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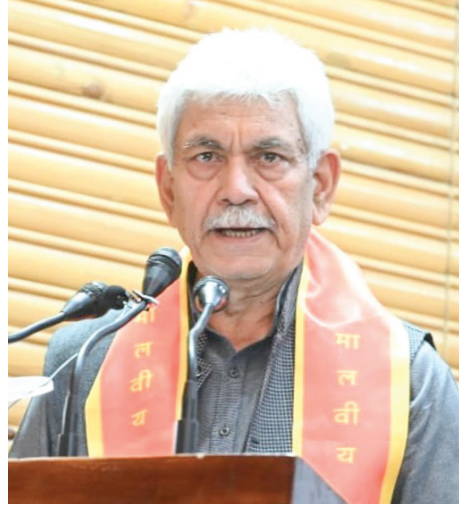
Homecoming of Hope; Return of Kashmiri Pandits Signals a New Era for J&K: LG Manoj Sinha

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: Describing the return of Kashmiri Pandits to their homeland as a defining moment in the region's recent history, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said their homecoming reflects a new chapter of reconstruction, confidence and renewal in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the Global Kashmiri Pandit Conclave in Srinagar, attended by distinguished members of the community from across India and abroad, the Lieutenant Governor said the gathering celebrated the resilience, achievements and enduring spirit of a community that overcame decades of hardship and displacement.

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LG attends launch ceremony of e-edition of collected works of Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya at Srinagar

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today attended the launch ceremony of e-edition of collected works of revered nationalist, educationist and social reformer, Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, at Srinagar.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the monumental efforts of the Mahamana Malaviya Mission. "Given the increased accessibility of digital content in today's era, I am confident that this initiative

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India Will Give Voice to Aspirations of Global South at G7 Summit: PM Modi

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JUNE 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India will represent not only its own interests but also the aspirations of developing nations at the upcoming G7 Summit in France, underscoring the country's expanding role in global affairs.

In a departure statement issued ahead of his week-long visit to France and Slovakia, Modi said India's participation in the G7 for the eighth consecutive year reflects the confidence the international community places in the country and its increasing influence

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Collaborative Security Training Essential For Maintaining High Operational Readiness

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

JAMMU, JUNE 13: Emphasising the importance of coordinated preparedness in the face of evolving security challenges, senior security officials have said that collaborative training initiatives are essential for maintaining a high state of operational readiness and ensuring an effective response to emerging threats.

The statement came as the Special Operations Group (SOG) of Jammu and Kashmir Police and the National Security Guard (NSG) successfully concluded a week-long joint training exercise.

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Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Urban Development Must Go Hand in Hand: LG Saxena

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

LEH, JUNE 13: In a major boost to environmental protection and sustainable infrastructure development in Ladakh, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved the construction of a Decentralised Sewerage Treatment Plant (DSTP) in Leh at an estimated cost of Rs. 9.12 crore, aimed at preventing untreated wastewater from entering rivers and drainage channels.

The project has been conceived as a long-term solution to strengthen wastewater management in Leh

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Shujaat Bukhari: An Enduring Legacy of Excellence in Journalism

Remembering a Distinguished Editor, Mentor and Media Professional Par Excellence

FROM EDITOR'S DESK

SRINAGAR JUNE 13: Eight years have passed since the Assassination of veteran Journalist Shujaat Bukhari, However his name continues to command immense respect within journalistic, literary and intellectual circles.

As Kashmir marks the eighth anniversary of his passing today on June 14, colleagues, admirers and members of the wider community remember a man whose life was dedicated to the pursuit of professional excellence, public service and the highest standards of journalism.

Among the most respected media personalities of his generation, Bukhari earned recognition through years of dedicated work, thoughtful writing and an unwavering commitment to factual and responsible reporting. His contribution to journalism extended far beyond headlines and news reports; it was reflected in the values he upheld throughout his career, integrity, credibility, fairness and professionalism.

As the founding editor of Rising Kashmir, Bukhari played a pivotal role in establishing a respected media institution that became known for its commitment to quality journalism. Under his leadership, the newspaper evolved into an important platform for news, ideas and public engagement, earning the trust of readers across the region and beyond.

Those who worked with him often recall his meticulous attention to detail, strong work ethic and insistence on maintaining high professional standards. He believed that journalism carried a profound responsibility and that accuracy, balance and credibility were essential qualities of any meaningful news organization.

To me, one of Bukhari's most enduring contributions was his role as a mentor to young journalists. Throughout his career, he encouraged aspiring reporters and writers, helping many take their first steps in the profession. Numerous journalists who worked under his guidance continue to acknowledge the valuable lessons they learned from him about ethics, discipline and dedication to the craft. I still remember that his newsroom was not merely a place where news was produced; it was also a learning environment where young professionals were encouraged to grow, improve and uphold the principles of responsible journalism. Many of those who benefited from his mentorship have since gone on to establish successful careers of their own, carrying forward the values he championed.

Beyond journalism, Bukhari was widely admired for his intellectual depth and broad range of interests. He possessed a deep appreciation for literature, culture and education, and frequently supported initiatives aimed at promoting learning and intellectual engagement. His writings reflected clarity of thought, careful research and a genuine desire to inform and educate readers.

Friends, relatives and colleagues describe him as a man of remarkable humility despite his professional accomplishments. Accessible, courteous and thoughtful, he earned admiration not only for his journalistic achievements but also for his personal qualities. His ability to build lasting relationships across different sections of society reflected the respect he commanded as both a professional and an individual.

His commitment to excellence brought him recognition at various levels, and his work continues to be regarded as an important benchmark for aspiring journalists. Even years after his passing, his articles, editorials and professional achievements remain a source of inspiration for those entering the field of media and communication.

When we at Headlines Today remember our mentor, The annual remembrance of Shujaat Bukhari, we believe is more than an occasion to recall a distinguished journalist. To me as an editor of a daily English newspaper, It is an opportunity to celebrate a life devoted to truth, professionalism and public service. It is also a moment to acknowledge the lasting influence he continues to have on the journalistic community and on the many individuals whose lives he touched through his work and mentorship.

As we remember him on his eighth death anniversary, we do so with profound respect and gratitude.

Eight years after his passing, Shujaat Bukhari remains a shining example of professional integrity and journalistic dedication.

May Allah his soul in eternal peace and blessings.....



Remembered By: **Jehangir Bukhari**
 Editor-in-Chief | Headlines Today

A Life of Service, Simplicity and Wisdom Will Forever Inspire Us

Team 'HEADLINES TODAY' Pays Rich Tributes to Veteran Socio-Political, Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin Bukhari

Advocate Syed Shabir Bukhari, Syed Fida Hussain Bukhari Bereaved, Rasmī Chararrum to be Observed on June 16 Tuesday

KREERI JUNE 13: The entire team of Headlines Today including Chief patron of Lubaab Publications Group Syed Sad ud din Saidi, Editor-in-Chief, management, editorial board and staff of Daily Headlines Today express profound grief and heartfelt sorrow over the demise of Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin Bukhari, a respected elder, distinguished socio-political personality and widely admired public figure of Kreeri-Muradabad, who passed away after a prolonged illness.

With his passing, the region has lost a man whose life was defined by selfless service, integrity, humility and an unwavering commitment to the welfare of the people. Throughout his life, Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin Bukhari remained a source of guidance and inspiration for countless individuals. His wisdom, balanced outlook and dedication to public causes earned him respect and affection across all sections of society.

Despite his stature and influence, he was known for his simplicity, compassion and close connection with ordinary people. He carried himself with dignity and grace, always placing the interests of society above personal considerations. His contribution to community life and public affairs will continue to be remembered for generations.

On behalf of the entire Daily Headlines Today family, I pay my deepest respects to a noble soul whose life reflected the finest values of humanity. He was a fatherly figure whose kindness, encouragement and goodwill touched many lives and whose memory will remain etched in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Advocate Syed Shabir Bukhari, Syed Fida Hussain Bukhari and all members of the bereaved family. May they find strength and solace in the rich legacy he leaves behind and in the prayers and support of the people whose lives he influenced.

His departure marks the end of a remarkable chapter in the social and public life of Kreeri-Muradabad. Yet, the values he upheld, the relationships he nurtured and the service he rendered to society will continue to illuminate the path for future generations.

Forth day ceremony RASMI CHAHARRUM will be Observed on 16th of June Tuesday at Kreeri Muradabad.

May Almighty Allah grant eternal peace to the departed soul and bestow patience and fortitude upon the bereaved family.



Jehangir Bukhari
 Editor-in-Chief | Headlines Today

Nazki Day at Bandipora Celebrates Enduring Legacy of Prof. Rashid Nazki

Farooq Nazki Honoured Posthumously, Prof. Naseem Shafaie Receives Charaag-e-Sukhan Award

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

BANDIPORA, JUNE 13: The Literary Forum Bandipora (LFB) on Saturday observed its annual Nazki Day, paying tribute to the literary legacy of renowned poet and scholar Prof. Rashid Nazki while honouring distinguished contributors to Kashmiri language and literature.

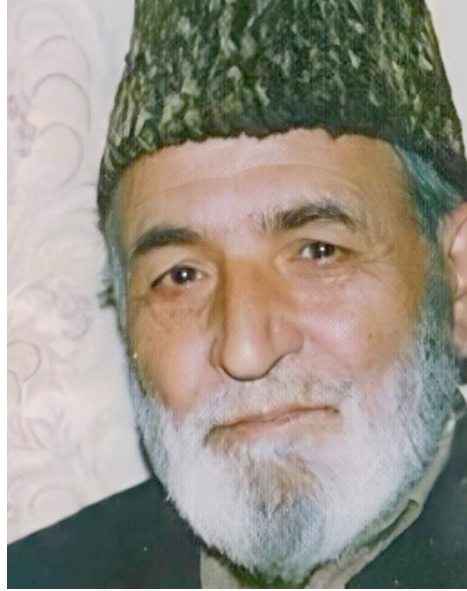
The event brought together prominent scholars, poets, writers and literary activists from across Kashmir to celebrate Prof. Nazki's enduring contribution to the promotion and development of Kashmiri literature and culture.

A key feature of the programme was the release of Prof. Rashid Nazki's book Irfanuk Pai, alongside discussions highlighting his literary achievements and intellectual influence.

Poet and researcher Basharat Fauqir presented a scholarly paper examining Prof. Nazki's literary works and contributions to Kashmiri thought and literature. Delivering the keynote address, Majrooh Rashid described Prof. Nazki as a visionary poet who helped revive Persian and Central Asian influences in Kashmiri literature and played a significant role in shaping the language's modern literary identity.

Recalling his association with the late poet, Dr. Ayaz Rasool Nazki shared personal memories and reflections on Prof. Nazki's impact on literary and public life. President of Adbi Markaz Kamraz, Mohammad Amin Bhat, said the continuing relevance of Nazki's work was reflected in the growth and success of institutions founded by him, including Literary Forum Bandipora and Adbi Markaz Kamraz.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Sonaul-



lah Parvaiz described Prof. Nazki as a poet of deep philosophical insight whose writings explored themes of existence, spirituality and metaphysics. He also highlighted Nazki's lifelong efforts towards preserving and enriching language and culture.

The programme's most significant moment was the posthumous conferment of the Nazki Award on noted poet and former Doordarshan Director Farooq Nazki in recognition of his exceptional contribution to Kashmiri language and literature. The award was received by his daughter, Roohi Nazki, while the citation was read by Dr. Adil Mohiuddin.

Farooq Nazki, widely respected for his poetry in both Kashmiri and Urdu, is remembered for works exploring identity,

memory, love and social realities. He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1995 for his acclaimed Kashmiri poetry collection Naar Hyutun Kanzal Wanas.

The Literary Forum Bandipora also conferred the prestigious Charaag-e-Sukhan Award on noted poet and academic Prof. Naseem Shafaie for her recent publication Bu Vanyeth Zaan Kass. Prof. Shafaie is recognised as one of the foremost contemporary voices in Kashmiri literature and became the first Kashmiri woman to receive the Sahitya Akademi Award for Kashmiri literature in 2011.

The event concluded with a poetry session sponsored by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages. Chaired by Prof. Naseem Shafaie, Shahnaz Rashid, Munawar Parwana and Gul Tanveer, the session featured recitations by more than a dozen poets, drawing enthusiastic appreciation from the audience.

The programme was attended by several eminent literary personalities, including Prof. Sonaulah Parvaiz, Dr. Ayaz Rasool Nazki, Majrooh Rashid, Mohammad Amin Bhat, Dr. Rafiq Masoodi, Shafaq Sopori, Dr. Maroof Shah, M. Yousuf Mashoor, Mir Dachigami, Mubashir Saleem Nazki, Sufi Showkat, Mir Tariq, Dr. Adil Mohiuddin, Mansoor Muntazir, Sheikh Saleem, Fayaz Tilgami, Tanha Nizami, Ayoub Dilber, Rashid Jawahar and Abid Ashraf.

LFB President Sufi Showkat presented the vote of thanks, while organisers acknowledged the support of The Kashmir Convent, the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Shudh Spices, Design and Eff Ess Traders in making the event a success.

Sakeena Itoo reaffirms govt push for quality education, future ready learning

Exhorts students to use technology positively, strive for excellence

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, JUNE 13: Minister for Education, Health and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo, today visited Kulgam and presided over the Graduation Day Ceremony at Ayesha Ali Academy.

Sakeena Itoo congratulated the graduating students and encouraged them to pursue excellence through dedication and continuous learning.

Addressing the gathering, She stated that the government is committed to strengthen the education sector and is continuously working to ensure quality education for every child across Jammu and Kashmir. She highlighted that the present dispensation is focused on providing better infrastructure and modern facilities in educational institutions to create a conducive learning environment. She said sustained efforts are being made to enhance the teaching standards and expand educational opportunities for the students.

The Minister stressed the importance of using technology in a positive and productive manner. She exhorted upon the students



to optimally harness the digital tools for learning, innovation and personal growth while avoiding their misuse.

Highlighting the pivotal role of teachers, she said the educators must identify and nurture the unique talents of every student while also understanding

and addressing the challenges they face. She called upon the teachers, parents and educational institutions to work collectively

in shaping the future of young learners.

She stated that continuous efforts are being made to provide more facilities and create an inclusive, future-ready education system that empowers the students to succeed in every sphere of life.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Shahzad Alam highlighted the achievements made under the education sector in the district.

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Homecoming of.....

"A moment of transformation is here. Those once uprooted from their homeland return and this homecoming is the truest victory," Sinha said, describing the conclave as an important step towards strengthening the community's connection with its roots and encouraging its active participation in the region's future.

He said the presence of leading entrepreneurs, business executives, technology professionals and cultural figures from the Kashmiri Pandit diaspora reflected growing confidence in the peace, stability and development of Jammu and Kashmir.

Calling upon members of the community to contribute directly to the region's growth, Sinha urged them to establish industries, academic institutions and cultural centres that would not only preserve their rich heritage but also create opportunities for future generations.

"The true measure of life lies in what we give back to society, the hope we inspire and the change we leave behind. The contribution of the Kashmiri Pandit community is needed across industry, education, arts and spirituality," he said.

Reflecting on the community's journey, the Lieutenant Governor said Kashmiri Pandits had endured immense suffering and displacement but refused to be defined by adversity. Instead, he said, they transformed hardship into determination and emerged as leaders in diverse fields across the world.

