 2:30 PM, the Financial Commissioner visited Kokernag, where he was received by the staff of the Kokernag Development Authority (KDA) under the leadership of the CEO, KDA. A formal welcome was organized at the KDA office premises.

During the visit, the Administrative Secretary Tourism held an extensive and fruitful interaction with officers, employees, and local contractors associated with tourism-related works in the area. The participants highlighted several issues and developmental requirements aimed at further strengthening tourism infrastructure and visitor facilities in Kokernag. The ACS Tourism carefully heard their concerns and emphasized the government's commitment to promoting tourism destinations across Jammu and Kashmir through better infrastructure, efficient administration, and timely execution of development projects.

According to officials present during the meeting, Ashish Chandra Verma issued clear instructions that all pending issues concerning Verinag and Kokernag should be taken up on priority. He directed the concerned authorities, including the CEO of the Tourism Development Authority, to place all unresolved matters before the department for their early resolution and necessary action.

The visit was widely appreciated by tourism stakeholders, traders, local contractors, and members of civil society, who expressed satisfaction over the proactive approach adopted by the Administrative Secretary. Many described the visit as encouraging and result-oriented, noting that the officer's assurances and directions reflected the government's commitment towards strengthening tourism infrastructure and addressing long-pending concerns of the sector. Stakeholders expressed hope that the visit would pave the way for accelerated development and timely resolution of issues affecting the tourism industry in both Verinag and Kokernag, two of South Kashmir's most prominent tourist destinations.

LPC Ichgam Stages Play "Yateem Kour" at GHS Battapora Kanihama Badgam

GULFAM BARJI

BADGAM, JUNE 10: Luka Pather Centre, Ichgam, Badgam organized a cultural programme at Govt. High School Battapora, Kanihama Badgam where its artists presented the Kashmiri play "Yateem Kour." The performance was warmly appreciated by students, teachers and local residents. The play depicts the struggles of an orphan girl and highlights issues of social injustice, exploitation, women's rights and human compassion. Through its powerful message the play emphasized the importance of social justice and humanity. The programme was organized under the Repertory Grant Scheme "Guru Shishya Parampara" of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India New Delhi.

Headmaster Khurshid Khamosh attended the event as the chief guest. Appreciating the efforts of the artists he highlighted the important role of theatre in creating social awareness and preserving cultural heritage.



The event concluded with enthusiastic applause from the audience for the meaningful presentation and outstanding performances.

CRPF Medical Camp Benefits 255 Villagers in Anantnag

HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, JUNE 10: As part of its Civic Action Programme (CAP), the 90 Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) organized a free medical camp at Primary School Kanjigund in Bijbehara area of Anantnag district, providing healthcare services to 255 residents from Kanjigund, Uranhall and nearby villages.

The camp offered free

medical consultations, health check-ups, diagnosis and distribution of medicines. It was inaugurated by Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh, Second-in-Command, 90 Bn CRPF, in the presence of Dr. Suraj Kumar Singh, Chief Medical Officer, OG 90 Bn CRPF, and Shri Ranjeet Kumar Maurya, Deputy Commandant.

The programme was conducted by a team of CRPF medical professionals, assisted by Dr. Tawseef

Ahmad and Dr. Jahan Ara from Qaimoh, along with trained paramedical staff.

Men, women, senior citizens and children participated in large numbers and received medical care and free medicines. Medical experts examined patients suffering from various ailments and provided treatment and health-related guidance.

Officials said the initiative was aimed at improving access to

healthcare in rural areas while strengthening ties between security forces and local communities. Residents appreciated the humanitarian effort and thanked the CRPF for bringing essential healthcare services to their doorstep.

The successful camp highlighted the CRPF's commitment to community welfare and public outreach through meaningful civic initiatives.

People In J&K Living In Peace, Those In PoJK Being Killed: Minister Sanjay Seth

HT News Desk / Agencies

SRINAGAR, JUN 10: Amid reports of unrest in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on Wednesday said the people in Jammu and Kashmir were living in peace and the region was prospering, while those across the border were being killed.

Speaking to reporters here, Seth asked people not to worry about their security, saying that "no one can even dare to raise an eye" against India.

"The citizens of the country need not worry. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and our Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, there is nothing to worry. No one can even dare to raise an eye," Seth said.

The minister was in Srinagar to visit the revered Hazratbal shrine, where he inaugurated a cleanliness drive under the theme '12 saal bemisaal' marking Modi's 12 years in office.

"See how much peace there is



(in Jammu and Kashmir). Between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025, after the (Pahalgam terror attack) incident, 1.7 crore tourists visited here. And my assessment is that this time, in 2026, the number of tourists will

reach three crores," he said. Seth said people are enthusiastic to visit the Kashmir valley. "Our people want to come here. That's why Prime Minister Modi asked not to travel abroad. If you want to travel, come to Kashmir,

go to the Northeast," Seth added. He also praised Prime Minister Modi for keeping inflation in check amid the West Asia crisis. "There is a war-like situation in the Middle East. Has anything vanished from the market here?"

No. Have prices increased exorbitantly? No. Is there any panic? No. Why? Because there is peace. Everything is calm," he said.

"We don't have oil wells here, yet the fuel prices have not increased exorbitantly. There has been a minimal increase," he added. On Modi completing 12 years in office, Seth said that it was a very important day for the country, adding that the prime minister "changed the country's destiny and image".

"PM Modi, who has also changed the destiny and image of Kashmir, completed 12 years, i.e., 4,399 days as elected PM. Today, first thing in the morning, I went to the Shankaracharya Temple. There, I offered prayers and oversaw a cleanliness drive. Then I came to this holy dargah to offer prayers for the PM, for his good health and long life," he said.

He said the entire country is praying for Modi's good health and long life. "The country today is moving forward peacefully and very rapidly," he said.

Sports quota recruitment a historic step towards empowering youth, recognising excellence: Satish Sharma

223 sportspersons selected for government jobs; appointment orders to be handed over by Chief Minister

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: In a major boost to the sporting fraternity of Jammu and Kashmir and a significant step towards creating sustainable career opportunities for the athletes, Minister for Youth Services & Sports, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today congratulated the 223 outstanding sportspersons who have been selected for appointment to government services under the sports quota.

Terming the recruitment as a landmark achievement in the government's efforts to promote sports and youth empowerment, the Minister said that the selection of such a large number of athletes reflects the administration's commitment towards honouring the sporting excellence and ensuring that talented sportspersons are provided meaningful opportunities beyond the playing arena.

The Minister expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Chief Minister for his unwavering support and keen interest in strengthening the sports ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir. He informed that the appointment orders would be formally handed over to the se-

lected candidates by the Chief Minister at a special ceremony, marking a proud and memorable occasion for the athletes and their families.

Satish Sharma said that the government under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has adopted a comprehensive approach towards sports development, focusing not only on infrastructure creation and competitive excellence but also on ensuring social and economic security for athletes who dedicate years of hard work and perseverance to bring laurels to Jammu and Kashmir.

"The selection of 223 sportspersons for government employment is not merely a recruitment process; it is a recognition of the discipline, commitment, sacrifices and achievements of our young athletes. It sends a strong message that excellence in sports will be respected, rewarded and supported by the government," the Minister said.

He observed that sports have emerged as a powerful vehicle for youth engagement, character-building, leadership development and social transformation. He added that by creating assured career pathways for athletes, the government is encouraging young people to pursue sports with



greater confidence and commitment.

The Minister highlighted various initiatives being undertaken to strengthen the sports landscape across the

Union Territory, including the upgradation of sports infrastructure, development of modern training facilities, organization of competitive events at district and state

level, promotion of grassroots talent identification programmes and enhanced support for athletes participating in national and international competitions.

He said that Jammu and Kashmir has consistently produced talented sportspersons who have excelled in diverse disciplines and brought recognition to the region at national and international forums. The government, he added, is determined to create an enabling environment where such talent can flourish through sustained institutional support, professional coaching, scientific training methods and improved access to opportunities.

Satish Sharma said that the sports quota recruitment fulfills a long-standing aspiration of many athletes who have dedicated themselves to excellence despite numerous challenges. He said the initiative will not only provide financial stability and career security to the selected candidates but will also inspire thousands of aspiring sportspersons across Jammu and Kashmir to take up sports as a serious and rewarding pursuit.

The Minister called upon the educational institutions, sports associations, coaches and parents to work collectively towards nurturing sporting talent and creating a culture of excellence. He emphasized that the future of Jammu and Kashmir's sporting success lies in strengthening grassroots

participation and ensuring that every talented youth receives adequate opportunities to showcase their potential.

Reiterating the government's vision of making Jammu and Kashmir a hub of sporting excellence, Satish Sharma said that sports are no longer confined to recreation but have evolved into a dynamic sector offering opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, international exposure and social mobility.

"The success of these 223 sportspersons belongs not only to them and their families but to the entire sporting community of Jammu and Kashmir. Their achievements will not only provide financial stability and career security to the selected candidates but will also inspire thousands of aspiring sportspersons across Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The Minister extended his warm congratulations to all the selected candidates and wished them success in their future careers. He expressed confidence that they would continue to uphold the spirit of sportsmanship and serve as role models for the youth while contributing meaningfully to public service and the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

VC SKUAST-K holds SAC meeting of KVK Ganderbal

HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, JUNE 10: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir's Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Ganderbal on Wednesday convened its 22nd Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting at the Kendra campus Shuhama.

The meeting was chaired by Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai and was attended by Director Extension, SKUAST-K, Prof Raihana Habib Kanth, KVK scientists, district heads of line departments, agri-entrepreneurs, and progressive farmers to deliberate on scientific interventions and future strategies for strengthening the agricultural sector in the district.

Prof Ganai highlighted the Kendra's growing role in promoting region-specific agricultural innovation and entrepreneurship. Interacting with progressive farmers and agri-preneurs, he urged them to dive into agriculture, agri-preneurship, and post-harvest value as there are end number of opportunities.

Prof Raihana Habib Kanth emphasized the need to transform traditional farming into a commercially sustainable enterprise. She urged scientists to intensify skill development programs, promote low-cost organic farming solutions, and develop specialized training modules aimed at enhancing farmers' capacities and livelihoods across the Union Territory.

Dr Ajaz Ahmed Malik, Senior Scientist & Head, KVK Ganderbal delivered a detailed presentation on the Action Taken Report, Annual Progress Report, and newly launched initiatives of the centre.

On the occasion, Vice Chancellor inaugurated several newly established facilities at the KVK, including a Food Technology Laboratory, a High-Density Pear Orchard, Diversified Stone Fruit Block, Cucurbitaceae Crop Cafeteria, and the "Sindh Greens" Urban Kitchen Garden initiative.

DC Shopian Presides over Block Diwas at Methwani Behak, Sarbal Devpora Hears Tribal Community issues, Assures prompt redressal

HT NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN, JUNE 10: In a major push towards responsive governance and redressal of issues and concerns raised by members of the tribal community during a public interaction programme at their doorsteps, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today presided over a Block Diwas programme at Methwani Behak, an alpine meadows on the upper reaches of Sarbal Devpora area.

An appreciable number of members of the tribal community comprising also the nomadic people attended the block diwas. The DC interacted with

the community members and listened to public issues.

The issues raised by the local public of the area include matters related to the Forest Rights Act (FRA) including community rights on grazing, animal vaccination and healthcare services, school infrastructure and rural development works at Shopian, Shishir Gupta today presided over a Block Diwas programme at Methwani Behak, an alpine meadows on the upper reaches of Sarbal Devpora area.

Besides, the core issues raised during the interaction centered around the augmentation of water supply, uninterrupted electricity supply, healthcare



facilities and coverage of local population under various Welfare and employment schemes.

To ensure swift action, senior sectoral district heads were present to respond directly to public

concerns and note the demands for action.

Addressing the gathering, the DC emphasized the importance of block diwas as an effective platform for direct engagement

and grievance redressal, enabling citizens to bring their concerns before the district administration.

He directed concerned officers to ensure timely resolution of genuine issues and maintain close coordination with the public. He assured the public about the on-time resolution of highlighted issues.

ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone; GM, DC, Shurjil Naik; ACD, Muzafar Ahmad; Dy.CEO, DIO, LDM, Exen KPDC, Tehsildar Shopian, BDO Shopian and Keller, other senior officers of the district administration, ex PRI members, public representatives and a large number of local residents attended the programme.

Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan gains momentum across Budgam Awareness, Outreach Activities intensified

HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, JUNE 10: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), various departments and stakeholders across district Budgam have intensified awareness, outreach and preventive activities to combat drug abuse and promote a healthy, drug-free society. A series of awareness programmes, community interactions and sensitization campaigns were conducted at different locations across the district to educate the public, particularly youth, about the harmful effects of

substance abuse. Participants were informed about the social, psychological and economic consequences of drug addiction and the importance of adopting a healthy and productive lifestyle. The campaign also focused on generating awareness regarding the provisions of the NDPS Act, prevention of illicit cultivation of narcotic crops and the role of community participation in curbing the menace of drug abuse. Officials emphasized the need for collective efforts involving government departments, educational institutions, civil society organizations, parents

and community leaders to safeguard the younger generation from the dangers of addiction. During the programmes, participants pledged to support the objectives of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan and actively contribute towards creating awareness in their respective communities. The District Administration Budgam reiterated its commitment to strengthening preventive, awareness and enforcement measures under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan and urged all sections of society to join hands in building a safer, healthier and drug-free district.