"Lives marked by pain and struggle gave the Kashmiri Pandit community only two choices—despair or rebuilding. They chose creation, rebuilding and selfless service, and in doing so, they made history," he said.

Sinha noted that despite facing enormous challenges, members of the community went on to establish successful businesses, create institutions, drive innovation and earn recognition in areas such as technology, finance, medicine, education, arts and public service.

"Hardship never broke their spirit. Suffering did not silence their ambition. Through perseverance and dedication, they shaped their own destiny and earned respect across the world," he added.

The Lieutenant Governor said the conclave also marked the beginning of a renewed effort to restore the community's historic legacy and strengthen its role in the social, cultural and economic development of Jammu and Kashmir. Discussions held during the event on investment, institution-building and economic cooperation, he said, could serve as a roadmap for future growth and community empowerment.

He further observed that the return of Kashmiri Pandits reflected the changing landscape of Jammu and Kashmir and demonstrated growing faith in the region's future.

Expressing confidence in the community's continued contribution to national development, Sinha said Kashmiri Pandits would play a significant role in India's progress in the years ahead.

The conclave featured several interactive

sessions in which prominent members of the community shared their experiences, achievements and perspectives on strengthening ties with their homeland while contributing to its development.

Senior government officials, representatives of civil society, youth leaders and a large number of members of the Kashmiri Pandit community from different parts of India and the world attended the event.

LG attends.....

will ensure seamless, universal access to the timeless wisdom of Mahamana," he said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor spoke on the "Viksit Bharat and Jammu Kashmir: The Relevance of Mahamana's Vision" and highlighted Mahamana's foundational contributions toward building an Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

"Mahamana did not inherit easy paths; instead, he forged new avenues for India's future.

While his contemporaries debated structural reforms across education, Swadeshi, national unity, and rapid industrialization, Mahamana had already advanced significantly toward implementing solutions.

In 1904, Mahamana had envisioned a comprehensive curriculum that would produce engineers to make the nation powerful and prosperous. He placed special emphasis on holistic education focussing on modern engineering, industrial machinery manufacture, chemical sciences and agricultural research with indigenous handicrafts, handloom skills, art, and India's cultural-spiritual heritage. 122 years later, we are giving concrete shape to his ideas through the National Education Policy.

Mahamana wanted to strengthen the nation through education and skills aligned with industrial needs. Today, the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is working to fully realize the dreams of Mahamana. While the entire world is grappling with economic crises, India is moving forward with renewed momentum and confidence," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that under leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the UT of Jammu & Kashmir is leading the country in implementing Mahamana's visions.

"A historic industrial revolution, catalysed by the 2021 New Industrial Policy, has resulted in an influx of investments over the past four years that surpasses the cumulative industrial investments of seven decades.

Aligning with Mahamana's principles of national unity, social harmony and women-led development, Jammu Kashmir has undergone a societal transformation," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the youth to commit to five core pillars of growth:

"First, continuous Mastery of Knowledge and skills aligned with evolving industrial needs. Second, cultivate a culture of personal integrity, honesty, and ethical values. Third, adopt an entrepreneurial mindset in

both thought and action. Fourth, engage in community service. Fifth, promote National Unity and foster cross-sectoral collaboration and social harmony."

Shri Prabhoo Narain Srivastava and Shri Kamal Nain Rai, Patrons of the Mahamana Malaviya Mission; Shri Hari Shankar Singh, President, Mahamana Malaviya Mission; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu; Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Prof. A. Ravinder Nath, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir; office-bearers of the Mahamana Malaviya Mission, faculty members of the University of Kashmir, and senior officers of the police and civil administration were present on the occasion.

India Will.....

on major global issues. "India will not only speak for itself, but it will also give voice to the aspirations of the Global South," the Prime Minister said, referring to the grouping of developing and emerging economies.

The G7 Summit is scheduled to take place in Evian, France, on June 16 and 17, bringing together leaders of the world's leading economies to discuss pressing international challenges, economic cooperation and sustainable development.

Modi expressed confidence that his visits to France and Slovakia would deepen India's engagement with Europe and strengthen its strategic partnerships across the region.

Highlighting the importance of France in India's foreign policy, he said the country occupies a special place in New Delhi's strategic vision. During his visit, Modi will join French President Emmanuel Macron in Nice to inaugurate a major innovation initiative designed to connect Indian start-ups with global investors and promote cutting-edge research and entrepreneurship.

The Prime Minister said the programme would serve as a significant platform for showcasing innovations emerging from India's higher education and technology sectors.

From France, Modi will travel to Slovakia for a state visit, the first by an Indian Prime Minister since the country gained independence in 1993. During the visit, he will hold talks with Slovak President Peter Pellegrini and Prime Minister Robert Fico and engage with business leaders to explore opportunities for greater economic cooperation.

Describing the visit as historic, Modi said it would build on the growing momentum in bilateral ties and contribute to stronger trade, investment and technological collaboration.

He also noted that the visit comes at a time when India and the European Union are working to deepen economic engagement, including progress on a proposed free trade agreement.

Following the G7 Summit, Modi will return to Paris to participate in one of Europe's leading technology and innovation events, where India is expected to have the largest national presence, highlighting the growing partnership between Indian and European inno-

vation ecosystems.

The Prime Minister also said he looked forward to meeting members of the Indian community in France, acknowledging their contribution to strengthening ties between the two countries.

The visit is expected to further reinforce India's diplomatic outreach, economic partnerships and leadership role in representing the interests of developing nations on the global stage.

Collaborative.....

codenamed Shakti Sangam, in Jammu on Saturday.

The exercise was conducted from June 8 to June 13 as part of intensified security preparations for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage, which is scheduled to begin on July 3. Authorities have been focusing on enhancing the preparedness of security forces to ensure the smooth and secure conduct of the 57-day pilgrimage.

According to a police spokesperson, the joint exercise was designed to strengthen operational capabilities, improve inter-agency coordination, and enhance the ability of security personnel to respond effectively to a wide range of security threats.

During the training programme, personnel underwent specialised instruction in intervention tactics, hostage rescue operations, deployment and handling of bomb disposal equipment, counter-drone measures, use of night vision devices, and live firing exercises. The participants also engaged in scenario-based drills aimed at improving real-time decision-making and coordinated responses during critical situations.

The spokesperson said the exercise provided an important platform for personnel from both organisations to exchange expertise, share operational best practices, and improve interoperability while dealing with complex security scenarios.

Senior officers overseeing the exercise noted that continuous training and capacity-building initiatives remain crucial for keeping security forces prepared for contemporary challenges. They stressed that seamless coordination, precision, and adaptability are key components of effective security operations.

The annual pilgrimage will be conducted through the traditional Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the shorter Baltal route in Ganderbal district. Pilgrims from across the country will assemble at the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu before proceeding to the holy cave shrine in Kashmir.

Officials said the successful completion of Shakti Sangam marks another significant step towards strengthening the capabilities of security forces and reinforcing the overall security framework for the forthcoming pilgrimage.

Environmental.....

while safeguarding the ecologically sensitive environment of the Union Territory. Officials said the initiative will help address

growing urban sanitation needs without compromising environmental sustainability.

The Lieutenant Governor has accorded administrative approval and expenditure sanction for the project and has also sanctioned an initial allocation of Rs. 1.80 crore from overall Union Territory savings in favour of the Public Health Engineering Department for the commencement of work.

Highlighting the significance of the initiative, Saxena said environmental conservation and sustainable urban development must progress together in Ladakh. He described decentralised sewerage treatment as an innovative and environmentally responsible approach that would protect rivers and water bodies, improve public health, facilitate water recycling and support planned urban growth while preserving the region's fragile ecosystem for future generations.

According to officials, the decentralised treatment system will process sewage close to its source, significantly reducing pressure on extensive sewer networks and preventing untreated sewage and sludge from flowing into stormwater drains and river basins.

The project has been designed to achieve multiple objectives, including source-level wastewater treatment, rejuvenation of rivers and drainage channels, water reuse, reduction of environmental and health risks, and efficient land utilisation. Officials noted that the decentralised model also eliminates the need for large tracts of land, heavy capital investment and lengthy implementation periods typically associated with centralised treatment facilities.

The proposed facility will be established at Agling-1, covering Camp 6 and Camp 7 areas of Leh. It is designed to cater to a current population of approximately 915 residents and has been planned to serve an estimated population of 1,464 over the next 15 years.

The treatment plant will have a capacity of 200 kilolitres per day against an assessed requirement of 158 kilolitres per day, ensuring adequate provision for future growth. The facility will utilise a Portable Membrane Bioreactor package plant, a modern wastewater treatment technology considered particularly suitable for Ladakh's challenging geographical and climatic conditions.

In addition to the treatment plant, the project includes the construction of a 3.2-kilometre gravity sewer network, a one-lakh-litre collection tank and the restoration of roads affected during the laying of sewerage infrastructure.

Officials said the treated water generated by the facility will be reused in the lower reaches of the Abi Canal for landscaping and other appropriate purposes, promoting water conservation in the water-scarce region.

The project is expected to play a key role in improving sanitation infrastructure, protecting natural water resources and supporting environmentally sustainable urban development in Leh as the town continues to expand.



Javid Dar reviews irrigation infrastructure in Rafiabad, Baramulla

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

RAFIABAD, JUNE 13: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today undertook an extensive tour of Rafiabad, covering Sagipora, Zalipora, Nathipora, Bagh-e-Chatkakh, Bohipora, Wadoora, Seelo and Shankargund areas of Baramulla district, to review the functioning of irrigation infrastructure.

During the visit, the Minister carried out field inspection of canals, lift irrigation schemes, distributaries and water reservoirs to assess the water availability, progress of desilting operations and overall functioning during the ongoing agricultural season.

He interacted with the farmers and local residents to obtain first-hand feedback on irrigation-related issues. He emphasized that irrigation is the lifeline of



agriculture, underscoring the importance of ensuring efficient and timely water supply.

The Minister directed the concerned officers to ensure uninterrupted and equitable distribution of water, particularly to paddy fields. He stressed that no farmer should face hardship due to shortage of irrigation water during the cultivation season. He instructed the officers to identify the vulnerable and underserved areas and prepare time-bound plans for upgradation and modernization of lift irrigation systems wherever required. He reiterated that strengthening irrigation infrastructure is critical for enhancing the agricultural productivity.

Chief Engineer, Irrigation & Flood Control Kashmir, ACD Baramulla, Executive Engineers of Irrigation and Flood Control and other senior officers of the department accompanied the Minister during the visit.

Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani visits bereaved family of JKAS Officer Mohammad Younis Mir

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, today visited the Natipora residence of late Mohammad Younis Mir, a Junior JKAS Officer of the 2019 batch, who passed away yesterday after a brief illness.

During the visit, the Advisor met the bereaved family and conveyed his heartfelt condolences on behalf of the Government. He offered words of comfort and solidarity to the family members and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

Expressing profound grief over the untimely demise of the young officer, Advisor Wani described the loss as deeply saddening and extended sympathies to the family in this difficult hour.

He assured the family of all possible support from the Government and prayed for strength and fortitude for them to bear this irreparable loss.

The Advisor also joined the family in offering prayers for the departed soul and wished them courage and forbearance during this period of grief.

DC Kulgam reviews arrangements at Mata Tripuri Sundri Temple ahead of Zeashta Ashtami

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, JUNE 13: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today visited the Mata Tripuri Sundri Temple, Devsar, to review the arrangements being made for the smooth and successful conduct of the annual Zeashta Ashtami celebrations, scheduled to commence on June 18.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Tehsildar Devsar, Rakib Ahmad; Executive Officer Devsar, Irfan Ahmed; AE Jal Shakti, Towseef Ahmad and other senior officers.

During the visit, officials from various departments, including KPDC, Jal Shakti, Health, and other line departments, briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the preparations being undertaken to ensure the availability of essential services and facilities for devotees expected to



visit the shrine.

Reviewing the arrangements, the DC emphasized the need for effective coordination among all departments to ensure a safe, hassle-free, and comfortable experience for pilgrims. He directed the concerned officers to complete all necessary preparations well ahead of the religious event.

The Deputy Commissioner also interacted with members of the temple management committee and assured them of full administrative support for the successful observance of the Zeashta Ashtami festival.

The visit was aimed at assessing on-ground preparedness and ensuring that all requisite facilities are put in place for the convenience of devotees during the annual religious occasion.

JKEDI Srinagar Trains 27 Aspiring Entrepreneurs under RAMP

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: JK-Entrepreneurship Development Institute, Srinagar concluded the 3rd Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) under the RAMP Initiative at ITI, Bemina.

The valedictory ceremony was attended by Er. Mubashir Hafiz Jan Jan, Superintendent Women, ITI, Bemina; Dr. Naila Khanday, Range Officer; Shabir Hussain Shah, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI, Srinagar. The officials urged participants to build scalable businesses for local economic growth and emphasized the critical role of entrepreneurship, skill development, and capacity building in empowering aspiring entrepreneurs.

The JKEDI course team provided continuous academic and mentoring support during the training period. Participants expressed deep gratitude to JKEDI for its guidance and for creating a platform that strengthens entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region.

The RAMP initiative, supported by the Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India, and the World Bank, aims to enhance the performance and competitiveness of MSMEs across J&K.

Sakina Itoo visits SHMS Hospital, enquires about well-being of injured students of Budgam road accident

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today early morning visited SMHS Hospital here to enquire about the health condition of two school children who sustained injuries in a road accident at Negoo Brenwar Budgam.

The Minister arrived at the hospital in the early hours and met the injured girl students undergoing treatment at the hospital. She personally interacted with each child and their attendants, taking stock of their health status and the medical care being provided.

Expressing concern over the incident, the Minister conveyed her sympathies to the affected families and assured them that the Government is closely monitoring the situation.

"The government stands with the affected families in this difficult hour. No effort will be spared for the speedy



recovery of the children", Sakeena Itoo said.

Sakina Itoo also interacted with the attending doctors and hospital administration and directed them to provide comprehensive healthcare

services to the patients without any inconvenience. She emphasized that all necessary medical facilities and specialised care should be made available to facilitate the speedy recovery of the children.

Awareness Programmes on Substance Abuse organised under NMBA in Bandipora

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, JUNE 13: As part of the ongoing activities under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA), several awareness programmes against substance abuse were organised across Government Degree Colleges in Bandipora district on Saturday to sensitise students about the harmful effects of drug addiction and to promote a healthy and drug-free lifestyle.

At Government Degree College Sumbal, a pledge ceremony against substance abuse was conducted under the presence

of Principal Prof. (Dr.) Shabeena Iqbal Shawl. The event witnessed the participation of students and faculty members, who collectively took a solemn pledge to refrain from substance use and to spread awareness about the importance of a healthy and drug-free society.

Meanwhile, under the banner of Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, the Youth Club of the Red Ribbon Committee of HKM Degree College Bandipora organised a "Pledge Against Substance Abuse" under the convenership of Dr. Mehrajuddin Talie. The programme concluded with a

strong message highlighting the collective responsibility of youth in combating the menace of drug abuse and promoting a healthy and productive lifestyle.