DDC Kulgam reviews progress of works, Employment Generation under MGNREGA

HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, JUNE 10: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of works and performance under the MGNREGA scheme in the district.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Kulgam, all Block Development Officers (BDOs), MIS Operators and Technical Assistants. During the meeting, the DDC Kulgam conducted a detailed review of the execution of works, employment generation, quality of assets being created and overall implementation of the MGNREGA Scheme across all blocks of the district.

Emphasizing transparency and accountability, the DDC Kulgam directed the functionaries of Rural Development Department Kulgam to ensure that only genuine and deserving job card holders are engaged under the programme and that employment opportunities are provided strictly in accordance with prescribed guidelines, without any duplicity or violation of norms.

The DDC Kulgam further stressed the need for the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PwDs) in the scheme and directed officers to encourage their active participation wherever feasible. He also underscored the importance of women empowerment and instructed BDOs to motivate and facilitate the participation of women, particularly those above the age of 40 years, in various permissible activities under the scheme.

Highlighting the significance of durable community assets, the DDC directed all concerned officers to ensure that the quality of works and assets created under the programme remains of the highest standard and that all works are executed strictly as per technical specifications.

SKUAST-K's "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" gains momentum through doorstep Farmer Outreach in Srinagar villages

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: In a sustained effort to strengthen grassroots agricultural extension and promote sustainable farming practices, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Srinagar under Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) today intensified its village-level outreach under the nationwide "Khet Bachao Abhiyan",

taking scientific advisories, soil health awareness, and institutional support mechanisms directly to farmers' doorsteps in the villages of Malikpora, Sheikhpura, Khanpora and Patipora of Panzinar-B block Qamarwari.

The programme witnessed active participation of farmers, agricultural experts, officials from Grameen Bank, and representatives from the



National Innovation Foundation (NIF), reflecting a collaborative effort to encourage

environmentally sustainable farming practices and enhance farmers' access to institutional support systems.

During the programme, Dr. Shamim A. Simnani, Head, KVK Srinagar, highlighted the need for sustainable and regenerative farming practices to restore soil health and ensure long-term agricultural sustainability. He noted that excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides over the years has adversely af-

ected soil fertility and ecological balance.

The farmers were also sensitized about the benefits of the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme and encouraged to avail institutional credit facilities for agricultural and allied activities.

Experts interacted with farmers on balanced nutrient management, soil conservation, and eco-friendly agricultural practices.

DC Srinagar hands over fully equipped Ambulance to BMO Hazratbal to strengthen emergency healthcare services in Harwan Block

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR JUNE 10: Continuing efforts to strengthen emergency healthcare services in the District, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today handed over a fully equipped ambulance to the Block Medical Officer (BMO), Hazratbal, aimed at strengthening medical transportation and emergency response facilities in Harwan Panchayat Block and other rural areas of the District.

The handover ceremony was held at the DC Office premises attended by Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Tahir Sajad, BMO Hazratbal Dr. Abdul Majeed, ZMO SR Gunj Dr. Shafaqat, ZMO Zaidal Dr. Rubena, besides other officers of the District Administration and Health Department.

Speaking on the occasion, the



Deputy Commissioner said the addition of the ambulance would significantly strengthen emergency healthcare infrastructure in Hazratbal Medical Block and serve as a critical resource for the patients, especially residents of tribal and rural areas.

He emphasized that the ambulance will improve the accessibility and efficiency of healthcare services by ensuring the timely transportation of patients and trauma cases to healthcare institutions. The DC also stressed the importance of its optimal utilization to provide prompt medical assistance, enhance patient care and further strengthen the district's emergency response capacity.

The ambulance is expected to provide much-needed support to healthcare teams serving remote areas and contribute to improved healthcare delivery across rural parts of Srinagar district

Director JKEDI chairs review meeting with DNOs, ROs, In-charge officers

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: Director, Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Mohammad Younis Malik, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Sempora campus of the Institute to assess the progress of various entrepreneurship development and youth engagement initiatives being implemented across the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Range Officers (ROs), District Nodal Officers (DNOs), and other officials, both physically and through virtual mode, from different districts of Jammu & Kashmir.

During the meeting, Joint Director JKEDI, Chand Kishor Sharma, presented a detailed overview of the various programmes and initiatives being implemented by the Institute, along with the achievements registered under different schemes and interventions.

A thorough review of key government initiatives, including the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27, Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Scheme, Mission YUVA, and various other programmes, was undertaken during the session. The progress made in loan repayment and recovery under different schemes was also discussed in detail.

Addressing the officers, the Director emphasized the need to intensify efforts towards achieving JKEDI's core objective of empowering youth through entrepreneurship awareness, orientation, and capacity building. He called

upon the District Nodal Officers to further strengthen grassroots outreach and ensure greater mobilisation of aspiring entrepreneurs from all regions of the Union Territory to foster a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Director, JKEDI stressed the importance of enhanced coordination with allied departments, including the District Industries Centres (DICs), Handloom and Handicrafts Department, Employment Department, Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB), and other stakeholder agencies for wider outreach and effective implementation of entrepreneurship initiatives.

The Director also advised the District Nodal Officers to design Entrepreneurship Orientation Programmes (EOPs) in close alignment with district-level allied departments to help entrepreneurs effectively address real-time business challenges and sector-specific issues.

Highlighting the significance of internship programmes being conducted by the Institute, he directed that such programmes be closely monitored to ensure that interns receive structured learning experiences and meaningful industry exposure.

He further urged all officers and employees of the Institute to work in close coordination and with renewed commitment towards realizing JKEDI's vision of creating a self-reliant, innovative, and enterprising youth population in Jammu & Kashmir.

Day 7 of Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament: volleyball and wrestling competitions held in Doda

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, JUNE 10: The seventh day of the Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament 2026 featured competitions in Volleyball (U-19 Boys) and Wrestling (U-17 and U-19) categories, bringing together student-athletes from across District Doda.

The tournament saw participation from the zones of Assar, Ghat, Gundna, Bhalessa, Bhagwah, Doda, Bhalla, Bhaderwah, Bhatyas and Thathri. Athletes displayed determination, discipline and sporting skill throughout the day's events.

The tournament is being organised under the guidance of Director General Youth Services and Sports J&K Anuradha Gupta and Joint Director Youth Services and Sports Jammu Inderjeet Singh Parihar and is being conducted under the overall supervision of DYSSO Doda



Ashok Kumar.

The Volleyball U-19 Boys matches were highly competitive, with teams demonstrating teamwork, coordination and resilience. The Wrestling competitions in the U-17 and U-19 categories highlighted the strength, technique and perseverance of young wrestlers representing different zones of the district.

The organising committee congratulated all medal winners and participants for their performances in the Wrestling Boys U-19 competition. The competitions were officiated by technical officials from the Department of Youth Services and Sports, including PELs, PEMs, PETs, REK teachers and NYK coordinators, ensuring fair play and the

Capacity Building Programme for J&K Accounts Service Probationary Officers concludes at NZATI Jammu

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JUNE 10: A two-day Capacity Building Programme for Probationary Officers of the J&K Accounts Service, jointly organised by The Business School University of Jammu and the Northern Zonal Accountancy Training Institute

(NZATI) Jammu, concluded today at NZATI Jammu. The second day commenced with a session on Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Dynamics by Prof. Jaya Bhasin, who emphasised effective leadership, team building, motivation and people-centric management practices in public administration.

DC Doda holds Block Diwas at Kari Ghuraka, directs time-bound redressal of public grievances

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, JUNE 10: Deputy Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal today chaired a Block Diwas programme at Panchayat Ghar Kari Ghuraka, Panchayat Kari Chatra, Block Bhalla, providing a platform for direct interaction between the administration and the public. The programme saw active participation from PRI representatives, prominent citizens, women, youth and officials from various departments.

During the programme, the public raised several demands and grievances pertaining to basic infrastructure and public services. Key issues included drinking water scarcity, damaged electricity poles in Kari and surrounding areas, construction of the Chatra-Kari road, completion of the Drana-Ghuraka road, pending work on the Cheka-Ghuraka road, shortage of teachers in Government High School Chatra, Higher Secondary School Ghuraka, UPS Charota and Middle School Kari, absence of a Headmaster at Government High School Chatra, fencing of schools to protect them from stray animals, repair of school washrooms and sanitation facilities, MGNREGA-related issues, water supply problems in Santhapani Ghuraka and Sengoi Panchayat, shortage of healthcare staff including a Staff Nurse at Health Centre Ghuraka and the need for awareness

camps on government welfare schemes.

The public also demanded the establishment of a J&K Bank branch in the area and sought regular outreach by the Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry and Social Welfare Departments to educate people about welfare and subsidy schemes. Taking serious note of the issues, the Deputy Commissioner issued on-the-spot directions to the departments concerned. He directed the Public Works Department (PWD) to expedite all ongoing road projects and take strict action against non-performing contractors, instructing that contractors who have abandoned works be blacklisted, their contracts terminated and such contractors barred from future government works.

The Jal Shakti Department was directed to immediately repair the damaged Santhapani water pipeline and ensure timely completion of all ongoing water supply projects, with priority resolution of water supply issues in affected villages.

The Education Department was directed to address the shortage of teachers, repair school washrooms and kitchens and improve educational infrastructure. The Deputy Commissioner also emphasised the adoption of online teaching methods to address academic challenges in remote areas. The Assistant Commissioner (Development) was directed to address issues re-



lated to school fencing and playground facilities, particularly at UPS Charota.

The Power Development Department (PDD) was instructed to survey damaged electricity poles in Kari Chatra and adjoining areas, submit a detailed report and undertake immediate repair and replacement works.

The Social Welfare Department was directed to organise awareness camps on welfare schemes and identify all eligible beneficiaries for pension schemes to ensure that benefits reach deserving citizens.

The Agriculture Department

ensure roster-based deployment of doctors, address the shortage of healthcare staff including the requirement of a Staff Nurse at Ghuraka and prepare a schedule for mobile medical units to extend healthcare services to remote areas. The Health Department was also directed to undertake health screening drives and strengthen efforts under the TB Mukta Bharat Campaign.

The Deputy Commissioner urged the public to register grievances on the JK Samadhan Portal for prompt and transparent redressal. He also sensitised the gathering about the Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan and called upon people to actively support the campaign by spreading awareness against drug abuse and encouraging affected individuals to seek rehabilitation and counselling services. The Deputy Commissioner later inspected Government Higher Secondary School Ghuraka, where he reviewed educational infrastructure, availability of teaching staff, sanitation facilities and other basic amenities, directing officers concerned to address deficiencies on priority and ensure a conducive learning environment for students.

He reiterated the administration's commitment to responsive governance and assured the public that all genuine issues raised during the programme would be addressed in a time-bound manner.

DC Kathua chairs review meeting of revenue officers on Digitized Jamabandi-2026, Water Census and other assignments

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, JUNE 10: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today chaired a review meeting of revenue officers to assess the progress of various assignments being implemented by the Revenue Department, including Digitized Jamabandi-2026, Irrigation Census and Water Census.

Among those present were Additional Deputy Commissioner Mahima Madan, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Vishav Partap Singh, Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Tehsildars and other officers concerned.

At the outset, the Assistant Commissioner Revenue presented a detailed overview of the status of ongoing assignments entrusted to the Revenue Department. He apprised the Deputy Commissioner of progress under



the Water Census, including the enumeration and documentation of water bodies, assessment of groundwater resources and updation of related records.

He further briefed the meeting on the progress of finalisation of Digitized Jamabandi-2026, verification of mutation entries and the corrective measures being undertaken to

ensure accuracy and updation of revenue records across the district.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed tehsil-wise progress of all assignments and took stock of surveys, field verification and record updation being carried out by revenue functionaries. He stressed the need for accuracy, transparency and consistency in data compiled under various surveys and census-related activities.

Emphasising the importance of modernisation of land records and reliable database management, the Deputy Commissioner directed officers to expedite digitisation and ensure timely completion of all pending tasks. He underscored that accurate

and updated records are essential for efficient public service delivery and effective governance.

He also instructed officers to intensify field-level monitoring and complete all surveys and verification exercises within the stipulated timelines, directing them to strictly adhere to guidelines and deadlines prescribed by higher authorities and ensure that no target remains unattended.

The Deputy Commissioner urged all revenue officers to work with dedication and accountability to achieve the objectives of assigned tasks within the prescribed timeframe.

The meeting concluded with a discussion on the roadmap for timely completion of ongoing assignments and strategies for improving the quality and accuracy of revenue records in the district.

Day 7 of Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament: volleyball and wrestling competitions held in Doda

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The tournament is being organised under the guidance of Director General Youth Services and Sports J&K Anuradha Gupta and Joint Director Youth Services and Sports Jammu Inderjeet Singh Parihar and is being conducted under the overall supervision of DYSSO Doda Ashok Kumar.

The Volleyball U-19 Boys matches were highly competitive, with teams demonstrating teamwork, coordination and resilience.

HT EDITORIAL

From Isolation to Integration :
Gadkari's Road Revolution
Redefining Future of J&K

The announcements made by Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari during his visit to Jammu and Kashmir have generated unprecedented optimism across the region. While the Zojila Tunnel breakthrough rightly attracted national attention, it was the minister's broader vision for an extensive network of highways, tunnels, expressways and strategic road corridors that truly captured the imagination of the people.