In another programme, the NSS Units of HKM Degree College Bandipora, in collaboration with the Department of Education, organised an interactive session on the causes, consequences and remedial measures of drug abuse. The programme aimed at creating awareness among students regarding the growing menace of drug addiction and its adverse impact on individuals, families and society.

On the occasion, Head of the Department of Education, Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Parry, delivered an insightful lecture and elaborated on the major causes of substance abuse, its harmful consequences and the preventive as well as remedial measures required to combat the social evil.

Further, the Department of Political Science, in collaboration with the NCORD Cell of HKM Degree College Bandipora, organised a counselling session on the theme "Say Yes to Life and No to Drugs." The session was aimed at sensitising students about the

dangers of drug abuse and encouraging them to adopt a healthy and responsible lifestyle.

During the session, Prof. Irfan Ahmad Wagay, Convener of the NCORD Cell, delivered an informative lecture highlighting the causes and harmful effects of substance abuse. He stressed the importance of self-discipline, positive thinking and community support in preventing drug addiction among youth.

The programmes collectively reinforced the message of creating a drug-free society through awareness, counselling and active youth participation.

DIPR's Cultural Unit organises Awareness Programme under Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan at GHS Chattabal

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan, the Cultural Unit Kashmir of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) today organised an awareness programme at Government High School (GHS) Chattabal aimed at sensitising students about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, who took part in a symposium highlighting the need for collective action against substance abuse and the importance of building a drug-free society.



On the occasion, artists of the DIPR's Cultural Unit presented a thematic short play depicting the devastating consequences of drug addiction on individuals,

families and society. The performance effectively conveyed the message of prevention, awareness and social responsibility.



Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Exhibition and Cultural Officer (AECO), Cultural Unit Kashmir, Syed Shakeel Shan, said that the 100-day Nasha Mukta J&K

Abhiyan has now transformed into a people's movement with active participation from all sections of society. He said that DIPR is actively playing its role in

spreading awareness through cultural programmes and public outreach initiatives across the Valley.

The Principal of GHS Chat-

tabal appreciated the efforts of the Cultural Unit Kashmir and thanked DIPR for organising the programme. He stressed the importance of sustained awareness campaigns to protect the younger generation from the menace of drug abuse.

Students and teachers also hailed DIPR's endeavour in promoting awareness through informative and engaging cultural activities, and reiterated their commitment towards supporting the vision of a drug-free Jammu and Kashmir.

The programme concluded with a pledge by participants to contribute towards making society free from the scourge of drugs.

Rana calls for scaling up rainwater harvesting, stresses adoption in new government buildings

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JUNE 13: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology, Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a review meeting with officers of the Jal Shakti Department to take stock of the measures initiated to address the summer exigencies and strengthen preparedness for the ensuing monsoon season.

The meeting was convened to assess the progress achieved in implementing the decisions taken during an earlier review of summer and monsoon preparedness across Jammu Division.

The Minister reviewed the status of various initiatives aimed at ensuring uninterrupted drinking water supply, enhancing flood management capabilities and strengthening the department's response mechanism to meet any eventuality.

Underlining the urgent need to address declining groundwater tables and erratic precipitation patterns, Rana stressed that rainwater harvesting must be treated as a core component of water resource planning in Jammu and



Kashmir. He called for a fundamental shift in water management practices and emphasised the need for strict implementation of the mandate requiring the incorporation of rainwater harvesting infrastructure in all newly constructed government buildings. He said that government establishments must set the standard and lead by example in institutionalising water conservation across the region.

Rana observed that the growing challenges posed by climate variability and increasing water

demand necessitate a shift towards sustainable water conservation practices. He called for formulation of a comprehensive roadmap to expand rainwater harvesting infrastructure across the division and create greater public awareness regarding its benefits.

The Minister also directed the officers to undertake monitoring of groundwater levels across all districts in close coordination with the Central Ground Water Board and ensure that timely corrective measures are taken

based on the assessments and inputs received. He stressed that regular monitoring and data-driven interventions are crucial for sustainable groundwater management and effective planning to address emerging water stress.

The Minister also directed that all private water filling stations operating in Jammu Division register themselves with the concerned authorities within ten days. He stressed the need for a credible registry of such stations to ensure quality control and

accountability in water distribution, particularly during periods of high demand.

While chairing the meeting, Javed Rana underscored the importance of proactive planning, close monitoring and timely execution of works to ensure efficient service delivery and safeguard public interests. He directed the officers to maintain a high level of preparedness and ensure that all necessary measures are in place to effectively address challenges arising from water scarcity, heatwave conditions and potential flood threats during the monsoon season.

The Minister called upon concerned officers to ensure that all repairable hand pumps in Jammu Division are restored immediately and that defunct borewells are revived without delay.

Rana also directed the officers to identify and implement all necessary flood protection measures, including construction of protective walls and other structural interventions, to safeguard water supply infrastructure from future flood damage.

CIIBM of JKEDI organizes Stakeholder Meet under J&K Startup Policy

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: The Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Business Modelling (CIIBM) of Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) organized stakeholder meet under J&K Startup Policy at its main Campus Pampore.



The session was chaired by the Director, JKEDI, Mohammad Younus Malik, and brought together key stakeholders from academia, industry, incubation centres, financial institutions, and the startup ecosystem to deliberate on strengthening entrepreneurship and innovation across the Union Territory.

The meeting served as a platform for meaningful discussions on enhancing the startup ecosystem through targeted mentorship, improved market access, stronger institutional collaborations, and sustained support mechanisms for entrepreneurs.

Participants emphasized that while access to seed funding remains important, the long-term success of startups depends equally on continuous mentoring, business development support, financial prudence, market linkages, and professional guidance.

Deliberations also focused on nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset from an early age through the introduction of entrepreneurship education in schools, promotion of innovation and tinkering labs, and creation of opportunities for young innovators to experiment and develop problem-solving skills. Stakeholders highlighted the need for robust incubation frameworks, stronger proof-of-concept development, and platforms that enable startups to validate ideas, refine business models, and scale effectively.

The discussions further underscored the importance of collaborative efforts among JKEDI, educational institutions, incubation centres, industry partners, and financial institutions to address challenges related to commercialization, investment readiness, and business scalability. The pivotal role of JKEDI in facilitating connections between startups, investors, mentors, markets, and other ecosystem stakeholders was widely appreciated.

The Stakeholder Meet concluded with a shared resolve to foster a vibrant, inclusive, and innovation-driven startup ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir, aligned with the vision and objectives of the J&K Startup Policy and aimed at creating sustainable opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs across the region.

Among the distinguished participants were Dr. Parvez Mir from CIED, IUST Awantipora; Muheet Mehraj of Kashmir Box; Syed Ashfaq from Cred Agro; Abdul Rouf Khan of SKUAST-Kashmir; representatives from SKIIE, IIT Jammu, SKUAST-Jammu, University of Jammu, NIT Srinagar, besides several startup founders and ecosystem enablers.

Sakeena Itoo holds public outreach camp at Yaripora

REVIEWS MUHARRAM ARRANGEMENTS AT SHAHOO

HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, JUNE 13: Minister for Education, Health and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo, today visited Kulgam and held a public darbar at Yaripora, where she interacted with the local residents and assessed their grievances and developmental concerns.

During the camp, people from different areas projected issues related to civic amenities, infrastructure, healthcare, education and other public welfare matters.

The Minister assured them that their genuine concerns would be addressed in a time-bound manner through coordination with the concerned depart-



ments. Speaking on the occasion, she said that the government is working for welfare and development of the people.

MLA Devsar Peerzada Feroze Ahmad Shah also said that the government is committed to betterment of the people and highlighted the developmental requirements of the area.

Later, the Minister visited Shahoo to take stock of the arrangements being put in place for the upcoming observance of Muharram-ul-Haram. She reviewed the preparations related to sanitation, drinking water, electricity, healthcare facilities, traffic management and other essential services to ensure the smooth conduct of the religious observance.

While interacting with the officers, Sakeena Itoo directed the concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure that all necessary arrangements are completed well in advance. She emphasized the importance of providing all required facilities to the mourners and maintaining seamless public services during the occasion.

DC Budgam visits Railway Station Nowgam, reviews preparedness for SANJY-2026

HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, JUNE 13: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today visited Nowgam Railway Station to review the arrangements being put in place for the smooth facilitation of devotees undertaking the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026.

During the visit, the DC inspected various facilities and reviewed the preparedness of the concerned departments to ensure seamless movement, convenience, and safety of the pilgrims. He visited the Registration-cum-Facilitation Centres established at the railway station and assessed the arrangements being made for the registration and assistance of the Yatis.

The DC also inspected the stay accommodation and allied facilities being provided for the devotees at the railway station. He directed the concerned officers to complete all necessary arrangements well in advance and ensure that no inconvenience is caused to the pilgrims during the Yatra period.

The DC instructed the concerned Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to keep all essential medical facilities available throughout the Yatra period.

He also directed the PHE Department to ensure adequate drinking water facilities and asked the Power Development Department to repair all defunct lights at the station and adjoining areas.

The DC further directed the concerned departments to put in place



proper sanitation measures and maintain cleanliness in and around the railway station to ensure a hygienic environment for the pilgrims.

The DC instructed the Nodal Officer SANJY 2026 for Budgam to install Helpdesk Kiosks on both sides of the boarding areas. He also directed that proper signage boards be installed from the deboarding area to the Registration-cum-Facilitation Centres to enable easy navigation and assistance for the Yatis.

The DC reiterated that District

administration is committed towards ensuring a comfortable and smooth transit experience for all pilgrims arriving through the station. He emphasized the need for close coordination among all departments and officers to ensure seamless arrangements and the satisfactory conduct of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

The visit was attended by the ADDC, ADC, Joint Director Planning Budgam, ACD Budgam, Tehsildar BK Pora, Exen PDD Budgam and officers from other concerned departments.

G&B Hostel Bandipora Students visit Waqar Knowledge Centre on Educational Exposure Tour

HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, JUNE 13: Students of the Gujjar and Bakarwal (G&B) Hostel Bandipora on Saturday visited the Waqar Knowledge Centre Mini Secretariat Bandipora as part of an exposure tour aimed at encouraging interactive learning, dialogue, and greater awareness about educational and developmental opportunities available to the youth.

Programme Officer, ICDS Bandipora, Yaar Ali Khan, interacted with the students and highlighted the importance of awareness, continuous learning, and positive community engagement in shaping responsible and confident youth. He encouraged the students to actively participate in educational and developmental initiatives and make constructive use of plat-

forms like the Waqar Knowledge Centre for their personal growth and future aspirations.

District Information Officer Bandipora, Aadil Manzoor Wani; Block Development Officer Aaloo, Ulfat Ali; and other officials were present on the occasion and interacted with the students during the exposure visit.

During the visit, officials and staff members associated with the Waqar Knowledge Centre interacted with the students and highlighted the broader vision behind the facility as a shared learning and community space designed to promote awareness, guidance, innovation, and constructive engagement among young people.

The students were introduced to the various activities and initiatives being conducted at the Waqar Knowledge Centre, particularly those focusing on youth



empowerment, career awareness, public participation, and social issues affecting society. Officials also encouraged students to make use of such platforms for learning, self-development, and informed decision-making.

The interactive exposure visit provided the students with an opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions and gain firsthand experience of a community-oriented space dedicated to learning and awareness. The students actively participated in the session with enthusiasm and curiosity.

Hostel staff including Warden and teachers accompanying the students appreciated the initiative and termed the visit informative, inspiring, and beneficial for the overall exposure and personality development of the students.

Cultural Event in GBHSS Sursyaar Budgam Focuses on Drug-Free Future for Youth

■ GULFAM BARJI

BUDGAM, JUNE 13: National Bhand Theatre Wathoora, Chadoora Budgam, organised a cultural programme at Govt, Boys Higher Secondary School Sursyaar Budgam under the Repertory Grant "Guru Shishya Parampara" Scheme approved by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India New Delhi. On the occasion, the theatre group presented a thought-provoking Kashmiri play titled "Afsos" which was warmly appreciated by students, teachers and local residents. The play highlighted the growing menace of drug abuse, its devastating



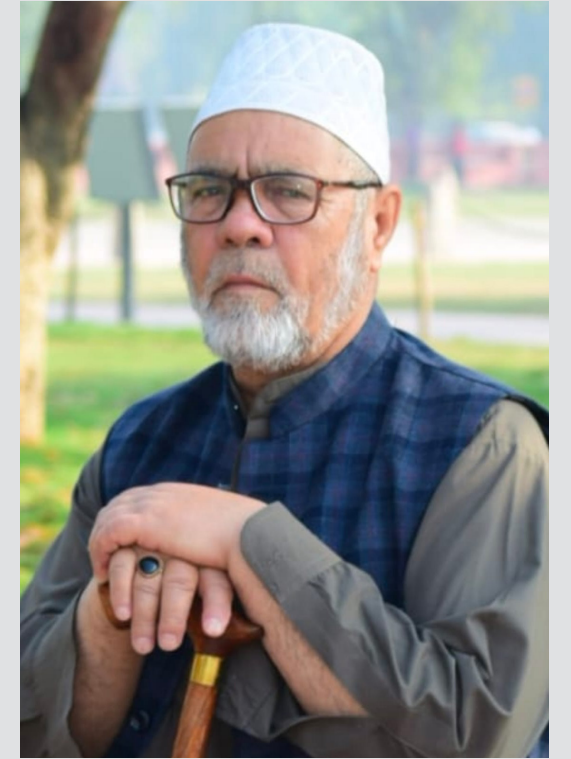
consequences and the irresponsible behaviour of children who disregard the guidance of their parents. Through powerful performances, the artists effectively conveyed the harmful impact of drug addiction on individuals, families and society. The production carried a strong message urging young people to stay away from drugs and adopt positive values. The programme concluded with the audience applauding the performers for their outstanding acting and appreciating the continued cultural and social contributions of National Bhand Theatre Wathoora Chadoora Budgam.

Krohen Cultural Forum Kreeri Condoles Demise of Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin Bukhari

■ HT NEWS DESK

KREERI, JUN 13: The President of Krohen Cultural Forum Kreeri, Syed Shamim Ahmad Shamim, General Secretary Syed Sharief Hussain Qadri, along with all members of the Forum, have expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin Bukhari.

In a condolence message, the Forum described the deceased as a respected and dignified member



of society whose passing has created a void that will be deeply felt by all who knew him. The members offered heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

The Forum also expressed solidarity with Advocate Syed Shabir Bukhari and noted businessman Syed Fida Hussain Bukhari, assuring them of its support during this difficult time. Members shared in the grief of the family and prayed for strength and patience for them to bear the irreparable loss.

The Forum prayed that Almighty Allah grant the departed soul the highest place in Jannah and bestow courage upon the bereaved family to overcome this moment of sorrow.

Agha Syed Karar Hashmi Remembers Hashmi & Bukhari: A Poet's Legacy, A Journalist's Sacrifice

- Announces Major Literary Event in Iran to Honour Syed Manzoor Hashmi ;
- Pays Tribute to Two Influential Figures of Kashmir's Literary and Intellectual Life

■ HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JUNE 13: Islamic scholar Agha Syed Karar Hashmi on Friday paid rich tributes to noted poet Syed Manzoor Hashmi and veteran journalist Dr. Syed Shujaat Bukhari on their death anniversaries, describing them as two towering personalities whose contributions continue to inspire generations.

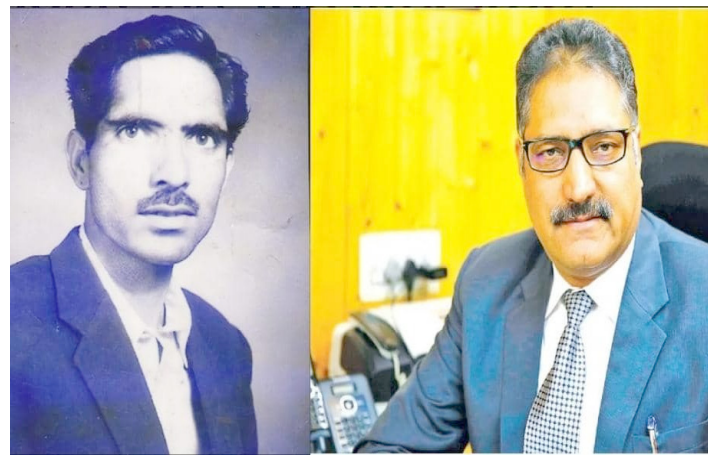
In a statement issued on the occasion of the 29th death anniversary of Syed Manzoor Hashmi and the eighth death anniversary of Dr. Shujaat Bukhari, Agha Karar Hashmi said both men left an enduring imprint on Kashmir's literary, cultural and intellectual landscape through their respective fields of work.

Remembering Dr. Bukhari, Agha Hashmi said his loss con-

tinues to be deeply felt across society, noting that his professional commitment, courage and dedication to journalism earned him widespread respect. "His departure left a void that no words can fill," he said while paying homage to the late editor and public intellectual.

The scholar also highlighted Dr. Bukhari's contribution to the promotion of the Kashmiri language through his association with Adabi Markaz Kamraz, where he served as president and worked to strengthen literary and cultural initiatives.

Paying tribute to his grandfather, Agha Hashmi described Syed Manzoor Hashmi as one of the most influential literary figures produced by Kashmir. He said the celebrated poet, critic, researcher and educator played a pivotal



role in enriching Kashmiri literature through his acclaimed works, including Garmal, Loluk Sargam and Ichhar Phula, which earned him recognition from the State Academy of Culture.

In a significant announcement,

Agha Hashmi said he would soon organise a major literary event in Qom dedicated to showcasing the life, works and contributions of Syed Manzoor Hashmi to Kashmiri language and literature before an international audience.

He also expressed gratitude to literary, cultural and social organisations across Kashmir for continuing to commemorate both Syed Manzoor Hashmi and Dr. Shujaat Bukhari, saying their efforts have helped preserve the legacies of two remarkable figures whose work continues to inspire younger generations.

On the occasion, Syed Manzoor Hashmi's sons, Syed Sarwar Hashmi and Syed Azhar Hashmi, also remembered their father and paid tribute to his lasting contribution to literature and culture.

Agha Hashmi concluded by offering prayers for the departed souls and expressing hope that their contributions would continue to guide and inspire future generations.

Literary Event Held in Memory of Eminent Writer and Poet Moti Lal Saqi

Jointly Organized by Azad Cultural Forum Chadoora and J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages

■ HT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, JUNE 13: A grand literary and cultural event was organized in memory of the renowned Kashmiri poet, researcher, critic, lexicographer, and intellectual Pandit Moti Lal Saqi. The programme was organized by the Azad Cultural Forum Chadoora in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), Srinagar.

The event witnessed the participation of a large number of citizens, writers, poets, artists, intellectuals, and local residents from the area.

Among the distinguished guests were noted poet and broadcaster Majid Masroor, eminent Islamic scholar Maulana Abdul Ghani Wathrali, Akhtar Miraj, Shah Zubair, and several other prominent literary, academic, and social personalities.

On the occasion, renowned singers Yaseen Gundpuri, Fayaz Ahmad Qawal, and Feroz Ahmad Shah captivated the audience with their performances of Sufi, literary, and Kashmiri compositions. Their soulful renditions received immense appreciation and applause from the audience.

A major highlight of the programme was a grand Mushaira (poetic symposium), in which nearly twenty poets from different parts of the Kashmir Valley participated. The poets recited verses on themes of love, humanity, spirituality, Kashmir's cultural identity, and communal harmony, which were warmly received by the audience.

Speaking on the occasion, Shehnawaz Nazir said that Pandit Moti Lal Saqi was not merely a poet but a distinguished researcher, critic, lexicographer, intellectual, and custodian of Kashmir's rich literary and cultural heritage. He stated that Saqi's life and contributions constitute a



luminous chapter in the intellectual, literary, and cultural history of Kashmir.

He further remarked that Moti Lal Saqi symbolized Kashmir's shared cultural ethos and spirit of brotherhood, which for centuries has united Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims through bonds of mutual respect, harmony, and coexistence. His personality and ideas, he said, continue to serve as a source of inspiration for society.

At the conclusion of the event, speakers paid rich tributes to Pandit Moti Lal Saqi's literary, scholarly, and cultural contributions. They reaffirmed their commitment to preserving and promoting the legacy of such great literary and cultural figures and expressed hope that similar programmes would continue to be organized in the future to introduce younger generations to Kashmir's invaluable intellectual and cultural heritage.

Ministry of Culture
Government of India

राष्ट्रीय नाट्य विद्यालय
NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DRAMA
(An Autonomous Institution of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)

THEATRE IN EDUCATION CENTRE, SRINAGAR
In collaboration with
J&K ACADEMY OF ART, CULTURE & LANGUAGES

ORGANISES

SUMMER CHILDREN THEATRE WORKSHOP

WITH SCHOOL CHILDREN DURING SUMMER VACATION

The National School of Drama, Theatre in Education Centre, Srinagar in collaboration with J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages is going to organize two separate 15 days Theatre / Drama in education summer workshops with school children during summer vacation.

THE WORKSHOP AIMS TO:

- ★ Develop and strengthen life skills
- ★ Explore latent potential of the students

ELIGIBILITY

School children of age group 8 - 12 & 12 - 16 years as on 20th June 2026.

Interested aspirants may collect the application forms from NSD, TIE Centre, Srinagar, Cultural Academy Campus, Lal Mandi, Srinagar from **10th June 2026** between **11:00am to 4:00pm** before the announcement of summer vacation.

"REGISTER YOUR NAME BEFORE SUMMER VACATION STARTS"

FREE ADMISSION IS TOTALLY FREE.

AFTER THE COMPLETION OF WORKSHOP CERTIFICATES WILL BE AWARDED TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED:

1. Copy of Aadhar Card & identity card issued by school authorities.
2. Consent from parent / guardian

For further information contact Director

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HT EDITORIAL

**Taking the Profit Out of Poison:
The Seizure of Drug-Linked
Assets Signals a Stronger
and Smarter Fight Against
Narcotics**

The decision by Srinagar J&K Police to attach properties worth crores of Rupees, allegedly acquired through drug trafficking is a welcome development in Jammu and Kashmir's intensifying battle against narcotics. While arrests and drug seizures often dominate headlines, actions targeting the wealth accumulated through the illegal trade are equally important, if not more so. By focusing on the financial gains derived from narcotics trafficking, law enforcement agencies are striking at the very heart of a criminal enterprise that survives on profit.

The drug menace has emerged as one of the most serious social challenges confronting Jammu and Kashmir. What was once perceived as a law-and-order concern has evolved into a broader societal issue affecting families, educational institutions, communities and, most alarmingly, the youth. The growing reach of narcotics threatens not only public health but also the social and economic future of the region. Every young life drawn into addiction represents a personal tragedy and a loss to society.

It is against this backdrop that the attachment of drug-linked properties assumes particular significance. The narcotics trade is sustained by enormous financial incentives. Traffickers are motivated not by ideology or grievance but by profit. As long as illicit earnings remain secure, criminal networks possess the means to recruit, expand and continue their activities. Confiscating assets believed to have been purchased through the proceeds of crime sends an unmistakable message that illegal wealth will not be protected and that those who seek to profit from human suffering will face consequences beyond imprisonment.

The ongoing anti-drug campaign in Jammu and Kashmir has gained noticeable momentum under the leadership of the Lieutenant Governor's administration and with the support of the elected government. The emphasis on creating a drug-free society has translated into stronger enforcement measures, increased public awareness campaigns and a growing focus on rehabilitation. The latest action demonstrates that the campaign is evolving from a reactive exercise into a more comprehensive strategy aimed at dismantling the entire ecosystem that sustains narcotics trafficking. A key strength of this approach lies in its recognition that the fight against drugs cannot be won through seizures alone. Drug consignments can be replaced, and arrested operatives can be substituted. What criminal networks find harder to recover from is the loss of their financial assets. Targeting the proceeds of crime weakens their operational capacity, disrupts their networks and diminishes the attractiveness of the trade itself.

However, enforcement, however robust, is only one part of the solution. The challenge demands a collective response from society. Parents, teachers, religious leaders, community organisations and civil society groups all have a role in creating awareness and identifying early signs of substance abuse. Preventive efforts must go hand in hand with law enforcement measures if lasting results are to be achieved.

Equally important is the need to strengthen rehabilitation and recovery programmes. Addiction is a complex challenge that requires medical, psychological and social support. While traffickers deserve strict punishment, those trapped by addiction need opportunities to rebuild their lives. A successful anti-drug policy must therefore balance firmness against criminal networks with compassion for those seeking recovery. The seizure of properties in Srinagar is a reminder that the battle against narcotics is entering a more determined phase. It reflects an understanding that drug trafficking is not merely about the movement of illegal substances but also about the accumulation of illegal wealth. By following the money trail and targeting assets generated through crime, authorities are adopting a strategy that promises lasting impact.

Jammu and Kashmir's aspiration of becoming drug-free will require perseverance, coordination and sustained public support. Yet measures such as these inspire confidence that the fight is moving in the right direction. When the profits of the drug trade are stripped away, the foundations of the network begin to weaken. And when those foundations crumble, society moves one step closer to securing a safer future for its youth and generations to come.

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Fractured Identity in Satyajit Ray-Ritwik Ghatak Films



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

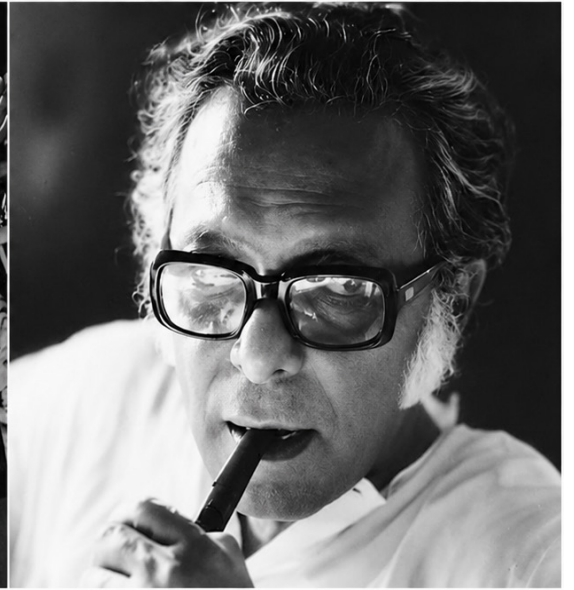
The cinema of Satyajit Ray and Ritwik Ghatak occupies a unique place in Indian and world film history. Though differing widely in style and ideological orientation, both directors explored the notion of crisis as an essential condition of human existence. Their films transcend mere entertainment and become profound reflections on social, economic, psychological, and cultural upheavals. Crisis, in their cinematic universe, emerges not only from external circumstances but also from inner conflicts and fractured identities. Satyajit Ray was one of the greatest filmmakers of the twentieth century and a pioneering figure in Indian cinema. Born in Kolkata in 1921, he brought international recognition to Indian films through his realistic portrayal of human life and his profound understanding of social issues. Influenced by literature, music, and painting, Ray developed a unique cinematic style marked by simplicity, emotional depth, and artistic excellence.

Satyajit Ray's films reveal crises through a humanistic lens. His celebrated Apu Trilogy portrays poverty, alienation, and the relentless struggle for survival. In Pather Panchali, Aparajito, and Apur Sansar, the crisis is fundamentally existential. Human beings confront deprivation, death, and loneliness while attempting to preserve dignity and hope. Ray's characters rarely rebel against society; rather, they adapt to circumstances and seek moral equilibrium. His cinematic treatment is subtle and restrained, emphasizing realism and psychological depth. The crisis of modernity forms another important theme in Ray's works. Mahanagar examines the transformation of traditional family structures as women enter the workforce. Arati's employment creates tension between conventional values and changing social realities. Similarly, Jana Aranya exposes moral degeneration and unemployment in urban Calcutta. The protagonist's descent into corruption reflects the ethical crisis that engulfed middle-class society during the turbulent decades of post-independence India. Ray's films of the 1970s increasingly display political consciousness and resistance to institutional decay. What distinguishes Ray's films is their humanism and psychological insight. His characters are realistic and relatable, and his narratives emphasize compassion and dignity amid adversity. Drawing inspiration from Italian Neo-realism, Ray created films that transcended cultural boundaries and spoke to universal human experiences. Through his remarkable body of work, Satyajit Ray enriched world cinema and left an enduring artistic legacy that continues to inspire filmmakers and audiences across generations.

Unlike Ray's measured realism, Ritwik Ghatak's cinema is marked by emotional intensity and historical trauma. His films are deeply rooted in the experience of the Partition of Bengal. Having himself suffered displacement, Ghatak transformed personal anguish into collective memory. The crisis in his cinema is civilizational. It is the crisis of homelessness, uprootedness, and fractured identity. His celebrated Partition Trilogy—Meghe Dhaka Tara, Komal Gandhar, and Subarnarekha—portrays refugees struggling to reconstruct their shattered lives. Ritwik Ghatak was one of the most original and influential filmmakers in Indian cinema. Born in East Bengal in 1925, he experienced the trauma of the Partition of India, an event that profoundly shaped his artistic vision. Though he directed only a few films, his contribution to world cinema remains immense. His films are marked by emotional intensity, social commitment, and a deep concern for the suffering and displacement of ordinary people.

Ghatak's cinema is best known for its portrayal of the refugee experience and the crisis of identity caused by the Partition of Bengal. His celebrated trilogy—Meghe Dhaka Tara (The Cloud-Capped Star), Komal Gandhar (E-Flat), and Subarnarekha—examines the pain of uprooted families and the loss of cultural roots. These films combine realism with symbolism and melodrama, creating a unique cinematic language.