For decades, inadequate connectivity remained one of the biggest obstacles to the economic and social development of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Difficult terrain, harsh weather conditions and limited road infrastructure often slowed growth, restricted investment and isolated remote communities. Today, that long-standing challenge is being addressed with determination and speed.

What distinguishes the current phase of infrastructure development is not merely the scale of projects but the pace at which they are moving. Several projects that remained pending for years are now witnessing rapid execution. New highways, tunnel projects, road widening works and alternative connectivity corridors are steadily taking shape across the region, signalling a clear commitment to overcoming geographical barriers.

The impact of these projects extends far beyond transportation. Improved road connectivity means easier access to healthcare, education, tourism and markets. It means lower transportation costs for businesses, better opportunities for farmers and traders, and enhanced mobility for thousands of people living in far-flung areas. In a region where development has often been dictated by geography, connectivity has emerged as the most powerful catalyst for change.

The minister's announcements have also strengthened public confidence that Jammu and Kashmir is receiving the infrastructure attention it deserves. The vision is no longer limited to connecting cities; it is about integrating regions, empowering communities and unlocking economic potential that has remained underutilized for decades.

At the same time, the journey is far from complete. There remains immense scope for further strengthening road infrastructure in this geographically challenging region. Several remote districts still require all-weather connectivity, additional tunnels and alternate routes to ensure uninterrupted movement during adverse weather conditions. Border areas and interior regions must continue to receive priority in future planning.

As the government pushes ahead with its ambitious connectivity agenda, the expectation of the people is simple: maintain the present momentum. The foundations of a road revolution have been laid, but the task now is to ensure that every village, district and region benefits from it.

Mr. Gadkari deserves credit for bringing renewed urgency to long-pending infrastructure aspirations. Yet the true success of this vision will lie in carrying it forward until every corner of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh is seamlessly connected to the opportunities of modern India.

The region has waited long for such transformation. The time has now come to ensure that the road to development reaches every doorstep.

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Sukhnag River: A Lifeline of the Kashmir Valley

A river quenches the thirst of the Kashmir Valley



SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

The Kashmir Valley is not just a place on Earth; it is often called the "Paradise on Earth." It is known for its unique culture, breathtaking landscapes, and abundant natural treasures. Today, I would like to highlight the Sukhnag River, a river that quenches the thirst of thousands and provides water for irrigation across a large area of Kashmir.

The Sukhnag River lies in the lap of the Pir Panjal Mountains and flows through the enchanting landscapes of Parihas, Doodhpathri, and Sitaharan Khag. The name "Sukhnag" is derived from two Kashmiri words: "Sukh," meaning peace or calm, and "Naag," meaning spring. Thus, Sukhnag can be interpreted as the "Spring of Peace."

The river beautifies and provides water to several villages along its course, including Arizal, Zanigam, and Beerwah, before finally merging with the Jhelum River. Sukhnag is one of the major tributaries of the Jhelum and plays a vital role in supporting local agriculture and meeting the daily needs of the people.

The river originates from the upper mountain hills of Tosamaidan. Its waters are fed by high-altitude springs and mountain streams that enhance the beauty of the lush green forests of the region. The Sukhnag River possesses immense tourism potential. With proper planning and administrative attention, it can be developed into a significant tourist attraction. It is located approximately a 40-minute walk from the Tourist Reception Centre (TRC) at Raiyar-Ich, Tangnar.

If included in the tourism development plans of the Kashmir Valley, the concerned departments would discover many hidden aspects of this beautiful region. The District Administration of Budgam has been making efforts to uplift the district; however, several basic facilities necessary for tourism development are still lacking.



Budgam is home to renowned tourist destinations such as Yousmarg and Doodhpathri, while new destinations continue to emerge. Tosamaidan, a recently introduced tourist destination, has tremendous tourism potential and deserves focused development and support from the administration.

Dear readers, In Sha Allah, I will continue to bring more interesting information and facts about these destinations in the future and strive to highlight the unmatched beauty of the Sukhnag River and other hidden gems of Budgam district.

Raiyar-Ich is a picturesque hamlet and a peaceful resting place for tourists visiting from different parts of the country and the world. There are fascinating stories associated with the name "Raiyar." According to local tradition, the name is derived from two Kashmiri words: "Rai," meaning lost, and "Yaar," meaning friend.

It is believed that the name was given by the revered Sufi saint. According to a local legend narrated by Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Bhatti, when the saint arrived in the village from the forests of the Pir Panjal Mountains, he sent his companions to different parts of Kashmir to spread the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Thereafter, he continued his spiritual journey alone towards the Dreygam Cave.

Today, Raiyar-Ich stands as a symbol of natural beauty and spiritual heritage. The hamlet offers breathtaking views, fresh mountain air, and a serene environment that refreshes the mind and soul of every visitor. It also serves as a gateway to numerous trekking routes and picnic spots around Doodhpathri, making it an attractive destination for nature lovers and adventure seekers alike.

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Bhal Padri Where Nature Speak In Silence



MOOL RAJ

New Secret of the Himalayas Unraveled: Bhal Padri a Stunning Meadow in the Lap of Chenab Valley

Bhal Padri, a remote trail of the nomadic tribes is now attracting tourists thanks to a new 10-kilometer road, allowing families, photographers, trekkers, and nature enthusiasts to easily explore this pristine valley.

For decades, Bhal Padri, a pristine high-altitude meadow nestled in the hills of Doda district's Gandoh subdivision has been cloaked in quiet anonymity, known only to nomadic Gujjars and Bakerwals, and to the occasional botanists from the Institute of Mountaineering and Environment in Bhaaderwah.

But now, with improved access and official recognition, Bhal Padri is ready to embrace the world and the world, in turn, is ready for it. As the region looks to diversify its tourism potential, this hidden gem, perched at an altitude of 11,000 feet above sea level, covering nearly 11 kilometers of alpine terrain, is stepping into the limelight.

Until recently, it was accessible only through difficult trekking routes known and used primarily by the nomadic tribes. The only other mentions of Bhal Padri appeared in the scattered field notes of botanists fascinated by its rich biodiversity and carpeted wild flowers.

Historical evidence indicates that Bhal Padri served as an ancient transit point and trading route connecting Bhalessa with the native town of Bhaaderwah. Bhaaderwah was a jagir under the rule of Raja Amar Singh.

This location is now becoming a



popular trail that attracts both individual tourists and groups from outside the Chenab region of Jammu and Kashmir, demonstrating the tourism potential of the region beyond the beaten tracks of Gulmarg, Pahalgam, and Sonamarg.

The transformation at Bhal Padri began with the construction of a new 10-kilometer road connecting it directly to Padri Pass, the highest point on the Bhaaderwah-Chamba interstate highway. This crucial infrastructure has converted what was once a remote, almost mythical meadow into an accessible eco-tourism destination.

Now, families, photographers, trekkers, and nature lovers can safely explore this untouched valley easily and safely for the first time.

Often referred to as the "Valley of Flowers", Bhal Padri's meadows are alive with seasonal wild blooms that are vibrant, aromatic, and mesmerising. Its sprawling grasslands, icy glacial streams, and expansive pastures are framed by thick forests of pine, fir, and Himalayan birch, offering one of the most awe-inspiring landscapes in Jammu and Kashmir.

Unlike the highly commercialised destinations in the Kashmir Valley, Bhal Padri offers tranquility, raw beauty, and ecological integrity. It is the kind

of place where you wake up to the rustling of wind through pine trees, watch Gujjar families tending to their flocks, and encounter rare birds and flora that thrive in these high-altitude ecosystems.

Bhal Padri's introduction to the tourism map has not been abrupt. The Government of Jammu and Kashmir and District Administration Doda have embraced a slow-tourism approach, placing sustainability at the core of their strategy.

Infrastructure is being developed mindfully, without disturbing the delicate ecology of the region. Plans are underway to encourage eco-lodges, local home stays, community-guided treks, and organic food-based tourism—all of which empower the local economy while preserving the cultural and environmental ethos.

This is crucial, given that Bhal Padri lies within a fragile Himalayan ecosystem. The success of this tourism model could serve as a blueprint for other offbeat Himalayan destinations that want to avoid the mistakes of mass tourism while still harnessing its benefits.

Beyond its stunning landscapes, Bhal Padri is also a rich cultural zone. The meadows and surrounding hamlets are home to nomadic Gujjar and Bak-

erwal communities, whose seasonal migration and traditional lifestyles form a living heritage of the Chenab region.

Their stories, music, folklore, and hospitality add depth to the visitor experience. Engaging with them offers a glimpse into a world where tradition and nature still coexist in harmony.

Botanists and researchers continue to be drawn to Bhal Padri for its alpine plant species, many of which are rare and endemic to the Western Himalayas. With greater access now available, Bhal Padri is poised to become a centre for eco-education, scientific exploration, and nature photography, in addition to leisure tourism.

The introduction of Bhal Padri marks a new chapter in Himalayan travel one that speaks to the spirit of responsible exploration. It is a place where tourism meets conservation, where travelers rediscover peace, and where communities find hope and dignity in sustainable development.

As this alpine treasure opens up to the world, it reminds us that the Himalayas still have secrets left to tell if we are willing to listen, learn, and tread lightly. Whether you're seeking spiritual renewal, wilderness adventures, or cultural immersion, Bhal Padri stands ready—timeless, pure, and profoundly alive.

How to Get There
By Road:
Start from Jammu - via Batote-Doda-Bhaaderwah - reach Padri Pass From Padri Pass, a newly built 10-kilometre road leads to Bhal Padri directly.

By Trek:
Adventure enthusiasts can opt for trekking trails that run from Bhalessa Changa Block, traversing forest streams, and rolling pastures via Gingota, Jawali and Ghati Meadow of Changa Block Bhalessa.

THE AUTHOR IS A
REGULAR COLUMNIST AND
FREELANCE WRITER

HT - PERSONALITY

Maya Angelou: The Uncaged Bard



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

Maya Angelou stands as one of the most luminous literary voices of the twentieth century, a writer whose words carried the music of pain, resilience, memory, rebellion, and hope. She was not merely a poet, memoirist, performer, or activist; she was an entire civilization of experiences speaking through language. Her life resembled an epic journey through trauma, racism, silence, survival, creativity, and triumph. To call her "The Uncaged Bard" is to recognize her extraordinary ability to break every prison imposed upon her—racial discrimination, gender oppression, personal suffering, and historical injustice—and transform those struggles into songs of liberation. Maya Angelou's literary universe is deeply rooted in the African American experience, yet her voice transcends race and geography to touch the universal human spirit. Her writings speak to all who have suffered humiliation, displacement, loneliness, or oppression. Like a bird rising above storms, she converted suffering into artistic power. Her poetry does not whisper; it sings, protests, remembers, and rises. It is at once intimate and political, lyrical and revolutionary.

Born Marguerite Annie Johnson in 1928 in St. Louis, Maya Angelou spent much of her childhood in the segregated American South. Her early years were marked by instability, racial humiliation, and emotional trauma. Perhaps the most defining tragedy of her childhood was sexual abuse at the age of eight. The traumatic experience led her into near-total silence for several years because she believed her voice had caused a death connected to the event. Yet paradoxically, this silence became the womb of her future literary brilliance. During those silent years, she immersed herself in books, absorbing literature, rhythm, and language with extraordinary intensity. The silent child would eventually become one of the most powerful voices in world literature. This transformation itself is deeply symbolic. Maya Angelou's life demonstrates how language can emerge from silence as resistance, healing, and rebirth.

Maya Angelou's works form one of the most resonant and enduring bodies of literature in modern American letters, a tapestry woven from memory, struggle, resilience, and the triumphant assertion of identity. Her writing, spanning autobiography, poetry, drama, and essays, emerges from the deep well of personal experience, yet rises far beyond the individual to speak to collective histories of race, womanhood, and human dignity. To read Angelou is to encounter a voice that refuses silence, a voice that transforms pain into power and memory into meaning.

Angelou's most celebrated contribution to literature is her seven-volume autobiographical series, a monumental achievement in life-writing. Beginning with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), she redefined the possibilities of autobiography by centering the experiences of a Black girl growing up in the segregated American South. The book's lyrical prose, unflinching honesty, and emotional depth opened a new path for autobiographical narrative, blending the intimacy of personal confession with the broader social realities of racism, trauma, and resilience. The subsequent volumes—*Gather Together in My Name*, *Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas*, *The Heart of a Woman*, *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*, *A Song Flung Up to Heaven*, and *Mom & Me & Mom*—trace her evolution from a vulnerable child to a global cultural figure. Across these works, Angelou chronicles her journey through poverty, motherhood, artistic discovery, political activism, and spiritual growth. What distinguishes these autobiographies is not

merely the events they recount but the voice that recounts them: a voice that is at once tender and fierce, reflective and assertive, shaped by suffering yet never defined by it.