Meghe Dhaka Tara is widely regarded as his masterpiece. The tragic story of Neeta, who sacrifices her life for her family, reflects the despair and frustrations of an entire generation displaced by historical events. In Subarnarekha, Ghatak presents the devastating consequences of poverty, social disintegration, and emotional alienation. His earlier film Nagarik, released posthumously, portrays unemployment and shattered dreams in post-independence Calcutta. Unlike the restrained realism of Satyajit Ray, Ghatak employed dramatic sound effects, abrupt editing, and powerful visual imagery to convey human suffering and historical trauma. His films are deeply rooted in Bengali culture, folklore, music, and theatre traditions. Although he received limited recognition during his lifetime, Ritwik Ghatak is now acknowledged



Meghe Dhaka Tara is widely regarded as his masterpiece. The tragic story of Neeta, who sacrifices her life for her family, reflects the despair and frustrations of an entire generation displaced by historical events. In Subarnarekha, Ghatak presents the devastating consequences of poverty, social disintegration, and emotional alienation. His earlier film Nagarik, released posthumously, portrays unemployment and shattered dreams in post-independence Calcutta. Unlike the restrained realism of Satyajit Ray, Ghatak employed dramatic sound effects, abrupt editing, and powerful visual imagery to convey human suffering and historical trauma. His films are deeply rooted in Bengali culture, folklore, music, and theatre traditions. Although he received limited recognition during his lifetime, Ritwik Ghatak is now acknowledged as one of the greatest filmmakers of India. His works continue to inspire filmmakers and scholars worldwide and remain enduring testimonies to the resilience of humanity in the face of displacement, loss, and social upheaval.

(1952), though released posthumously, is considered a landmark in Indian realist filmmaking. He also directed influential works like Ajantrik (1958), notable for its unconventional portrayal of a man's bond with his car, and Titash Ekti Nadir Naam (1973), a sweeping narrative about a riverine community. Despite limited commercial success during his lifetime, Ghatak's films have grown in stature, influencing generations of filmmakers. His use of sound, folk music, and symbolic imagery—especially rivers—reflects his belief that cinema should speak to collective suffering and hope. Today, Ghatak is recognized as one of India's greatest filmmakers, his work resonating far beyond Bengal.

In Meghe Dhaka Tara, Neeta symbolizes the sacrificial woman whose aspirations are destroyed by familial exploitation and economic hardship. Her heart-rending cry, "I want to live," represents the existential agony of an entire displaced generation. In Subarnarekha, the tragedy of Ishwar and Sita reflects the devastating consequences of social disintegration. Ghatak presents history as a violent force that leaves individuals emotionally scarred and spiritually homeless. Ghatak's Nagarik portrays unemployment and the shattered dreams of refugees living in post-Partition Calcutta. The film reveals economic insecurity and social marginalization while retaining hope for a better future. Poverty and displacement are not merely social conditions but symbols of a deeper human crisis.

Stylistically, the two filmmakers differ considerably. Ray employs classical narrative techniques and understated realism, drawing inspiration from nineteenth-century literature and neo-realism. His camera observes human suffering with compassion and detachment. Ghatak, on the other hand, uses melodrama, symbolism, abrupt editing, and innovative sound patterns to express anguish and collective memory. His cinema is epic, emotional, and intensely political. Critics have often noted that where Ray seeks harmony, Ghatak foregrounds rupture and fragmentation. Despite these differences, both filmmakers share a profound concern for humanity. Their crises are ultimately moral and existential. They reveal how ordinary individuals confront poverty, alienation, displacement, and historical upheaval. While Ray finds redemption through resilience and human values, Ghatak exposes wounds that remain unresolved. Together, they represent two complementary visions of postcolonial India—one emphasizing continuity and human endurance, the other highlighting rupture and loss.

In contemporary times, marked by migration, identity conflicts, and cultural dislocation, the films of Satyajit Ray and Ritwik Ghatak continue to retain remarkable relevance. Their cinematic explorations of crisis transcend geographical boundaries and historical periods, offering timeless insights into the fragility and resilience of human existence. Through different aesthetic approaches, both masters transformed individual suffering into universal art and enriched the discourse of world cinema with their profound understanding of the human condition.

Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee is formerly Affiliate Faculty Virginia Commonwealth University and a multilingual columnist of Indian National Dailies and awardee poet Glen Allen Richmond, email profpratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com

as one of the greatest filmmakers of India. His works continue to inspire filmmakers and scholars worldwide and remain enduring testimonies to the resilience of humanity in the face of displacement, loss, and social upheaval. Ritwik Ghatak's films stand as some of the most powerful expressions of displacement, memory, and human resilience in Indian cinema. His work is deeply rooted in the trauma of the Partition of Bengal, which shaped both his worldview and his cinematic language. Ghatak's cinema blends realism with myth, music, and melodrama, creating a style that is emotionally raw yet formally inventive. His early film Nagarik

HT SUNDAY-GOSSIP

One Man, One Story

It was a warm summer morning. On Wednesday, June 3, at around seven o'clock, Sahil left home for the local market. He had an appointment with an ENT specialist who visited the town once a week and ran a clinic there.

After a short ride in an auto-rickshaw, he reached the market at about nine. The doctor had not arrived yet, so Sahil decided to spend some time walking along the roadside.

Shopkeepers were lifting shutters. Some swept the fronts of their stores. A few early customers sat in tea stalls, chatting over steaming cups of tea. As Sahil walked, his attention was drawn to a man sweeping the area outside Gash Tea Stall.

He had long hair, wore simple but neat clothes, and worked with quiet concentration. Looking up, he smiled and said, "Would you like some tea?"

Sahil smiled back. "Finish your cleaning first. I'll come in a little while."

A few minutes later, he took a seat at the stall. Tea was served, and conversation followed naturally.

"You seem like a cheerful man," Sahil said. "What's your name?"

"Tahir."
"How long have you been doing this work?"

"Eighteen years."
"And your age?"

"Fifty-five."
Sahil looked at him in surprise.

"You don't look fifty-five."
Tahir laughed.

"Believe me, I've seen fifty-five springs."
Then he added, "I live within my means. I don't run after more than I need. I take care of my health. Every day I walk twelve kilometres—six in the morning and six in the evening."

"Every day?"

"Every day. Eid or Holi, rain or snow,

summer or winter. I walk to work and back. By the grace of God, I've been doing it for eighteen years."

Sahil nodded. "That explains why you don't look your age."

Just then a customer arrived. Tahir prepared tea, collected the payment, and returned.

"Who lives at home with you?" Sahil asked.

"My wife, my children, and my father."
"How is your father?"

Tahir's expression changed. "He's been unwell for quite some time. Breathing problems."

For a moment, silence settled between them.

Then Sahil said, "The way you speak, it sounds as if you've learned a lot from life." Tahir replied immediately.

"I haven't learned much myself. Whatever I've learned, I've learned from my father."

"What did he teach you?"

Tahir was quiet for a few seconds. "My father always said, 'Son, never lie. Never take what belongs to someone else. Never waste time. And never do anything that will keep your own conscience awake at night.'"

A faint smile appeared on his face. "I may not be highly educated, but I've never forgotten those words."

Sahil asked another question. "What do you do when there are no customers?"

Tahir reached into his pocket and pulled out a small electronic prayer counter.

"This."
"You spend your time in remembrance of God?"

"Yes. A shop needs cleaning every day. So does the heart."

Sahil found himself silent again.



Usuf Mir

After a moment, Tahir continued on his own.

"I spend the whole day here. By the time I return home, it's usually late. I eat, offer my prayers, and go to bed. But I wake up an hour and a half before Fajr."

"So early?"

"Yes. That's the time that belongs to me and my father."

"What do you do then?"

A spark lit up his eyes. "I make tea for him. We sit together and talk. I tell him everything about my day—who came, who went, how much I learned, what happened in the market, what people were saying. Then he talks to me. Sometimes he gives advice. Sometimes he shares an old memory."

He paused. "I don't get much time to sit with him during the day. So those moments are ours."

Sahil felt the depth hidden behind those simple words. There was no display of emotion, yet years of love and respect seemed to speak through them.

At that moment, two customers

arrived, and Tahir became busy again.

When he returned, Sahil asked, "Have you managed to save anything in all these years?"

Tahir laughed. "What savings?"

He placed a few empty cups aside. "About eight thousand rupees go towards rent. Whatever remains runs the household. At the beginning of the month, I buy rice, flour, cooking oil, salt, spices, tea, and medicines. Then we somehow make it through the rest of the month."

"Where do you keep your money?"

"I don't carry a wallet. Whatever I have stays in my shirt pocket. When I get home, I hang the shirt on a nail."

"And your family knows where the money is?"

"Of course."
"You never worry?"

Tahir smiled. "Why should I be afraid in my own home?"

The tea was finished, but the conversation continued.

Sahil glanced once again at Tahir's long hair.

"Can I ask you something?"

"Go ahead."
"The long hair?"

Tahir burst into laughter. "I get asked that question all the time."

Then he explained, "Keeping long hair was my childhood dream. But I could never do it. When you're young, you're afraid of your parents and relatives. Later, responsibilities take over."

He paused thoughtfully. "When people are young, they fulfil their dreams. Some buy cars. Some travel. Some develop expensive hobbies. This was mine. One day I thought, why not fulfil it now?"

He ran a hand through his hair and smiled.

"After all, a person is known by character, not by hair."

The words stayed with Sahil. "And there's one more thing," Tahir added.

"I always try to stay away from debt. If I owe someone even a small amount, I can't feel at peace."

Just then a voice echoed from the market road.

"The doctor has arrived!"

Sahil stood up suddenly. He had completely lost track of time.

"Well, Tahir, I should go now."
"Take care."

Tahir returned to his work. After walking a few steps, Sahil stopped and looked back.

The same simple clothes. The same long hair. The same modest tea stall.

On the surface, he seemed like an ordinary man.

But he no longer looked ordinary.

Sahil realised that every person carries an entire world within them. Some people write books, while others turn their lives into one.

He had come to the market to have his ear treated. Yet as he walked away, it felt as though he had spent the morning reading a human being.

And in that moment, a title appeared clearly in his mind:

One Man, One Story
(The End)

This story is inspired by the life of an ordinary man who never received formal education, yet through hard work, honesty, and the values taught by his father, built a life that made him successful in the truest sense of the word.

Email: yousufmir55@gmail.com

THE BARRIER OF SOCIAL PHOBIA



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

In an age where communication and networking have become essential for personal and professional success, millions of people are struggling with an invisible psychological challenge known as social phobia. While society often mistakes this condition for mere shyness or introversion, social phobia is a far more serious issue that can significantly restrict an individual's ability to participate fully in daily life.

Social phobia, also known as social anxiety disorder, is characterized by an intense fear of being judged, criticized, embarrassed, or rejected in social situations. Individuals suffering from this condition often experience overwhelming anxiety when speaking in public, attending social gatherings, meeting new people, participating in discussions, or even performing routine tasks in the presence of others. The fear is not simply nervousness; it is a persistent psychological burden that can interfere with education, employment, relationships and overall well-being.

The modern world, despite being more digitally connected than ever before, may unintentionally contribute to the rise of social anxiety. Increasing social comparisons through social media, fear of public scrutiny, unrealistic standards of success and reduced face-to-face interaction have created an environment where many individuals feel constantly evaluated by others. Young people, in particular, are vulnerable to developing social fears when they become overly concerned about their appearance, performance, or social acceptance.

The roots of social phobia are often complex. Negative childhood experiences such as bullying, humiliation, excessive criticism, rejection, or social exclusion can leave lasting psychological scars. Low



self-esteem, overprotective parenting and genetic predisposition may also contribute to the development of this disorder. Whatever its origins, the effects can be profound.

In educational settings, students with social phobia may avoid asking questions, participating in classroom discussions, or delivering presentations. Their academic performance may suffer not because of a lack of intelligence or ability, but because anxiety prevents them from demonstrating their potential. In

workplaces, talented individuals may hesitate to share ideas, avoid leadership opportunities and struggle with professional networking, limiting career advancement and personal growth.

The impact extends beyond academics and employment. Social phobia can severely affect relationships and emotional health. Individuals often desire companionship and meaningful social connections but find themselves trapped by fear and self-doubt. Over time, social withdrawal may

lead to loneliness, depression, chronic stress and diminished self-confidence. In severe cases, some individuals may resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms to manage their anxiety.

One of the most troubling aspects of social phobia is the cycle it creates. Fear leads to avoidance, avoidance provides temporary relief and that relief reinforces the fear. As individuals increasingly withdraw from social situations, their confidence declines and the anxiety becomes

even more entrenched. Without intervention, this cycle can continue for years.

Fortunately, social phobia is highly treatable. The first step toward recovery is recognizing that the condition is not a personal weakness but a manageable psychological challenge. Individuals can benefit greatly from learning to challenge negative thinking patterns and replacing self-critical beliefs with more realistic and balanced perspectives. Gradual exposure to feared social situations can also help reduce anxiety over time by teaching the brain that such situations are not genuinely threatening.

Professional psychological support plays a vital role in treatment. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy has proven particularly effective in helping individuals identify and modify the thoughts and behaviors that maintain social anxiety. Relaxation techniques, mindfulness practices, regular physical exercise and healthy lifestyle habits can further support emotional resilience and recovery.

Equally important is the role of families, schools and workplaces. Supportive environments that encourage participation without judgment can make a significant difference. Instead of criticizing mistakes or reinforcing insecurities, society must foster understanding, patience and empathy toward those experiencing social anxiety.

Ultimately, human progress depends not only on technological advancement but also on healthy social relationships. Social phobia deprives individuals of opportunities to learn, contribute and connect with others. By raising awareness about this often-overlooked condition and promoting early intervention, society can help countless individuals reclaim their confidence and realize their full potential.

Social phobia may be an invisible disorder, but its consequences are very real. Addressing it with compassion, education, and evidence-based support is not merely a mental health priority—it is a social responsibility.

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

French Fries Linked to Higher Diabetes Risk, but Potatoes Are Still Healthy

Eating fried potato products like French fries three times weekly is linked to a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes (T2D). Researchers followed over 150,000 participants over several decades and found that those who ate fried potatoes frequently were more likely to develop T2D compared to those who ate them less often.

The study, published on August 6 in *The BMJ* Trusted Source, showed that consuming three or more servings of French fries per week is associated with a 20% increased risk.

Experts say the findings highlight well-established concerns over ultra-processed food consumption and the role these foods play in blood sugar regulation and long-term health.

Fries, other ultra-processed foods negatively impact health

Nichola Ludlam-Raine, a registered dietitian and author of "How Not to Eat Ultra-Processed," wasn't involved in the new study but said she isn't surprised by the findings. "French fries are a form of ultra-processed food high in refined carbohydrates, fat (often from unhealthy oils due to the re-heating and reuse of them), and calories," she told Healthline. A 2022 meta-analysis Trusted Source of 1.1 million people found that moderate intake of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) is linked with a 12% higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes (and up to 31% higher risk with high consumption).

While potatoes are naturally rich in fiber, potassium, and vitamins C and

B6, it's how they are prepared that matters. "Frying potatoes increases their energy density (calories per gram) and often introduces harmful compounds like trans fats or advanced glycation end products, especially when oils are reused," said Ludlam-Raine.

"Frying also breaks down some of the natural fiber and increases the glycemic response." Caroline Roberts, a nutritional therapist at Integral Wellness, explained that industrially prepared fries go through multiple steps that can raise their glycemic index. Roberts wasn't involved in the new study.

"For the big chain fast food restaurants and any frozen French fries you buy in the supermarket, the skin of the potato is removed, removing most of the fiber content and immediately raising the glycemic index," she told Healthline. "Once cut and washed, sugar is added as part of the preparation process before they are cooked, which ensures they have the golden brown colour we all know, but raises the glycemic index of the fries further."

Roberts added that the part-boiling and part-frying process increases fat content and gelatinizes starch, which may cause a rapid rise in blood glucose levels. Then there are the extra ingredients to consider.

"Ultra-processed foods like French fries often contain additives, preservatives, emulsifiers, and refined oils that aren't typically used in home cooking," Ludlam-Raine noted. "These can negatively impact the gut microbiome,

promote inflammation, and contribute to insulin resistance over time."

A comprehensive review Trusted Source involving nearly 10 million participants linked UPF consumption to at least 32 adverse health outcomes, including type 2 diabetes, among others such as:

- cardiovascular disease
- obesity
- mental health conditions
- premature death

Fries in moderation unlikely to cause harm

Some good news? If you enjoy French fries, you don't have to swear off them forever. "Overall dietary pattern is crucial when assessing diabetes risk," Roberts said.

A healthy diet that emphasizes whole foods with adequate protein, fiber, and healthy fats can help minimize the risk of type 2 diabetes. Therefore, Roberts noted, the occasional serving of fries can be enjoyed as part of a balanced diet. Ludlam-Raine agreed that French fries should be consumed in moderation rather than regularly.

"While an occasional portion isn't likely to cause harm, habitual intake matters," she said. "I'd recommend limiting fries and similar foods to no more than once every couple of weeks and ensuring meals are balanced to help stabilize blood sugar." Like other ultra-processed foods, however, French fries are designed to be highly palatable, which may trigger cravings and lead to overconsumption and raise

blood sugar levels, Roberts noted.

Refined carbs may spike blood sugar

The new research also flagged white rice as a potential contributor to type 2 diabetes. Like French fries, white rice can be digested quickly and cause blood sugar spikes. "White rice has been stripped of its fibrous outer layer," said Roberts. "Without fiber, white rice is rapidly digested and can raise blood sugars significantly in some people." Ludlam-Raine explained that "refined carbohydrates are quickly broken down into glucose, causing rapid rises in blood sugar and insulin levels. These foods lack the fiber, vitamins, and minerals found in whole grains, which help slow digestion and support metabolic health."

This doesn't mean white rice is off the menu entirely. Pairing it with protein and healthy fats can prevent rapid blood sugar spikes. If you're looking for an alternative, experts recommend simple swaps, like brown rice, bulgur, or quinoa.

A balanced diet helps lower diabetes risk

If you're worried about your type 2 diabetes risk or you're looking to reduce your intake of French fries, there are lots of ways you can make healthier choices. If you want to make something similar to French fries at home, Roberts advised cutting white potatoes into wedges, keeping the skin on to retain the fiber content, and using an air fryer to cook them so that no oil is needed.

"Cooked and reheated white potatoes have a much lower glycemic index because the process of cooling and reheating them activates their resistant starch content," she explained.

Ludlam-Raine recommended "homemade oven-baked potato or sweet potato wedges using olive oil and herbs" as an easy alternative.

It's what you eat day that truly matters most.

Both experts stressed the importance of building meals with blood sugar balance in mind: focus on whole food protein sources, fiber-rich vegetables, and healthy fats.

To help lower your risk of type 2 diabetes, Ludlam-Raine offered a few nutrition tips:

Include fiber at every meal from vegetables, whole grains, pulses, nuts, and seeds.

- Prioritize protein, like eggs, fish, tofu, or beans.
- Choose healthy fats, such as olive oil, avocado, and oily fish.
- Limit less nutritious ultra-processed foods and sugary drinks.

Roberts added that hydration and balanced snacking also play a role in supporting blood sugar regulation.

Ultimately, most experts agree it's the overall pattern of what you eat that matters most.

"Making small, sustainable swaps, like choosing whole grains over refined carbs and preparing meals at home more often, can significantly reduce long-term risk," said Ludlam-Raine.

Courtesy Healthline



Study estimates climate-driven heat extremes impacted tropical bird numbers by nearly 40 pc since 1950



NEW DELHI: Heat extremes driven by climate change may have reduced the world's tropical bird population by 25-38 per cent on average since 1950, a study has estimated. Findings published in the journal

Nature Ecology and Evolution suggest that climate change is endangering tropical bird populations even in the absence of direct human pressures, such as changes in land use, researchers said.

The world's tropical regions -- having a high biodiversity -- are home to nearly half of all bird species. However, many species are said to be living at temperatures close to their tolerance thresholds. (PIT)

Doctors at McKinsey: Caring for patients while transforming health systems

NEW DELHI: As faculty at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Caroline Morgan Berchuck led sessions for aspiring doctors on healthcare 101. Often drawing on insights from McKinsey's research to highlight how people can slip through the cracks, she has helped doctors understand their role in creating a more equitable and effective health system. It's hard-earned knowledge from years spent as a physician specializing in patients from vulnerable populations with complex needs and working with organizations focused on making the system work for them.

An associate partner at McKinsey and co-director of women's health at the McKinsey Health Institute, she continues to practice medicine—caring for patients in the hospital—and serves as a medical school faculty member. She is part of a growing community of clinician-leaders at the firm who remain active in clinical care and bring real-world practice experience to their work with clients.

Here she discusses her unique career path, how her clinical work ties

in with consulting, and the progress she's helped create in healthcare in her three years at the firm.

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After college, I worked for two years at the Touch Foundation (now Touch Health), a global health nonprofit that was led by McKinsey and was then run out of the firm's New York office. It was a great way to learn about consulting while being dedicated to a cause.

I worked on various projects in Tanzania, including visiting rural clinics, talking to clinic operators, and speaking with women about their families' healthcare needs. At one center, there were around a hundred moms and their kids who had walked for days and spent all their resources to be there. They often waited days more for vaccines and care. Through

operational improvements, scaling the healthcare workforce, and streamlining payment structures, we were able to significantly improve access to healthcare across the country.

It was a formative experience for me. It inspired me to go to medical school but also to make sure I worked on improving how healthcare is delivered.

The more privilege we have in life, the further we are from the most overlooked and underserved patients. Practicing medicine ensures their needs always inform my work.

I became a complex care doctor, specializing in primary and hospital-level care for patients with serious medical, behavioral, and social needs. I did this at Brigham and Women's Hospital, as well as through a home-based care model. I combined this with my work at Commonwealth Care Alliance, where I focused on care delivery innovation for people with complex needs, and at Cityblock Health, where I worked to scale those innovations across many states. EMJ

DC Kathua reviews arrangements for NEET-2026 re-examination

HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, JUNE 13: A preparatory meeting to review arrangements for the re-examination of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)-2026 was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma at the DC Office Complex here.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner held a detailed discussion on logistics, staff deployment and infrastructure required for the smooth conduct of the examination, scheduled for June 21, 2026.

A threadbare discussion was held on security arrangements, deputation of examination staff, including Centre Superintendents, Invigilators and supporting personnel and the secure transportation and handling of examination material.

The DC directed the officers concerned to strengthen CCTV surveillance and ensure installation of jammers at examination centres as per prescribed



guidelines for secure and transparent conduct of the examination.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Health, JPDC, Police, Traffic and Fire and Emergency Services Departments to ensure timely arrangements, adequate manpower and close coordination for the safe and smooth conduct of the examination.

Rajesh Sharma stressed the need for strict adherence to prescribed guidelines and directed all departments concerned to ensure foolproof arrangements, maintaining utmost transparency and discipline throughout the examination process. He also emphasised coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to facilitate a conducive environment for candidates and ensure the examination is conducted in a fair and organised manner.

Pertinently, the re-examination will be conducted at two designated centres in the district – Government Degree College (Boys) Kathua and Army Public School, Janglote.

Among those present were Additional Deputy Commissioner Mahima Madan; ASP Sunil Kesar; Principal, Kendriya Vidyalaya Janglote (representative of the National Testing Agency) and other officers concerned.

SAD DEMISE



With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of **Abdul Rehman Rather S/o Abdul Gaffar Rather** R/o Ikhrajpora, Rajbagh, Srinagar Who left for Heavenly Abode on **12th June 2026 (Friday)**. We pray that Almighty Allah grants the departed soul the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous and bestows patience and strength upon the bereaved family to navigate this immense loss. The Mourning will be held for three days only.

BEREAVED FAMILY
MOHD SHAFI RATHER (SON) 7006122133

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

Subject: Application of AADIL AHMAD DAR S/O GH MOHAMMAD DAR R/O SHEIKHPORA Tehsil KREERI for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of self for the issuance of RBA in his own favor.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of RBA in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of SHEIKHPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the DAR community having annual income 2,60,000// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..GH MOHAMMAD DAR Father 58 years Farmer
- 2...HAJIRA BAGUM Mother 57 years Housewife
- 3...AADIL AHMAD DAR self 31 years student

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

NAIB TEHSILDAR KALANTRA

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application of QURAT UL AIN D/O FAYAZ AHMAD MIR R/O SHEIKHPORA Tehsil KREERI for the issuance of OBC (Other Backward classes in his/her favor

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of OBC in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of SHEIKHPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the MIR community having annual income 1,64,000// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1...MOHD AKBAR MIR Grand Father 73 years Farmer
- 2..SARA BEGUM Grand Mother 63 years Housewife
- 3... FAYAZ AHMAD MIR Father 46 years Labour
- 4...FAHMEEDA Mother 40 years H/W
- 5...QURAT UL AIM self 20 years student
- 6...AITSHAN HUSSAIN Brother 14 years student

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that I would like to change the name on my electricity bill with Consumer Number 020301000899 from Late Gulam Mustafa bhat to Sajad Ahmad Bhat. If any person has objection He/She can Contact me on the below mentioned Address or phone No. With in 7 days , After which No objection will be Accepted.

Sajad Ahmad Bhat
R/o: Awee Watal Kadal
Hamdaniya Colony Bemina
Cell No: 9419002547

Public Notice

My name has been wrongly written as HAJAM KHAZIR MOHAMMAD in my passport bearing passport No..K0678371 while my correct name is KHAZIR MOHD HAJAM S/O GHULAM NABI HAJAM as per aadhaar record Which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the passport office shrinagar within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....KHAZIR MOHD HAJAM
S/O...GHULAM NABI HAJAM
R/O...DOLIPORA KREERI
Distt.... BARAMULLA

Public Notice

In the school record the mother's name of my children has been mentioned as ROHI BEGUM instead of REHANA BEGUM . Now I am applying for its correction if anybody having any objection in this regard he / she may file same to the PRINCIPAL ISLAMIA PUBLIC SCHOOL DUNGARA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....ABDUL HAMEED GANATE
R/O DUNGARA

Public Notice

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

Aijaz Ahmad Malik
S/o: Gh Rasool Malik
R/o: Khisipora Kreeri

Public Notice

I am applying for fresh pesticides and fertilizer license if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file in the office of CHIEF AGRICULTURE OFFICE BARAMULLA & PPO LAL MANDI SRINAGAR within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....MOHMAD ASHRAF MALIK
S/O ...ABDUL RASHID MALIK
R/O...WAGILA WAGOORA
DisttBARAMULLA
Ph No ...7051504935
Pin ...193103

Public Notice

I have last my 10th class marks card at somewhere bearing Roll No.333578 .Now I am applying for its duplicate if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of concerned BOSE within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....MAISARA BANO
D/O...MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH MALLA
R/OUSHKURA BARAMULLA

Laptop Care House

Wholesale Dealer Of New And Pre Used Laptops

DEALS IN ALL KINDS OF LAPTOPS AND ACCESSORIES

REPAIRING OF: ALL TYPES OF LAPTOPS & DESKTOPS



7006083461

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: 29/EEA/R&B of 2026-27/1990-2000 | Dated: 13-06-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	T.D Cost (In Rupees)	Time	Class
1.	Construction of Drainage Near H/O Mohammad Rafiq S/o Mohammad Shaban Dar at Bagander Pampore.	1.24	200/-	15 days	DEE
2.	Repairment of Drain Near H/o Bashir Ahmad Mir (RTD Professor) near Gousia Masjid Tulbagh at MC Pampore.	0.55	200/-	15 days	DEE
3.	Construction of Lane and Drain from H/o Ali Mohammad Kumar to Golden Tuch Work Shop at Kadlbal Pampore.	2.83	200/-	15 days	DEE
4.	Construction of Drain from H/O Ab Ahmad Lawa to H/o Mst Zooni at Tulbagh Pampore.	0.57	200/-	15 days	DEE

Earnest money (In Rupees): 2% of Adv. Cost

M.H of Account: Normal Resources MC-Pampore

Project Authority: Directorate of Urban Local Bodies Kashmir

Position of AAA: Accorded vide No. 131 of 2026 Dated: 29.01.2026. (SE's Letter No. SE/R&B/DB/1488 Dated: 18-05-2026.)

Position of funds: Committed.

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	13-06-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	13-06-2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	15-06-2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	24-06-2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	25-06-2026 12:00 PM

1. Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)

(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document/Tender Fee to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 047001020000099, IFSC: JAKA0LALANG

3. All the bidders must deposit Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 047001020000099, IFSC: JAKA0LALANG

4. The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 047001020000099, IFSC: JAKA0LALANG), which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period.

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (tender receiving authority).

6. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

Sd/- Executive Engineer
R&B Division Awantipora

DIPK: 2114/26 | Dated: 13-06-2026

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Admission (1st Round)	01 June - 06 June 2026
2nd Merit List	09 June 2026
Admission (2nd Round)	10 June - 15 June 2026
Spot Round	18 June - 25 June 2026

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Satish Sharma reviews sports facilities across Anantnag

Announces major infrastructure upgrades

HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, JUNE 13: In a significant push towards strengthening the sports infrastructure and promoting youth engagement in Jammu and Kashmir, Minister for Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma, today undertook an extensive tour of sports facilities across Anantnag district and announced a series of major infrastructure upgrades aimed at transforming the sporting landscape of the region.

The Minister was accompanied by MLA Anantnag West Abdul Majeed Bhat, District Youth Services & Sports Officer (DYSSO) Anantnag and Officers from Transport, Food Supplies Science and Technology also accompanied.

During the visit, Satish Sharma inspected the sports stadiums, playgrounds and allied facilities at Qazigund, Sadoora, Bumthan, Panzath, Monghall, Dialgam, Ruh and Boin Dialgam. He reviewed the existing infrastructure, assessed the condition of sports facilities and took stock of the requirements necessary for their modernization and expansion.

Interacting with the players, coaches, sports officials and local youth, the Minister appreciated

the enthusiasm and sporting spirit displayed by young athletes across the district. He observed that Anantnag has emerged as one of the leading districts of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of sports participation and talent development, with its athletes bringing laurels to the Jammu and Kashmir at various levels.

Maintaining that sports infrastructure forms the backbone of athletic excellence, Satish Sharma announced major upgrades for sports stadiums and playgrounds across the district. These include expansion and modernization of existing sports facilities, development of additional playfields, improvement of training infrastructure, augmentation of spectator amenities and installation of floodlighting systems to facilitate sporting activities during evening hours.

The Minister said that the proposed interventions would significantly enhance the quality of sports infrastructure and provide aspiring athletes with better opportunities to train, compete and excel. He emphasized that the government is committed to ensuring that talented sports persons, particularly from rural areas, have access to modern facilities comparable



to the best available elsewhere in the country.

"Sports have the power to

transform lives, build character and channelize the energy of youth towards positive and pro-

ductive pursuits. Our aim is to create an enabling environment where every young athlete gets

the opportunity to realize his or her full potential," the Minister said.