Her poetry, too, occupies a central place in her literary legacy. Angelou's poems are marked by a musicality rooted in African American oral traditions, a rhythmic confidence that echoes gospel, blues, and spoken word. Collections such as *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diiie*, *Oh Pray My Wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well*, *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?*, and *And Still I Rise* reveal her mastery of tone and cadence. In these poems, she celebrates the indomitable spirit of Black womanhood, confronts the wounds of history, and affirms the possibility of rising above oppression. "Still I Rise," perhaps her most iconic poem, has become a global anthem of resilience, its refrain embodying the defiant hope that characterizes much of her work. Angelou's poetic voice is both intimate and universal, capable of addressing personal sorrow and collective struggle with equal clarity. Her poems often move between vulnerability and strength, between lament and celebration, creating a dynamic emotional landscape that resonates across cultures and generations.

Beyond autobiography and poetry, Angelou's contributions to drama, film, and essays further reveal the breadth of her creative vision. She wrote plays such as *The Least of These* and *Cabaret for Freedom*, the latter created with Godfrey Cambridge during her involvement in the civil rights movement. Her screenplay for *Georgia, Georgia* (1972) made her the first African American woman to have a screenplay produced, marking a significant milestone in American cinema. Angelou also directed the film *Down in the Delta* (1998), bringing her narrative sensitivity and humanistic vision to the screen. Her essays, collected in volumes like *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now* and *Even the Stars Look Lonesome*, reveal a contemplative thinker reflecting on identity, culture, aging, love, and the moral responsibilities of the artist. These essays, written in her signature lyrical prose, offer wisdom distilled from a life lived with courage and curiosity.

What unites Angelou's diverse works is her unwavering commitment to truth—truth not merely as factual accuracy but as emotional and moral clarity. She writes with a profound understanding of how personal stories intersect with historical forces, how the intimate and the political are inseparable. Her works insist that the act of remembering is itself a form of resistance, a way of reclaiming agency in a world that has often denied it to marginalized voices. Angelou's literature is deeply rooted in the African American experience, yet it transcends boundaries of race and nationality, speaking to universal themes of suffering, survival, and the search for belonging.

Angelou's influence extends far beyond the printed page. Her recitation of "On the Pulse of Morning" at President Bill Clinton's 1993 inauguration marked a historic moment, reaffirming the role of poetry in public life. Her voice—measured, resonant, dignified—became a symbol of moral authority and artistic integrity. Through her writings, performances, and activism, she shaped the cultural consciousness of multiple generations, offering a language through which readers could articulate their own struggles and aspirations.

In considering the totality of Maya Angelou's works, one encounters not merely a writer but a chronicler of the human condition. Her literature stands as a bridge between memory and history, between individual experience and collective identity. She invites readers to confront the darkest corners of human experience while also affirming the possibility of transformation. Her works remind us that dignity can be reclaimed, that stories can heal, and that the human spirit—though battered—can rise again and again. Maya Angelou's legacy endures not only in the books she wrote but in the lives she touched, the voices she



empowered, and the courage she inspired. Her works remain a luminous testament to the power of language to liberate, to console, and to awaken the deepest truths of our shared humanity. Her autobiography *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* became a landmark work in American literature precisely because it broke long-standing taboos surrounding race, trauma, sexuality, and female identity. The title itself carries immense metaphorical power. The caged bird becomes the symbol of oppressed humanity longing for freedom, dignity, and self-expression. She did not merely describe suffering; she escaped its cage through creativity. Her voice became the voice of countless silenced people. The caged bird in her writing eventually learns not only to sing but to soar.

Her poems are meant not only to be read but heard, spoken, and felt physically. The cadence of Black oral tradition, gospel music, blues rhythms, and spiritual resilience pulses through her lines. One of her most celebrated poems, *Still I Rise*, remains a timeless anthem of human dignity and defiance. The poem speaks directly against oppression and humiliation with extraordinary confidence. The repeated declaration "I rise" transforms personal resilience into collective liberation. The poem embodies the spirit of the uncaged self refusing defeat despite centuries of racial and gender-based oppression. Its power lies in its simplicity, emotional force, and unshakable self-belief. Another unforgettable poem, *Phenomenal Woman*, celebrates feminine strength and self-confidence beyond conventional standards of beauty. Angelou redefines womanhood through dignity, charisma, intelligence, and inner power. The poem became especially influential among women seeking affirmation in societies dominated by narrow and oppressive beauty standards. Angelou's feminism was deeply experiential rather than abstract. She wrote from lived realities, not merely ideological positions.

Her autobiographical writings revolutionized the genre of memoir in America. Before Angelou, autobiographies by Black women rarely received mainstream literary recognition. She transformed personal memory into collective historical testimony. Her autobiographies document not only her own journey but also the larger struggles of African Americans confronting segregation, poverty, racism, and social exclusion. Yet even

while addressing historical suffering, Angelou's writing never surrenders to despair. Hope remains central to her literary vision.

The civil rights movement deeply shaped Maya Angelou's intellectual and political consciousness. She worked with major civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Her involvement in activism strengthened the moral urgency of her writing. She understood literature not as detached aesthetic exercise but as a force capable of transforming consciousness and challenging injustice. Angelou also spent significant periods abroad, including time in Africa. Her experiences in countries such as Ghana broadened her understanding of Black identity and global struggles against colonialism and racism. These international experiences enriched her worldview and gave her writing a wider human dimension beyond Amer-

ican racial politics. One of Maya Angelou's greatest strengths was her ability to combine vulnerability with strength. She never concealed pain, fear, or emotional wounds in her writing. Instead, she transformed vulnerability into moral courage. This honesty created a powerful emotional connection between her and readers across generations. Her life itself became a testimony to survival. She experienced racism, poverty, failed relationships, professional struggles, and personal trauma, yet she refused victimhood. Her voice remained triumphant without becoming arrogant. As a public speaker, Angelou possessed extraordinary charisma. Her deep resonant voice carried authority, wisdom, and warmth. When she recited poetry, the performance transcended literature and became almost spiritual experience. Her reading of the poem "On the Pulse of Morning" at the presidential inauguration of Bill Clinton in 1993 symbolized her recognition as a national moral voice in America. She became one of the few poets whose words entered mainstream political and cultural consciousness on such a massive scale.

Yet despite fame and recognition, Angelou remained deeply connected to ordinary human struggles. Her writings continue to resonate because they emerge from compassion rather than elitism. She spoke about love, loneliness, prejudice, motherhood, identity, aging, courage, and freedom in ways accessible to both scholars and common readers. Her literary language deserves particular attention. Unlike many modern poets who embrace obscurity and intellectual complexity, Maya Angelou often preferred clarity, rhythm, and emotional directness. Her poems are rich in metaphor yet accessible. She believed literature should communicate rather than alienate. This communicative strength explains her enormous popularity among readers who may not normally engage deeply with poetry. Her autobiographical honesty opened new pathways for confessional and identity-based literature. Her poetry became central to feminist studies, African American literature, and cultural studies worldwide. In classrooms across continents, students continue reading her works not only as literary texts but as moral documents of resilience. Activists quote her lines during protests and movements for justice. Women find strength in her affirmations of dignity. Survivors of trauma discover hope in her journey from silence to speech. This enduring relevance proves that Maya Angelou was more than a literary figure; she was a human institution of courage. Like the ancient bards, she preserved collective memory through storytelling and song. Yet unlike traditional court poets, her allegiance was not to power but to humanity. She sang for the oppressed, the silenced, the wounded, and the hopeful. Her poetry broke cages of race, gender, fear, and silence. Even after her passing in 2014, Maya Angelou continues to live through the rhythm of her words.

Maya Angelou was indeed an uncaged bard because no force could imprison her spirit permanently. Not racism, not trauma, not silence, not poverty, not patriarchy. She rose repeatedly through language, memory, and imagination. Her songs continue to fly across generations like liberated birds carrying messages of resilience and human dignity. To read Maya Angelou today is not merely to encounter literature; it is to encounter the triumph of the human spirit itself. Her life teaches that words can heal wounds, challenge injustice, and restore broken identities. Her poetry teaches that the soul can rise above every cage. And her legacy teaches that true art is not escape from reality but transformation of reality into courage, beauty, and hope.

Angelou's influence extends far beyond the printed page. Her recitation of "On the Pulse of Morning" at President Bill Clinton's 1993 inauguration marked a historic moment, reaffirming the role of poetry in public life. Her voice—measured, resonant, dignified—became a symbol of moral authority and artistic integrity. Through her writings, performances, and activism, she shaped the cultural consciousness of multiple generations, offering a language through which readers could articulate their own struggles and aspirations.

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YOGA FOR BEAUTY



■ SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Celebrated worldwide on June 21, International Yoga Day is the perfect reminder to slow down, stretch out, and let your inner glow shine through. Yoga is the complete route to physical, emotional and pranic beauty aimed to rejuvenate the skin, tone the body, and reduce signs of ageing!

Yoga beauty is the art of integrating traditional yoga practices into your beauty routine. It is a blend of physical postures, breathing exercises, and mindfulness techniques that help boost your skin's appearance from within.

Yoga offers a way to stay fit, reduce stress, boost circulation, support detoxification, and leave your complexion naturally radiant. Yoga increases blood flow to the

face, delivering oxygen and nutrients while flushing out toxins.

Blood flow delivers oxygen and nutrients, removes waste, supports healing, and keeps your complexion glowing. Oxygen and nutrients carried through the blood circulation keep skin strong, supple, and bright.

Whether it's a blemish, an irritation, or a small cut, skin heals much faster when the blood supply is strong. If you are aspiring for radiant and glowing skin, shiny hair and attractive features, the solution may actually be a selection of yoga poses and exercises.

Pranayama, a powerful breathing practice rooted in yoga, works from within. Instead of treating skin issues only on the surface.

Pranayama enhances oxygen levels, better microcirculation and lymphatic drainage; conditions that are key factors that directly affect your skin health and makes it glow.

Pranayam helps purify the blood because of the increased intake of oxygen. Mindfulness meditation can have benefits for health and performance, including improved immune function, reduced blood pressure and enhanced cognitive

function. Mindfulness meditation involves a breathing practice and holistic awareness of body and mind. In a world filled with endless distractions, mindfulness meditation offers a pathway to inner peace, and surprisingly, to radiant skin.

Mindfulness techniques like breathwork and meditation lower cortisol levels, reducing flare-ups of acne, eczema, and rosacea. As a result of it, our complexion appears brighter, more vibrant, and radiant, free from the dullness caused by daily pressures.

Meditation helps to preserve collagen, the protein responsible for skin's elasticity, thus reducing the signs of ageing and promoting a youthful glow. When we practice mindfulness meditation, our complexion appears brighter, more vibrant, and free from the dullness caused by daily pressures.

Those who regularly practice yoga and meditation have a certain glow about them that comes from within and radiates outward. Yoga helps lower stress hormones that compromise the immune system, while also conditioning the lungs and respiratory tract, stimulating the lymphatic

system to oust toxins from the body, and bringing oxygenated blood to the various organs to ensure their optimal function, which helps us to remain healthy and attain inner beauty.

The appeal of Yoga lies in the fact that it helps both body and mind. It not only works on all the muscle groups, but also increases vitality, tones the internal organs, stimulates the nerve centres, relieves stress and clears the mind, which boosts immunity and gives you an attractive personality and beauty from within. The other important aspect of Yoga is that it involves breath control and specifies the inhalation and exhalation of breath during the exercises. Thus, it helps oxygenation, which boosts immunity and imparts a feeling of physical and mental exhilaration. This is so important for beauty because feeling good is an integral part of looking good.

Yoga improves blood circulation, including the circulation of blood to the skin surface. This is so important for the good health of the skin, as it helps to supply essential nutrients to the skin. It also promotes the removal of toxins through the skin, which boosts immunity. This is so important, especially in cases of skin congestion.

It tones the skin, improves oxygenation, imparts a beautiful glow, and keeps the skin youthful and free from problems. Well-oxygenated skin looks firmer, revitalised, and more plump. Oxygenated blood fuels cellular repair, stimulates collagen production, and detoxifies the body—resulting in a natural, youthful glow.

The same goes for the hair. Yoga helps to promote blood circulation and oxygenation to the scalp and hair follicles. This helps to supply nutrients in the bloodstream to the hair follicles. It promotes hair growth and keeps the scalp healthy.

When we talk of beauty, we do not talk only about the beauty of the face. It also includes the figure, giving it suppleness, good posture and grace. Where the appearance is concerned, a slim figure can take years off and help in staying youthful for a longer time. It supplies oxygen to every tissue, and this, itself, makes way for

both health and beauty. If you are leading a life that does not provide enough physical activity, you are actually encouraging ageing. Yoga is a potent remedy for premature ageing, not only because it strengthens the body, but also keeps it looking trim, fit and enhances immunity in the body. It fights ageing at a cellular level by reducing oxidative stress, lowering chronic inflammation, and preserving telomeres.

The yogic asanas are designed to keep the spine and joints flexible and supple. They make the body strong and agile, tone the muscles, improve blood circulation, impart vitality and enhance both beauty and good health. Many beauty problems are triggered by stress. Elevated cortisol from stress breaks down collagen, triggers inflammation, and causes breakouts or dullness.

The impact of stress can manifest differently for everyone: some may see dullness, sensitivity or irritation, whilst others may experience more inflammatory conditions like eczema or psoriasis.

Since yoga helps to induce relaxation and reduce stress, it certainly helps in dealing with stress-related conditions like acne, hair loss, dandruff, etc. Lower stress improves blood circulation for a brighter complexion, balances sebum production, prevents stress-induced hair loss or dullness and brings back your natural glow.