Satish Sharma reiterated that under the leadership of the Government, sports development has emerged as a priority sector, with focused efforts being made to strengthen grassroots infrastructure, identify talent at an early stage and provide systematic support for athlete development.

The Minister noted that Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a sporting revolution, with increasing participation of youth in various disciplines. He stated that investments in sports infrastructure are not merely investments in physical assets but investments in the future of the youth and the overall development of society.

He further directed the concerned officers to prepare comprehensive project reports for the upgradation of sports facilities wherever required and ensure timely execution of developmental works. He also stressed the importance of proper maintenance and optimum utilization of existing infrastructure so that the facilities remain accessible and beneficial to local youth throughout the year.

Highlighting the role of sports in fostering discipline, fitness and social cohesion, Satish Sharma said that the Department of Youth Services & Sports will continue to work in close coordination with public representatives, sports bodies and local communities to create a vibrant sporting ecosystem across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister also met several public delegations and representatives from different areas of the district who apprised him of a wide range of public issues and developmental concerns pertaining to their respective localities. The delegations projected matters related to sports infrastructure, transport services, public distribution system, youth welfare and other developmental needs.

Giving a patient hearing to the delegations, Satish Sharma assured them that all genuine concerns raised would be examined on priority and appropriate measures would be taken for their redressal in a time-bound manner. He reiterated the government's commitment towards responsive governance and ensuring that developmental benefits reach every section of society.

20th Death Anniversary



Today, as we mark the 20th death anniversary of our beloved Gh. Rasool Buhroo Sahib, Nadihal Bandopora, former Treasury Officer, Bandipora, our hearts are filled with memories of a man whose life was a shining example of courage, dignity, dedication, and selfless service to others.

Twenty years may have passed since he departed from this worldly life, yet the void left by his absence remains deeply felt. Time has moved on, generations have changed, but his noble character, unwavering principles, wisdom, and compassion continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew him. His legacy is not merely remembered; it is carried forward through the values he instilled and the lives he touched.

As Allama Iqbal beautifully said:

نشان مرد مؤمن با تو گویم
چو مرگ آید تبسم بر لب اوست

"Let me tell you the sign of a true believer: when death approaches, a smile rests upon his lips."

He played his role in life with sincerity, honour, and steadfastness, and departed leaving behind a name that continues to be remembered with love, respect, and gratitude.

On this day of remembrance, we raise our hands in prayer and ask Almighty Allah (SWT) to forgive his shortcomings, expand his grave with divine light and mercy, and grant him the highest Maqam in Jannat-ul-Firdous.

Though you are no longer among us, your memories remain etched in our hearts, your teachings continue to guide us, and your presence is felt in every cherished remembrance.

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raji'un.

May Allah grant eternal peace to his soul and reunite him with the righteous in the everlasting gardens of Paradise. Ameen.

Amit Sharma reviews Census preparedness in Ganderbal

Stresses Accuracy, Quality Checks and Public Participation

HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, JUNE 13: Chief Principal Census Officer (CPCO) and Director Census Operations (DCO), Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Amit Sharma along with Deputy Director General, Office of Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, Biswajit Das and Principal Census Officer (Deputy Commissioner) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Mini Secretariat Ganderbal to assess the progress of the ongoing House Listing Operations (HLO) being conducted under Census 2027 in the district.

The meeting was also attended by Joint Director, DCO J&K, Arun Kumar; Assistant Director DCO J&K, Vijay Kumar; Chief Planning Officer Ganderbal, Sub-Divisional Magistrate Kangan, District Coordinator Census Ganderbal, Charge Officers and other concerned officers associated with the Census exercise.

At the outset, Chief Planning Officer Ganderbal briefed the CPCO on the district profile and the status of preparations for Census-2027. He informed that all House Listing Blocks (HLBs) have been successfully created and demarcated on the CMMS portal, while field operations are

progressing smoothly across the district. He apprised the meeting about the training imparted to enumerators and supervisors, self-enumeration progress, awareness campaigns undertaken through various IEC activities, and the monitoring mechanisms put in place to ensure quality data collection and comprehensive coverage of all households, including migratory populations.

Reviewing the progress, Amit Sharma appreciated the preparedness of Ganderbal district and emphasized that Census is the country's largest administrative and statistical exercise, forming the basis for planning, resource allocation and socio-economic development for years to come.

Amit Sharma stressed the importance of maintaining the highest standards of accuracy during data collection and directed enumerators and supervisors to ensure that every entry is recorded correctly and verified thoroughly. He cautioned that even minor errors or conceptual misunderstandings can adversely impact the quality of Census data and affect future policy planning.

The CPCO directed Charge Officers to ensure that Supervisors undertake regular field inspections and conduct random qual-



ity checks instructed to intensify monitoring and ensure strict adherence to Census guidelines. He also emphasized verification of household information, coverage of migratory populations, forest areas and other special categories to ensure that no household or individual is left out of the enumeration process.

Special emphasis was laid on ensuring comprehensive coverage of migratory and seasonal populations during the ongoing Census exercise.

The CPCO directed field functionaries to meticulously track migration routes and collect details of all eligible tribal popu-

lation and individuals to ensure that no person is left out of the enumeration process.

Highlighting the role of technology, Amit Sharma said the digital mode of data collection would enhance efficiency and improve the quality of information gathered.

Principal Census Officer Ganderbal, assured full administrative support for the smooth conduct of Census operations and directed all concerned officers to closely monitor field activities to ensure timely completion of the exercise.

The meeting also reviewed training activities, awareness campaigns, supervision mechanisms

and field-level monitoring arrangements aimed at ensuring comprehensive and error-free Census operations across the district.

Later, the CPCO briefed the media regarding the progress achieved under the ongoing House Listing Operations (HLO) of Census-2027 in the district and highlighted the extensive preparations undertaken to ensure smooth, accurate and timely completion of the exercise.

He appealed to the public of Ganderbal and overall public residing in UTs of J&K and Ladakh to fully co-operate with Census functionaries and provide accurate information, stating that reliable Census data serves as the foundation for informed governance, developmental planning and equitable distribution of resources.

The CPCO also reiterated that all information collected during the Census is fully protected under Section 15 of Census Act 1948 while assuring that it remains completely confidential and cannot be shared with any agency or individual. He urged citizens not to fall prey to cyber fraudsters and clarified that Census officials never seek bank account details, passwords, credit card information, PAN or Aadhaar details.

Secretary RDD reviews sanitation services for SANJY 2026 along Pahalgam axis

HT NEWS NETWORK

PAHALGAM, JUNE 13: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, today conducted an extensive review of sanitation arrangements along the Pahalgam axis, from Nunwan Base Camp to Pissutop and Zojibal, in preparation for the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026.

During the visit, the Secretary inspected the sanitation infrastructure, including toilets and bath units installed at Nunwan, Chandanwari, Pissutop and Zojibal, to assess the pace and quality of ongoing works. He directed the concerned agencies to expedite progress and ensure timely completion of all sanitation assets as per the prescribed timelines. He also emphasized the importance of maintaining cleanliness in and around the tented accommodations housing sanitation personnel.

Highlighting the scale of preparations, the Secretary said

that the department has planned comprehensive sanitation arrangements along the Pahalgam axis to facilitate the smooth conduct of SANJY 2026. A total of 3,120 sanitation assets, comprising 2,755 toilets and 365 bath units, are being installed across key locations from Nunwan to Panjarni to ensure better hygiene, convenience and comfort for pilgrims.

He informed that major sanitation facilities have been established at Panjarni, Sheshnag, Chandanwari and Nunwan Base Camp. Additional facilities are also being created at Pissutop, Zojibal, Wawbal, MG Top, Poshpathri and Bijbehara to further strengthen sanitation coverage along the Yatra route.

Aijaz Asad directed that dedicated sanitation teams be deployed at huts maintained by the Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board to ensure regular and efficient cleaning throughout the Yatra period.

Reviewing the quality of

infrastructure being created, he instructed that all toilets and bath units must be equipped with proper latches, door panels, bath fittings, electrical arrangements and drainage systems to provide safe, functional and hygienic facilities to the pilgrims.

To strengthen solid waste management systems, the Secretary directed the concerned agencies to expedite wall-matting works and ensure timely installation of all required machinery at Solid Waste Management (SWM) sites.

He also chaired a detailed review meeting with officers of line departments and executing agencies at Pahalgam, stressing the need for timely completion of all sanitation assets and reiterating the objective of conducting a "Zero Landfill Yatra."

The Secretary was accompanied by Director General, Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; ACD Anantnag, Shafiq Ahmad Wani; Block Development Officers and other field officials during the visit.

HSS Berarru honours Class XII achievers at felicitation ceremony

HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, JUNE 13: Higher Secondary School (HSS) Berarru, Zone Bhalla organised a felicitation ceremony to honour the top achievers of the Class XII Board Examination, with Deputy Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal gracing the occasion as Chief Guest.

Class XII toppers and meritorious students were honoured with certificates and mementos by the dignitaries in recognition of their academic achievements.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner commended the students for their outstanding performance and appreciated the efforts of teachers and parents. He urged students to remain focussed and continue striving for excellence.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Bharderwah Sunil Kumar Bhutyal and Chief Education Officer Doda Bhushan Kumar Pathak also emphasised the importance of discipline, quality education and determination in achieving success.

Principal Anjeel Kumar Thakur highlighted the institution's achievements in academics, sports and co-curricular activities and put forth certain demands for the overall development and welfare of the school.

Among those present were Additional Deputy Commissioner Bharderwah Sunil Kumar Bhutyal, Chief Education Officer Doda Bhushan Kumar Pathak, Tehsildar Bhalla Mohd Tahir and other dignitaries, educationists and members of the School Management Committee.

Bajaj Auto Foundation commits Rs 400 Crore through Rupa Rahul Bajaj Scholarship

India's largest scholarship program for women in core engineering

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

PUNE, JUNE 13: Bajaj Auto Foundation, the CSR arm of Bajaj Auto Limited, on Thursday announced a landmark commitment of Rs 400 crore over the next decade to empower women engineers through the Rupa Rahul Bajaj Scholarship for Women in Engineering (RRBSWE).

The Rupa Rahul Bajaj Scholarship, India's largest scholarship programme for women in core engineering has been conceived for meritorious young women pursuing core engineering disciplines including Mechanical Engineering, Electronics, Industrial Instrumentation, Mechatronics, Robotics, and allied fields.

Under the programme, scholars will receive financial support of up to Rs 8 lakh across the course of their engineering education at 40 leading engineering institutions including IITs, NITs, IIITs, and reputed state and private universities.

Beyond financial assistance, the scholarship is designed to nurture the next generation of women leaders in engineering through structured mentorship, leadership development, industry immersion, and access to professional networks.

The event was held at Bajaj Auto Headquarters in Pune, where the Foundation formally unveiled the scholarship identity and fe-



licited the inaugural cohort of 506 meritorious young scholars. The event was graced by chief guest Ms. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Executive Chairperson and Founder of Biocon Limited, alongside Mr. Rajiv Bajaj, Managing Director, Bajaj Auto Ltd.

The scholarship program seeks to address the persistent under-representation of women in core engineering and manufacturing sectors at a time when advanced manufacturing, deep technology, and industrial innovation are becoming increasingly critical to India's economic growth and global competitiveness.

Reflecting the larger commitment towards building India's future workforce through skill-

ing and contributed to Bajaj Auto's global scale, thereby making us the World's Favourite Indian. This program would extend our learning with the larger manufacturing industry."

Elaborating, he noted: "The Rupa Rahul Bajaj Scholarship for Women in Engineering holds a special place in my heart, as it carries the name of my beloved mother, Rupa Rahul Bajaj. Her dedication to education and her belief that women can drive change in their communities inspire this program."

The Rupa Rahul Bajaj Scholarship is an investment in talent, ambition, and the belief that opportunity can unlock extraordinary potential. We are deeply committed to ensuring that women play a far greater role in shaping the future of engineering and manufacturing," he added.

Sharing her thoughts on the impact of the announcement, Ms. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said that the future of science, engineering, and manufacturing must be built on inclusion and equal opportunity.

"Encouraging more women to pursue core engineering disciplines is not just a social imperative, but an economic one. Initiatives like the Rupa Rahul Bajaj Scholarship can help create a stronger and more diverse innovation ecosystem for India," she observed. UNI

2.5 times more than Saudi's Aramco: How big is SpaceX's \$75 billion IPO?

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JUNE 13: SpaceX priced the largest initial public offering in history on Thursday, selling 55.6 million shares at \$135 each to raise \$75 billion and valuing Elon Musk's rocket, satellite and artificial intelligence company at \$1.77 trillion. The stock begins trading on the Nasdaq on Friday under the ticker symbol SPXC. The IPO sits far from anything that has come before. Here's how:

Until Thursday, the largest IPO on the books was Saudi Aramco, the state oil giant, which raised \$29.4 billion in 2019. SpaceX raised more than two and a half times that.

Put another way: the gap between the two — about \$45.6 billion — is by itself larger than Aramco's entire record-setting sale. And the deal could grow. SpaceX has given its underwriters an option to buy a further 83.3 million shares at the offer price, which would lift the total to about \$86 billion if fully exercised, according to the company's filing reported by news agency Bloomberg.

Demand ran well ahead of supply. The offering was more than four times oversubscribed, and Musk's retail following placed more than \$100 billion in orders — more than the entire deal on its own, and far above the roughly 20% of shares reserved for individual investors.

Pre-listing trading pointed in the same direction: derivatives offered by the brokerage IG International implied a first-day market value of \$2.4 trillion, a jump of more than 35%, while traders on the prediction market Polymarket gave 70% odds that the stock would close its first day above \$2 trillion.

At \$135, SpaceX's \$1.77 trillion valuation — about \$1.8 trillion on a fully diluted basis — ranks it among the 10 most

valuable public companies in the world. It is worth more than Tesla, the company that made Musk a household name, and ahead of Meta Platforms and Walmart, according to the filing.

That mark caps a steep climb. SpaceX was valued at about \$800 billion in an insider share sale in December, roughly double its July 2025 level. Its acquisition of Musk's xAI in February — which folded in the Grok chatbot and the social platform X, formerly Twitter — pushed the combined company to a private valuation of \$1.25 trillion and the SpaceX business itself to \$1 trillion. The IPO price now adds another leap in under a year.

It also stands to make Musk the richest person the world has seen. By Bloomberg's Billionaires Index, the offering lifts his fortune by about \$275 billion to roughly \$970 billion at the offer price — just short of the trillion-dollar mark, which a strong Friday debut could breach.

Forbes and Reuters, using their own valuations of his holdings, estimate his net worth at over \$1.1 trillion once the shares begin trading, making him the first trillionaire.

The scale of that lead is hard to convey. "The second richest person has been hovering around \$300 billion, so about less than one-third of what Musk can potentially be worth tomorrow," Matt Durot, deputy editor at Forbes Wealth, told Reuters. "And only one other person, (Oracle founder) Larry Ellison, has ever been worth \$400 billion."

For the record, the number that defines the IPO is not one SpaceX has earned on its books. Revenue reached \$18.7 billion in 2025, news agency AFP reported, but the company lost \$4.9 billion that year, largely on spending to build AI computing capacity. UNI

Piyush Goyal will visit Switzerland to foster implementation of TEPA

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JUN 13: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is scheduled to visit Berne, Switzerland, on June 12, where he will meet senior Swiss government officials and leading representatives of the pharmaceutical industry to advance the implementation of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement



(TEPA) and further deepen economic ties between India and Switzerland.