Studies conducted on those who practice yoga have shown that positive changes also occur in personality, in attitudes, emotional stability, and self-confidence. It has a direct effect on the mind, emotions and mood. In fact, it is a regular stress-buster and puts the glow back on the skin. You will feel instantly rejuvenated and good about yourself.

Indeed, the benefits of Yoga reflect external beauty. For flawless skin, shiny hair and a slim, graceful figure, make yoga a part of your daily life.

The author is an internationally fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

THE NEO-HUMANISM

Expanding Humanity Beyond Self-Interest



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

The twenty-first century stands as one of the most transformative periods in human history. Scientific discoveries have revolutionized medicine, communication and transportation. Technological innovations have connected people across continents within seconds. Economic growth has lifted millions out of poverty and created opportunities that previous generations could scarcely imagine. Yet, despite these remarkable achievements, humanity continues to face a range of complex social, psychological and environmental challenges. Loneliness and social isolation are increasing even in highly connected societies. Environmental degradation threatens the delicate balance of nature. Intolerance and polarization continue to divide communities. Consumerism dominates lifestyles, while economic inequality widens the gap between privilege and deprivation.

These realities raise an important question: Has material progress alone been sufficient to ensure human happiness and collective well-being? Increasingly, many thinkers, educators and social reformers argue that genuine progress requires something more than economic prosperity and technological advancement. It requires a deeper transformation of human consciousness, values and relationships. It is within this context that Neo-Humanism emerges as a powerful and relevant philosophy for the modern age.

Neo-Humanism offers a broader vision of humanity and development. It encourages individuals to move beyond narrow self-interest and embrace a wider sense of responsibility toward all living beings and the natural world. Rather than limiting concern to personal gain, family interests, social groups or national boundaries, Neo-Human-

ism advocates a universal outlook rooted in compassion, empathy and interconnectedness. It reminds us that true advancement is not measured solely by wealth, power or technological capability, but by the quality of our relationships, our ethical values and our capacity to care for others.

At its core, Neo-Humanism is an expanded form of traditional humanism. Classical humanism emerged as a philosophy that emphasized human dignity, rationality and welfare. It sought to place human beings at the center of moral concern and social development. While this represented a significant advancement in ethical thought, Neo-Humanism extends the circle of concern even further. It recognizes that human beings do not exist in isolation but are part of a vast network of life that includes animals, plants, ecosystems and the broader universe.

According to Neo-Humanistic thought, every living being possesses intrinsic value and deserves respect. The well-being of humanity cannot be separated from the well-being of nature. Human prosperity depends upon healthy ecosystems, biodiversity and sustainable interactions with the environment. Therefore, a truly progressive society must cultivate compassion not only for fellow human beings but also for all forms of life. This expanded outlook challenges the tendency to view nature merely as a resource to be exploited and instead encourages a relationship based on stewardship, care and mutual respect.

One of the most important principles of Neo-Humanism is universal love and compassion. Human history has often been shaped by divisions based on race, religion, ethnicity, nationality and social status. These divisions have fueled conflicts, discrimination and injustice. Neo-Humanism seeks to overcome such barriers by encouraging individuals to recognize the fundamental interconnectedness of life. It promotes the idea that beneath superficial differences, all beings share common aspirations for happiness, security and dignity.

Universal compassion does not imply ignoring cultural diversity or individual identities. Rather, it means acknowledging a shared humanity that transcends differ-

ences. When people cultivate empathy and understanding, prejudice begins to diminish. Communities become more inclusive, and relationships are strengthened by mutual respect. In a world where social tensions frequently dominate public discourse, the Neo-Humanistic emphasis on universal compassion offers a pathway toward greater harmony and peaceful coexistence.

Another key aspect of Neo-Humanism is the expansion of consciousness. Human beings often define themselves through narrow identities linked to family, caste, religion, political ideology, nationality or economic status. While these identities can provide a sense of belonging, they can also create limitations that prevent individuals from appreciating broader realities. Neo-Humanism encourages people to expand their thinking beyond these boundaries and develop a more universal perspective.

An expanded consciousness allows individuals to recognize their shared responsibility toward society and the environment. It helps them understand that their actions have consequences that extend far beyond their immediate interests. Such awareness fosters ethical decision-making and encourages cooperation rather than competition. In an increasingly interconnected world, where global challenges such as climate change, migration and public health crises affect entire populations, the need for broader consciousness has never been greater.

Respect for nature represents another fundamental pillar of Neo-Humanism. Modern industrial civilization has achieved extraordinary levels of production and consumption. However, this progress has often come at a significant environmental cost. Deforestation, pollution, habitat destruction and climate change have placed immense pressure on natural ecosystems. The consequences are becoming increasingly visible through extreme weather events, declining biodiversity and threats to food and water security.

Neo-Humanism challenges the belief that nature exists solely for human exploitation. It views the environment as a living system that deserves protection and nurturing. This perspective encourages sustainable living

practices that balance human needs with ecological preservation. Environmental responsibility becomes not merely a practical necessity but also a moral obligation. By fostering respect for nature, Neo-Humanism promotes a vision of development that safeguards the interests of future generations while preserving the beauty and diversity of the natural world.

The philosophy also places strong emphasis on social justice and equality. Throughout history, societies have struggled with various forms of exploitation, oppression and discrimination. Economic disparities continue to limit opportunities for millions of people around the globe. Marginalized communities often face barriers to education, healthcare and social participation. Neo-Humanism advocates fairness, dignity and equal opportunities for all individuals.

A Neo-Humanistic society seeks to create conditions in which every person can realize their potential regardless of background or circumstance. It opposes systems that perpetuate unnecessary suffering and inequality. By promoting justice and inclusiveness, Neo-Humanism contributes to the development of stronger, more cohesive communities where individuals feel valued and respected.

Holistic development is another significant dimension of Neo-Humanistic philosophy. Modern education and social systems frequently prioritize intellectual achievement and economic productivity. While these goals are important, they often overlook other essential aspects of human development. Emotional intelligence, ethical awareness, creativity, spirituality and interpersonal skills receive comparatively less attention.

Neo-Humanism advocates a balanced approach that nurtures the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions of human life. Such holistic development enables individuals to lead more meaningful and fulfilling lives. It encourages self-awareness, emotional resilience and a sense of purpose that extends beyond personal success. In doing so, it helps create individuals who are not only skilled and knowledgeable but also compassionate and socially responsible.

The relevance of Neo-Humanism becomes particularly evident when examining the challenges associated with modern materialism. Contemporary society often equates success with wealth, status, possessions and consumption. Advertisements, social media platforms and competitive economic systems constantly encourage individuals to acquire more and achieve higher levels of external success. While material comforts undoubtedly improve quality of life, excessive materialism can produce unintended consequences.

Many people today experience chronic stress, anxiety and dissatisfaction despite enjoying unprecedented levels of convenience and comfort. Social comparisons fueled by digital media often create unrealistic expectations and feelings of inadequacy. The relentless pursuit of personal gain can weaken social bonds and diminish opportunities for genuine connection. Individuals may become so focused on achievement that they lose sight of deeper sources of meaning and fulfillment.

Neo-Humanism does not reject material development. Instead, it advocates balance. Material prosperity should be accompanied by ethical values, social responsibility and inner growth. The philosophy encourages individuals and societies to ask important questions. How can wealth be used to benefit society? How can technology serve humanity rather than dominate it? How can economic growth coexist with environmental sustainability? How can personal success contribute to collective well-being?

These questions shift attention from self-centered pursuits toward broader concerns that enhance both individual and social welfare. By emphasizing contribution rather than accumulation, Neo-Humanism provides a meaningful alternative to the limitations of materialistic thinking. The social impact of Neo-Humanism can be profound. One of its greatest contributions lies in promoting social harmony.

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

Two dozen hutments gutted in Kathua blaze

Forest fire sparks mine blasts in Rajouri

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JUN 10: A massive fire reduced nearly two dozen hutments to ashes in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district early Wednesday, leaving several migrant workers homeless and causing extensive damage to household belongings, officials said.



The fire broke out in a cluster of temporary dwellings adjacent to a scarp yard at Maggar Khad in the Chak Gota area of the district around 4 am and spread rapidly due to the highly combustible material used in the structures, the officials said.

They said Fire and Emergency Services personnel, assisted by locals, launched a fire fighting operation and contained the flames.

While no loss of life was reported, the fire destroyed household goods, clothes, utensils, three motorcycles and other essential items belonging to the migrant workers, mostly ragpickers from Bihar, the officials said.

Recalling the moments when the fire engulfed her house, one of the victims, Anita Devi, said, "We were asleep when the fire broke out. By the time we realised what was happening, the flames had spread rapidly." She said people managed to get all her family members out safely, but

all their belongings were destroyed. "Now we have nothing left except the clothes we were wearing when we fled our home," she said, seeking government assistance and community support for the restoration of their livelihoods.

In a separate incident, a forest fire in Rajouri district triggered a series of landmine explosions along the Line of Control in Keri sector. Officials said loud blasts were heard from the forested area as the fire spread through the dry vegetation but there was no casualty.

Security forces and civil authorities

monitored the situation closely, while firefighting teams worked to bring the blaze under control, the officials said.

Forest fires were also reported from several other areas in Rajouri, Reasi and Udhampur districts in the last 24 hours, the officials said. Forest fires have become increasingly common across Jammu during the summer months due to rising temperatures and prolonged dry conditions. Authorities have urged people to exercise caution and avoid activities that could trigger fires in vulnerable forest zones.

Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my father's name MOHAMMAD AKBAR BHAT R/O BANDI PAYEEN Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040016208 wants to be registered on my name SHABIR AHMAD BAHT S/O MOHAMMAD AKBAR BHAT R/O BANDI PAYEEN .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name...SHABIR AHMAD BHAT, S/O ...MOHAMMAD AKBAR BHAT, R/O .. BANDI PAYEEN

Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection name has been wrongly registered SAMEER AHMAD KHAN S/O ABDUL QAYOOM KHAN R/O CHANDOOSA Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040011641 wants to be registered on correct name SAMEER AHMAD BAIGH S/O ABDUL QAYOOM BAIGH R/O CHANDOOSA .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name...SAMEER AHMAD BAIGH S/O ...ABDUL QAYOOM BAIGH, R/O .. CHANDOOSA

Public Notice

This is to notify the general public that the name recorded in the Aadhaar database is incorrect. Name shown in Aadhaar: Aimana Jan Correct name: Ayman Jaan, Fathers name : Showkat Ahmad Mir Address: Humpora Kralgund Kupwara Jammu and Kashmir 193302. The above mentioned person (Aimana Jan) hereby declares that the name printed on the Aadhaar is incorrect and that her correct and legal name is Ayman Jaan. Any objection to this correction should be brought to the attention of the UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra, Office Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the necessary correction procedures may be undertaken.

Public Notice

This is to inform for general public that I have changed my old name Ruqaya Rasool Akhooon to new name Ruqaya Rasool. If anyone has any objection they may file their objection within seven days. After this period, no objections will be accepted.

Public Notice

This is for the information of the general public that I have changed my name from TAIBA FEROZE to TAIBA FERAZ. Henceforth, I shall be known and recognized by my new name, TAIBA FERAZ, for all purposes and records. If any person has any objection to this name change, he/she may submit the same before the Passport Office, Srinagar, within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained after the expiry of the stipulated period.

TAIBA FERAZ (Formerly known as TAIBA FEROZE)

Public Notice

I, BILAL AHMAD BHAT S/O GHULAM HASSAN, R/o MALOORA HMT, Tehsil Sumbal, District Srinagar, do hereby declare that my father's name has been wrongly recorded as GH HASSAN in my Police Department service record. Whereas, my father's correct name as per my school records and other valid documents is GHULAM HASSAN. All concerned are hereby informed that henceforth I should be known and identified as BILAL AHMAD BHAT S/O GHULAM HASSAN only. I have to get my parentage corrected as per my school records and other valid documents in the DPO Srinagar. If any person has any objection regarding this, the same may be filed in writing in the DPO Srinagar within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, after which no objection shall be entertained.

BILAL AHMAD BHAT, S/o GHULAM HASSAN R/o MALOORA HMT, Tehsil Sumbal, District Srinagar Dated: 06-06-2026

Public Notice

I, SHOWKAT AHMED BHAT S/O GH MOHAMMAD BHAT, R/o Zari Mohalla, Malkoo, Tehsil & District Srinagar, do hereby declare that my name has been wrongly recorded as Showkat Ahmad Bhat S/o Ghulam Mohd Bhat in my Police Department service record. Whereas, my correct name as per my school records and other valid documents is SHOWKAT AHMED BHAT S/O GH MOHAMMAD BHAT. All concerned are hereby informed that henceforth I should be known and identified by my correct name SHOWKAT AHMED BHAT S/O GH MOHAMMAD BHAT only. I have to get my name corrected in the DPO Srinagar. If any person has any objection regarding this, the same may be filed in writing in the DPO Srinagar within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, after which no objection shall be entertained.