This visit shows the importance India attaches to its economic engagement with Switzerland and other European Free Trade Association (EFTA) states. The minister will meet Helene Budliger Artieda, State Secretary for Economic Affairs, and Guy Parmelin, Federal President of Switzerland. He will interact with leading representatives of the Swiss pharmaceutical industry.

According to the Commerce Ministry, discussions were around the implementation of the TEPA and addressing the operational issues arising from this agreement.

On the sidelines of the visit, Goyal will engage with Swiss companies and investors in Zurich to discuss opportunities related to bilateral trade and investment.

India and the EFTA States—Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Iceland—signed the TEPA in March 2024, which entered into force in October 2025. This pact provides a comprehensive framework for strengthening trade, investment, and economic cooperation between the two sides. UNI

Reliance 4IR Realty consortium bags Mumbai slum redevelopment project

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

MUMBAI, JUNE 13: A consortium led by Reliance 4IR Realty Development Limited which is a subsidiary of the Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has emerged as the highest bidder for the cluster redevelopment of the 101-acre Juhu slum corridor, according to official sources.

"The tender attracted participation from three leading corporate groups. Following a transparent and competitive bidding process, a consortium led by Reliance 4IR Realty Development Ltd, which is a subsidiary of Reliance Industries, emerged as the successful bidder," Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) CEO Mahindra Kalyankar said.

Reliance 4IR Realty Development Limited made the highest bid in a consortium with Mahadev Realtors Juhu Pvt Ltd, which is

a subsidiary of Aspect Realty. The consortium offered to pay the highest 35.10 percent premium to Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), which is 10% above the regular premium of 25 percent.

The massive urban renewal initiative, known as the Juhu Galli SRA scheme, stretches from Juhu Galli on CD Barfiwala Road to the backyard of Hansraj Morarji Public School in Andheri. The entire project footprint spans 101.36 acres, of which 61.4 acres consist of slum areas identified for redevelopment under the project framework.

Reliance's entry into the real estate redevelopment sector indicates a move to be present in the integrated smart-city infrastructure. Other bidders who had participated in the competitive bidding process for the Juhu slum redevelopment project, are the Shapoorji Pallonji Group and the JSW Group.



SRA officials stated that the Maharashtra state government's high powered committee (HPC) has approved Reliance's technical and financial bid and accordingly, the state government will now issue a Letter of Award (LoA) to the Reliance-backed consortium. The consortium will pay around Rs 180 crore pending rent to tenants as well as two years of advance rent, which is around Rs 750 crore.

According to SRA officials, developers usually pay 25% of the ready reckoner (RR) rate of the plot to be developed as premium to the SRA, in SRA schemes. As far as the Juhu slum redevelopment scheme is concerned, Reliance 4IR Realty Development Ltd will pay 35.10%, which is the highest among the three bidders.

"As part of the stringent financial safeguards incorporated into the tender conditions,

successful bidders are required to secure pending transit rent of slum dwellers along with a cumulative transit rent commitment of approximately Rs 750 crore for the next two years with Slum Redevelopment Authority (SRA). A further one year's transit rent also has to be deposited in the form of post-dated cheques with the SRA, to ensure uninterrupted rental support to eligible residents during the rehabilitation and construction period. The successful bidder is also required to submit a performance guarantee amounting to Rs 100 crore with SRA," Kalyankar said.

The Juhu slum cluster redevelopment project is expected to result in the construction of more than 28,000 rehabilitation homes for eligible slum dwellers as well as unlock large slum clusters which were difficult to redevelop under conventional rehabilitation models. UNI

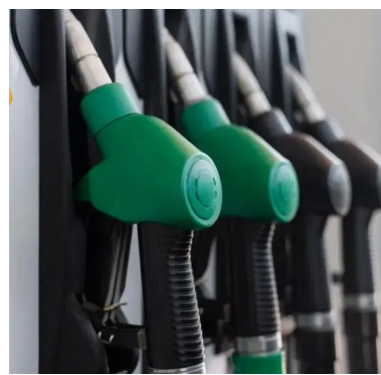
Govt exempts Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) from central excise duties

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JUN 13: The Government on Thursday exempted Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) from applicable central excise duties, an official order said.

It is subjected to the condition that appropriate central excise duties have already been paid on petrol and appropriate GST on the ethanol used for blending.

EBP blends are E22, E25, E27 and



E30 which contain 22, 25, 27 and 30pc ethanol respectively.

According to official order, the objective of this exemption is to remove the "deeming fiction" under central excise law.

The exemption has been provided on same lines as already existing for EBP blends like E5, E10, E20 etc. There is no change in central excise duty rate on petrol for domestic consumption. UNI

Sensex jumps over 900 points, Nifty tops 23,400 as global markets rebound

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JUNE 13: Indian equity markets staged a sharp recovery on Friday morning as global stock indices turned green, dusting off recent geopolitical cues. The BSE SENSEX started at 74,742.65 points, up by 910.10 points or 1.23 per cent. Similarly, the NSE NIFTY 50 began at 23,432.70 points, advancing 271.10 points or 1.17 per cent.

Ajay Bagga, Banking and Market expert, noted that foreign institutional investor (FII) debt flows into India are undergoing a major structural transformation following the landmark June 5 policy ordinance.

"By completely eliminating the 12.5% long-term capital gains tax and the 20% withholding tax on interest income for FII investments in government securities (G-Secs), New Delhi has effectively eliminated the single largest frictional drag on foreign bond returns." He added that global macro funds and active index trackers are already ramping up allocations, as India's 10-year sovereign yield, now fully tax-exempt, stands out as one of the most lucrative investment-grade debt instruments in the world.

"Analysts project this regulatory pivot could draw up to USD 50 billion over the next two years, providing a vital cushion for the rupee and significantly lowering sovereign borrowing costs at a time when equity outflows have been persistent," Bagga said.

The domestic momentum follows positive cues from the broader Asian landscape, where GIFT NIFTY traded at 23,464.00, up 0.26 per cent, and the Nikkei 225 surged over 3 per cent to 66,230.00.

The Hang Seng moved up 2.05 per cent to 24,747.00, while the Taiwan Seng moved up 2.41 per cent to 44,187.41.

In the West, Wall Street rallied sharply overnight with the Nasdaq gaining 2.5 per cent, supported by technology and AI-related optimism. UNI

Indian stock markets end lower amid fresh blows between US and Iran

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JUNE 13: Indian stock markets on Thursday ended lower in a highly volatile session. Nifty 50 close below the 23,200 mark amid broad-based selling across sectors, and taking fresh cues from the United States (US) fresh attack on Iran.

At close, the Sensex was down 150.63 points or 0.20 per cent at 73,832.55, and the Nifty was down 53.35 points or 0.23 per cent at 23,161.60.

Among the sectors, private bank, media, pharma were up, while IT index shed 1.4 per cent,

PSU Bank, Realty, Energy, Consumer Durables were laggards.

On Nifty, the stocks ending in green were M&M followed by ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, JSW Steel, Sun Pharma and Bharti Airtel. Nearly 38 stocks ended in the red. These included Infosys, HCL Technologies, Adani Ports, Eternal and Bajaj Finance.

More than 80 stocks touched their 52-week low on the BSE. These included HCL Tech, LTM, Zensar Tech, EID Parry, Rail Vikas Nigam, Dalmia Bharat, Kalyan Jeweller, Swiggy, HDFC Life, eClerx Services, Wipro, SBI



Life Insurance, TCS, ICICI Prudential, P and G, Reliance Industries, Jyothy Labs, Bharti Hexacom, among others.

After the government's announcement on the excise cut on higher ethanol blended petrol, sugar stocks rallied.

Paytm shares came under significant selling pressure, falling 4%. Adani Group stocks also remained under pressure, with Adani Energy Solutions and Adani Power declining 4.5% and 2.3%, respectively.

Bank Nifty fell more than 400 points from its day's high. ICICI Bank rose 1.6 per cent. Further,

Kotak Mahindra Bank advanced 1.16 per cent, while AU Small Finance Bank gained 0.94 per cent. IndusInd Bank, IDFC First Bank and Axis Bank also rose up to 1 per cent.

In a fresh development in the US Iran War, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps declared the Strait of Hormuz "closed to all vessels" after fresh US strikes on Iran.

The IRGC warned that any ship attempting to pass through the key waterway could be targeted, marking a sharp escalation in the confrontation between Washington and Tehran.

Williamson on retiring mid-series: 'Just feels like the right time'

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

CHRISTCHURCH: Kane Williamson sat on the Lord's balcony last week and came to the gradual realisation that his 110th Test would be his last match as a New Zealand cricketer.

He firmed up his decision over the subsequent days after conversations with his parents and his partner, and told a close circle - some senior players, including captain Tom Latham, head coach Rob Walter and team manager Mike Sandle - that his time was up. "It just feels like the right time for me to step away," he explained.

Most of Williamson's New Zealand team-mates only discovered the news that he was retiring from international cricket with immediate effect on Friday morning, shortly before he went public with the news. In typically understated fashion, he had called an unexplained meeting for "coffee and a chat" at the team's Imperial Wharf hotel, where he informed them that he was done.

The timing of Williamson's decision came as a shock, one match into a three-Test series and with a bumper 2026-27 season featuring series against India and Australia on the horizon. But he said that he had no interest in "being

on a team sheet and adding a couple of games" to the record without being fully committed, and that he had realised his time was up.

"When I look at the dressing room now and I see the talent, and the journey that I think this team's looking to go on, it just feels like the right time for me to step away," Williamson said. "I feel really good about it. It's funny when you reflect on so much, but all good things come to an end, and it's the change of seasons."

Williamson has gradually decreased his workload as an international player since turning down a central contract two years ago, a decision which has allowed him to miss some series to play franchise cricket or spend more time with his young family.

"Just as someone that cared deeply about the team, always wanted to do more, and was deeply committed to my craft as a cricketer. I'm really, really grateful for it all."

He hinted before the first Test that he was unlikely to return to Lord's as a player and said on Friday that he had been "getting comfortable" with retirement since that match, in which he made 0 and 18 in a low-scoring defeat.

"I didn't have it [retirement] in mind," he said. "You're at the pointy end, and



so you're wanting to just value every experience and really commit because that's what you have done and that's what you expect of everybody else in the group and they certainly all do that in a big way. And yeah, [there was] a little bit of reflection.

"Obviously that was an interesting match in itself, but [I was] sitting up there on the [dressing-room] balcony and thinking a bit about it, and then just taking a bit of time in the days post that to get comfortable with it... I really like the space of being really grateful for the time I've had with this New Zealand cricket team, and then also the excitement and potential I see in the group."

Williamson will turn 36 in August and said that he felt comfortable stepping away knowing that he was still worth his place, rather than clinging on. "It does feel good to not exhaust it, because it's not just about me, this decision," he said. "There's a lot of factors and a deep care for the team."

He said that he felt comfortable with the decision to play his last match overseas - "playing that last game at Lord's is kind of cool" - rather than in front of a home crowd, and to slip away quietly rather than have a farewell appearance. "I've got too much respect for this team and where it's wanting to go," he explained.

Williamson will stay with the squad for the coming days but said that he will be "giving the team a bit of space" and that his decision would enable other leaders to emerge. "I remember the day when other leaders in our team left and there's steps to take, and I think me stepping away allows that as well," he said.

The timing is a blow to New Zealand's hopes of overturning a 1-0 deficit to win this series in England, as Walter acknowledged: "You don't lose Kane Williamson off the team sheet and get stronger, because he's a legend." Henry Nicholls is the spare batter but Walter declined to say who will bat at No. 3 at The Oval, with Rachin Ravindra shifting up from No. 4 as an alternative.

"Everyone is asking, 'Why in the middle of the series?' but you hear his reasons and you understand fully," Walter said. "That's the person that he is, and just [shows] the regard that he holds the team to not just carry on because it's the end of a series, but actually to hand the opportunity to someone else who would take his place and fill a more long-term role for this team."

Affarwat-XI Storm into Kawcheck Premier League Final

HT SPORT DESK

KREERI, JUNE 13: Affarwat-XI Sports Club Baramulla delivered a dominant performance to defeat Harnow-XI by 10 wickets in the semi-final of the Kawcheck Premier League and secure a



place in the grand finale.

Batting first, Harnow-XI managed to score 64 runs for the loss of 4 wickets in their allotted overs. Aqib Lefty led the bowling attack for Affarwat-XI with an impressive spell, claiming 2 wickets, while Shakir Lefty and Suhail Wani chipped in with one wicket each.

In reply, Affarwat-XI chased down the target comfortably in just 7 overs without losing a wicket. Wani Saliq played a magnificent innings of 35 runs off 21 balls, striking 6 elegant boundaries. Captain Shahid Mir provided excellent support with an unbeaten 25 runs off 21 balls, including 4 boundaries.

The opening pair's outstanding partnership ensured a comprehensive victory for Affarwat-XI. For his match-winning knock, Wani Saliq was adjudged Player of the Match.

With this convincing win, Affarwat-XI Sports Club Baramulla has successfully booked its place in the grand finale of the Kawcheck Premier League.

New Zealand legends gear up for one last hurrah

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

DUBAI: Three legends of New Zealand cricket will all end illustrious careers at the 2026 women's T20 World Cup in England and while it's hard to imagine a White Ferns side without them, at least they've given everyone plenty of time to get used to the idea. Each announcing well before the tournament that this would be their last means there are no questions hanging over them, save for the big one: can New Zealand defend the title? What a send-off that would be,

as well as a launchpad for Melie Kerr, who took over from Devine as captain earlier this year.

"That T20 title is obviously a huge carrot," Bates told ESPNcricinfo's Powerplay podcast. "It was great to win one, but to be able to defend it with Melie as captain as well, I think that'd just be a really special way to have a send-off for her and for the three of us that have been doing it a long time."

After lifting the trophy as Player of the Tournament in Dubai in 2024, Kerr revealed that when she was still in school she wrote

assignments about winning a World Cup with her senior teammates. If ever there was a story of successful role models inspiring the next generation, this is it. Now there is a sense that both generations want to wring every drop from being together at this tournament.

"It's nice to have two other older players at the moment; everyone's so young in the squad, so to lift that age up, but also just to really embrace that moment with two other really special friends, it doesn't happen very often," Bates said. "We've all just

talked about making sure that we're always going to go out there and compete, but to really just embrace every moment that we get on and off the field."

Speaking in Derby after she played a lone hand in smashing 45 off 22 balls as New Zealand lost their opening T20 to England in the lead-up to this tournament, Devine quipped with the typical dry humour: "It makes knowing that I'm retiring a hell of a lot easier when it's that cold out there."

"But no, look, I'm just really happy and just feel really grate-

ful," she added. "Not many athletes get the opportunity to decide when they walk away from the game and for me to be here and just soak it all up - I'm not sure how much I'll be soaking up the Derby weather on a Wednesday night - but yeah, it's pretty cool."

"Whatever happens out in the game, and it's a pretty nice perspective to be able to have, I'm one of the most competitive people going around, but it is a chance for me to just soak it up and just enjoy it for what it is, the small moments."

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