SHOWKAT AHMED BHAT, S/o GH MOHAMMAD BHAT R/o Zari Mohalla, Malroo, Tehsil & District Srinagar Dated: 06-06-2026

Public Notice

I, Ruqaya Rasool, daughter of Late Dr. Nazir Ahmad, resident of Model Town, Sopore, do hereby notify the general public that I have changed my name from Ruqaya Rasool Akhooon to Ruqaya Rasool for all purposes and records. Any person having any objection to the aforesaid change of name may submit the same in writing before the Passport Office, Srinagar, within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection received after the stipulated period shall be considered.

Ruqaya Rasool, D/o Late Dr. Nazir Ahmad R/o Model Town, Sopore

Public Notice

I am applying for fresh Pesticide and Fertilizer License under the name/style of MUZAMIL FAROOQ deals in Pesticides, Fertilizers and agricultural tools situated at HAIL Kreeri, Baramulla. 193108 In this regard if anybody is having any objection may file the same to Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla and PPO Lal Mandi Srinagar within the time period of 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name...MUZAMIL FAROOQ S/O..FAROOQ AHMAD DAR R/O .HAIL JAGIR KREERI, Dist...BARAMULLA

Office of the Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Tender Notice Inviting e-Tender

NIT No: M&HDB/TS/2026-27/06/528-32
Date: 10-06-2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla, invites online e-bids in Two Cover system on percentage wise basis from Authorized Service Providers of OEMs /Registered / Listed Contractors for the below mentioned works:

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money Deposit	Time of Completion
01.	Job / Repair Works required for Mahindra Bolero bearing Registration No. JK05C-7964 (Inspection Vehicle) pertaining to Mechanical and Hospital Sub-Division 1 st Baramulla	0.865	200.00	1730/-	07 days

- Note:
- AAA: -Administrative Approval accorded by Chief Engineer M&HD Kashmir vide No. M&HED/K/Acctt/ of 2026-27/29 Dated: 30-04-2026.
 - Technical Sanction: - Technical Sanction Accorded by Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla vide No. M&HDB/TS/05 of 06/2026; Dated: - 10-06-2026.
 - Executing Agency: - Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla.

1.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	10-06-2026
2.	Period of downloading of the bidding document	From 10-06-2026 to 22-06-2026
3.	Bid Submission Start Date	From 10-06-2026 (18:30 HRS)
4.	Bid Submission End Date	22-06-2026 (18:55 HRS)
5.	Date of Opening of Cover 1 st	23-06-2026 (13:00 HRS)

The bidders are required to submit their offers in two (02) covers.

Cover-I shall contain: Scanned copies of following documents:

01.	Tender Fee	Rs. 200.00 (Rupees Two hundred only) in shape of e-Challan / e-receipt / online Bank transfer acknowledgement including m-Pay Delight+, to be uploaded with each online bid pledged to Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla. Tender ID to be written also on the voucher. Bank: J&K Bank. Branch: T.P Baramulla. IFSC Code: JAKAOTHSIL Account No.: 0213010200000051.
02.	EMD	Scanned copy of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in the shape of CDR/FDR equivalent to 02% of value of the advertised cost pledged to Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla. EMD of successful bidder shall be released on receipt of 03% to 10% Performance Guarantee from (L1) and execution of agreement with the Department. EMD of un-successful bidders shall be also released as per rules provided in J&K PWD Engineering Manual 2020.
03.	Terms & Conditions	Scanned copy of the Annexure- "A" & "B" duly accepted by the bidder.
04.	Tax Clearance	Registration Certificate of Sales Tax Department quoting GST Number.
05.	GST	Scanned copies of PAN Card / GST Registration / Latest GST clearance certificate or acknowledgement of latest returns.
06.	Undertaking	Undertaking as per format at Annexure "C" that the bidder has not been blacklisted or debarred by any Govt./Semi Govt. Department.
07.	Contractor Registration	Scanned copy of valid Contractor Registration on JKPWDOMS of PWD J&K.
08.	Eligibility / Work Experience Certificate	The Bidder Shall submit documentary proof of having successfully executed similar nature of work amounting to 80% of the estimated cost in single contract or 50% of the estimated cost in two contracts each or 40% of the estimated cost in three contracts each in last 07 years in any Govt. / Semi Govt./Autonomous institutions alongwith satisfactory performance certificate issued by a competent authority not below the rank of Assistant Executive Engineer.

- Note:
- The successful bidder has to furnish EMD document physically to the Divisional office alongwith fee receipt within three days from the date of opening price bid, without which his bid shall not be accepted for further processing of contract in his favour.
 - No EMD exemption shall be given to bidders.
 - Bidders / Firms shall refrain from uploading irrelevant documents.
 - Contractor/ Firm shall upload the contact / communication details separately on single page.

A. Cover-II shall contain:

- Price bid, as per BOQ uploaded by this department. In no case, financial bid will be accepted in physical form.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for 180 days and the contract shall be valid for one complete year, starting from the date of allotment of the said contract.
- The complete bidding process will be online.
- The Financial bid of only qualifying bidders shall be opened online in the Office of the Executive Engineer M&HD Baramulla after evaluation of technical bid and decision thereof.
- Bidder shall be penalized as per tender conditions if they withdraw their bid during the period of bid validity or make any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
- Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually. The BOQ downloaded should be used for filling the rate below %age inclusive of all taxes and it should be saved with the same name as it contains.
- The cost of tender documents is non-refundable and the tender shall in no case be accepted if submitted by any firm other than the purchaser.
- Any tender found to have been submitted by the firm by furnishing false information to the department shall be cancelled and the firm shall be penalized as and when it comes to the notice of the Department even during the currency of the contract. The department reserves the right to debar / blacklist such firm(s).
- Conditional tenders shall not be entertained.
- Unbalanced Bid:** In case bid of the lowest bidder is found unbalanced, the successful bidder shall have to produce additional performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/ Bank Guarantee within 07 days after opening of price bid as per the Circular directives of the J&K U.T Finance Department issued vide No. FD-Code/441/2021-22-158; Dated: - 08.08.2025 and relevant clauses of J&K (PWD) Engineering Manual 2020.
- The tenders should be addressed to the Executive Engineer M&HD Baramulla.

No: M&HDB/TS/e-tender-06/528-32 | Dated: 10-06-2026

Sd/- Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla

DIPK: 2016/26 | Dated: 10-06-2026

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DC Ganderbal presides over weekly Block Diwas at Tulumulla

Directs time-bound redressal of public grievances; emphasizes community participation in development initiatives

HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, JUNE 10: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today presided over a public outreach programme under the weekly Block Diwas initiative at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Tulumulla.

The programme was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Manzoor Ahmad; PO ICDS, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Assistant Commissioner Development and other district and sectoral officers, besides civil society members, public representatives and residents from different areas of Tulumulla and adjoining villages.

At the outset, several delegations and individuals projected issues and demands concerning development and public welfare in their respective localities.

The issues raised during the programme mainly related to augmentation of drinking water supply, issues related to Dhobi canal, repairs of roads and damaged water pipelines, improvement of existing playground, establishment of additional Anganwadi Centres, healthcare infrastructure, sanitation, maintenance of public assets, street lighting, restoration of springs in the localities among others.

Residents also sought better management of irrigation canals, revival of defunct infrastructure, improvement of public facilities, establishment of library in Tulumulla and deployment of sanitation workers and dustbins at



Main Market Tulumulla.

Officers of the concerned departments responded to several issues on the spot and apprised the public about ongoing works, departmental procedures and measures being undertaken

for resolution of grievances.

The DC gave a patient hearing to all delegations and individuals and directed the concerned departments to take prompt action on genuine public grievances in a time-bound manner.

Addressing the gathering, the DC said that programmes such as Block Diwas provide an important platform for direct interaction between the administration and the public and help in obtaining valuable feedback

regarding developmental requirements and service delivery.

The DC directed the concerned irrigation officials to undertake field visits to identified locations and assess practical issues raised by residents so that necessary interventions can be taken up at the earliest.

Expressing concern over certain complaints regarding public service delivery, he directed departmental officers to ensure that officials perform their duties with sincerity and commitment and that public grievances are addressed in a responsive manner. Referring to the forthcoming annual Kheer Bhawani Mela at Tulumulla, the DC appreciated the tradition of communal harmony and hospitality displayed by the people of the district. He said the event holds immense significance for Ganderbal and expressed confidence that local residents would continue to extend a warm welcome to visiting devotees and uphold the positive and inclusive atmosphere for which the mela is known.

Earlier, students of Government Higher Secondary School Watlar, Ganderbal presented a captivating song on Nasha Mukh Bharat, while students of Royal Public School staged an impactful skit highlighting the menace of drug abuse among youth.

These performances sensitized the audience regarding the harmful consequences of substance abuse and underscored the importance of collective efforts in safeguarding younger generations from the threat of addiction

Agriculture Production Department holds "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" at Kathua

HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, JUNE 10: The Agriculture Production Department Kathua today organised the "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" awareness campaign to promote sustainable agricultural practices, protect soil health, enhance farm productivity and encourage the judicious use of agricultural inputs among the farming community.

Secretary Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department J&K Nitu Gupta inaugurated the programme as Chief Guest in the presence of Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma. The event saw participation from officers of Agriculture and allied departments, scientists from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), progressive farmers and other stakeholders.

Addressing the gathering, the Secretary underscored the importance of protecting agricultural lands and preserving soil fertility for future generations. She stressed the need to adopt scientific, climate-resilient and resource-efficient farming practices and urged farmers to actively participate in government initiatives aimed at improving agricultural productivity and sustainability. She also highlighted the government's commitment to promoting sustainable agriculture through farmer-centric policies.



The Deputy Commissioner emphasised the collective responsibility of all stakeholders towards conservation of natural resources, sustainable agricultural development and long-term food security. He called upon farmers to make optimum use of departmental schemes, scientific advancements and modern technologies to enhance productivity, improve farm incomes and promote environmentally sustainable farming.

During the technical session, KVK Kathua Head Dr Vishal Mahajan highlighted the role of scientific interventions and innovative technologies in improving farm productivity and profitability. He stressed the importance of integrated crop management, efficient resource utilisation and climate-smart agriculture in addressing emerging challenges in the sector.

Joint Director Soil and Land Use Survey and Planning (SLUB) Jammu Aman Jyoti elaborated on the objectives and significance of the "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" and called for coordinated efforts by all stakeholders to safeguard soil health and strengthen agricultural ecosystems.

Chief Agriculture Officer Kathua Jatinder Kumar Khajuria highlighted the significance of the campaign in ensuring long-term agricultural sustainability. He elaborated on the importance of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), balanced use of fertilisers, integrated disease and pest management, soil health management and the adoption of smart agricultural technologies. He also sensitised participants about the National Mission on Natural Farming and emphasised the need to reduce dependency on chemical inputs while promoting eco-friendly farming.

Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Kathua Dr Jugal Kishore apprised participants of various schemes and initiatives being implemented by the department for farmer welfare and the promotion of integrated farming systems. He emphasised the importance of livestock-based interventions in strengthening rural livelihoods and enhancing farmers' income.

An interactive session was also held during which farmers raised queries related to soil health management, crop protection, natural farming and modern agricultural practices. Experts and scientists addressed the queries and provided practical guidance.

District Agriculture Officer (Extension) Kathua Raj Singh presented the vote of thanks.

NMBA Campaign continues across Pulwama with Awareness, Counselling, Sports Activities

HT NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA, JUNE 10: As part of the ongoing 100-day campaign under the Nasha Mukh Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, a series of awareness, counselling and sports activities were conducted across Pulwama district to promote a drug-free society and encourage community participation in the fight against substance abuse.

Awareness programmes were organised at Midoora Noorpora, Amirabad, Amlar, Donigund, Tokina, Talangam and Gudpora Aripal, where participants were sensitised about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of collective efforts in preventing substance abuse. Various activities including awareness sessions, pledge ceremonies, signature campaigns and padyatras were conducted to highlight the message of a drug-free society and encourage public engagement. Meanwhile, Self Help Group (SHG) members organised awareness and counselling sessions along with a padyatra at Arihal to spread awareness regarding drug abuse prevention and promote healthy lifestyles.

Furthermore, the Social Welfare Department also conducted awareness sessions, pledge ceremonies, signature campaigns and padyatras at Naina and Zaintrag as part of the ongoing campaign. While, the Education Department organised seminars, painting competitions and awareness sessions at various educational institutions across the district, highlighting the adverse effects of drug abuse and encouraging students to adopt healthy and responsible lifestyles.

Furthermore, the Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS), Pulwama, is conducting district-level competitions in Hockey, Table Tennis and Chess at Hockey Turf Pulwama and Indoor Stadium Rajpora under the NMBA campaign. Awareness programmes and yoga sessions were also organised at Central High School (CHS) Pulwama to educate students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Meanwhile, Zone Awantipora hosted mega zonal-level girls' tournament in the disciplines of Volleyball, Kho-Kho and Kabaddi at Sports Stadium Charligund, witnessing enthusiastic participation from young athletes. Zone Tral organised athletic meet featuring various track and field events for U-17 boys at Bajwani Tral under NMBA. Recreational activities and an awareness campaign were also conducted at Government Middle School (GMS) Tral Bala.

Similarly, Zone Tahab conducted yoga sessions and awareness drives at High School Naina in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department. Yoga sessions were also held at HSS Arihal and HS Dogripora Tahab.

IEI-JKSC holds One-day Seminar on World Environment Day

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: Institution of Engineers (India), Jammu & Kashmir State Centre (IEI-JKSC), organized a One-Day Seminar in observance of World Environment Day-2026 on the theme "A Global Call for Climate Action."

The seminar brought together engineers, academicians, environmental experts, professionals, and students to deliberate upon the growing environmental challenges facing humanity and the urgent need for collective action towards sustainable development, environmental protection, climate resilience, and ecological conservation.

The Chief Guest, Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Vice Chancellor, Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST), addressed the gathering and highlighted the critical importance of climate action, environmental sustainability, and evidence-based policy interventions in addressing emerging ecological challenges. He emphasized the need for strengthening

collaboration among academic institutions, professional bodies, policymakers, and civil society organizations to develop sustainable and resilient solutions for environmental protection and climate adaptation. He appreciated the role of IEI-JKSC in promoting technical awareness and constructive dialogue on issues of environmental significance.

Er. Ferdous Ahad Bhat, FIE, Chairman, IEI-JKSC underlined the increasing environmental challenges confronting societies across the globe, including climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, pollution, and unsustainable patterns of development. He also highlighted the role of the Institution of Engineers (India), J&K State Centre, as a professional platform for promoting technical discourse, knowledge sharing, professional excellence, and public.

Er. Irfan Ahmad Reshi, MIE, Honorary Secretary, IEI-JKSC, in his address, highlighted the significance of World Environment Day.

The technical session featured

presentations by Er. Khurshid Ahmad Ganai, MIE, Former Divisional Officer, J&K Pollution Control Board; Dr. Rayees Ahmad Khan, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics, SSM College of Engineering and Er. Bashir Ahmad Dar, AMIE, Former Secretary (Technical), JKPD who deliberated upon various environmental challenges affecting the region and highlighted the importance of environmental regulations, pollution control measures, sustainable resource management, scientific dimensions of climate change and emphasized the role of technological innovation, renewable energy solutions, environmental stewardship, and sustainable practices in mitigating the adverse impacts of global warming and environmental degradation.

The seminar served as an important platform for meaningful discussions on climate action, environmental sustainability, ecological conservation, and the role of engineering and scientific innovation in promoting a greener, more resilient, and sustainable future.

Comprehensive Cleft Care CME, CDE 2026 programme held at GMC Baramulla

Focus on awareness, early intervention, Multidisciplinary Care

HT NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA, JUNE 10: Department of Dentistry, Government Medical College (GMC) Baramulla, today organized a one-day Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Dental Education (CDE) programme on "Comprehensive Cleft Care: A Holistic Approach Towards Cleft Lip and Palate Patients", aimed at raising awareness and strengthening coordinated care for cleft patients.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Dr. S.F Hamid, graced the inaugural session as the Chief Guest, while Prof. (Dr.) Sandeep Kaur, Principal/Dean, Government Dental College (GDC) Srinagar, attended as the Guest of Honour.

Among other dignitaries present were Prof. (Dr.) Majid Jehangir, Principal/Dean GMC Baram-

ulla (Patron); Dr. Parvaiz Masoodi, Medical Superintendent GMC Baramulla (Co-Patron); Prof. (Dr.) Shafkat Ahmed Lone, Registrar Academics and Head, Department of ENT (Co-Patron); Prof. (Dr.) H.U. Malik, President IDA; and Dr. Omer Hussain Misger, Head, Department of Dentistry.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner, accompanied by the Guest of Honour and other dignitaries, inspected various stalls established at the venue showcasing awareness materials, treatment modalities and initiatives related to comprehensive cleft care and oral health services.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the Department of Dentistry for organizing the programme and reiterated the district administration's commitment to supporting initiatives aimed at improving health-

care outcomes. He emphasized the importance of early identification and timely management of cleft lip and palate cases and urged the organizing team to conduct screening and awareness camps in peripheral and remote areas for wider outreach.

The Deputy Commissioner also highlighted the objectives of the Nasha Mukh Abhiyan and appreciated the contribution of GMC Baramulla towards rehabilitation and awareness programmes. He particularly acknowledged the role of various departments, including the Department of Dentistry, in extending healthcare support, counselling and rehabilitation services to individuals affected by substance abuse.

He further urged the organizers to conduct similar camps in far-flung areas under the Vibrant

Village Programme to ensure that the benefits of such healthcare initiatives reach people residing in remote and underserved regions.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. (Dr.) Sandeep Kaur congratulated the Department of Dentistry for introducing comprehensive cleft care services at GMC Baramulla and emphasized the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration in ensuring holistic treatment and rehabilitation of cleft patients.

Prof. (Dr.) Majid Jehangir extended his appreciation to the Department of Dentistry for successfully organizing the CME/CDE programme and for taking a significant step towards strengthening specialized healthcare services in the district.

The programme was organized with the objective of creating awareness about cleft lip

and palate among the general public and frontline healthcare workers. ASHA workers and coordinators from all blocks of Baramulla district were sensitized about early identification of cleft cases, feeding techniques, door-to-door surveys, provision of psychosocial support and timely referrals for comprehensive management at GMC Baramulla.

The event witnessed participation of more than 250 delegates from different parts of the Union Territory, including Heads of Departments from Government Dental College Srinagar, SKIMS Medical College Bemina, GMC Anantnag, GMC Doda and GMC Baramulla. Doctors from peripheral healthcare institutions, ANMs, midwives and ASHA workers from across Baramulla district also attended the programme.

Nearly 12 lakh MSEs registered on GeM, procurement reaches Rs 8.69 Lakh Crore

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JUN 10: The Government e Marketplace (GeM) has emerged as a key driver of India's digital governance transformation by enabling transparent, technology-driven, and citizen-centric public procurement, the platform said on the occasion of its milestone journey since inception on August 9, 2016.

Designed as a major governance reform, GeM has shifted government procurement from manual and fragmented processes to a digital, data-driven ecosystem. The platform has reduced human intervention, enhanced transparency, and simplified access to government procurement opportunities for businesses across the country.

The GeM has also contributed to improving the ease of doing business by enabling enterprises of all sizes to participate in government supply chains through online onboarding, transparent bidding, digital contract management and end-to-end procurement processes.

Over the years, participation of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) on the platform has witnessed significant growth. Reg-



istered MSEs have increased from 2,396 in 2016-17 to more than 11.9 lakh currently. Procurement from MSEs has surged from Rs 69 crore to over Rs 8.69 lakh crore, while order volumes have grown from 2,994 to more than 2.17 crore during the same period.

The platform has also expanded opportunities for traditionally underrepresented groups. Women-owned MSEs registered on GeM have risen from 268 in 2016-17 to over 2.16 lakh, with procurement value increasing from Rs 8 crore to more than Rs 93,327 crore.

Startup participation has also

grown sharply, rising from 88 entities to over 40,000, while procurement from startups has increased from Rs 2 crore to over Rs 61,400 crore. Similarly, registered SC/ST MSEs have increased from 38 to over 66,000, with procurement value crossing Rs 21,800 crore.

Beyond procurement, the GeM has supported public service delivery, especially in the healthcare sector. The platform has facilitated the procurement of more than 324 crore vaccine doses and 199 crore syringes, along with medical kits, diagnostic equipment, and other healthcare-re-

lated supplies.

The platform is increasingly adopting emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence-based tools, advanced analytics, digital monitoring systems, and transparent auction mechanisms to enhance efficiency and accountability.

Mihir Kumar, CEO, GeM, said, "Over the past 12 years, GeM has contributed to building a transparent, efficient, and inclusive public procurement ecosystem. He noted that the platform has enabled participation of enterprises, including MSEs, startups, and local manufacturers, and has strengthened access to government procurement in a structured and transparent manner, supporting public service delivery and expanding economic opportunities."

As India moves towards the vision of Viksit Bharat, the GeM continues to strengthen digital procurement systems and support national priorities such as Aatmanirbhar Bharat by connecting local enterprises, women entrepreneurs, startups, cooperatives, and rural businesses with government demand, according to a Commerce and Industry Ministry statement on Tuesday. UNI

IIT Ropar, Rocket Learning ink MoU to boost

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

BENGALURU, JUNE 10: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ed-tech nonprofit Rocket Learning to strengthen early childhood education in India through artificial intelligence and technology-enabled training systems.

The partnership aims to upskill frontline public workers and caregivers involved in foundational learning, particularly Anganwadi educators and parents, by combining IIT Ropar's research and technical expertise with Rocket Learning's large-scale grassroots outreach across the country.

The MoU was signed by Prof. Rajeev Ahuja, Director, IIT Ropar, and Azeesh Gupta, Co-Founder, Rocket Learning, in the presence of Dr. Sarang Gumfekar, Dean, IIT Ropar, and Namya Mahajan, Co-Founder, Rocket Learning.

Prof. Ahuja said early childhood development remains one of the most under-resourced yet impactful areas of social investment, adding that the collaboration aims to build a generation of skilled caregivers capable of transforming children's life outcomes through better foundational support.

Dr. Gumfekar said IIT Ropar is committed to contributing to India's development trajectory by working with civil society, government and communities to make advanced technology and learning tools accessible to underserved sections.



Rocket Learning co-founders Azeesh Gupta and Namya Mahajan said the partnership brings institutional strength to their mission of using AI and technology for large-scale social impact, noting the transformative role of trained caregivers in shaping children's futures.

Early childhood development, covering children from birth to six years, is widely recognised as a critical window for cognitive and foundational skill formation, though it remains under-resourced in India. The MoU seeks to address this gap through scalable digital training and support systems.

Under the collaboration, IIT Ropar and Rocket Learning will jointly develop technology-enabled training modules and support tools for Anganwadi workers and other frontline caregivers, aligning with IIT Ropar's broader focus on socially relevant research and innovation.

Rocket Learning currently operates across 16 states and union territories and more than 200 districts, reaching about 6 million children through 500,000 classrooms and 400,000 Anganwadi educators, with a target of impacting 50 million underserved children by 2030. UNI

Centre notifies Coal Exchange Rules for establishment of Coal Exchanges

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JUN 10: The Ministry of Coal has notified the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, paving the way for the establishment of Coal Exchanges in the country. The rules were published in the Official Gazette, following the enactment of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025.

The Gazette had introduced the concept of a Mineral Exchange and empowered the Central Government to promote transparent and efficient trading of minerals, including coal and its processed forms.

The Ministry of Coal had already designated the Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) in December 2025 as the authority responsible for registering and regulating Coal Exchanges.

Eligible entities will be authorized by CCO to establish and operate Coal Exchanges, frame market rules and bye-laws, and facilitate coal trading. Registrations will be granted for a period of 25 years.

"The introduction of Coal Exchanges marks a paradigm shift in coal marketing by moving from the traditional 'one-to-many' sales model to a competitive 'many-to-many' trading platform. This will enable transparent and market-driven price discovery, improve efficiency, and provide coal producers, including commercial and captive miners, with easier access to a wider pool of buyers. Public Sector coal companies can also leverage the platform to enhance market participation," Ministry of Coal said in a statement.

The Coal Exchange initiative reflects the Government's commitment to enhancing ease of doing business, promoting transparency, and building a modern, self-reliant energy ecosystem.

Recently, the Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) received approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to invest in a proposed coal exchange company.

MCX plans to invest up to Rs 100 crore as initial capital to meet net worth requirements under the draft coal exchange framework. UNI

Sasken launches Hyderabad CoE to Boost Semiconductor, AI Engineering Capabilities

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, JUNE 10: Sasken Technologies Ltd (formerly Sasken Communication Technologies Limited), a leading provider of product engineering and digital transformation services, on Monday announced the launch of a new Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Hyderabad aimed at strengthening its semiconductor engineering, artificial intelligence (AI) and digital innovation capabilities. The new facility will enhance Sasken's regional delivery footprint and deepen collaboration with strategic chipset partners, including Qualcomm, and their OEM ecosystem, senior company executives said.

Addressing a media briefing, Rajiv C Mody, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) and CEO, along with Nirmala Datla, Chief Data Science and Engineering officer and Hareesh Ramanna, CXO, Sasken Technologies and President, Borqs Technologies (Sasken Group), India, said the Hyderabad centre has been established to support major semiconductor customers, chipset manufacturers and hyperscalers operating in the region.

Mody said Sasken offers end-to-end product engineering services spanning silicon design, embedded software, product development and manufacturing support.

"Sasken is a full-service product engineering company. We work across the entire technology stack, from silicon design to end-product engineering and software development," he said.

The Bengaluru headquartered company has engineering centres across Bengaluru, Chennai, Pune, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Mumbai, apart from international locations in China, Japan, Finland and the United States.

According to the company, Sasken serves global customers across semiconductor, automotive, consumer electronics, in-

dustrial equipment, networking, satellite communications and hyperscaler segments.

The company recently strengthened its semiconductor and device engineering capabilities through its integration with Borqs Technologies.

Ramanna said Sasken follows an asset-light business model and partners with third-party electronics manufacturing services (EMS) providers rather than operating its own manufacturing facilities.

"We work with contract manufacturers in China, Noida and Hyderabad. We are also evaluating partnerships in Europe, the United States and Mexico to support customers amid changing global trade and tariff dynamics," he said.

He said Borqs has shipped more than 40 million connected devices globally and continues to expand its footprint in the hardware and Internet of Things (IoT) segments.

The Hyderabad CoE has been launched with an initial seating capacity of 120 and is expected to expand in line with customer demand. The facility will primarily support semiconductor companies, including Qualcomm, by providing software integration, validation and engineering services for next-generation chipsets and connected devices.

"Hyderabad has become a major semiconductor hub. Being close to customers enables faster collaboration with chipset companies and hyperscalers who build products around these platforms," Ramanna said.

The company currently employs around 2,460 people globally and expects future recruitment to focus on highly skilled product engineers, architects, AI specialists and designers.

"With AI and machine learning transforming engineering services, value creation is no longer measured only by headcount. Our focus is on enhancing engineering productivity and building industry-specific AI solutions," company officials said.

Mody said Sasken works with several Fortune 500 companies, global hyperscalers, automotive original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), semiconductor companies and industrial technology firms. The company also maintains longstanding partnerships with technology leaders such as Google and Qualcomm.

On future growth drivers, Sasken said semiconductor engineering, AI, IoT, connected devices and Global Capability Centres (GCCs) are expected to play a significant role in the company's expansion strategy.

The company reported combined revenue of about USD 125 million for the financial year ended March 2026 and said it remains open to strategic investments and acquisitions to strengthen its technology portfolio and global presence. UNI

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Bandhan Bank opens four new branches in Karnataka

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

BENGALURU, JUNE 10: Bandhan Bank on Tuesday announced the opening of eight new branches across four states, including four in Karnataka, as part of its continued expansion strategy to strengthen its national presence and deepen regional penetration.

In Karnataka, the new branches have been opened at Jubilee Circle Branch in Dharwad, Siddhartha Nagar Branch and Shivarampet Branch in Mysuru, and Jakkur Branch in Bengaluru. With this addition, the bank's total number of banking outlets in Karnataka has risen to 178. The

branches will cater to customers in both urban and semi-urban regions.

Apart from Karnataka, the bank has also opened two branches in Delhi, and one each in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

The expansion in southern India, the bank said, reflects its strategic focus on diversification and wider accessibility of banking services. The new outlets are expected to enhance customer reach and improve access to financial products and services.

Commenting on the expansion, Bandhan Bank Executive Director and Chief Business Officer Rajinder Kumar Babbar said the bank is com-

mitted to strengthening its network and delivering flexible, innovative banking solutions to meet evolving customer needs.

"We are delighted to announce the opening of eight new branches across four states, strengthening our network, especially in southern India, to serve customers more efficiently. As our network grows, we stay committed to sustainable expansion and delivering innovative, flexible banking solutions," he said.

Bandhan Bank currently operates across 35 of 36 states and union territories, serving over 3.2 crore customers through more than 6,380 banking outlets nationwide. UNI

India emerging as global hub for affordable healthcare & pharma innovation: Ravi Teja

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, JUNE 10: India has emerged as the "Pharmacy of the World" through its scale, quality, affordability and reliable supply of medicines, Ravi Teja, Deputy Director, Department of Commerce, Government of India, said on Tuesday.

Addressing a press conference in Hyderabad on the occasion of completion of 12 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government and India's pharmaceutical export growth, he said the Indian pharmaceutical sector had grown from around USD 20 billion to USD 60 billion over the last 12 years and was expected to touch USD 130 billion by 2030.

He said India's pharmaceutical exports increased from USD 14 billion in FY2015 to USD 31 billion in FY2026, registering a compound annual growth rate of 7.22 per cent. India currently supplies around 20 per cent of the global generics demand and exports medicines to more than 200 countries.

Ravi Teja said the United States remained India's largest pharmaceutical market, with exports reaching about USD 10.5 billion.

He added that exports to countries such as France, Brazil, the United Kingdom and South Africa had also witnessed significant growth during the last 12 years.

Highlighting India's global role during the COVID-19 pandemic, he said the country supplied vaccines and medicines to several nations under the Vaccine Maitri initiative, strengthening its position as a reliable global health partner. He said India was now moving from volume-driven growth to high-value pharmaceutical innovation with increasing focus on biosimilars, biologics, gene therapies, vaccines, speciality medicines and API self-reliance. Initiatives such as Biopharma SHAKTI and expansion of clinical trial infrastructure would further strengthen the sector, he added.

Ravi Teja said India has set a target of achieving USD 50 billion in pharmaceutical exports by 2030 and would continue strengthening quality standards, regulatory cooperation and innovation to maintain its position as a trusted global healthcare partner. UNI

Viyash Scientific to acquire Italy's BioForLife for Rs 188 Cr Strengthening Global Pet Care Business

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, JUNE 10: Hyderabad-based Viyash Scientific Limited, through its wholly owned subsidiary Alivira Animal Health Limited, has signed a binding agreement to acquire a 100 per cent stake in BioForLife (BFL), a leading pet care company headquartered in Milan.

The acquisition, valued at Rs 188 crore in cash, is expected to be completed during the second quarter of FY27, the company announced today.

The transaction marks a significant milestone in Viyash Scientific's strategy to expand its footprint in the rapidly growing global Companion Animal Health Generics market.

The acquisition will strength-

en Alivira's companion animal health business globally and enhance its presence in the European pet care sector.

Italy is among Europe's five largest animal health markets, with companion animal care emerging as one of its fastest-growing segments, driven by increasing pet ownership, pet humanisation trends and higher spending on preventive and specialised veterinary care.

BioForLife specializes in the development, commercialization and distribution of pet care products.

The company has built a strong portfolio spanning nutritional supplements, pharmaceuticals and rapid diagnostic tests, while also expanding into high-growth segments

such as dermatology and ophthalmology.

With an established sales network reaching more than 80 per cent of veterinary clinics across Italy, BioForLife provides strong market access and customer relationships that are expected to support future growth initiatives.

The acquisition will provide Viyash Scientific, headquartered in Jubilee Hills, with a platform to introduce products from Alivira's development pipeline into the Italian market.

At the same time, it will create opportunities to expand BioForLife's product range across Alivira's operations in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

Commenting on the development, Dr. Haribabu Bodepu-

ti, Managing Director and Group CEO of Viyash Scientific Limited, said the acquisition is an important step toward building a leading global companion animal health business.

He noted that BioForLife offers an established platform in one of Europe's most attractive pet care markets and strengthens the company's regional presence.

According to him, combining BioForLife's commercial reach with Alivira's product development capabilities will help accelerate growth, broaden the companion animal health portfolio and create greater value for veterinarians, pet owners and business partners.

Dr. Bodepuoti also said the company sees significant op-

portunities to introduce innovative products into India and other international markets through its global network, adding that the investment reflects Viyash Scientific's commitment to sustainable growth, strategic expansion and long-term value creation.

The acquisition will also strengthen Alivira's leadership team, with BioForLife's existing executives expected to continue managing business operations while driving new growth initiatives.

The transaction builds on Alivira's track record of international expansion, having successfully acquired and integrated multiple animal health companies across Europe, Latin America and Asia over the past decade. UNI



Prasidh replaces Siraj for Ireland and England T20Is

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

CHANDIGARH: India have withdrawn fast bowler Mohammed Siraj from their squads for the T20I series against Ireland and England in a bid to manage his workload, replacing him with his Gujarat Titans (GT) team-mate Prasidh Krishna.

"Following discussions between the BCCI Medical Team and the Team Management, Siraj has been advised a period of rest as part of his workload management programme," the BCCI said in a release. "The decision has been taken as a precautionary measure to ensure adequate recovery ahead of a long international season."

Prasidh has played five T20Is so far, with eight wickets at an economy rate of 11. His last game for India in the format came in

November 2023, against Australia in Guwahati.

Prasidh is also part of India's squad for the upcoming three-match ODI series against Afghanistan beginning June 13, while Siraj was left out for that series. Both quicks recently played in the Test win against Afghanistan in New Chandigarh.

Siraj played 17 games for GT in IPL 2026, while Prasidh played 12 during the team's run to the final.

After the T20I series against Ireland and England, India are also set to play ODIs in England, and have assignments lined up in Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and New Zealand.

India play Ireland in two T20Is in Belfast on June 26 and 28, followed by five T20Is in England from July 1 to 11.

McGrath: Australia will have to manage turnover of Test attack

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

ADELAIDE: Glenn McGrath hopes that the incentive of winning an Ashes series outright in England next year will keep the flame burning for Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood, but he expects the pace attack to go through a period of transition in the near future. "There's a few [new fast bowlers] coming through at the moment. The Pakistan tours before and after the World T20 didn't go to plan," McGrath said during an interaction at the MRF Academy in Chennai on Monday. "But I think there's opportunity for quite a few young guys at the moment. Guys like Spencer Johnson have some real pace, but whether they've had enough opportunity? I know [Nathan] Ellis has been for a while and [Xavier] Bartlett, they are the next level [in white-ball cricket]."

"Starc, Hazlewood and Cummins are all in their mid-to-late thirties, aren't they? You wonder how long they can go. I look at it from an Australian perspective in Test cricket. The Ashes is coming up next year in England and Australia have not won an Ashes in England outright since 2001. Hopefully, there's incentive for the boys to keep going, but there's going to be that turnover. You've also got Will Sutherland, Jack Edwards and Brendan Doggett. Plenty of young guys there, but we'll wait and see if someone really puts their hands up."

The fitness and depth of Australia's pace resources will be tested over the next 14 months with at least 20 Tests on the schedule. Cummins played just once in last season's Ashes due to a back injury and Hazlewood didn't feature at all.

McGrath suggested that Shield success could tune up the fast bowlers for Test-match challenges. Nathan McAndrew, for instance, is among those Shield bowlers who could help boost Australia's pace stocks. In March, former Australia fast bowler Ryan Harris felt that McAndrew should be in the Test frame.

"A lot of it comes back to Shield cricket, I think," McGrath said. "I don't know their exact stats in Shield cricket, but state cricket in Australia is quite competitive. South Australia have won back-to-back and a couple of their guys have done well. There's going to be opportunities out there and we'll see once they get there."

In terms of the future, McGrath has been encouraged by his early sightings of Ollie Peake. McGrath believed that the 19-year-old has the potential to succeed across conditions and that he might also be in contention for next year's Border-Gavaskar Trophy in India.

Peake recently became the youngest specialist men's batter to debut for Australia and fourth youngest overall for them in ODI cricket. In his second innings, on a slow surface in Lahore, he showed glimpses of his potential, scoring 31 off 32 balls while taking on fast bowler Haris Rauf and wristspinner Shadab Khan. In 2025, McGrath had observed Peake's development in subcontinent conditions when he visited the MRF Academy in Chennai.

"It's a great opportunity for him [to be exposed to Bangladesh conditions]. He's only a young guy," McGrath said. "He was also here with the Aussie team at MRF. He's been a talent identified for a while. This will be the true test to see how the handles [pressure] - but again he's huge potential. He's played well at the Big Bash and he's also played well at state level. He's got that feel, but playing for your country it's a little different."

Women's T20 World Cup 2026 warm-up: India ease past WI; Perry headlines Australia's win

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

CARDIFF: Bharti Fulmali scored an unbeaten 56, Shreyanka Patil picked up four wickets and Radha Yadav returned 3 for 25 as India warmed up for the 2026 T20 World Cup in style with a 26-run win against West Indies in Cardiff. Smriti Mandhana (39), Yastika Bhatia (36) and Shafali Verma (29) also made important contributions.

Sent in, Shafali and Mandhana - captaining in place of Harmanpreet Kaur - added 59 runs for the opening wicket in 5.2 overs before the latter fell to Aaliyah Alleyne. Shafali hit five fours in her 13-ball 29 but fell to offspinner Karishma Ramharack in the seventh over. Jemimah Rodrigues became the first of legspinner Afy Fletcher's four victims as India slipped to 85 for 3 in eight overs.

Bhatia and Fulmali, however, added 60 runs in seven overs as India raced towards 150. Bhatia struck six fours during her innings, while Fulmali hit six fours and a six as India racked up 179 for 8. For West Indies, Fletcher was easily the pick of the bowlers, returning 4 for 23.



West Indies began their chase well with Deandra Dottin and Shemaine Campbelle adding 63 runs in nine overs. But once

Campbelle retired out for 25, Patil and Radha took over. Patil got rid of Qiana Joseph, Jahzara Claxton, Jannillea Glasgow and Zaida James while Bhatia picked

up Dottin, Alleyne and Chinelle Henry. Dottin top-scored for West Indies with 49 off 44, who were restricted to 153 for 8 after 20 overs.

Megan Schutt and Alana King's two-wicket hauls backed up by Ellyse Perry's half-century headlined Australia's comfortable win over England in the 2026 T20 World Cup warm-up game in Cardiff.

Sent in, England slipped and stumbled to 157 for 6 after being reduced to 19 for 3 in the fifth over. Kim Garth struck with her third ball, taking out Danni Wyatt-Hodge before Schutt removed Amy Jones on the same score. Nat Sciver-Brunt, in her comeback game, was bowled by King with England enduring a poor powerplay.

Alice Capsey (45) and Heather Knight (25) steadied the ship before Freya Kemp and Dani Gibson provided the finishing touches.

Australia hardly broke a sweat in chasing down the 158-target. Beth Mooney raced away with a 26-ball 43, while adding 51 runs with Georgia Voll for the opening wicket. Perry walked in at No. 3 and struck nine fours in her 43-ball 64 and was the last wicket to fall as Australia romped home with ten balls to spare.

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